

# FLYING WHEEL

Vol. 59 No. 1



Winter 2020-2021



**2020 State Trooper of the Year**  
*Trooper Tyler S. Ross*

# OHIO STATE HIGHWAY PATROL

## Colonel's Letter



The circumstances of 2020 caused us to redefine what success looks like, and how best to serve our communities in unconventional times. Both figuratively and literally, the work and support demonstrated by our sworn and professional staff in 2020 cannot be measured. What I do know is this: there was a tremendous amount of sacrifice by each of you – and for that I am eternally thankful.

Throughout 2020 you represented the solution to so many challenges and problems that many of us were experiencing for the first time. You were on the frontlines when it came to the pandemic and social justice demonstrations. As our organization was called on to shift you continued to make the necessary adjustments, even as you were making changes at home for your families.

In the midst of a constantly changing mission, we had to refocus efforts to get highway safety under control. You responded to whatever was asked.

Our success was manifested by continuing to build strong partnerships with our local, county and federal law enforcement colleagues. These partnerships are exemplified in places like the Public Safety Leadership Academy, contributions on homeland security task forces and at our new K9 training facility.

Operationally we are not working in a silo either. Our assets are available, and used for the benefit of all of Ohio's law enforcement agencies. We are best positioned to be everywhere critical services are needed in communities during those critical life-saving moments.

Examples could include assisting the township police department in locating a grandmother who is suffering with dementia and walked away from her caretakers, or joining with a multi-agency investigation that rescued a missing child who was being victimized by the scourge of human trafficking.

This Flying Wheel issue highlights the importance of what you did in 2020 and celebrates our annual award winners. It may look different from how we have acknowledged our top performers in years past, because even in recognizing our best, we had to adapt. I want to thank the Ohio Channel who assisted us by bringing the annual award announcements to you in a new way. Perhaps later this year we will be able to gather for an additional way to celebrate our 2020 awardees.

Nobody could have predicted the demonstrations related the pandemic and social justice that dominated our lives in 2020.

I appreciate your flexibility during such uncertainty. Thank you to those who spent time protecting the Statehouse in Columbus, and also to those who stayed behind covering for your comrades to maintain post operations, assisting the motoring public and working side by side with our law enforcement partners.

Through it all, our mission critical services kept Ohio highways safe, the population safe and allowed thousands of people in communities across the state to peacefully protest.

While we have a lot to be thankful for, our Patrol family is mourning the loss of Trooper Brad Huffman who passed away on January 20 due to complications from COVID-19. I ask each of you to pause and take a moment to remember Brad and the life he devoted to public service and being a member of our family.

Please continue to support all of our sworn and professional staff who are battling COVID-19 and other serious illnesses and personal struggles. And in your continued service, observe proper COVID-19 protocols.

There will be more challenging times ahead. Throughout our history, the importance of what we do has risen to the surface during challenging times. Our mission is critical and we have been put in this place and time to serve the public.

Operationally, legislatively and through our communications efforts – now is the time to show our public value.

Be safe, take care of your families and each other.

Colonel Richard S. Fambro  
Superintendent



### 3. A Tribute to Trooper Huffman

Patrol pays tribute to fallen Trooper Huffman.

### 4. 2020 Leadership Awards

The Patrol hosts the annual Leadership Awards, virtually, through the Ohio Channel.

### 12. Community Safety Threat Plan

A structure for highlighting threats on Ohio's roadways was established.

# A Tribute to Trooper Huffman

The Ohio State Highway Patrol mourns the loss of Trooper Bradley K. Huffman of the Piqua District Commercial Standards section, who passed away on January 20, 2021.

Trooper Huffman was born April 9, 1964, in Cincinnati. Prior to joining the Patrol in 1998, Trooper Huffman enlisted with the U.S. Army. After serving his country, he started his career with the Ohio State Highway Patrol as a member of the 130th Academy Class and graduated on May 10, 1998. During his 23-year career, he was assigned to the Xenia post and most recently to the Piqua District Commercial Standards Unit.

Trooper William D. Wilson recalls his friend Brad as “open, honest and would let you know how he felt about something.” Wilson also said that Trooper Huffman “was a dedicated hard worker and took pride in wearing his uniform. He believed in a mission that was bigger than him and carried it out to his local community.”

Wilson recalls that Trooper Huffman was someone you could confide in, as well as learn from. He said that Brad was someone “who could make you want to be a better person and perform to the best of your ability, not just at work, but at home too.”

“He was an informal leader for the Patrol who mentored many young troopers throughout his career,” said Lieutenant Schmenk, Xenia Post commander. “He loved his job and will be missed by his co-workers, friends, family, and the community he served.”

During a coronavirus news briefing, Ohio Governor Mike DeWine expressed condolences to Huffman’s family and coworkers. DeWine quoted those who knew Huffman best, who said he was, “a rock for everyone to lean on,” and someone that would always be there to help.

On the day of the funeral, a large procession traveled from the Xenia Church of the Nazarene to the grave site. Trooper Bradley K. Huffman was laid to rest at Woodland Cemetery of Xenia on February 5.



# Trooper of the Year



Trooper Tyler S. Ross, of the Hamilton Post, earned top honors as the 2020 State Trooper of the Year. He was selected from nine District Troopers of the Year across the state. Trooper Ross exemplifies what it means to be a trooper and is a leader among his peers.

Trooper Ross believes in the Patrol's mission and is passionate about making a difference in the community. He continues to look for new ways to improve his overall knowledge and abilities. He leads by example and motivates his co-workers through his work ethic and positive attitude. Trooper Ross displays pride and dedication in all aspects of his job, and never hesitates to help out his coworkers and the public. He demonstrates a high level of expertise when it comes to certain aspects of the job, such as OVI enforcement, criminal patrol and traffic enforcement. Trooper Ross is actively involved in his church and community outreach programs in and around Butler County.

Trooper Ross joined the Patrol in October 2016 as a member of the 161st Academy Class. He earned his commission in March of the following year and has been assigned to the Hamilton Post throughout his career. In 2019, he earned the Criminal Patrol Award. In 2020, he was selected as Post Trooper of the Year.

Trooper Ross earned an Associate of Arts degree in psychology from Sinclair Community College in 2014.

# Dispatcher of the Year



Dispatcher Amanda H. Hermann, of the Canton Dispatch Center, earned statewide honors as the 2020 Dispatcher of the Year. She was selected from 10 recipients across the state. Her calm demeanor, positive attitude and commitment to service distinguished her from the other nominees.

Communications professionals are often the first point of contact for the public when need arises. Dispatcher Hermann strives to provide the highest level of service to the public, her co-workers and the troopers on her shift. She has garnered praise for her teamwork.

Dispatcher Hermann goes above and beyond what is asked of her. She responds to the aid of others without being asked and is a self-motivated individual who takes pride in her work. Dispatcher Hermann's calm demeanor and even temperament assist troopers on the road during the busiest times. Outside of the Patrol, Dispatcher Hermann enjoys volunteering with local organizations. Dispatcher Hermann joined the Patrol in June 2014 assigned to the Warren District Headquarters. She was selected as Post Dispatcher of the Year three times and District Dispatcher of the Year in 2019. She earned the Gold Star Award in 2017. She also served at the Medina and Cleveland dispatch centers.

# OIU Agent of the Year



Enforcement Agent Gerald J. Ferguson, of the Athens District Office, was selected as State Agent of the Year out of six District Agents of the Year across the state.

Enforcement Agent "Joe" Ferguson joined the Ohio Investigative Unit in February 2017 as an enforcement agent assigned to Athens District Office.

# Colonel Thomas W. Rice Leadership Award



Sergeant Jonathan A. Ganley, of the Ravenna Post, was honored with the Colonel Thomas W. Rice Leadership Award, which is presented to one sworn supervisory officer for outstanding leadership. The award is sponsored by the Ohio State Highway Patrol Retirees' Association and is in honor of former Patrol Superintendent Thomas W. Rice. Sergeant Ganley leads by example and works alongside troopers on the midnight shift. He takes a unique approach when it comes to motivating post troopers and has implemented several special operational programs to increase participation. Sergeant Ganley is willing to adjust his schedule when needed, and has taken the initiative to complete additional administrative responsibilities. He routinely works with troopers who have demonstrated an interest in the promotional process and shows them the administrative responsibilities of post-supervision. He is a diligent worker and leads from the front.

Sergeant Ganley began his Patrol career in December 2004 as a member of the 143rd Academy Class. He earned his commission in June of the following year and was assigned to Canfield Post. He was selected as Post Trooper of the Year twice and District Trooper of the Year in 2011. He also served at the Hiram and Ravenna posts.

In 2017, he was promoted to the rank of sergeant and remained at the Ravenna Post to serve as an assistant post commander.

# Robert M. Chiaramonte Humanitarian Award



Sergeant Pablo Cruz, of the Elyria Post, was honored with the Robert M. Chiaramonte Humanitarian Award, which recognizes officers dedicated to humanitarian causes on the highway and in their communities.

Service above self are not just words for Sergeant Cruz. Wanting to make a positive impact on the community, he has been an active member of several organizations including Operation Open Heart, a program dedicated to helping children who are involved with Children Services. Sergeant Cruz is motivated by something greater than himself and works tirelessly to bring positive change to their lives.

