

In Pursuit of Region 29

In the beginning was the word...whoops, wrong beginning.

In the beginning was Nick Mileur, a most ardent purveyor of projects and dreams. This time his message was The International Police Association and why my life would be bare and stark, barren, and even empty without it.

Nick, a Placer County Deputy was also an officer and activist with the Peace Officers Research Association of California (PORAC), and my good friend. Although at times I wondered "With friends like these..."



I was sitting comfortably in my manager's chair at the PORAC state office in 1985, trying to look busy when Nick pops in and plops himself down in the visitors chair. "Baratta" he says, "You are missing the boat on one of law enforcements better kept secrets...the IPA." Knowing better to interrupt him when he was on a crusade, I tried to look disinterested as possible, wishing that the phone would ring...but it didn't, and Nick went into his sales pitch.

Seems like this IPA had been around since 1950 or so and was all about friendship among all police officers, and paying dues, and meetings and such; and Nick was a recent member who just could not wait to spread the gospel of one Arthur Troop. Arthur was the original culprit that had started this international scheme.

"How much," I asked, reaching for my wallet. Nick tried for a hurt expression but only came off looking mournful. "Later" he says, "Right now I want you to make use of your editor's hat and publish an article in the PORAC Rag..." The rag is named The PORAC Law Enforcement News." "Whatever" says Nick, who ignores my interruption. "What we need is for you to write a good article on the benefits of joining the IPA; an article that will appeal to your 30,000 readers..." "Thirty-five thousand circulation I corrected." Ignoring me Nick went on to describe the activities and benefits of belonging to such a wonderful outfit, until I realized I was not going to get off the hook until I agreed to place some sort of article in the paper.

"OK" I grunted, Give me some facts. How many members in the organization?" "There are over a quarter million members in the world in fifty odd nations, and nine thousand in the states," he proudly boasted. "Sounds like a mighty casually kept secret" I murmured. "That's it" he shouts. "The most casually kept secret among the police fraternity. A good punch line."

