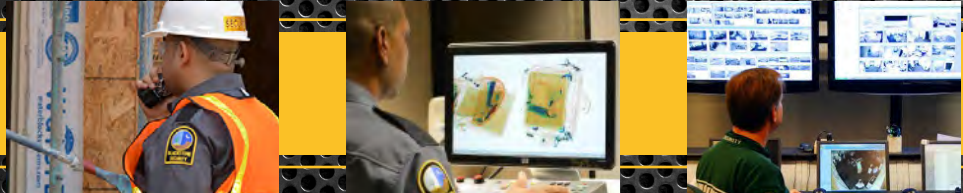




BLACKSTONE POST



*"The Secret to Our Success
is in Our People."*



The Voice of Blackstone Security

First Quarter, 2023

Blackstone Wins March Madness Chili Wars on Record-Setting Day

A record-setting Fundraiser for the AzSOMF

Phoenix – Blackstone Security Services, Inc.® emerged victorious from the Arizona Private Security Professionals' Association's version of March Madness when it set a record for first place wins on the way to unseating a 6-time champion against the backdrop of a record-setting fundraiser for the Arizona Security Officer Memorial Fund.

The event was the 8th Annual APSPA Chili Cook-Off on March 18, 2023 at the VFW Post 9400, 804 E. Purdue, and it featured 17 chilis with the most provocative monikers you could imagine, including: Champion Chili, Dubb's Grubb, B.K.'s Chili, Frank's Chili, Montana Chili, Cowboy Chili, and Wonderfully Wide Chili among a host of many others.

About 150 patrons attended the event throughout the afternoon, including security guards, family members, vendors and other supporters and featured raffles, music provided by Kirk Williams, children, service pets and chili tastings. It netted \$2,690. That's more than \$1,000 over the record set by the previous cook-off held two years ago because of the Covid pandemic.

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1st Place Chili winner, Brian Koren (Blackstone Security) with Phx PD and Phil Candy, APSPA Chair.

Blackstone is a Real Family Affair for the Kohlers

Three Generations Employed Simultaneously

Phoenix – Blackstone Security is known for being a family-run business that exudes a family-like atmosphere that its employees say may be the company's best feature. Anyone who doesn't buy in to that point of view should talk to Frank Kohler. Sporting three generations of his family plus one fiancé, the Kohlers are the poster children of Blackstone's "family atmosphere."

"That's exactly why I came to Blackstone," said Frank, a 20-year security industry veteran. "I wanted a smaller company that was family oriented that paid attention to their employees. I was just a number with my previous employer."

Frank began as a field supervisor before being promoted to dispatcher. His daughter Sarai Kohler is the accounts receivable manager and his father-in-law, George Gritts, is a patrol officer. Sarai's fiancé, Andrew Napier was hired



Frank, Sarai, Andrew and George, family strong at Blackstone Security Services, Inc.®

as a shift supervisor and dispatcher. He is now an operations manager.

But it was Frank who initiated the domino effect by recruiting Sarai. "My daughter had never worked security before and I thought she should give it a shot," he said. "Same with my father-in-law. I said to her, 'why don't you come and work here, it seems like a good company,'" he recalled.

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Ken Vandiver
Corporate Training Coordinator

When is the Use of Force Excessive?

We all have either seen it on the news or on social media the excessive use of force by police and security professionals and the outcry from the public for lawmakers to do something about it. Community involvement, defunding the police and training on de-escalation are pressing issues that have become talking points in the news calling for something to be done to stop it. So, I bring up the questions, when does the use of force become excessive and when is it reasonable?

We all might have an opinion about this topic, or we might have a preconceived perception of what is excessive or what would be reasonable in a situation. In any circumstance I believe that we all can agree we all want to be treated as humans whether it be from our friends or family members to even casual contact with strangers.

We also would hope that law enforcement and security professionals would be held to a higher standard. So where is the line drawn from using reasonable force to excessive force? The public may see reasonable as rights, whether it be from religion, race, gender, and even constitutionally we want to be protected. But does this give us the right to not comply with law enforcement or private security?

