

BOLO

Be On the Lookout

The Newsletter for the Los Angeles Airport Peace Officers Association



www.laapoa.com

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Second Tour of Duty: LAX Police Officer II Thomas Dye

After 28 years of service with the U.S. Navy, Master Chief Thomas Dye could have comfortably retired more than a decade ago, having served his country and armed service division honorably with an extensive list of achievements.

Instead, he chose to pursue a second career and became an airport police officer at LAX. "I wasn't ready to stop working and wanted to experience a career in the civilian work force," says Police Officer II Dye, now with 12 years on the job and assigned to Patrol Services, second watch. "I still felt I had something to contribute."

Son of a senior enlisted Army officer, Dye was born in Ohio and raised in Florida. His connections to the ocean and military made the Navy a natural choice for Dye, who joined straight out of high school with the goal of being a diver and parachutist.

After starting out as a young sailor on patrol craft, then submarines, Dye requested to be a submarine scuba diver before moving into his career specialty of explosive ordnance disposal (EOD). "After meeting Navy SEALs and EOD techs while involved with their special ops, and having a weapons background, it was a natural progression," he says. Among many other qualifications and accomplishments, Master Technician Dye performed shipboard detachments aboard aircraft carriers and minesweepers; was senior instructor of underwater ordnance and demolition, beach reconnaissance, shallow water mine clearance and deep-sea diving; served as senior enlisted advisor to the



Officer Dye and the rest of the Los Angeles Airport Police Honor Guard attended the January 4 funeral of fallen NYPD Officer Wenjian Liu. JetBlue Airways provided free flights enabling law enforcement from around the country to pay their respects at the funerals of Officer Liu and his partner, Officer Rafael Ramos, and stand tall with their brothers and sisters during a difficult time.

commander of Naval EOD Forces, Pacific Fleet; and was qualified as officer in charge for all conventional, IED, chemical, underwater and nuclear incidents.

During his last several years in the Navy, Dye also instructed several San Diego Sheriff's deputies and Los Angeles police officers in IED/demolition protocols, as well as teaching several VIP Escort classes.

Stationed in Coronado when he retired, Dye says he always loved his duty in California, and decided to stay for the long term after his military service concluded. His choice of an LAXPD career was a combination of fate and simply connecting with what he enjoys. "I love the people and activity at airports. I was stationed at two naval air stations and sea tours on two aircraft carriers," he says. "But what clinched it was when my little 3-year-old son was at LAX when I returned from deployment. He was so excited leaving baggage claim that he nearly ran out into the street, when he was stopped by an LAXPD officer (Officer Pierce, now Sergeant Pierce)."

Pivotal events in 2004 and 2005 led to yet another level of service that Officer Dye provides to the LAXPD — that of a 10-year training officer and second platoon member of the Honor Guard.

In July 2004, while on patrol, Dye was notified of an arriving fallen soldier by an LAPD supervisor assigned to LAX, he recalls. A special contract aircraft had arrived at a private air carrier with

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SECOND TOUR OF DUTY

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a locked gate ramp, and military and family members could not access the airfield.

“Immediately following that incident, the LAPD supervisor, my fellow LAXPD officers and I vowed we would do everything we could to prevent that from happening again!” says Dye. “Then, approximately eight months later, Officer Tommy Scott was killed in the line of duty.” Dye stepped up quickly when “LAXPD Sergeant Holt (retired) and Officer Marshall McClain asked for volunteers from the ranks to form an honor guard to honor our fallen officer.”

In addition to participating in the funerals of LAXPD officers and soldiers killed in action passing through LAX, the Honor Guard attends other events to pay tribute to the fallen, such as the recent funeral for NYPD Officer Wenjian Liu, killed in the line of duty with fellow Officer Rafael Ramos on December 20, 2014.



“Officers from the Asian Police Officers’ Association picked up dozens of California police officers at JFK, drove us to our hotel, took us out to eat, drove us to and from the funeral service, then to dinner, and finally dropped us off again at JFK,” says Officer Dye. “Amazing! It felt like we were family!”

Standing with New York’s thin blue line was a unique experience, Dye says. “Hundreds of NYPD officers broke ranks while waiting, to shake hands and thank us for attending and showing support for their fallen officer and his family,” he recalls. “They said they saw the Los Angeles Airport on our shoulder patches and greatly appreciated the distance we traveled to honor Officer Liu. It was an honor and a privilege to be among them!”

Back at home, responding to calls for service and ensuring that passengers and fellow employees are safe at LAX is still Dye’s favorite part of being an LAXPD officer, as there are also daily unique experiences when working at one of the world’s largest and busiest transportation hubs: “Where else can you recall a taxiing aircraft back to the gate to pick up a would-be bride in her wedding dress, sobbing on the terminal floor because she was late for her departure to Hawaii (with the groom and wedding party on the plane)?”



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The Board of Directors meets quarterly on the third Thursday of January, April, July and October at the LAAPOA Headquarters. Additional meetings and/or times are subject to change and will be posted as they occur.

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2015 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Yes You Can! 2015 Women in Law Enforcement Leadership & Empowerment Conference

www.lahidtatraining.org

March 26

Baker to Vegas

www.bakervegas.com

March 28–29

First Annual Tommy Scott Memorial Motorcycle Ride/Car and Truck Show

April 25

2015 California Peace Officers' Memorial Ceremony

www.camemorial.org

Candlelight Vigil: May 3

Enrollment Ceremony: May 4

National Police Week

www.nleomf.org/programs/policeweek

Police Unity Tour Arrival Ceremony: May 12

27th Annual Candlelight Vigil: May 13

Inaugural Annual Tommy Scott Memorial 5K/10K Run to LAX

May 16

Special Olympics Los Angeles

www.specialolympics.org/los-angeles-2015.aspx

July 25 to August 2

Westchester Park Back-to-School Night

August 29

Cruise for a Kid's Cure

October 24

Christmas Party

December 12 (tentative)



Emergency Services Unit: LAXPD's Tactical Team

As LAX has grown into the West Coast's foremost terrorist target, LAXPD has taken on expanded duties and evolved an array of specialized units to guard against threats and respond to critical incidents. Among these is the Emergency Services Unit (ESU), which stands ready to act quickly and effectively when an active shooter, barricaded suspect, aircraft hijacking or any other high-stakes situation strikes.

LAAPOA Zeroes in on Critical Issues for 2015

LAAPOA worked tirelessly in 2014 to voice its many concerns about LAXPD staffing, facilities, equipment, training, autonomy, safety and morale in the face of rapid airport expansion, illegal revenue diversion, mismanagement and other ongoing obstacles. The association's focus for 2015 is to build on the momentum begun last year, pressing for urgently needed changes in key areas, including parity in pay and benefits, full staffing, a new LAX police station, the end of the split-policing model with LAPD, and OIG oversight.

Congratulations, LAXPD Softball!



The LAXPD softball team was crowned champion after defeating the San Diego Sheriff's Department 25-21 on February 7.



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