Sergeant Cruz joined the Patrol in April 1998 as a member of the 131st Academy Class. He earned his commission in October of that year and was assigned to the Medina Post. In 2004, he was selected as Post and District Trooper of the Year. He earned the Criminal Patrol Award and the Ace Award for excellence in auto larceny enforcement twice. As a trooper, he also served at the Elyria Post. In 2006, he was promoted to the rank of sergeant and transferred to the Ashland Post to serve as an assistant post commander. As a sergeant, he also served at the Medina and Cleveland posts.

# Colonel Paul A. Pride Criminal Patrol Award



Trooper Darrell M. Dowler, of the Cleveland District Criminal Patrol K-9 Unit, earned the Colonel Paul A. Pride State Criminal Patrol Award for conducting the most felony case investigations with 83, which led to 108 felony arrests in 2020. The majority of his cases were drug related. Throughout 2020, his criminal seizures included 48 pounds of marijuana, 21 pounds of methamphetamine and 20 firearms.

Trooper Dowler joined the Patrol in September 2002 as a member of the 140th Academy Class. He earned his commission in February of the following year and was assigned to the Van Wert Post. He also served at the Ashland and Cleveland posts. In 2014, he earned the Ace Award for excellence in auto larceny enforcement. He was selected as Post Trooper of the Year three times and District Trooper of the Year twice. He earned the Criminal Patrol Award 10 times.

He served in the United States Army from 2000 to 2008.

# MCEI of the Year



Motor Carrier Enforcement Inspector Aaron R. White, of the Warren District Commercial Enforcement Unit, was selected as Motor Carrier Enforcement Inspector of the Year. MCEI White joined the Patrol in August 2015 as a motor vehicle inspector assigned

to the Warren District Commercial Enforcement Unit. In 2017, he was promoted to motor carrier enforcement inspector and remained in the Warren District Commercial Enforcement Unit.

# Blue Max



Trooper Anthony W. Hosey, of the Cleveland Post, earned the Blue Max Award for recovering the most stolen vehicles of any trooper in 2020. Throughout the year, he recovered 34 stolen vehicles valued at \$404,000, which resulted in the apprehension of 35 suspects.

Trooper Hosey joined the Patrol in September 2011 as a member of the 151st Academy Class. He earned his commission in February of the following year and was assigned to the Milan Post. In 2017, he was selected as Post Trooper of the Year. He earned the Ace Award for excellence in auto larceny enforcement three times and the Criminal Patrol Award twice.

# Employee Recognition Award



Human Capital Management Senior Analyst Leanne Lanciotti, of the Office of Personnel, received the Employee Recognition Award which is presented annually to recognize excellence by a professional employee. She joined the Patrol in August 2014 as a Human Capital Management Senior Analyst and has been assigned to the Office of Personnel throughout her career.

Human Capital Management Senior Analyst Lanciotti earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology from Wittenberg University in 1993 and a Master of Education degree in human resource development from Xavier University in 1997.

# Police Officer of the Year



Police Officer 2 Dustin C. Lamont, of Capitol Operations, was selected as Police Officer of the Year. Officer Lamont joined the Patrol in January 2016 and has been assigned to Capitol Operations throughout his career.

# Trooper Recognition Award

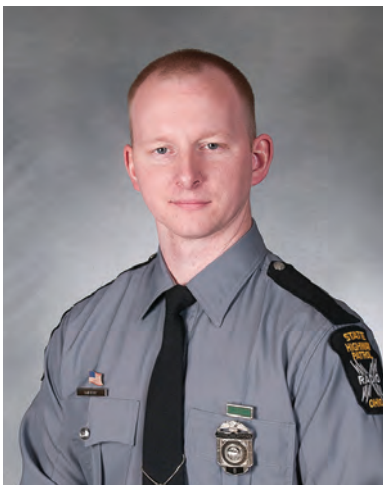


Trooper Lewis R. Finsen, of the Cleveland District Criminal Investigations Unit, earned the Ohio Trooper Recognition Award. He was selected from 10 recipients across the state. The award recognizes excellence among troopers who are assigned to specialty positions.

He joined the Patrol in June 1999 as a member of the 134th Academy Class. He earned his commission in December of that year and was assigned to the Ashland Post. He was selected as Post Trooper of the Year three times and District Trooper of the Year in 2005. As a trooper, he also served at the Hiram Post.

Trooper Finsen served in the United States Marines from 1989 to 1995.

## ET of the Year



Electronic Technician 2 Steven D. Miller, Jackson District Electronic Technician Unit, was selected as Electronic Technician of the Year. An electronic technician 2 supports the Division by testing, maintaining, aligning and programming many types of communications and electronic equipment. Such equipment consists of radios, radars, lasers, facility video security systems and all electronic related equipment within a facility or vehicle.

Electronic Technician 2 Miller joined the Patrol in April 2012 as an electronic technician 1 assigned to the Electronic Technician Unit in Finance & Logistics. In 2015, he was promoted to an electronic technician 2 and transferred to the Jackson District Electronic Technician Unit.

## MVI of the Year



Motor Vehicle Inspector Rodney A. Parker, of the Jackson District Commercial Enforcement Unit, was selected as Motor Vehicle Inspector of the Year.

MVI Parker joined the Patrol in June 1996 as a maintenance repair worker 2 assigned to the Jackson District Headquarters. In 1997, he was promoted to Portable Load Limit Inspector assigned to the Jackson District Commercial Enforcement Unit.

In 2012, he was promoted to Motor Vehicle Inspector and remained in the Jackson District Commercial Enforcement Unit.

## Family Member Recognition



Brittany Wheeler, Findlay District, received the Family Member Recognition Award. She created a support group for local law enforcement officers and their families. She puts service above self no matter if it is organizing fundraisers, coaching basketball or supporting her husband at Patrol functions.

## Distinguished Retiree



Retired Dispatcher Barbara Mattes, Wilmington District, received the Distinguished Retiree award. She was a dispatcher with the Patrol for 30 years. During her service, she was known for her positive attitude and willingness to help others. She currently has in active role in Shepherd's Place, a program that helps improve the lives of less fortunate children.

## Auxiliary Officer of the Year



Auxiliary Lieutenant Mary McPherson received the Auxiliary Officer of the Year Award. She joined the Ohio State Highway Patrol Auxiliary in May 2003 and has been assigned to the Jackson and Columbus districts throughout her career. She was promoted to sergeant in 2006 and lieutenant in 2009. In 2020, Auxiliary Lieutenant McPherson volunteered 900 hours of her time in assisting with Patrol duties. This time included riding on patrol, working emergency callout duties, food distribution and assisting at the Ohio Statehouse.

## William J. Duffy Award of Excellence



Auxiliary Sergeant Joshua J. Jordan received the William J. Duffy Award of Excellence award. The William J. Duffy Award of Excellence requires a minimum of 300 volunteer hours per year over three consecutive years. Auxiliary Sergeant Jordan joined the Ohio State Highway Patrol Auxiliary in February 2018 and has been assigned to the Circleville Post throughout his career. In 2019, he was promoted to sergeant and remained at the Circleville Post. Auxiliary Sergeant Jordan volunteered 2,801 hours during the last three years riding on patrol, assisting with food distribution and emergency callout duties.



# District Winners

## DISTRICT TROOPER OF THE YEAR

Trooper Jacob E. Blossom.....Findlay District  
Trooper Michael D. Smith.....Bucyrus District  
Trooper Mykol A. Gardiner.....Cleveland District  
Trooper Daniel L. Deluca.....Warren District  
Trooper Eric J. Devers.....Piqua District  
Trooper Ishmael S. Dabo.....Columbus District  
Trooper Mitchell A. Reynolds.....Cambridge District  
Trooper Tyler S. Ross.....Wilmington District  
Trooper Ethan S. Branham.....Jackson District

## DISTRICT DISPATCHER OF THE YEAR

Dispatcher Carly M. Michalski.....Findlay District  
Dispatcher Heidi J. Maloy.....Bucyrus District  
Dispatcher Amanda H. Hermann.....Cleveland District  
Dispatcher Kristen M. Paolillo.....Warren District  
Dispatcher Tina K. Creviston.....Piqua District  
Dispatcher Matthew A. Williams.....Columbus District  
Dispatcher Melissa J. Rath.....Cambridge District  
Dispatcher Darla M. Malone.....Wilmington District  
Dispatcher Brittany J. Davies.....Jackson District  
Dispatcher Erin N. Garloch.....General Headquarters

## OIU DISTRICT AWARD WINNERS

Agent Mario Makris.....Akron District  
Agent Gerald J. Ferguson.....Athens District  
Agent Thomas P. Eisnaugle.....Cincinnati District  
Agent Jeffrey W. Yarian.....Cleveland District  
Agent Tony M. Storey.....Columbus District  
Agent Anasia Greathouse.....Toledo District

## CHIARAMONTE AWARD NOMINEES

Lieutenant Lance S. Shearer.....Bucyrus District  
Sergeant Pablo Cruz.....Cleveland District  
Trooper Jacob C. Morrison.....Piqua District  
Trooper Caleb E. Cox.....Columbus District  
Trooper Timothy R. Cunningham.....Cambridge District  
Sergeant Robert L. Burd.....Wilmington District  
Sergeant Glendon H. Ward.....Jackson District