To lay some groundwork we would need to know the definitions of *reasonable force* and *excessive force*: (Taken from Merriam-Webster)

Reasonable: *Being in accordance with reason.*

- Reasonable force varies depending on the circumstances. In order to determine if the amount of force used is reasonable, the reasonable person standard is applied. Under this standard, actions will be considered reasonable if a reasonable person would have acted in the same way under the same (or similar) circumstances.

Excessive: *Implies an amount or degree too great to be reasonable or acceptable.*

- Excessive force is any force used which exceeds what is necessary to gain compliance or control.

Force: *As in pressure.*

- The use of power to impose one's will on another.

The use of force can only be justified if it is reasonable, and a reasonable person would agree that the degree of force is warranted.

A clearer definition would be we can only use the same force as someone is using against us. We get this standard by following the use of force continuum that lays out what force is justified:

Level 1 – Presence *Officers' presence and professional bearing. (No physical contact)

Level 2 – Verbal *Giving directives or orders. (Clear and deliberate instructions)

Level 3 – Empty-hand control *Holds / wrist locks up to strikes to gain compliance. (Hands on control / Pressure Points)

Level 4 – Less-lethal methods *Impact weapons / Chemical sprays / Taser (Pain compliance / Strikes / Chemical agents)

Level 5 – Lethal force *Any force that's likely to cause serious bodily harm or death. (Weapons / Strikes to vital areas)

This use of force model is designed to only use the amount of force that is used against us to get voluntary compliance or gain control of a resisting subject. Of course, the presence of an officer means something, but verbal control is one of our strongest uses of force. Our verbal communication is something we must practice and relates to our appearance, our distance, our tone (how we say it) and what we say to de-escalate a situation. If it escalates past verbal and a subject touches us, officers now can be reasonable to touch the subject back and even use less-lethal methods to gain control.

More importantly, we should de-escalate as soon as compliance is gained, this is important to show that no more force was used than what was reasonable. This relates directly to us as security officers when dealing with others. Sometimes progressing our use of force is needed to gain control, but we can see that de-escalation is required to be perceived as reasonable.

Hence, the need for de-escalation techniques and training are so important to use when dealing with an out-of-control situation. AVADE certification training on de-escalation within Blackstone Security Services and officers utilizing it while on duty has been influential in recent incidents where these techniques made a difference between a safe ending or something we would be see in the news. So, in answer to the question, is the degree of force used excessive? I say to you, yes, there is always another choice than the use of physical force against someone. The presence of us as professionals and utilizing verbal control with de-escalation techniques can prevent moving to higher levels of the use of force.

Keep safe and de-escalate!



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This newsletter is produced at Blackstone Corporate Headquarters for the use and enjoyment of our employees and clients.

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Las Vegas

Division 62

Matthew Clay – Division Manager

Blackstone Security Services

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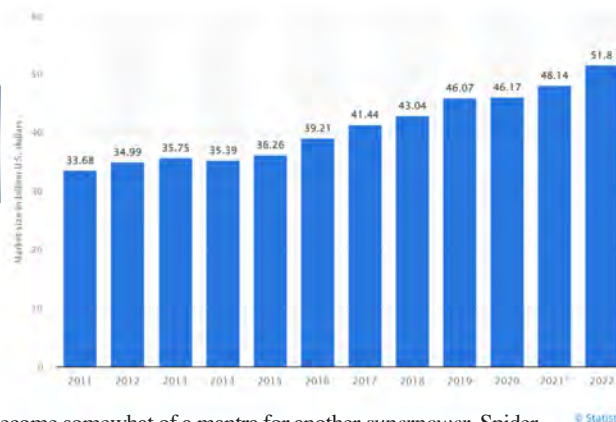
Nashville

Division 72

Mason Appleby – Division Manager



Raul De Leon
Vice President



Growth is More than Physical Expansion

The market size of the security services industry in the United States has increased steadily since 2011, reaching a value of over 50 billion U.S. dollars in 2022. Despite the economic effects of COVID-19, the industry has continued to grow and is now worth almost five billion U.S. dollars more than it was in 2020. (Graph provided by Statista)

Blackstone Security Services, Inc.[®] is a big part of this growth and we have started 2023 with a bang. Blackstone's team of business development managers have been busy and successful in bringing on the percentage of our growth.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects a 3.4 percent employment growth for security guards between 2021 and 2031.

