

LAKEHURST POLICE LODGE #179

Freak hunting accident leaves Lodge 179 President Lowe paralyzed

It was a bleak holiday season for the family of Lodge #179 President Gary Lee Lowe, who was paralyzed from a post-Thanksgiving hunting accident. FOP members have been doing their best to ease the family's strain.

On Nov. 30, Lowe was on a hunting trip near Allentown, Pa., when he fell backwards from a tree stand while placing a safety harness. He fell 12 feet, broke his neck and became paralyzed from the chest down.

"It was a freak accident. They took all the right precautions," said Lodge Secretary Ron Heinzman.

Lowe was hunting with fellow officers and all were carrying walkie-talkies. His friends transported him to

Lehigh Valley Hospital.

Lowe and his wife Amy are the parents of two daughters, 15 and 18, and a three-year-old son. A fourth child is on the way.

Lowe is a sergeant and 12-year veteran of the Lakehurst Police Department.

Heinzman said Lowe will ultimately be moved to Kessler Institute for rehabilitation but his insurance will cover only 30 days of treatments. "We're trying to

help," he said.

The lodge has established a fund to build an accessible bathroom, doorways and a ramp outside the house.

When the accident occurred, National Trustee Ron Bakley contacted FOP members in the Allentown area for assistance. Bakley said Pennsylvania members "went out of their way to spend time with the family and they opened their houses to them, especially people from the Bethlehem area. I sent a thank you from the state," said Bakley. "That's what the FOP is all about." ★

A dinner to benefit the Lowe family will be held on Saturday, Jan. 30 to jumpstart the newly established Lowe Family Fund. The event will be held at La Bove Grande in Lakehurst, from 6 to 10 p.m. Tickets are \$25 per person; 100% of the proceeds will go to the family. For information about the dinner or to make a direct donation, contact Ron Heinzman, at (732) 657-7812, x210 or Lpd282@comcast.net.

ATLANTIC COUNTY LODGE #34

Atlantic FOP wins scheduling arbitration

Atlantic County has been ordered to cease and desist from altering the normal work schedule at the Atlantic County Jail. FOP Lodge #34 proved that administrators altered the schedule during mandatory training to avoid paying overtime.

On Nov. 10, ten months after a state arbitration hearing, Lodge #34 won its argument but not the overtime compensation it sought.

The dispute dates back to January 2008 when officers were being scheduled to work more than the maximum five consecutive days so that they could attend state-mandated in-service training. The FOP contract sets forth that unless there is an emergency, officers cannot be required to work more than five consecutive days. When they must work more than 40 hours in a single week, overtime must be paid.

The FOP claimed that work schedules were changed during mandatory training to avoid overtime.

Arbitrator James Mastriani found that some officers worked as many as eight consecutive days spanning two work weeks. He said since training does not constitute an emergency, the schedule should not have been altered.

The FOP requested overtime pay for those affected by the violation, but Mastriani denied the request saying officers did not work more than 40 hours in any given week. ★



JERSEY CITY LODGE #4

Christmas Cheer!

Photos from Jersey City's annual Christmas meeting on Dec. 3.