## RICE AWARD NOMINEES

Sergeant Matthew N. Geer.....Findlay District  
Sergeant Jeffrey A. Kaess.....Bucyrus District  
Sergeant Andrew T. Topp.....Cleveland District  
Sergeant Jonathan A. Ganley.....Warren District  
Sergeant David G. Slanker.....Piqua District  
Sergeant Jason L. Snodgrass.....Columbus District  
Sergeant Shawn W. Allar.....Cambridge District  
Sergeant Joshua L. Patrick.....Wilmington District  
Sergeant Christopher B. Goss.....Jackson District  
Sergeant J. Trevor March.....General Headquarters

## EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AWARDS

AP1 Angela R. Sisco.....Findlay District  
AP1 Lori I. Kaple.....Bucyrus District  
MRW2 Samuel E. Walker.....Cleveland District  
MRW2 Joseph A. Truchan.....Warren District  
AP4 Stacy L. Mullen.....Piqua District  
AP1 Debra R. Sheldon.....Columbus District  
AP1 Lorie J. Wozniak.....Cambridge District  
AP1 Sarah Jo E. Tewksbury.....Wilmington District  
AP1 Susan S. Balzer.....Jackson District  
GIMSS2 Jerrod L. Stout...Planning, Research & Development  
EP Kristi L. Samples.....Training, Diversity & Recruitment  
HCMISA Leanne Lanciotti.....Office of Personnel  
PSIA Seth M. Dodson.....Office of Finance & Logistics  
AP1 Samantha K. Shepherd.....Office of Field Operations

## TROOPER RECOGNITION AWARDS

Trooper Justin G. Craig.....Findlay District  
Trooper Shaun M. Robles.....Bucyrus District  
Trooper Lewis R. Finsen.....Cleveland District  
Trooper Christopher T. Jester.....Warren District  
Sergeant Joseph M. Weeks.....Piqua District  
Trooper Trevor A.T. Jasper.....Columbus District  
Trooper Chad A. Durben.....Cambridge District  
Trooper Christopher M. Krantz.....Wilmington District  
Trooper Drew W. Kuhne.....Jackson District  
Trooper Andrew J. Edinger.....General Headquarters

## PATROL FAMILY RECOGNITION AWARD

Brittany Wheeler.....Findlay District  
Amber Bishop.....Cleveland District  
Rikki Belcher.....Warren District  
Stephanie Kelly.....Piqua District  
Ashley Riley.....Columbus District  
Stephanie Buxton.....Cambridge District  
Marsha Ward.....Jackson District

## DISTRICT DISTINGUISHED RETIREE

Sergeant James F. Bryan.....Bucyrus District  
Major J.P. Allen.....Cleveland District  
Lieutenant Colonel William Costas.....Warren District  
Sergeant Charles E. Wright.....Piqua District  
Staff Lieutenant Robert D. Warner.....Columbus District  
Sergeant Terry H. Requardt.....Cambridge District  
Dispatcher Barbara L. Mattes.....Wilmington District  
Trooper Hal A. Hardiesty.....Jackson District

## AUXILIARY OFFICER OF THE YEAR

Officer Joshua Scharp.....Findlay District  
Sergeant Tom Reffey.....Bucyrus District  
Officer Lorezno Butts.....Cleveland District  
Officer Alex Kalis.....Warren District  
Sergeant Jami Hackworth.....Piqua District  
Officer Xiaoxiang Ji.....Columbus District  
Sergeant Eric Heller.....Cambridge District  
Officer Jeremy Gale.....Wilmington District  
Officer Tyler Griffis.....Jackson District

# New Toledo Patrol Post Opens

The Ohio State Highway Patrol's new Toledo Post officially opened on the campus of the University of Toledo on November 20, 2020. The post moved from its Swanton location, where it had existed for the previous 59 years.

"The new location allows us to more efficiently and effectively serve the high concentration of the motoring public in the Toledo metro area and Lucas County," Colonel Richard S. Fambro, Patrol superintendent, said during the Post virtual opening ceremony.

The Patrol shares the new location with the Ohio Investigative Unit and the University of Toledo Police Department. The joint location lessens operating costs for the Patrol and university police, allowing them to share resources and assets. The new location also provides increased security around the campus area.

"This is a one of a kind facility and we are proud to partner with such high-caliber law enforcement partners on this venture," Fambro said. "Along with the opportunity to establish new relationships and strengthen existing ones in the community, this allows us to better deliver our services and meet the safety needs of both Lucas and Fulton counties."

The project came to fruition through a conversation among public safety leaders three years ago to enhance public safety and response times. A ground breaking was held in 2019.



From left: Lieutenant Shaun J. Robinson, Captain John C. Altman, UT President Gregory Postel, Deputy Chief Rod Theis and UTPD Lieutenant Chief Jeff Newton cut the ribbon at the opening of the new Toledo Post. Photo credit: Senior Photographer, Daniel Miller, University of Toledo.

# STACC's Frient nationally recognized for privacy protection excellence

Excellence and innovation in the protection of Privacy, Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (P/CRCL) in fusion center operations led to Heather S. Frient earning the 2020 National Fusion Center Association (NFCA) Privacy, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties (P/CRCL) Award. Major Shawn P. Davis presented the award during a special ceremony at the Statewide Terrorism Analysis & Crime Center (STACC) on December 10 as part of the 2020 NFCA virtual conference.

Since joining the STACC in 2018 as the Privacy & Compliance Officer, Frient has become a nationally-recognized subject-matter expert in P/CRCL issues impacting fusion centers and is an integral part of the success of the STACC and the Ohio Fusion Center Network.

"We are all aware of the substantial value Heather Frient provides, as an Ohio State Highway Patrol employee, to the daily operations of the STACC in terms of Privacy/Civil Rights and Civil Liberties," Staff Lieutenant Ron Raines, Assistant Commander at the HUB/STACC, said. "She has been, and continues to be, instrumental in our daily operations to ensure we comply with the highest of standards within the realm of information and intelligence sharing while equitably balancing First Amendment Rights."

STACC leadership and staff value her consistency to fusion center practices and procedures and her dedication to tackling issues that impact Ohio's safety and security. These efforts were exemplified throughout 2020 with her invaluable contributions to intelligence analysts during protests, demonstrations and threats related to COVID-19, social justice and the Presidential election.

Equally, she provides guidance in the Northeast Region, where she serves as the Northeast Regional Coordinator on both the NFCA Legal and NFCA P/CRCL Subcommittees.

"Heather has demonstrated a commitment to not only incorporating privacy, civil rights and civil liberties into the STACC's daily operations but communicating the importance of protecting these rights throughout the fusion center network," Major Davis said in presenting the award.

She established a structured privacy program and scheduled two audits: a peer-to-peer review with Pennsylvania and a federal 28 CFR Part 23 review. Both audits revealed the STACC was in compliance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations and its practices demonstrated a commitment to protecting individuals' privacy, civil rights and civil liberties.

Heather represents the STACC on a number of national work groups and is a resource to collaborate with on best practices. She has shared STACC policies and procedures, as well as her research and presentations on a variety of legal topics, with other privacy officers and fusion center directors in an effort to improve fusion centers' balancing of law enforcement needs with individuals' P/CRCL interests.

The STACC consists of analysts from Ohio Homeland Security, the Ohio State Highway Patrol, and Columbus Police & Fire Counter Terrorism Unit, and partners including the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the Buckeye State Sheriffs' Association and the Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police. The STACC also works closely with Ohio's regional fusion centers – the Northeast Ohio Regional Fusion Center and the Greater Cincinnati Fusion Center.



Public Safety Patrol Intel Analyst Chris Sands with Heather Frient at the STACC.

# Community Safety Threat Plan

A video shows a stolen car fleeing from Trooper Nicholas J. Konrad at more than 100 miles per hour in Toledo on Interstate 75. Then, moments later, a crash and the driver running away, leaving behind marijuana and a puppy. Ultimately, the suspect was arrested, the stolen vehicle recovered and illegal drugs seized. And yes, the puppy was fine.

When the video of that December 29, 2020, incident was shared on the Ohio State Highway Patrol's social media platforms of Twitter, Facebook and Instagram, the in-car video was viewed 1.9 million times and reached over 3 million people. More importantly, the public got an exclusive look inside the dangers of reckless driving, highway crime and illegal drug possession that Ohio State Highway Patrol troopers see all the time. The video demonstrated multiple threats to our communities, innocent motorists and residents.

That example illustrates the effectiveness and power of social media to show community threats that exist in our state, and the ways in which troopers are working to make communities safe.

It has long been known within the Patrol that its public value is in those critical safety and security areas where every day, across Ohio, troopers directly and positively impact people. A recent external communications push shared with the public and media the many ways in which troopers and professional staff are the solution to some of Ohio's most significant public security threats.

Four threats were specifically identified to highlight, for which troopers are the solution, including arresting impaired drivers, seizing illegal drugs, stopping distracted driving and apprehending highway criminals.

These are the topics and trends that are also concerning to city, county and state elected officials, and directly impact communities across the state. In a February video message seen by all Patrol employees, Colonel Richard S. Fambro emphasized the importance of the focused work on the four community threats.

"We are out there every day and night focused on keeping families safe against the four concerning trends we continue to see. Without the commitment from troopers and our law enforcement partners, problems will only get worse when it comes to the dangers posed by impaired or distracted drivers, drug cartels and highway crime," Fambro said.

On December 17, the Patrol undertook a 60-day operations and media push to focus on the critical services performed by troopers. The four community threats identified are topics that impact everyone's personal safety and security. The 60-day goal was simple – emphasize troopers are the solution to specific threats and problems. And without them, those community threats will only get worse.