With the boots on the ground to corporate management, we are in line to become a *superpower* in our industry and have already started competing and winning jobs that have been with the so-called "Big Three" companies for years.

Some of our new locations in just the past months have ranged from the Rio Grande Valley in South Texas, Tennessee, Missouri and the Denver market. We continue to explore new markets with the partnerships we have established.

After calling your attention to these encouraging statistics, I must point out that growth is more than territorial expansion and refer to a line to a

line that has become somewhat of a mantra for another *superpower*, Spider-Man: "With great power comes great responsibility." The same is true for growth. With great growth comes greater responsibility for all of Team Blackstone because true growth encompasses more than just physical expansion — that's the easy part. The key is filling the space we create with quality professionals that are dedicated to continuous self-improvement as we fulfill and exceed our clients' needs. Management knows this.

That's why Blackstone maintains memberships in the Arizona Private Security Professionals' Association (APSPA) and prestigious international associations such as NASCO and the International Association of Security and Investigative Regulators (IASIR). That's why we attend conferences to gather intelligence on what is happening in the industry and bring that information back to share during our annual managers' meetings. Let us know what you need. Asking for assistance is an integral step in the growth process. That's why we have an upper tier company trainer in Ken Vandiver. We will do all we can to help our people grow and prosper, because the secret to our success is **you!**

Blackstone Security is on the grow, and we want everyone to be part of this venture.

Blackstone on the Grow! Blackstone Strong! Blackstone Proud!

HUB International Names Blackstone's Bernard Best in the Nation for 2022-23

Quietly Disarmed Suicidal Mass Shooter



Errol Bernard receiving his award with Division Manager, Matthew Clay and Account Manager, Noah Nathanson

Blackstone Security Services guard Errol Bernard has been recognized as the top security guard in the nation for 2022-23 by an arm of an international organization for his effort in de-escalating a situation in July last year that prevented a mass shooting at a high-traffic retail client site in Las Vegas, Nevada.

In its first ever recognition program, the HUB Private Security Team selected the top three most incredible actions by private security guards nationwide.

Because there was no physical confrontation, Bernard's effort received no media coverage. The planned shooting never happened.

Bernard's action was all the more incredible because he did it without alarming any of the hundreds of patrons that were in the business at the time. Bernard followed his de-escalation training and his post orders and went about calming the distraught, would-be shooter and removed him from the crowded area quietly and without calling attention to what was happening to a concealed area where Bernard used verbal judo to persuade the subject to surrender his weapon. The police were called and removed the subject. This pleased the client, part of a national chain, who would not benefit from the publicity if its patrons knew there was an armed, suicidal person in their midst who wanted to harm them.

Bernard's selection was posted on the HUB Private Security Team's LinkedIn page by HUB Senior Vice President Jon Black:

"The HUB Private Security Team is honored to publish our first annual "Top 3" list of the most incredible stories we've received from 2022-23," Black wrote. "Although we received many incredible reports over the last year, we are humbled and privileged to recognize these specific brave officers again."

- 1. Officer Errol Bernard of Blackstone Security Services, Inc.[®]** prevented a mass shooting in Las Vegas by engaging with and persuading a suicidal gunman to relinquish his backpack that contained a handgun and ammunition.
- 2. Officer Pierre Peterson of Sunstates Security.** At a site in Indianapolis, Indiana, Officer Peterson went above and beyond to ensure the safety of an employee, and his diligence led to the arrest of a known criminal with active warrants.
- 3. Officer Tiago De Morais of Southwest Patrol.** For engaging calmly with a distraught, suicidal man and preventing him from harming himself or others and helping to get the man transported to a hospital for care.

For his effort, Bernard will receive a "thank you" package and a handwritten letter from HUB International. "What a wonderful recognition for Mr. Bernard," commented Blackstone Chief Operating Officer Jeanne Croft. "His effort saved lives and is reflective of the goals Blackstone sets for its employees through training and support. While the other security officers deserved mention, we are grateful to Jon Black and HUB International for recognizing Mr. Bernard for his superb accomplishment."

