

POAM IN FULL FORCE IN THE UPPER PENINSULA

On October 1 2012, nearly three hundred police officers and other public employees switched their union affiliation from the Wisconsin Professional Police Association (WPPA) to Police Officers Association of Michigan (POAM). Due to geographic limitations, POAM had allowed those groups to be represented by the WPPA since 2000.

Due to the sweeping the anti-union legislation that was passed in Wisconsin, the WPPA fell on hard times and questioned whether they could continue to effectively represent members in Michigan. This was a huge concern to POAM, causing Business Manager William Birdseye to initiate discussions about taking over those groups. POAM was willing to make a long term financial commitment to public employees in Michigan's Upper Peninsula and negotiated the transfer of exclusive bargaining status to the POAM.

Mr. Birdseye immediately secured the employment of WPPA's former Business Agent Emil Kezerle from Crystal Falls, to continue the representation he has been providing those members the past dozen years. Birdseye also instructed POAM's Director of Member Services, Ed Jacques to begin a publicity and recruitment campaign in the region to further bolster our presence there.

Jacques is in the process of securing a significant number of new members in the next year and Mr. Kezerle has been attending numerous labor seminars and POAM board meetings to further his already extensive labor knowledge.

"I am pleased this transition has taken place in such a seamless fashion," said Kezerle. "The additional programs and services that became available to my members in the fall of 2012 will benefit all terms and conditions of their employment. I couldn't ask for more support from the entire staff at the POAM headquarters."

Mr. Jacques encourages all POAM/TPOAM members that have friends or family in the Upper Peninsula that are employed in the public sector to contact the POAM office about bringing that same expertise and professionalism north of the Mackinaw. He has also posted Kezerle's resume on the web site for review.

Resume of Emil Kezerle

- * Graduate of Northern Michigan University with a degree in Criminal Justice.
- * Graduate of the Regional Police Academy class 7-85.
- * Worked as a Police Officer for:
 - The City of Negaunee
 - Northern Michigan University Public Safety
 - Marquette City Police Department

While with the Marquette City Police Department, served in the following areas:

- Patrol Officer
- Under Cover Narcotics Detective (Upper Peninsula Substance Enforcement Team)
- Detective Sergeant
- President of the Marquette City Police Association
- Awarded Marquette City Police Officer of the Year in 1989
- Awarded Marquette City Police Officer of the Year in 1985
- Awarded Marquette County Police Officer of the Year in 1994

Accepted a position with the Wisconsin Professional Police Association and placed in charge of all Upper Michigan Locals and through a cooperative effort with the POAM, served as a full time Business Agent from 2000 to October of 2012.

Hired by the POAM in October of 2012 at which time all WPPA Upper Michigan locals were transitioned over to the POAM. Current position is Business Agent with the POAM. Kezerle has received extensive and on-going training in all aspects of Collective Bargaining, Contract Enforcement, so on.