The Public Affairs Unit, regional public information officers (PIOs) and field commanders highlighted efforts through stories in all of Ohio's media markets to point out the threats and problems, and demonstrate how troopers are the solution.

"If we do not tell law abiding citizens what criminal or reckless activity is going on in their communities, we can never expect them to understand how critical the role of the law enforcement officer is in modern society. I have always said people have no idea the amount of criminal activity that is going on throughout our communities and on our roadways," Captain Anne R. Ralston, Cambridge District Commander said.

A statewide communications plan, developed by the Public Affairs Unit, established a structure for coordinating the Patrol's external messaging on the four threats. The plan's intent was to provide statewide consistency in highlighting the threat topics and the measures the Patrol takes to target these threats in order to impact the safety of Ohio's roadways and communities.

The plan further ensured efficient and consistent promotion of external messaging throughout the state by using conventional outlets and social media.

The Public Affairs Unit, regional PIOs and field commanders developed multiple stories every day highlighting the efforts, hard work and impact of what troopers were doing. These stories provided specific examples to Ohioans they could relate to and would remember.

On January 6, 2021, Trooper Cynthia D. Wilt captured in-car dashcam video of a reckless driver going off the road and ramping over a guardrail on the Ohio Turnpike near Elmore in Ottawa County. That video, combined with a safe driving message, reached over 1 million people and was viewed in excess of 650,000 times on social media. To put that into context, one social media post reached roughly the same number of people as are cumulatively reached in all the traffic stops made by troopers in one year.

"It's important for us to share and communicate through the media and on social media platforms so the public can see exactly how we are addressing their safety and security concerns," Regional PIO Sergeant Ray Santiago said. "It provides us the opportunity to show that we are doing the right things, in the right way, for the right reasons. It's an additional level of transparency to show that we are addressing their concerns and what they care about."

As a regional PIO, Santiago played a key role in leveraging media outlets and using social media to ensure information was communicated to the public and stakeholders.

The regional PIOs, who also included Sergeant Nathan E. Dennis, Sergeant Ryan E. Purpura, Trooper Jessica A. McIntyre and Trooper Brice A. Nihiser, worked extensively within their assigned districts to assist in developing and promoting stories regarding incidents relative to the threat topics.

These stories included impaired driving incidents involving crashes or egregious driving violations, road rage incidents, significant narcotics seizures and other criminal activity on highways such as weapon seizures, identity crimes, persons wanted for violent felonies, property theft, human trafficking, domestic violence, hit-skip crashes and vehicle thefts or recovery.

One social media post of a video of Jackson Post Trooper Steven M. Dunn assisting a local agency apprehend a suspect, who was wanted for rape of a juvenile, was viewed nearly 50,000 times.

In another post viewed over 233,000 times, a distracted commercial vehicle driver almost ran Piqua District Lieutenant Paul E. Lezotte off the road.

These examples, and countless others during the 60-day media push of the four major threats troopers see, clearly exemplified the Patrol's impact on safety to Ohioans and people across the nation.

Ralston reflected on how a traffic stop in January, and the officer's recognition that the public needs to see what troopers see every day, is vital in highlighting the Patrol's public value.

"One of my sergeants stopped a vehicle for speeding and marked lanes violations on day shift and found the driver to be impaired by methamphetamine. The driver was obviously under the influence and was displaying erratic body movements and was breathing rapidly," Ralston said. "The driver was in possession of methamphetamine. The sergeant told me later how the public needed to see this video so they could understand how dangerous a drugged driver can be."

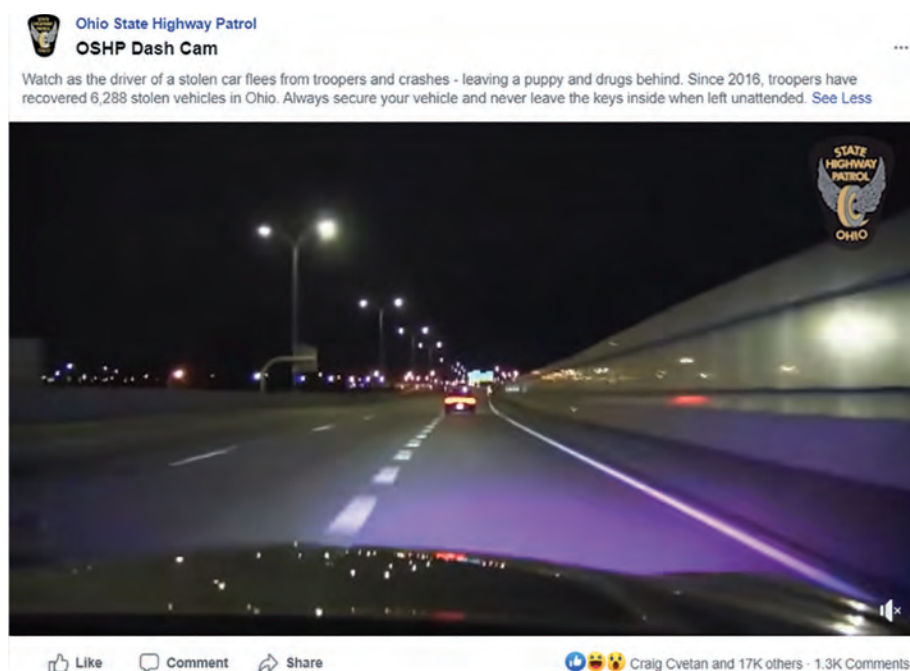
In all the coverage generated during the 60-day push, troopers were highlighted, many of whom do not seek the spotlight, but who are unsung heroes because of the ways they are directly making our state, and our nation safer.

"Initially troopers did not embrace the notion of promoting their successes and the reason is simple; humility. Our folks are humble. Early on, I had to pull daily incident logs then go lookup videos. What I saw day after day was nothing short of amazing," Santiago said.

"What was amazing to watch was not just the amount of times they were conducting traffic stops to combat our community safety threats, but how they were conducting business while doing so. Treating people with dignity and respect no matter their circumstance. As this initiative progressed, with some convincing, everyone really embraced what we were trying to do - to show our communities that we are here, keeping them safe in the manner they expect by providing those services with respect."

In addition to promoting the incidents submitted by field posts, regional PIOs used social media and conventional media outlets to bring attention to the threat topics and the Patrol's engagement to impact these areas. Public Affairs staff prepared materials for regional PIOs and commanders to use in this process. Resources provided for each threat focus included media guidelines, talking points, social media graphics and other methods of getting the message out in the local communities.

The regional PIOs promoted threat topics around the state to ensure the topics received consistent and continuous coverage, and the rotation of topics in the different media markets allowed for sustained coverage throughout the 60-day period.



Want daily updates on the Patrol & OIU? Follow us!



Ohio State Highway Patrol  
Ohio Investigative Unit



@OSHP  
@Ohio\_OIU



@OhioDPS

# Troopers respond to Statehouse

In early January, as Americans prepared for the Presidential Inauguration, the Patrol strategically prepared for possible civil unrest at the Statehouse in Columbus, with the largest contingent security detail in the Division's history.

This was a direct result from the events that occurred in Washington D.C. on January 6. Multiple intelligence reports, social media chatter and other behind the scenes information led Patrol managers to use and exercise an abundance of caution to make sure Ohioans were safe.

A combined contingent of several hundred troopers, including Mobile Field Force, and Ohio National Guard and Ohio Air National Guard personnel, along with the unmatched level of teamwork of LEADS personnel, professional staff and intelligence analysts for Operation Iron Wall.

“Logistically and operationally, the challenges could not have been greater, said Staff Lieutenant Christopher J. Kinn, who assisted with the planning. “From the time of the initial call on January 10 to protect the Statehouse, with only three days to plan, the Division needed to account for food, lodging and transportation for the numerous state troopers tasked with protecting the Statehouse.” Internal communications, planning from majors and commanders blended with the need to account for food, lodging and

transportation for such a large group. Furthermore, the possibility of adverse weather was another obstacle, in which it was critical to ensure all troopers had access to appropriate cold weather gear, to include hand and foot warmers.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, lodging needs consisted of individual rooms at the Patrol's Training Academy and local hotels to ensure the safety of those working the detail. Academy cafeteria staff worked to provide meals throughout the detail.

The Ohio National Guard deployed several hundred Army and Air National Guard personnel. This deployment provided a rare opportunity for joint training involving the Patrol's Mobile Field Force and the Air and Army National Guard.

“This training proved successful and will greatly increase our future ability to provide protection to the citizens of Ohio,” Staff Lieutenant Aaron J. Reimer, Patrol Mobile Field Force commander, said. “The joint training effort was also observed by several legislators who were impressed with the Mobile Field Force's capabilities.”

Throughout 2020 and into the first part of this year, the Patrol's Criminal Intel Unit at the Statewide Terrorism Analysis & Crime Center (STACC) provided intel support and threat assessments related to protests across Ohio tied to COVID-19, social justice and the outcome of the Presidential election.