HUB Private Security Team is based in Fresno, Calif., and is an arm of HUB International, an insurance brokerage that provides an array of property, casualty, risk management, life and health, employee benefits and services. The HUB Private Security Team insures and counsels private security companies on safety, potentially harmful practices and high-risk clients.


Tiffany Collazo

*Officer of the Quarter
Division 62 Vegas*

Las Vegas – Tiffany Collazo is a 15-year veteran of the private security industry. Her experience is showcased in her job as a dispatcher for Blackstone's Division 62 and Division Manager Matthew Clay is singing her praises after just four months on the job.

"Tiffany has shown a positive, go-getter attitude and has become the backbone of this division," Clay wrote on his selection form. "Her agreeable demeanor sets the tone for the office, and she is the first contact anyone has walking into the division. She goes above and beyond on a daily basis to ensure the clients and her fellow employees are happy."

"We as security, are here to make good things happen." — Tiffany Collazo

This is why Clay selected Tiffany as the Officer of the Quarter.

"Tiffany is a great asset to the Division 62 family," Clay continued. "As a dispatcher, Tiffany is tasked with many different responsibilities and completes each of her duties with pride and dedication to the division. Tiffany is always eager to assist the management team with a smile on her face, even when times are stressful. She is extremely adaptive to change on a short notice and has often stepped in to fill spots in times of need. Tiffany is one of a kind and we could not do it without her hard work and commitment."

While Tiffany has been with Blackstone for about six months, the Las Vegas native has logged 15 years in the security industry.

What does she like most about Blackstone? "It is family oriented and veteran-owned," she said. "Also, they promote from within and see value in their employees. That's very important to me." Tiffany also enjoys the office staff and likes the friendly environment. "I feel very welcome and appreciated here," she said.

Her philosophy on the security industry is upbeat: "We as security, are here to make good things happen."

When Tiffany is not on the job she enjoys video games, photography and hiking. She and her husband, Albert, have two dogs.

Congratulations, Tiffany, and thanks for being a Blackstone ambassador.


William Pele

*Officer of the Quarter
Division 32 Phoenix*

Phoenix – Will Pele is a quick study and an instinctive, patient leader. These qualities earned Pele recognition as the Officer of the Quarter for Blackstone's Division 32.

Division 32 Manager James Ayala said Pele's performance during the past year elevated him from patrol to field supervisor. "Will is a great leader," Ayala wrote in his nominating narrative. "Will is always willing to teach policies and procedures while he's making his rounds. He was promoted to supervision after a year of doing patrol and has continued to perform in an exceptional manner."

Pele is a Phoenix native who served two-and-a-half years as a seaman in the US Coast Guard, where he had to be a quick study. Pele has been in the security industry for a year.

Pele said he enjoys working for Blackstone because of, "the opportunities that are presented to me that I have not gotten with any other job, previously."

He enjoys his job because of, "the people I work with and seeing all the guards on an almost daily basis."

When Pele is not on duty, he enjoys gaming, mechanic's work and cooking a good hearty meal.

"My philosophy on security is keeping our clients' properties and persons safe in a professional manner," Pele said.

Congratulations, Will, and thanks for being a Blackstone ambassador.


James Borden

*Officer of the Quarter
Division 34 Tucson*

Tucson – While he bears no resemblance to Mel Gibson, James Borden is described by Blackstone Division 34 Manager Adam Roberson as his "Icebreaker" whose forte is his assessment skills when being assigned to areas known as "Thunderdome" in greater Tucson. This is why Roberson said Borden is the Division 34 Officer of the Quarter.



"If I have a hard post, he's always first in to break the ice and assess what is needed to make the post safer for the next guard," Roberson said. "He's basically my Icebreaker. He is in the middle of Thunderdome, which is a reference we use for a hot area. If I have a site that is new that I think may need more looking into to see what's going on, I'll send him in first."

Thunderdome is a reference to the 1985 Australian, post-apocalyptic, dystopian action movie, "Beyond Thunderdome," starring Mel Gibson.

But Roberson added that Borden is no "Mad Max" when it comes to his personality and getting along with others. "He's always laughing and has a joke to tell," Roberson said. "No matter how bad his day is going, he's still got a smile. He has a great attitude."

