



FLYING WHEEL

VOLUME 61 • NUMBER 1

WINTER 2023



Trooper of the Year
Dana R. Skinner

COLONEL'S LETTER



Leadership is important because of what it means to the sustainability of our agency. Now, and into the future.

There is no doubt that the future of the Ohio State Highway Patrol is bright and strong. That is certainly highlighted by the 2022 Leadership Award recipients featured in this Flying Wheel issue.

Congratulations to all of the award recipients. Each of you personify what Service with a Purpose looks like.

2023 is our 90th anniversary year.

To commemorate our nine decades, we are doing several special things.

Every post and district headquarters are hosting an open house to allow community members, partners and stakeholders to meet Patrol personnel. We are partnering with Dolly Parton's Imagination Library of Ohio and encouraging members of the community to enroll in the program at each open house.

There will be District-level social events this summer to further the Family core value.

We put special 90th anniversary license plates on all marked cruisers, and we are all proudly wearing a specially-designed 90th anniversary uniform pin this year.

Commemorative anniversary items are available through the Auxiliary Store, and our staff is writing a new Patrol history book covering 2009 through 2023.

This year is also exciting because we have a comprehensive operational direction called Impact 23 that is our roadmap for how we are delivering effective public safety services throughout the year. Impact 23 incorporates Collaboration, Operations and Technology in ways where we will really make a difference in Ohio communities. Here are three examples.

First, each of our nine districts is fully integrating substance abuse referral services into their everyday impaired driving enforcement and Criminal Patrol operations. In Ohio, more than half of all fatal crashes each year involves an impaired driver. A recent analysis of Ohio State Highway Patrol arrest data revealed an annual 30% recidivism rate in impaired driving arrests. In 2023, we are working to mitigate recidivism by offering behavioral health referrals to everyone arrested for an impaired driving or other drug-related offense.

This referral project is unique because it attacks the problem on a statewide scale as opposed to looking at it as a local issue. We are not aware of any other state doing it this way. This is an example in which we are using modern day law enforcement tactics to solve problems that have existed for a long time.

I want to thank local and state mental health and addiction services for their collaboration in this endeavor. This effort shows how we are evolving as an industry. Ultimately, this level of commitment should both reduce fatalities and the recidivism rate.

A second innovative strategy this year is our incorporation of the Handle with Care program, which is a trauma-informed, cross-systems, collaborative program aimed to ensure that children who are exposed to adverse events receive appropriate intervention and have opportunities to build resilience through positive relationships with teachers and first responders.

And third, human trafficking persists as a silent epidemic throughout the country. This terrible practice ruins lives while supporting other areas of crime including drug trafficking, weapons violations, child abuse, and innumerable other atrocities. We are bringing our full weight and resources to bear on this problem.

In this, our 90th anniversary year, we are in a great position to build on our heritage and forge a path forward that will enhance our public value.

God bless our fallen. God bless the families. And, God bless the Ohio State Highway Patrol.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Colonel Charles A. Jones'.

Colonel Charles A. Jones
Superintendent



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- 4** Trooper of the Year, Dispatcher of the Year, Ohio Investigative Unit Agent of the Year, Colonel Thomas W. Rice Leadership Award, Robert M. Chiamonte Humanitarian Award, Colonel Paul A. Pride State Criminal Patrol Award, Motor Carrier Enforcement Inspector of the Year, Employee Recognition Award, Blue Max Award, Police Officer of the Year, Ohio Trooper Recognition Award, Electronic Technician of the Year, Family Member Recognition Award, Distinguished Retiree Award, State Auxiliary Officer of the Year, William J. Duffy Award of Excellence and Partners for Safety Award
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TROOPER OF THE YEAR – TROOPER DANA R. SKINNER



Trooper Dana R. Skinner, Toledo Post, earned top honors as the 2022 State Trooper of the Year. She was selected from nine District Troopers of the Year across the state.

Trooper Skinner is a leader among her peers at the Toledo Post in all aspects, including safety belt compliance, removing impaired drivers as well in other ways that cannot be measured. She has dedicated her career to creating positive relationships and encounters with those whom she interacts with throughout her daily operations. As a leader in functional activity at the Toledo Post, she uses those contacts with the public to do her

part to educate the motoring public to exercise safe driving practices. She does not simply issue a citation or a warning and move on with her day, instead, she engages in conversation with the motorist to ensure they understand the violation while providing education.