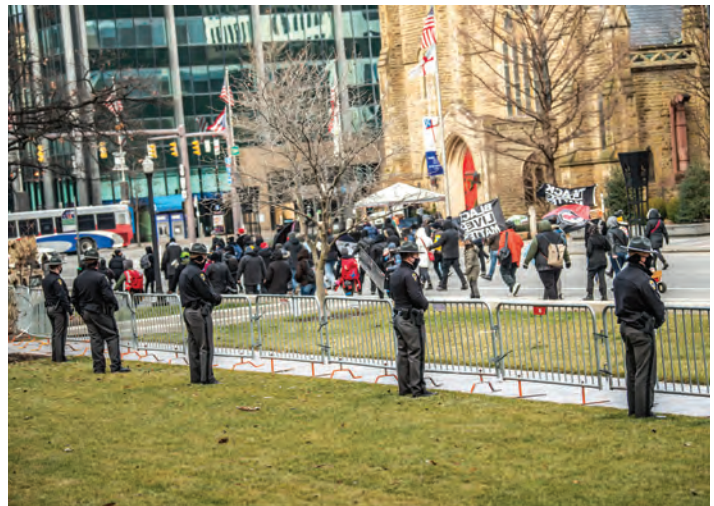
Additionally, intel work and threat assessments for the 2020 primary election and general election included collaboration with the Ohio Secretary of State's Office, FBI and other partners. This also involved intel support for the Democratic Party debate in Westerville and Presidential debate in Cleveland.

In total, the Patrol Intel Unit and STACC analysts supported command staff and troopers at 795 protests that spanned 178 cities throughout the state last year.

"Success of the Intel Unit last summer, then through the election and the recent protests in Washington, D.C. and at the Statehouse is directly tied to two important things," Lieutenant Michael K. Hasson, commander of the Intel Unit at the STACC, said. "Our relationship with the FBI has never been stronger and the establishment of the Intel Trooper Program made a big difference in our ability to get actionable intelligence to command staff and officers on the ground."

Four state troopers embedded with FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force in Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati and Toledo provided critical information to analysts that was not available years ago. That connection with the FBI enabled troopers and FBI agents to become much more connected in sharing information and working collaboratively on investigations.

Hasson also noted the Intel Trooper Program, which started in March 2020 just as the pandemic was beginning, proved integral for intelligence gathering and investigations regarding COVID-19 protests, and threats against public officials. As protests shifted during the summer toward social justice issues and then political protests in January at the Statehouse and in Washington, D.C., the Intel Trooper Program became a big part of the Patrol's overall security operations strategy.



---

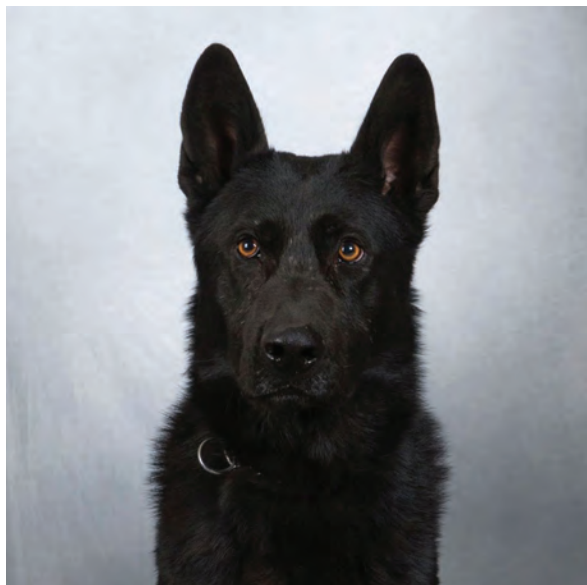
## Patrol mourns loss of K9 Rexey



The Patrol mourns the death of one of our drug detecting canines, K9 Rexey, who passed away unexpectedly on December 17, 2020. K9 Rexey was a five-year-old German shepherd assigned to the Cleveland District's Criminal Patrol team member Trooper James M. Baker. K9 Rexey completed canine training/certification in the fall of 2017.

During his short time with the Patrol he seized nearly 1,000 pounds

of marijuana, 20 pounds of methamphetamines, 345 grams of cocaine, 117 grams of fentanyl, 111 grams of heroin, 42 grams of crack, 58 illegal prescription depressants and \$114,392 in illegal currency.



# OIU Celebrates 87 years of service

*By Major Gary Allen, OIU Commander, Guest Columnist*

On December 23, 2020, the Ohio Investigative Unit celebrated 87 years of service. This has been a year like none other in OIU history. The COVID-19 pandemic thrusts the women and men of OIU into the forefront of enforcing Ohio Department of Health orders.

Beginning in March and through December, agents visited more than 25,500 liquor permit establishments. During this time, agents investigated 950 complaints. Between March and December, agents cited 306 liquor permit establishments.

While making more than 25,500 visits, what is more impressive to me is the manner in which our agents worked with many of the liquor permit holders, showing them how to become compliant. I am equally impressed by the mannerisms and professionalism they showed and continue to do so.

While enforcing the health orders, agents continued investigating Liquor Control Act violations, tobacco and food stamp laws. They assisted task forces in investigations ending a human trafficking ring in southern Ohio and in northeast Ohio. In addition to enforcement, agents also helped distribute food and participated in other community outreach during those beginning days of the pandemic.

In 87 years, many changes have taken place in OIU, however the foundation has stayed the same. In my belief, the women and men representing OIU today are doing so because of the foundation built just after the repeal of prohibition.

These women and men are some of the best in OIU's long history. I thank them all for their service and commitment.



## Patrol hosts annual holiday card contest

The Patrol's 2020 Holiday Card Contest was held again in late November for children up to 12 years old. The criteria for submitting artwork included having a "Happy Holidays" message and one of three items – a Patrol cruiser, state trooper or the Flying Wheel. Those with submissions were asked to provide the child's name, school name, grade, age and parent contact information. The submission window was open for 10 days with artwork received from across the state.

The contest received several unique and special art submissions from many talented children. The winner of the contest was Silas Edinger of Plain City Elementary in Madison County. Silas is the son of Trooper Andrew J. Edinger of the Aviation Unit. His artwork was featured as the Patrol holiday social media graphic on December 25.

In addition to the winner, two runner-ups were selected. First runner-up was Hudson Dement, 8, who attends Adena Local Schools in Ross County. Hudson is the son of Trooper Justin D. Dement of the Licensing and Commercial Standards Unit. Second runner-up was Layla Angelo, 12, who attends Watkins Middle School in Licking County. The two runner-ups and several honorable mentions were also posted to the Patrol Facebook for public display.

Those who submitted artwork received a letter from Colonel Richard S. Fambro thanking them for their participation in the 2020 Holiday Card Contest.





# Operation Santa's Sleigh

On December 23, 2020, troopers were proud to take part in "Operation Santa's Sleigh" by Light Ohio Blue. The operation spanned the state at all six children's hospitals (Akron, Cleveland, Dayton, Toledo, Cincinnati and Columbus) as well as the two state veterans homes (Georgetown and Sandusky). This event was comprised of first responders who helped spread holiday cheer and lift the spirits of patients and residents.



# Findlay District



On December 19, 2020, personnel and family members from the Findlay District participated in National Wreaths Across America Day. A wreath-laying ceremony was held to honor and remember our veterans.

# Bucyrus District



Troopers from the Fremont Post stopped to check on one of their fellow troopers who was out on state Route 19 ensuring the safety of the motoring public. This snow creation reminding drivers to "snow down" was created by Green Springs resident, Greg Sherman.

*Photo credit: Greg Sherman*

# Warren District



On December 9, the Ravenna Post hosted a holiday drive-thru with fellow service partners for area families to receive DIY ornaments kits, goody bags and visit with Santa. Families were able to attend this from the comfort and safety of their vehicles to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and promote the spread of holiday cheer.



On December 18, Sergeant Adam M. Shonk, Lisbon Post, partnered with the Alliance Police Department (APD) for a Cram-the-Cruiser event held at his Christmas Light Display, Shonk Family Lights. The event raised money and supplies for local families in need in the Alliance area. Sergeant Shonk, Santa, and Lieutenant Bair, APD, hosted the two-hour event raising more than \$650, over 330 pounds of food, more than 40 toys, toiletries, baby supplies, clothing and pet food.

# Piqua District



The Springfield Post, along with the Clark County Sheriff's Office, presented Patrick Driscoll and Jared Berner with a Certificate of Recognition for saving the lives of Tim and Joyce Seymour from a plane crash that occurred on October 13.



corridor brings awareness and education to the dangers of distracted driving.

The Dayton Post partnered with Indiana State Police and the Ohio Department of Transportation to launch a Distracted Driving Corridor on Interstate 70 in Preble County for the month of January. Signage designating the corridor's beginning and end was posted by ODOT. The

# Columbus District



Trooper Evan A. Cox received a top Forensic Examiner Award from the USSS and the National Computer Forensic Institute for 2020. He was ranked 28 in the country for his work in digital forensics. This ranking is based on devices analyzed, type of devices and amount of data. Trooper Cox received the award from Allen Biladeau, the Columbus Resident Agent in Charge.

# Cambridge District



In January, Trooper Greg B. Scalley of the Steubenville Post led question and answer sessions with Indian Creek High School students, specifically related to passenger safety, juvenile driving laws, and distracted driving. Students also participated in driving scenarios with Trooper Scalley, and discussed the importance of staying safe when riding with friends. Photo courtesy of Amy Gareis, Public Relations Coordinator, Jefferson County Educational Service Center.