Borden, a native of Roseville, California, spent 11 years in the US Air Force as a staff sergeant, and two years in the reserves. He has been in the security industry for seven total years, a little more than two years with Blackstone.

A man of few words when talking about himself, Borden said he enjoys the "good people" he works with and the flexibility the job gives him.

Borden's philosophy on security is that people have a right to feel safe and their property secure.

Borden and his wife, Patricia, have two adult sons.

Congratulations, James, and thanks for being a Blackstone ambassador.

*"He's basically my Icebreaker."
— Adam Roberson*



Joseph Hawthorne

*Officer of the Quarter
Division 53 Dallas*

Dallas – In the 20 years Joseph Hawthorne has been in the security industry, the native of Dallas, Texas has learned a few things. One of the most valuable lessons Hawthorne has learned is how to be a leader. That's why Hawthorne, a site supervisor for a high profile, mid-rise commercial property, is the Officer of the Quarter for Blackstone Security Services of Texas, Inc.®

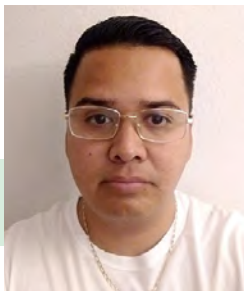
"Joseph has shown nothing but great leadership and professional skills to his officers and tenants, but more importantly he's shown them to our client and has been a great brand ambassador for Blackstone Security," commented Blackstone Division Manager Keric Jackson. "Joseph was selected for Officer of the Quarter because during the recent holiday season when an ice storm hit, Joseph stayed on the property for two days to ensure that the needs of the client were met without interruption. He stated that he wanted to show his officers that attitude reflects leadership and that a true leader leads by example."

Hawthorne states what he likes most about Blackstone is the wonderful work atmosphere and great communication. What he likes most about his job is "working (with) and serving the general public."

Hawthorne's philosophy on being a security officer is customer-service oriented. "Satisfying the client" he states, and "having their trust and confidence of upholding their rules and expectations."

When Hawthorne is not satisfying client needs, his main hobby is "being an active father and grandfather." He is the proud father of six children and the proud grandfather of three grandchildren.

Congratulations, Joseph, and thanks for being a Blackstone Brand ambassador.



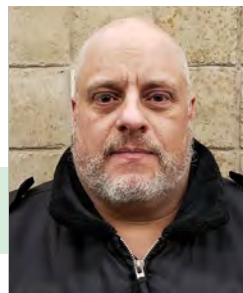
Daniel Hernandez

*Officer of the Quarter
Division 52 El Paso/Laredo*

Laredo – Daniel Hernandez is a conscientious, self-starter who takes his job seriously and is not above helping his coworkers succeed. These reasons are why Lizette Banuelos, regional manager of Blackstone Security Services of Texas, Inc.® selected Hernandez, a site supervisor, as the Officer of the Quarter for Blackstone Division 52.

"Danny has gone above and beyond since the start of the Laredo, Texas location," Banuelos said. "He is a very hard-working, dedicated person. He makes sure the client is happy and that all policies and procedures are being followed by the guard force."

Banuelos continued saying Hernandez also makes sure his security personnel are taken care of and assists in screening personnel to work at his remote site. "He has helped with conducting interviews for Laredo because his location is remote from the Division," Banuelos explained. "Danny takes the initiative to step up when he is needed, he never has to be asked to perform a task outside his job scope. Danny is the perfect example of 'the secret to our success is in our people.'"



Christopher Palmeter

*Officer of the Quarter
Division 42 Albuquerque/Gallup*

Albuquerque – Security Officer Chris Palmeter is a man of few words and lots of action. His work ethic and selfless dedication to his job and coworkers is a big reason he is the Officer of the Quarter for Blackstone's Division 42, but that's not the only reason.

Division 42 Manager Scott Clark describes Palmeter as someone who is very dependable and always goes above and beyond in his duties. Clark said he has seen the level of respect Palmeter receives when he completes his duties and that he exceeds all expectations. "Chris is always ready to go the extra mile, if needed, as I have called on him when additional security is needed for various functions and emergency situations," Clark wrote. "He is always willing to learn a new post or assignment. He has worked every post in the Albuquerque area and is often called upon to assist with the field training of new staff."

