

# Theodore Roosevelt students celebrate Cheektowaga officers

By **Jim Herr** - January 10, 2019



*Students from Theodore Roosevelt Elementary School honor Cheektowaga Police officers on National Law Enforcement Day, January 9, 2019. (Jim Herr/Cheektowaga Chronicle)*

CHEEKTOWAGA – Teachers, students, and the parents of Theodore Roosevelt Elementary School celebrated the police officers of the Cheektowaga Police Department on National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day.

Principal Jeff Mochrie says the events held Wednesday are twofold; honor the police officers and allow the kids to interact with the officers so they can build additional relationships.

“One our classroom teachers, Mary Potienko, her husband was killed in the line of duty so it means something to her very specifically so over the last couple of years we’ve done something special for the police department,” Mr. Mochrie says.

Detective Wasyl Potienko was killed in an automobile accident on Broadway near Lackawanna Street in 2002.



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This year, the school invited dayshift officers into the school to break bread with the students.

“Our PTO really stepped up to the plate this year and we were able to provide them with a sub and pizza lunch. They sat with each one of the kids at the tables throughout our entire lunch period to interact with the officers.”

Officers on the afternoon shift also were honored. Students stopped by the police station with pizza and chips in hand. After a brief tour of the police station, the students held a small presentation and thanked the police officers.

Mr. Mochrie says it’s important for the children to see the officers in a positive light.

“At this young age – we’re a Pre-K through second-grade building – it’s critical,” said Mr. Mochrie. “The support they give us is overlooked and there are a lot of negative stories sometimes right now in the community and more so in society so to shed a positive light for the kids to know and understand and see the police in a positive light.”



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