# Wilmington District



Wilmington District staff presented Sergeant Jeffrey E. Staples, Sergeant Nathan A. Ward, Trooper Axel C. Lewis, Trooper Michael J. Shuler, Trooper Tyler S. Ross, and Trooper Jacob A. Kunka with a Certificate of Recognition for their life saving efforts on October 16, 2020. The certificate was presented on behalf of Colonel Richard S. Fambro as a result of a pursuit where the driver became unresponsive and was revived by their quick actions after administering NARCAN.

Wilmington District troopers, along with the Union Township police and fire department, drove down Noah Mattingly's street to bring him joy. Noah is a 7-year-old cancer patient who is currently undergoing chemotherapy for the third time. He was given gifts and was told, "Be strong and courageous. We are all rooting for you and hope you get better soon."



Trooper Justin T. Cooper worked with the Cincinnati Police Department to spread joy to children and their families. Both agencies assisted by handing out gifts and shopping for groceries during the holidays.

# Jackson District



The Gallipolis Post opened a new Distracted Driving Safety Corridor on state Route 7, going from the Meigs County line to just south of state Route 218. Focused enforcement of distracted driving violations and increased signage in the area encourages drivers to keep their eyes on the road and hands on the wheel. Previous established safety corridors in Ohio have shown dramatic decreases in distracted driving related crashes, and less injury and fatality crashes overall.

# State Highway Patrol Federal Credit Union

**IT'S BACK... WE'VE GOT YOUR BACK!**

RATES AS LOW AS

**1.99% APR\*** NEW & USED AUTOS  
UP TO 72 MONTHS

**3.99% APR\*** NEW & USED BOATS, RVS & ATVS  
UP TO 72 MONTHS

**WE'VE GOT YOUR BACK**

**PROOF**

**GAP Waiver Coverage & Extended Warranties Available**

Since 1962, NATIONAL POLICE WEEK has highlighted the service of our law enforcement officers and the commitment they've made to serve and protect our communities.

After a year like no other, we would like to remind all members that The State Highway Patrol Federal Credit Union continues to be committed to providing the best possible financial services and that...**WE HAVE YOUR BACK!**

To honor our law enforcement family, as well as our entire membership, the **We've Got Your Back Loan Special** has returned. Throughout the month of May, whether you need a new vehicle or want to transfer your current loan from another institution to save money, your credit union is **HERE FOR YOU!**



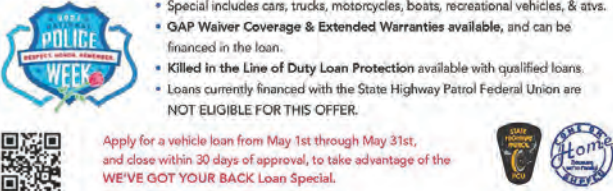
With the State Highway Patrol Federal Credit Union,  
**IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO SAVE MONEY ON YOUR VEHICLE.**

**NATIONAL POLICE WEEK**

- Special includes cars, trucks, motorcycles, boats, recreational vehicles, & atvs.
- GAP Waiver Coverage & Extended Warranties available, and can be financed in the loan.
- Killed in the Line of Duty Loan Protection available with qualified loans.
- Loans currently financed with the State Highway Patrol Federal Union are NOT ELIGIBLE FOR THIS OFFER.

Apply for a vehicle loan from May 1st through May 31st, and close within 30 days of approval, to take advantage of the **WE'VE GOT YOUR BACK Loan Special.**

Apply Today! Online [www.patrolcu.com](http://www.patrolcu.com) • Call (614) 431-0784 • Toll free 800-282-3006



Contact the State Highway Patrol Federal Credit Union for more information.  
[www.patrolcu.com](http://www.patrolcu.com)  
(614) 431-0784

## Retirees: Where Are They Now?

*By retired Captain Rob Jackson, Guest Columnist*

Retiree: Christine (Freund) Untrauer  
Career: March 18, 1985 – June 1, 2014  
Assignments/Positions: Dispatcher at the Ravenna, Medina, Ashland and Warren posts. Promoted to dispatcher supervisor in 2009, worked in Cleveland and Warren districts.



Like many Highway Patrol retirees, Christine Untrauer did not slow down upon retirement. As a matter of fact, she went right to work at Giant Eagle and General Aluminum. Also like many retirees, Christine has continued to be involved with the Highway Patrol and currently serves as the secretary for the Ohio State Highway Patrol Retiree's Association. Additionally, she is working on a project to recognize all members of the Division who have passed.

"We are so fortunate to have been a part of this great organization," Untrauer said. "For those who are retired, please consider becoming a member of the Retiree's Association. The friendships you rekindle really do enrich your life! Also, please continue to support our active members, as they are faced with many challenges during these difficult times."

Christine currently resides in Ravenna and volunteers for Find a Grave, an app used to record burial locations and memorials for genealogy purposes. She and her husband, Patrick, are snowbirds and winter in Florida and Alabama. An avid golfer, they also enjoy walking and average 25 miles a week. Christine is one of six siblings, with five of them still living within 40 miles of each other, which makes it easy to stay in touch with her family.

"I miss my Patrol family and although I try to keep in touch, it's not the same as when we saw each other every day," Untrauer said. "As time goes on, many of them are retiring, either going back to work or just enjoying their well-earned retirement. When we do get to see each other, it's like no time has passed at all."

# Highway Patrol Retirement System

Recently, the Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP) program has been the subject of many conversations with members, primarily due to the low interest rate being applied to DROP account balances. These concerns peaked in the last half of 2020, when the rate was lowered from 1.577% to 0.392%. The interest rate was lowered even more in January 2021, to an all-time low of 0.241%.

There are several considerations that guide the board in determining the method by which the DROP interest rate is calculated. Key among them is ensuring that DROP does not have a negative financial impact on the Highway Patrol Retirement System (HPRS), which is required by law. On February 18, 2021, Foster & Foster presented the results of an actuarial investigation of the HPRS DROP, as required by Ohio Revised Code 5505.12. They concluded that the DROP program experience from 2014-2018 did not have a negative impact on HPRS. Consequently, the board directed HPRS staff to research the possibility of establishing a minimum guaranteed interest rate and prepare a report to be presented at the April 2021 HPRS board meeting. The report will include substantive research that supports any proposed changes.

In addition to the report that will be presented at the April 2021 board meeting, a detailed presentation will be made available to all members, aimed at answering the questions that have been received. The HPRS DROP benefit will be compared to the DROP benefit from Ohio Police & Fire, which is structured differently, and therefore has its own advantages and disadvantages. Moreover, the presentation will illustrate the member benefit of DROP as compared to no DROP, and the ways that HPRS overcomes the higher actuarial present value (or cost) of providing a DROP benefit. This will also answer the concerns that many active and retired members expressed in the 2020 HPRS Survey about DROP being a drain on the retirement system.

Should you have questions or concerns about any of your benefits at HPRS, please do not hesitate to call me, or any of our staff.

Stay safe and stay healthy,



Carl Roark, Ph.D.  
HPRS Executive Director  
*Guest Columnist*



## Join the Auxiliary!



Interested in helping the Ohio State Highway Patrol? The Ohio State Highway Patrol Auxiliary is accepting applications for Auxiliary Officers. The Auxiliary is an all-volunteer force that provides assistance to troopers in the course of their duties. The Auxiliary has also been extremely active during the pandemic, assisting with food drives and other emergency duties.

Apply at:

<https://www.statepatrol.ohio.gov/recruit/auxiliary.html>

### Travis A. Hughes

Captain Travis A. Hughes, Bucyrus District Headquarters, retired on December 18, 2020, after 28 years with the Patrol. He joined the Patrol in November 1992 as a cadet dispatcher assigned to the former Bellefontaine post and the Marysville post. He became a member of the 127th Academy Class in May 1995. He earned his commission in November of that year and was assigned to the Lima Post. He earned the Ace Award for excellence in auto larceny enforcement four times. As a trooper, he also served at the Patrol's Training Academy. In 2004, he was promoted to the rank of sergeant and transferred to the Sandusky Post to serve as an assistant post commander. As a sergeant, he also served at the Lima Post and in the Office of Personnel. In 2009, he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant and transferred to the Elyria Post to serve as post commander. As a lieutenant, he also served at the Cleveland Post. In 2017, he was promoted to the rank of staff lieutenant and transferred to the Cleveland District Headquarters to serve as an assistant district commander. In 2019, he was promoted to the rank of captain and transferred to the Bucyrus District Headquarters to serve as commander. Captain Hughes received a certificate in advanced leadership training from The Ohio State University's John Glenn School of Public Affairs, Safety Leadership Academy in 2013.



### Patrick E. Kellum

Captain Patrick E. Kellum, Security Services, retired on December 18, 2020, after 27 years with the Patrol. He joined the Patrol in May 1993 as a member of the 125th Academy Class. He earned his commission in November of that year and was assigned to the Delaware Post. In 1999, he was selected as Post and District Trooper of the Year. As a trooper, he also served at the Patrol's Training Academy, Granville Post and in the Office of Special Operations. In 2003, he was promoted to the rank of sergeant and transferred to Capitol Operations. As a sergeant, he also served in the Office of Special Operations, Capitol Operations and the Criminal Intelligence Unit. He was also a member of the Patrol's Special Response Team from 1995 through 2008. In 2011, he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant and served as commander in the Office of Strategic Services. In 2013, he was promoted to the rank of staff lieutenant and transferred to the Office of Special Operations. As a staff lieutenant, he



also served in the Office of Criminal Investigations. In 2017, he was promoted to the rank of captain and transferred to the Office of Logistics and Security Services. Captain Kellum earned an Associate of Science degree in electronic engineering in 1988 from DeVry University and a Bachelor of Arts degree in business administration in 2020 from Mount Nazarene University.