Clark added that he knows that when Palmeter is on duty, "he will perform all duties as a professional and will follow all procedures as requested by myself and the client." Clark added that he is honored to have someone of Palmeter's caliber on staff.

And Palmeter said he is just as happy to be working at Blackstone. "What I like most about Blackstone is the people," he said. "Jeremiah (Butler) and Scott are the best management team I have ever worked for."

Palmeter is a 28-year veteran of the security industry, spending the first 27 years in Georgia before coming to New Mexico. He will celebrate one year with Blackstone in November. The Syracuse, New York native is also a US Army veteran who served as a Private 1st Class in Military Intelligence in Operation Desert Storm and in Panama.

Palmeter said he likes everything about his job, and his philosophy on security is simple: "Be vigilant." His favorite hobbies? "Work, work and more work," he says. "Then, some fishing." Palmeter, who is a widower, said he and his wife, Kimberli were married 24 great years and have a son, Johnathan, and a daughter, Ashley.

Congratulations, Officer Palmeter, and thanks for being a Blackstone ambassador.

Hernandez is not new to the game, having served seven years in the security industry, the past year with Blackstone. A native of Laredo, Hernandez said he likes his job at Blackstone because it gives him "the opportunity to grow as a leader."

"I get to meet people and learn how to work with them," he said.

When Hernandez is not working, his favorite hobbies are reading in silence and listening to friendly debates so he can learn.

His philosophy on security is, "Security shouldn't be taken lightly and should always inspire responsibility and safety."

Hernandez and his wife, Andrea, have two daughters and a son.

Congratulations, Danny, and thanks for being a Blackstone ambassador.

"Danny is the perfect example of 'the secret to our success is in our people.'"
— Lizette Banuelos

Family Strong *Continued from page 1*

“She did. I got promoted and she took my position as a field supervisor.”

Frank said he chose the security industry because it is solid and reliable. “I’ve always liked security, it is something you can live on and get by on,” he said. “It’s better than working at McDonald’s. Security is always going to be needed, it’s recession-proof.”

Frank said working with family members that he sees nearly every day is working out fine. “Everything has been good,” he said. “But I told them don’t expect any favoritism because I expect more from them than others. You expect more from family and friends than other people. They both are doing a great job.”

Frank, who has been with Blackstone nearly three years, says he has resisted any promotions so he can stay in sync with his wife, Regina, a registered nurse who works the graveyard shift. “I don’t want to ruin our relationship.”

Frank said he also has three friends that he recruited who work at Blackstone, his best friend Monty Fogle, Zach Bearnd and Adam Murtaugh. He tried to recruit his father, Gary Kohler, a retired law enforcement veteran of 30 years, but he declined.

“Everyone I know I’ve tried to get to come to work for Blackstone,” Frank said. “I’ve even reached out on Facebook to recruit people to come to work for Blackstone.”

Sarai began as a security guard two years ago but says she has found her calling as the Accounts Receivable Manager. She has enrolled online in a class at Rio Salado College to earn an accounting certificate. “I really love doing this job,” she said. “I can’t think of anything else I would rather do.”

Sarai said she enjoys working with her relatives and thanked her father for getting her involved. “I like working with my dad and I like being able to check on my grandpa,” she said. “My grandpa likes doing what he’s doing. My dad got me to go get my guard card and told me I was going to like it, so I did, and I do like it. I just recently got my fiancé to join us.”

Sarai says she enjoys working at Blackstone and has no plans to go anywhere else. “I think I’m going to be here for a long time,” she said. “I have no plans to leave anytime soon, and I’d like to build a career in accounting. I thanked my father for getting me involved.”

Meanwhile, Napier is a relative newcomer to the security industry having joined Blackstone last fall at the urging of Sarai with an assist from Frank. “I was looking for another job and Sarai mentioned they needed someone

in dispatch that had already had prior experience with shift supervision,” Napier said. “I soon came on as a shift supervisor / dispatcher.”