During the 2022 calendar year, Trooper Skinner initiated or responded to 1,440 calls for service. She is one of the leaders in safety belt enforcement at the Toledo Post, issuing 211 safety belt citations and seven child safety seat citations, potentially saving lives of those who travel on Ohio roadways by reinforcing the importance of wearing a safety belt. Her enthusiasm for traffic safety is contagious to those whom she works. In addition to being an advocate for traffic safety, she plays an active part in removing impaired drivers and drugs from our roadways before they affect the community. Trooper Skinner is the true definition of a team player, and she emulates that quality each day she works.

Trooper Skinner joined the Patrol in October 2001 as a member of the 138th Academy Class. She earned her commission in April of the following year and was assigned to the Piqua Post. She has also served at the Patrol's Training Academy.

DISPATCHER OF THE YEAR – DISPATCHER WILLIAM L. COURTRIGHT



Dispatcher William L. Courtright, New Philadelphia Post, earned statewide honors as the 2022 Dispatcher of the Year. He was selected from 10 District Dispatcher of the Year recipients across the state. His calm demeanor, positive attitude and commitment to service distinguished him from the other nominees.

Our communications professionals are vital to the operations of the Patrol and are often the first point of contact for the public in an emergency. Dispatcher Courtright has demonstrated enthusiasm, dedication and awareness through his performance in his day-to-day work activities as he

works with the public and his peers.

Dispatcher Courtright keeps the mood light and creates a fun-loving and enjoyable place to work. His technical knowledge, abilities and work attitude, combined with his personal attributes, demonstrate an accomplished ethical individual who is dedicated to not only the Division, but to public service.

Dispatcher Courtright joined the Patrol in February 2012, and was assigned to the Cambridge District Headquarters. In 2015, he earned the Gold Star Award. He has been selected as Post Dispatcher of the Year seven times and District Dispatcher of the Year four times.

OHIO INVESTIGATIVE UNIT AGENT OF THE YEAR – ENFORCEMENT AGENT WOODSER ROUSE



Enforcement Agent Woodser Rouse, Athens District Office, was selected as State Agent of the Year out of six District Agents across the state.

Enforcement Agent Rouse joined the Ohio Investigative Unit in August 2018, and has been assigned to the Athens District Office throughout his career. In 2021, he was selected as District Agent of the Year.

COLONEL THOMAS W. RICE LEADERSHIP AWARD – SERGEANT BRITTANY N. NOAH



Sergeant Brittany N. Noah, Office of Training, Recruitment and Diversity, 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 Noah has led two cadet classes, and she was the first supervisor of our new cadets encounter program. Her ability to be stern, but empathetic has contributed to some of the closest-knit classes to graduate from the Patrol's Academy. She meets with each cadet at least one time

throughout phases 2 and 3 of training. This time is utilized to get to know the cadet and find out what is happening in their lives outside the Academy.

Sergeant Noah leads her troopers the same way she leads the cadets, stern, but empathetic. These qualities have led her to be trusted and followed as a supervisor. When someone has an idea, she listens and incorporates their input. This empowerment of her troopers allows for the best training environment. She sets goals for her troopers, encouraging them to meet and exceed their goals.

Sergeant Noah began her Patrol career in November 2012 as a member of the 154th Academy Class. She earned her commission in April of the following year and was assigned to the Wilmington Post. In 2017, she was selected as Post, District and State Trooper of the Year. In 2018, she earned the Ace Award for excellence in auto larceny enforcement and the Criminal Patrol Award. As a trooper, she also served at the Patrol's Training Academy.

Sergeant Noah earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science from Wilmington College in 2011, and a Master of Arts degree in applied behavioral science from Wright State University in 2012.

ROBERT M. CHIARAMONTE HUMANITARIAN AWARD – TROOPER DONTE M. HANNS



Trooper Donte' M. Hanns, Fremont Post, was honored with the Robert M. Chiaramonte Humanitarian Award, which recognizes officers dedicated to humanitarian causes on the highway and in their communities.

Trooper Hanns embodies the term exemplary. He maintains his volunteer schedule while leading the Fremont Post's efforts on night shift. He consistently leads the post in enforcement for both impaired driving and Criminal Patrol.

Trooper Hanns participates in nine community projects; Fremont Public School Mentorship Program, Caring for the Caregiver Expo, Connecting Kids to Meals, adopt a school program, school supplies collection program, Toledo Walk for Lupus, Rebekah's Haven Clothing Drive, Fremont Special Olympics Torch Run and a roadway clean-up program. Of these, he is most dedicated to the mentorship program, which pairs students with mentors from sixth grade until they graduate. He enjoys the time he spends and sharing experiences with his student. He also values helping his student overcome obstacles at school and at home.