### Patrick B. Vessels

Captain Patrick B. Vessels, Office of Field Operations, retired on February 12, 2021, after 35 years with the Patrol. He joined the Patrol in September 1985 as a cadet dispatcher assigned to the Ironton Post. He became a member of the 117th Academy Class in March 1988. He earned his commission in September of that year and was assigned to the Circleville Post. In 1992, he was selected as Post and District Trooper of the Year. He earned the Ace Award for excellence in auto larceny enforcement twice. In 1993, he was promoted to the rank of sergeant and transferred to the Portsmouth Post to serve as an assistant post commander. As a sergeant, he also served at the Circleville Post. In 2002, he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant and remained at the Circleville Post to serve as commander. In 2009, he was promoted to the rank of staff lieutenant and transferred to the Office of Field Operations. In 2011, he was promoted to the rank of captain and remained in the Office of Field Operations. As a captain, he also served at the Columbus District Headquarters. Captain Vessels completed advanced leadership training at Northwestern University's School of Police Staff and Command in 2006.



### Kenneth E. Ward Jr.

Staff Lieutenant Kenneth E. Ward Jr., Office of Finance and Logistics, retired on February 22, 2021, after 31 years with the Patrol. He joined the Patrol in May 1989 as a member of the 118th Academy Class. He earned his commission in November of that year and was assigned to the Lebanon Post. In 1990, he earned the Ace Award for excellence in auto larceny enforcement. He was selected as Post Trooper of the Year four times and District and State Trooper of the Year in 1998. In 1999, he was promoted to the rank of sergeant and transferred to the Georgetown Post to serve as an assistant post commander. As a sergeant, he also served at the Lebanon Post. **cont. on pg. 23.**



In 2003, he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant and transferred to the West Jefferson Post to serve as post commander. As a lieutenant, he also served at the Patrol's Training Academy. In 2012, he was promoted to staff lieutenant and transferred to the Administrative Investigations Unit to serve as commander. As a staff lieutenant, he also served in the Office of Planning, Research and Development. Staff Lieutenant Ward completed the Administrative Officer's Course at the Southern Police Institute in 2007.

### **Charles Gullett Jr.**

Lieutenant Charles Gullett Jr., Norwalk Post, retired on December 4, 2020, after 25 years with the Patrol. He joined the Patrol in May 1995 as a member of the 127th Academy Class. He earned his commission in November of that year and was assigned to the Elyria Post. In 2000, he was selected as Post Trooper of the Year. In 2002, he was promoted to the rank of sergeant and transferred to the Ashtabula Post to serve as an assistant post commander. As a sergeant, he also served at the Chardon, Medina, Elyria and Cleveland posts. In 2013, he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant and transferred to the Defiance Post to serve as post commander. As a lieutenant, he also served at the Chardon Post. Lieutenant Gullett earned a Bachelor of Science degree in criminal justice and political science from University of Akron in 1994. He completed advanced leadership training at Northwestern University's School of Police Staff and Command in 2011.



### **Hugh A. Fredendall**

Sergeant Hugh A. Fredendall, Expo Center, retired on December 29, 2020, after 35 years with the Patrol. He joined the Patrol in November 1985 as a member of the 115th Academy Class. He earned his commission in March of the following year and was assigned to the Fremont Post. In 1996, he was selected as Post Trooper of the Year. As a trooper, he also served at the West Jefferson and Circleville posts, Office of Criminal Investigations, Capitol Operations, and in the Office of Special Operations. In 2008, he was promoted to the rank of sergeant and transferred to Capitol Operations. As a sergeant, he also served in Security Services.



### **Aaron L. Gentry**

Sergeant Aaron L. Gentry, Cincinnati Post, retired on January 4, 2021, after 29 years with the Patrol. He joined the Patrol in May 1991 as a member of the 121st Academy Class. He earned his commission in November of that year and was assigned to the Batavia Post. In 1999, he was promoted to the rank of sergeant and transferred to the Georgetown Post to serve as an assistant post commander. He also served at the Wilmington District Commercial Enforcement Unit and the Wilmington Post. Sergeant Gentry received a certificate in advanced leadership training from The Ohio State University's John Glenn School of Public Affairs, Safety Leadership Academy in 2013.



### **John D. Hromiak**

Sergeant John D. Hromiak, Canton Post, retired on January 22, 2021, after 30 years with the Patrol. He joined the Patrol in May 1990 as a member of the 120th Academy Class. He earned his commission in January of the following year and was assigned to the Ashtabula Post. In 2001, he was selected as Post Trooper of the Year. He also served at the Ravenna, Canton, Wooster, and Canfield posts and in the Office of Field Operations. In 2009, he was promoted to the rank of sergeant and transferred to the Wooster Post to serve as an assistant post commander. Sergeant Hromiak served in the United States Marines from 1985 to 1989.



Retirements in this issue of the Flying Wheel include those employees who retired from December 2020 - February 2021.

**Carlos M. Smith**

Sergeant Carlos M. Smith, Medina Post, retired on February 1, 2021, after 22 years with the Patrol. He joined the Patrol in April 1998 as a member of the 131st Academy Class. He earned his commission in October of that year and was assigned to the Jackson Post. As a trooper, he also served at the Canton Post. In 2005, he earned the Criminal Patrol Award. He was promoted to the rank of sergeant that same year and transferred to the Wilmington Post to serve as an assistant post commander. He has also served at the Medina, Canton, Marietta, Elyria and Akron posts, as well as in the Public Affairs Unit. Sergeant Smith served in the United States Air Force from 1993 to 1998. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in organizational management from Malone University in 2009. He received a certificate in advanced leadership training from The Ohio State University's John Glenn School of Public Affairs, Safety Leadership Academy in 2014. He also earned a Masters certificate in communications in 2019 and a master's degree in communications in 2020 from Walden University.

**Jason L. Hodge**

Trooper Jason L. Hodge, Security Services, retired on February 17, 2021, after 25 years with the Patrol. He joined the Patrol in May 1995 as a member of the 127th Academy Class. He earned his commission in November of that year and was assigned to the Springfield Post. In 2006, he earned the Criminal Patrol Award. In 2007, he earned the Ace Award for excellence in auto larceny enforcement. He was selected as Post Trooper of the Year three times and earned the Blue Max Award twice.

**Charles A. McDonnell**

Trooper Charles A. McDonnell, Cambridge Post, entered disability retirement on December 18, 2020, after 22 years with the Patrol. He joined the Patrol in October 1998 as a member of the 132nd Academy Class. He earned his commission in April of the following year



and was assigned to the Cambridge Post throughout his career. Trooper McDonnell served in the United States Army from 1991 to 1999. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in criminal justice from Ohio University in 1993.

**Thomas A. Murphy**

Trooper Thomas A. Murphy, Piqua District Licensing and Commercial Standards Unit, retired on February 12, 2021, after 27 years with the Patrol. He joined the Patrol in February 1994 as a member of the 126th Academy Class. He earned his commission in July of that year and was assigned to the Marysville Post. In 1999, he was selected as Post Trooper of the Year. As a trooper, he also served at the Lima Post. Trooper Murphy served in the United States Army from 1986 to 2007.

**Michael F. Seibel**

Trooper Michael F. Seibel, Cincinnati Post, retired on January 8, 2021, after 22 years with the Patrol. He joined the Patrol in October 1998 as a member of the 132nd Academy Class. He earned his commission in April of the following year and was assigned to the Wilmington Post. As a trooper, he also served at the Lebanon and Hamilton posts. Trooper Seibel earned a Bachelor of Science degree in business from the University of Rio Grande in 1990.

**Mathew T. Whims**

Trooper Mathew T. Whims, Mt. Gilead Post, retired on December 3, 2020, after 30 years with the Patrol. He joined the Patrol in January 1990 as a member of the 119th Academy Class. He earned his commission in June of that year and was assigned to the former Bellefontaine Post. He was selected as Post Trooper of the Year twice. As a trooper, he also served at the Wooster and Granville posts, and at the Columbus District Commercial Enforcement Unit.





### **Gary L. Kelley**

Police Officer 2 Gary L. Kelley, Expo Center, retired on February 26, 2021, after 30 years with the Patrol. He joined the Patrol in March 1991 as a police officer 1 assigned to the Office of Field Operations. In 1992, he was promoted to a police officer 2 and remained in the Office of Field Operations.



### **Doris C. Holzmeier**

Information Technologist 2 Doris C. Holzmeier, LEADS, retired on February 26, 2021, after 34 years with the Patrol. She joined the Patrol in February 1987 as a telecommunications technician 2 assigned to LEADS. While in LEADS, she was promoted to a network service technician 1 in 2008 and promoted to an information technologist 2 in 2010.



### **Jason L. Saunders**

Dispatcher Supervisor Jason L. Saunders, Jackson Dispatch Center, entered disability retirement on January 1, 2021, after 19 years with the Patrol. He joined the Patrol in October 2000 as a dispatcher assigned to the Ironton Post. In 2006, he served as a traveling dispatcher. He was selected as Post Dispatcher of the Year three times and District Dispatcher of the Year in 2012. Later that year, he was promoted to a dispatcher supervisor and transferred to the Jackson District Headquarters. During his Patrol career, he also served at the Columbus Communications Center and the Athens Post.