Napier said he agreed with Sarai that Blackstone and working with Sarai’s relatives has been a positive experience. “It’s been good,” Napier said. “I enjoy working here. It’s not like I go to work dreading what I have to do. I talk to Frank more than I do George, because I see Frank more in the office since he is a shift supervisor. Frank was confident that I would fulfill the job duties that were asked of us. Everything here has been pretty good. What Sarai’s opinion is as of right now about Blackstone is the same opinion I hold.” So, it will be a family affair for a long time.

For his part, George said the arrangement has been a pleasant experience. “It feels good, I’ve never worked with family before,” he explained. “I was in construction before, so this is a little easier. I’m a patrol officer so I enjoy that part of it. I don’t have to dig any holes.”

George recounted that when his son-in-law first approached him about a security job, he was already working and did not pay much attention. “But after I had not worked for 10 years, Frank said you’ve got to do this dad, and I’m glad I did,” George laughed. “It’s better than just sitting around doing nothing. It took him a few tries; I don’t know why I guess I’m just hard-headed that way.”

George said his wife, Judy, was all for him working in security and expressed an interest herself, but that did not work out. George said the only difference he has with Andrew is that Andrew is a Seattle Seahawks fan, like his wife, and he is a Cardinals fan. “I like Andrew he’s an intelligent young man. He knows his football.”

George said that when needed he can count on Frank or Sarai to answer his questions and help whenever they can. “I try not to bother them too much, because they are so busy,” he said. “I’m retirement age and it feels good to still be able to work so I enjoy that part of it and the family is icing on the cake. I didn’t realize there would be icing on the cake until I got into it. They look out for me. When you are in the situation, it doesn’t seem unique to me, and then you go to work, and Sarai says, “hi grandpa.” So that’s the cool part. Everything else is just work.”

Brian Falatko is the New Face in the Crowd

Memphis, Tenn. – Team Blackstone, meet Brian Falatko. Falatko’s role with the company is evolving. Currently the 17-year law enforcement veteran with three different law enforcement agencies is multi-tasking as an account manager for what will become Division 73 in Southaven, Miss., near the Tennessee border at which time he will become Division Manager, according to Blackstone Vice President Raul De Leon.

Falatko comes to Blackstone with a wealth of experience in various law enforcement and private security venues with a number of awards and recognitions along the way.

Falatko’s experience includes serving as a field training officer and SWAT team member for the DeSoto County Sheriff’s Department in Memphis. He has been a security consultant, a special investigations agent, a court bailiff, a patrol officer and the team leader on several task forces. Besides possessing a working knowledge of government, Falatko is certified as an Equalizer Self Defense for Women Instructor, has a 4-stripe White Belt in Jujitsu and has 15 years of experience in the ring as a pugilist. He was the point of contact for the Warner Bros. Security Team during the release of an Elvis movie in Memphis. Falatko is well-versed in public safety and has excellent communications skills.

While with the Memphis Police Department, Falatko was the 2010 Officer of the Year and the 2016 North Main Officer of the Year. He was Officer of the Month 12 times, earned three Letters of Accommodation and was the 2010 Optimist Officer of the Year for the City of Memphis.

While with the DeSoto County Sheriff’s Office, Falatko was Bailiff

Deputy of the Month for November 2020 and was the 2017 Shift Nominee for Officer of the Year. He was also a patrol officer with the Peoria Police Department in Illinois.

Falatko has 94 credit hours toward a degree in education from Murray State University near Paducah, Kentucky.

A single father, Falatko said he sought a job in private security so he could spend more time with his three young sons, Sutton, 10, Sawyer, 8 and Saxton, 6.

The Peoria, Illinois native said he chose Blackstone because of the impression Blackstone Owner, Dan Swindall and Blackstone Vice President Raul De Leon made on him during the interview.

“The same generosity that Dan showed me and the flexible work schedule that Dan has allowed me to have was impressive,” Falatko said. “I’ve used it as a model to manage my employees. I was also impressed with how straightforward Dan and Raul were. They did not beat around the bush with me. They gave me a set of parameters to follow, and I did.”

Falatko currently manages 20 to 25 guards and spends a lot of time shuttling between Tennessee and Mississippi. He said that aside from the storms and tornadoes that have plagued the area, the client is pleased with their work.

“It’s been great. I’m able to spend time with my sons and manage my personnel and have success in my job.”



