

2008 MPPOA Conference:

This was my first expedition to the MPPOA conference held at Arrowwood resort in Alexandria. I was impressed by the level of involvement the members contributed. We were well received and HCSO Sgt. Jim Bayer sat with us to help explain the procedures for the program. I was encouraged by the approachability of all the members of the organization.

Al Saastamoinen, Perry King, Dave O'Donnell and I were able to have active discussions with both the outgoing and incoming Presidents of MPPOA. We participated in active discussion with the legislative committee members from all over the state. The committee decides which issues will be brought before the legislature for future sessions. I was impressed when a St. Louis county member started a discussion about issues Lakeville and Dakota Counties were having with their respective administrations. He was very knowledgeable about the contractual matters they are having problems with even though there was no party from either of those departments at the meeting. He argued on their behalf to work to change law at the legislature. St. Paul Federation President David Titus asked for discussion and any input on their current law suit with the city regarding replacement of licensed personnel with civilian staff. He would like to find a way to resolve this state-wide rather than each jurisdiction having to enter into a law suit.

We were thrilled to take advantage of a critical moment during the election of new MPPOA officers on Monday morning. On a spur of the moment, Jim Bayer nominated Perry King for a Director position on the board. It was a key moment because candidates that were interested in a Director's position were already on three prior ballots. This means that there was an open, unchallenged seat remaining. There was no one in position to run against Perry and he was appointed. Perry will hold the position for the remaining 2 of the original 3 year term. Coincidentally, Jim Bayer won the vacated Treasure's seat. The most important aspect is that now HCSO has two representatives on the board. The only department with more is St. Paul, with three.

Overall I felt we were introduced to an organization with the financial backing to get things done. There was a general feeling of cooperation among the membership. I feel that with Perry as a conduit, we will be able to have more input and play more of an active roll in the decisions that affect us on the state level. In recent years our Association has not been active with MPPOA and hopefully now, we've changed that.

In Solidarity,

Sheri Bukkila
Court Security Steward