### **Lawrence D. Confer**

Infrastructure Specialist 3 Lawrence D. Confer, Computer Operations, retired on December 31, 2020, after 32 years with the State of Ohio. He began his state career with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources as a radio technician 1 in January 1989. He also served as a radio technician 2. In 1996, he transferred to the Ohio Emergency Management Agency as a radio technician coordinator. He joined the Patrol in April 2006 as a network services technician 2 assigned to Systems Operations, LEADS. While in Systems Operations, LEADS, he was promoted to an infrastructure specialist 2 in 2010, and an infrastructure specialist 3 in 2012. Infrastructure Specialist 3 Confer served as an Electronic Technician 3rd Class in the United States Navy from 1983 to 1986 and in the United States Naval Reserve until 1989. He earned an Associate of Applied Science degree in electronics from Columbus State Community College in 1997.



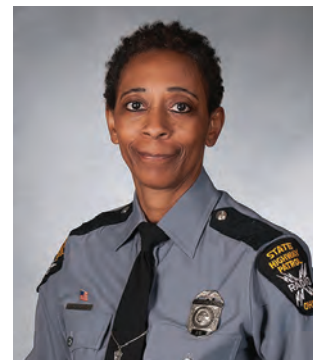
### **Jill A. Ehrhart**

Dispatcher Jill A. Ehrhart, Bucyrus Dispatch Center, retired on February 3, 2021, after 20 years with the Patrol. She joined the Patrol in June 2000 as a dispatcher and was assigned to the Bucyrus Dispatch Center throughout her career. She was selected as Post Dispatcher of the Year twice.



### **Cheryl L. Chever**

Electronic Technician 2 Cheryl L. Chever, Central Install, retired on December 28, 2020, after 30 years with the Patrol. She joined the Patrol in September 1990 as an electronic technician 2 and has been assigned to Central Install throughout her career.



### **Lisa S. Crosswhite**

Dispatcher Lisa S. Crosswhite, Springfield Dispatch Center, retired on January 30, 2021, after 14 years with the Patrol. She joined the Patrol in July 2006 as a dispatcher assigned to the Xenia Post. As a dispatcher, she also served at the Wilmington Dispatch Center.



# OHIO STATE HIGHWAY PATROL

## Chaplain's Comments



When the virus was beginning to claim its victims I was given a mask with the words Faith Not Fear. It was small and uncomfortable so I did not wear it often, but it did trigger thoughts about the place of fear when it comes to having faith. Do we wear the mask because we are afraid of contacting the virus from someone else? Do we wear it because we are afraid of transmitting the virus to someone? Or we do it because we are mandated to do so?

Fear is a good motivating factor, unless it takes over and brings us to a place of paralysis. I prefer to think in terms of having apprehension that calls for the use of caution and evaluation of consequences.

When we were in Scotland on my last exchange ministry, we were invited to take a boat trip around a rock island. The fishing boats would empty the catch, get scrubbed, and become available for a tour around the island. It meant going out of the safety of the harbor and into the rough water. It was rough! I had never been on a boat - nor do I ever desire to do so again - where you cannot see over the crest of the bow before plunging down into the trough of the wave. The look on my wife's face told me that if we survived, we would have a wee talk about such experiences.

To make matters more challenging, I worked myself around to the side to see where the life jackets were stored. There were none! There was just the pilot sitting on his stool with a look of confidence which took away my fear. The words of the hymn came to me: "Jesus Savior, pilot me through life's tempestuous sea." It became a matter of not what the circumstances were but who was in charge, who was in control.

I have been around for a number of crises beginning with the depression and continuing to the current one. There continues to be the Hand of the Creator orchestrating the sunrise after darkness of the night. We may not have all our questions answered but we have a God Who loves us and His perfect love casts out all paralyzing fear.

You are in our daily prayers.

Blessings,

Richard D. Ellsworth  
State Chaplain

## FLYING WHEEL

The *Flying Wheel* is published by the Ohio State Highway Patrol in the interest of the entire Patrol family.

**Mike DeWine**, Governor, State of Ohio

**Thomas Stickrath**, Director, Department of Public Safety

**Colonel Richard S. Fambro**, Superintendent, Ohio State Highway Patrol

**Editor:** Alexis E. Bartolomucci (aebartolomucci@dps.ohio.gov)

**Administrative Staff:** S/Lt. Craig S. Cvetan, Lt. Tiffany L. Meeks, Sgt. Nathan E. Dennis, Julie L. Hinds

### Contributors

**Findlay District**, Sgt. Ryan E. Purpura

**Bucyrus District**, Sgt. Ryan E. Purpura

**Cleveland District**, Sgt. Juan R. Santiago

**Warren District**, Sgt. Juan R. Santiago

**Piqua District**, Tpr. Jessica A. McIntyre

**Columbus District**, Lt. Shad E. Caplinger

**Cambridge District**, Tpr. Brice A. Nihiser

**Wilmington District**, S/Lt. Wayne V. Price

**Jackson District**, AP4 Lynne A. Robinson

**Criminal Investigations**, AP4 Tiffany C. DeArmond

**Field Operations**, S/Lt. William R. Menendez

**Personnel**, PA2 Jessica L. Scalley

**Finance and Logistics**, AP4 Pamela H. Walker

**Security & Communications**, Lt. Chad Maines

**Planning, Research & Development**, AO1 Vicki

L. Cox

**Training, Recruitment & Diversity**, S/Lt. Darren

K. Thomas

**Auxiliary**, Lt. Col. William J. Sanford

# OSHP TweetAlongs

The regional Ohio State Highway Patrol Twitter accounts each held an #OSHPTweetAlong to show their followers what a day in the life of a trooper is like. Be sure to follow the regional accounts to stay up to date with information in those regions.



**OSHP\_NWOhio**  
@OSHP\_NWOhio

Teamed up with our law enforcement partner @ToledoPolice to weigh some commercial vehicles. Overweight vehicles not only cause damage to the roadways, but they take more distance to stop. #OSHPTweetAlong



9:32 AM · Dec 8, 2020 · Twitter for iPhone

View Tweet activity

3 Retweets 12 Likes



**OSHP\_CentralOhio**  
@OSHP\_CentralOH

Troopers start each shift by ensuring the safety and video equipment, speed measuring devices and other items in their patrol car are working correctly. Here we go! #OSHPTweetAlong



4:20 PM · Dec 5, 2020 · Twitter for iPhone

View Tweet activity

2 Retweets 8 Likes



**OSHP\_CentralOhio**  
@OSHP\_CentralOH

This driver was stopped for speed in excess of 20 mph over the posted speed limit and was not wearing a safety belt. This year, 62% of those killed in Franklin Counties fatal crashes were not wearing an available safety belt. #BuckleUp #OSHPTweetAlong



5:06 PM · Dec 5, 2020 · Twitter for iPhone

View Tweet activity

1 Retweet 4 Likes



**OSHP\_NWOhio**  
@OSHP\_NWOhio

We checked our video system, speed measuring devices and our emergency equipment. We're on patrol! #OSHPTweetAlong



6:59 AM · Dec 8, 2020 · Twitter for iPhone

View Tweet activity

1 Retweet 9 Likes



**OSHP\_CentralOhio**  
@OSHP\_CentralOH

This driver was stopped for speed. Between 2017 and 2019, 1,040 people died in crashes due to unsafe speed. #SlowDown #OSHPTweetAlong



10:08 PM · Dec 5, 2020 · Twitter for iPhone

View Tweet activity

3 Likes



**OSHP\_NWOhio**  
@OSHP\_NWOhio

Working along the road is a dangerous job. You must #MoveOver or #SlowDown when approaching an emergency vehicle with flashing lights. It is for the safety of the trooper and the motoring public. It's the law and the right thing to do! #OSHPTweetAlong



1:25 PM · Dec 8, 2020 · Twitter for iPhone

View Tweet activity

1 Retweet 4 Likes



**OSHP\_NWOhio**  
@OSHP\_NWOhio

Back at the post. We will clean the car, check equipment, file paperwork and get ready for the next shift. We're going home, but the afternoon shift is on patrol and ready to serve the motoring public! Thanks for following along and look for this in the future. #OSHPTweetAlong



2:53 PM · Dec 8, 2020 · Twitter for iPhone

View Tweet activity

1 Quote Tweet 7 Likes



**OSHP\_CentralOhio**  
@OSHP\_CentralOH

Another traffic stop for a marked lanes violation. This violation can also be an indicator for impaired driving. Troopers average over 25,000 impaired driver arrests annually. #DriveSober #OSHPTweetAlong



10:51 PM · Dec 5, 2020 · Twitter for iPhone

View Tweet activity

1 Like



**OSHP\_CentralOhio**  
@OSHP\_CentralOH

Back at the Patrol Post! The trooper will clean the car, file necessary paperwork and prepare for another shift tomorrow. Thanks central Ohio for following along with us tonight! #OSHPTweetAlong #BuckleUp #DriveSober



12:22 AM · Dec 6, 2020 · Twitter for iPhone

View Tweet activity

11 Likes

**OHIO STATE HIGHWAY PATROL  
P.O. BOX 182074  
COLUMBUS, OHIO 43218-2074**

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

PRESORTED  
STANDARD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
COLUMBUS, OHIO  
PERMIT NO. 3546