Brian Falatko and sons: Saxton, 6, Sawyer 8, Sutton 10.

Chili Cook-Off *Continued from page 1*

The money will go to the Arizona Security Officer Memorial Fund, which was created to provide financial assistance to the immediate families of private security officers who make the ultimate sacrifice while in uniform and on duty.

"What a great day for the private security industry in Arizona," said Phil Candy, chair of the APSA Board of Officers. "The fact that we set another record for fundraising shows how much this event has caught on over the years. This was a great day for a great cause."

When the smoke cleared it was B.K.'s Chili, cooked up by Brian Koren, a newcomer to the event who was sponsored by Blackstone Security Services, Inc.[®], that took home the top prize in a stunning upset of a perennial chili-cooking champion by a freshman newcomer by the razor-thin margin of one vote.

"Winning feels great," Koren beamed. "But I just like feeding people and watching them have a good time eating my food."

In addition to the award judged by the police, the APSA this year introduced a "People's Choice" award. Again, the result was determined by one vote with Kim Matich's Champion's Chili placing second behind the Blackstone Security sponsored Dubb's Grubb Chili served up by J.W. Cornish and Stephanie Love.

Cornish said he got the idea of what to name his chili from his mother. "My mama calls me Dubb and that's why I called it Dubb's Grubb," Cornish explained. "Love is my secret ingredient."

Blackstone Chief Operating Officer Jeanne Croft worked long and hard to rally her troops to enter the fray and sponsored others who would enter a chili on Blackstone's behalf. When the results were announced, Croft was quick to congratulate her team. "We did it!" Croft said in a congratulatory email to her troops. "Blackstone won first place and the People's Choice (award). This counts as two First Place wins in our eyes. Great teamwork!"



Blackstone Chief Operating Officer Jeanne Croft enjoying the chilis at the 8th Annual Chili Cook-Off.



People's Choice awarded Dubb's Grubb Chili served up by J.W. Cornish and Stephanie Love (Team Blackstone Security).



1st Place Champion, Brian Koren (Team Blackstone Security)

Later, Croft's comments were focused on the importance of the event. "Of course, we are extremely pleased to win this competition, but we cannot lose focus on why we are here," said Croft, who also heads the APSA Special Events Committee. "The families of security officers who have died in the line of duty have been saddled with final costs that have come without adequate life insurance. We at Blackstone have supported the efforts of the APSA in assisting these families by participating in this event since its inception. We are proud to do so. The last Arizona security guard to die in the line of duty worked for Blackstone."

Much of the record-breaking fundraising was due to Croft's tireless efforts in obtaining raffle prizes from local businesses ranging from dinners at fine restaurants to massages to beauty treatments at local salons. "I was happy to contribute," Croft said.

In taking home the top prize, Koren defeated defending champion Kim Matich, owner of Anderson Security Agency who had won the event six consecutive years and looked as invincible as Tom Brady, Michael Jordan and Muhammad Ali. The only times Matich did not finish first was when she did not enter the first year of the competition and the two years she did not win, including the current year, she finished second.

Matich, the founder of APSA was just as gracious in relinquishing her crown as she was in earning it. She lauded her successor and reaffirmed her dedication to the purpose of the event. "Congratulations to the new champion," Matich said after the results were announced. "I'm super happy for him and I want to thank him for participating in such a great cause."

Judging of the event was handled by members of the Phoenix Police Department, Lt. Nick Jimenez, Sgt. Jon Scott and Ofc. Joe Kapla. Lt. Jimenez said they were happy to connect with the community again.

"I think it's great anytime we can engage with the community," Jimenez said. "It's a win for the police department and the community. We are always trying to build bridges and partnerships, and this is a great way to continue that process."

Third place was taken by VFW 9400 representative Vance Fulkerson, who entered "Just Chili." Fulkerson is the Senior Vice President of the Post.



Kim Matich, owner of Anderson Security Agency and founder of APSA taking 2nd Place.



Team Blackstone having a good time at the Chili Cook-Off.



The VFW 9400 Senior Vice President, Vance Fulkerson, took 3rd Place with his "Just Chili."



8th ANNUAL CHILI COOK-OFF

