

From the President

Kevin Blongy

Greetings from Rutland. The first half of 2004 has flown by. The legislative session was very busy this year and I would like to take this opportunity to thank our Legislative Chair Scott Tucker and our Lobbyist Ed Miller for the outstanding job they did this year in Montpelier. In addition to the many bills that the VPA had input on, the Legislature also has named a member from the VPA to three summer-study committees this year. The voice of Vermont's Law Enforcement is being heard and our legislative bodies are looking for out input on public safety topics.

Not only are we being heard on the state level, but also on the federal level. The VPA spearheaded a letter writing campaign to our federal legislators regarding a grant application for the Vermont Emergency Services Memorial that had apparently stalled in Washington. Our two U.S. Senators and our U.S. Congressman received letters in late April from me, DPS, the Vermont State Troopers Foundation, the Sheriffs Association, the Chiefs Association, and the Wardens Association, along with both the Professional and Volunteer Firefighters Associations and the Vermont Ambulance Association. Within a few days I had personally heard from Senators Leahy and Jeffords offices and Congressman Sanders office, expressing support for our effort and assurances that they would look into

the matter. On May 13 when we were in Washington DC for the National Law Enforcement Memorial Services, Senator Leahy announced that the Vermont Emergency Services Memorial would be receiving a \$75,000 grant under the Federal Law Enforcement Tribute Act. Both Senator Jeffords office and Congressman Sanders office also personally contacted me to tell me this grant had been awarded. This grant will pretty much pay to complete the memorial. The only fundraising left to be done on the Memorial will be to create a perpetual care trust for the memorial.

I would also like to strongly encourage participation in the Vermont Police Association by our members. If you have an issue that you feel the VPA should be taking a stand on, please contact a Trustee. This is *your* organization and the stronger member participation is, the stronger our organization is.

The 2004 Vermont Police Association Convention is October 22 through October 24 at the Holiday Inn in Rutland. The Annual meeting is at 1 p.m. on Saturday, October 23, 2004. Please join us and have your vote count on some important issues.

I wish every one a safe and happy summer and hope to see you at the convention.

—Kevin R. Blongy
President
Vermont Police
Association



I would like to take this opportunity to thank our Legislative Chair Scott Tucker and our Lobbyist Ed Miller for the outstanding job they did this year in Montpelier.
