

## EA 1996 Admin

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**From:** EA 1996 Admin <ea1996admin@ea1996.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, August 01, 2015 10:39 PM  
**Subject:** EA 1996 Website - Five-O Alert!!

### *“Oh sh\*t man, it’s the cops!”*

No, this isn’t an NWA song. But there are cops in the area, so watch your speed and don’t do anything stupid. In a class of about 150 people, it’s not too odd to have one classmate go into a career in law enforcement. But to have 4 people out of about 150 enter the same career, is rather noteworthy. One thing is for certain... if anything dangerous goes down at our reunion, we’ll be well protected by the trained professionals who walk among us. That’s right, the class of 1996 reunion comes with a built-in security detail. We’ll have **Francis Speranza, Sam Gallo, Pat Schwer, and Eric Hess** on duty (so to speak). If you have trouble recognizing them, they’ll be the guys sitting facing the door and watching everybody’s hands to make sure nobody’s reaching for a weapon.

A lot of you guys know me and you know that I do a lot of work with law enforcement and I am a staunch supporter. I work with current/previous law enforcement and military professionals to provide Defensive Tactics, Critical Incident Response, and Firearms training to people on a weekly basis. I also do private firearms training for some state police troopers & their families and I volunteer for [Camp Cadet](#). So I have tremendous respect for what our 4 classmate cops do every day. These guys are the real deal!

Choosing to become a police officer takes a great deal of dedication to the community and a true passion for providing aid to others. It usually means working part-time LE jobs (sometimes multiple) FOR YEARS before getting hired full-time, putting in (no-pay) probationary time during initial training, working for way too little money given the risk and requirements, working ridiculous hours with little sleep, having to pay for a lot of your own gear & training (if you want top-quality), trying to help people who are at their worst and often resent your involvement, and wondering if you’re going to make it home to your family each night. Not to mention that they have to put up with a lifetime of corny donut jokes and every distant cousin they never heard of asking for a favor because they think you can/should be able to squash their speeding ticket. *“Hey remember me? I used to date your aunt’s landscaper’s niece and I saw you once at Giant Eagle. So anyway... some jerk gave me a ticket for blowing through a stop sign at 95mph in a residential zone while texting and eating a burger. Can you hook me up, bro? We’re practically family!”*

There’s an iconic leader in the law enforcement and military community by the name of [Dave Grossman](#). Grossman is an author, West Point psychology professor, Army Ranger, police officer, and special ops instructor. In several books, he talks extensively about cops. This particular passage always stood out to me:

*“Have you ever wondered why the symbol of a cop a shield? It is a direct, intentional, overt reference to the nights of old? They woke up in the morning and they donned armor. They hung a weapon on their hip. They hung a shield on their left side. And on that shield was whose authority by which they went forth and administered justice and did good deeds in the land.”*

We now live in a society where law enforcement professionals are often not appreciated and are sometimes given an undeserving bad rap at times. So I just wanted to take a minute to acknowledge and pay tribute to our friends, that I consider to be true heroes. Buy these guys a beer! Preferably, not while they’re on-duty.

Here’s the rundown on what they’re doing. And let me just say that this is NOT a comprehensive list of credentials. I didn’t have an opportunity to talk to all of these guys and get a full summary of their qualifications and experience.

- **Pat Schwer:** Penn Township PD
  - 17 years in LE, 10 years at North Versailles PD
  - Defensive Tactics Instructor

- Firearms Instructor
- Drug Task Force Officer and D.A.R.E. Instructor (works with 600-700 kids each year!)
- **Francis Speranza:** Monroeville PD
  - 17 years in LE, 16 years at North Versailles PD
  - Transitioned from North Versailles PD to Monroeville PD in June of 2014
  - Previously North Braddock PD and Pitcairn PD
- **Sam Gallo:** North Versailles PD
  - Previously East Allegheny School Resource Officer (for NVPD)
  - Previously East McKeesport PD and East Pittsburgh PD
- **Eric Hess:** East McKeesport PD
  - 9 years in LE, full time with East McKeesport PD since 2009
  - Narcotics trained by DA's office
  - Many credited accomplishments, including [saving a trapped man and his dog from the roof of a burning residence in 2013](#), for which he received a letter of commendation

Thanks for all that you do: **Francis, Sam, Pat, and Eric!** We hope to see you at the reunion. Leave your breathalyzer kit at home though. ;)

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