Trooper Hanns 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 Fremont Post throughout his career. In 2020, he was selected as Post Trooper of the Year.

Trooper Hanns earned a Bachelor of Science degree in criminal justice from the University of Toledo in 2019.

COLONEL PAUL A. PRIDE STATE CRIMINAL PATROL AWARD – TROOPER JEFFERY J. HUFFMAN



Trooper Jeffery J. Huffman, Bowling Green Post, earned the Colonel Paul A. Pride State Criminal Patrol Award for conducting the most felony case investigations in 2022 with 90, which led to 105 felony arrests in 2022. The majority of his cases were drug related. Throughout 2022, his criminal seizures included 10 grams of cocaine, 67 grams of fentanyl, 140 opiate pills, 39,716 grams of marijuana, 12 bottles of promethazine syrup and nine firearms.

Trooper Huffman 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 Bowling Green Post throughout his career. He was selected as Post Trooper of the Year twice. He earned the Ace Award for excellence in auto larceny enforcement twice. He also earned the Criminal Patrol Award five times.

Trooper Huffman earned a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Bowling Green State University in 2014.

MOTOR CARRIER ENFORCEMENT INSPECTOR OF THE YEAR – MOTOR CARRIER ENFORCEMENT INSPECTOR STEVEN R. MORGAN



Motor Carrier Enforcement Inspector (MCEI) Steven R. Morgan, Columbus District Commercial Enforcement Unit, was selected as Motor Carrier Enforcement Inspector of the Year. A motor carrier enforcement inspector's primary function is to ensure the safe operation of commercial motor vehicles within Ohio. This goal is achieved through education and enforcement of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations and Public Utility Commission of Ohio Safety Rules.

MCEI Morgan joined the Patrol in February 2003 as a maintenance repair worker 2 assigned to the Circleville Post. In 2011, he was promoted to security officer 1 and transferred to the Patrol's Training Academy. In 2014, he was promoted to motor vehicle inspector and transferred to the Columbus District Commercial Enforcement Unit. In 2015, he was promoted to a motor carrier enforcement inspector and remained at the Columbus District Commercial Enforcement Unit.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AWARD – SECURITY OFFICER 1 TODD E. OSBORN



Security Officer 1 Todd E. Osborn, Office of Training, Recruitment, and Diversity, received the Employee Recognition Award which is presented annually to recognize excellence by a professional employee.

Security Officer 1 Osborn joined the Patrol in May 1993 as a security officer 1 and was assigned to the Patrol's Training Academy. As a security officer 1, he also served in the Office of Personnel.

BLUE MAX AWARD (PATROL'S TOP AUTO LARCENY ENFORCER) – TROOPER MATTHEW D. BOYER



Trooper Matthew D. Boyer, Cleveland District Criminal Patrol Unit, earned the Blue Max Award for recovering the most stolen vehicles of any trooper in 2022. Throughout the year, he recovered 23 stolen vehicles valued at \$420,500, which resulted in the apprehension of 27 suspects.

Trooper Boyer joined the Patrol in March 2015 as a member of the 158th Academy Class. He earned his commission in September of that year and was assigned to the Lisbon Post. In 2021, he earned the Superintendent's Award of Excellence. He has earned the Ace Award for excellence in auto larceny enforcement six times and the Criminal Patrol Award eight times. He

also earned the Blue Max Award twice. As a trooper, he also served at the Canfield, Canton and Akron posts, and the Warren District Criminal Patrol Unit.

Trooper Boyer earned an associate degree in criminal justice from the University of Akron in 2014.

POLICE OFFICER OF THE YEAR – POLICE OFFICER 2 BALLA MBENGUE



Police Officer 2 Balla Mbengue, Capitol Operations, was selected as Police Officer of the Year. Police Officer Mbengue joined the Patrol in February 2017 as a security officer 1 assigned to the Training Academy. In 2018, he was promoted to police officer 2 and transferred to Capitol Operations.

OHIO TROOPER RECOGNITION AWARD – TROOPER BRYAN L. BUTLER



Trooper Bryan L. Butler, Bucyrus 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.

Trooper Butler joined the Patrol in February 1997 as a member of the 128th Academy Class. He earned his commission in July of that year and was assigned to the Xenia Post. In 1999, he was selected as Post Trooper of the Year. As a trooper, he also served at the Wilmington and Mansfield posts.

Trooper Butler earned an Associate of Applied Science degree in criminal justice from Sinclair Community College in 1995. He earned a master criminal investigator certificate from the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy (OPOTA) in 2016. In 2018, he earned a crime scene certification from the International Association for Identification.

ELECTRONIC TECHNICIAN OF THE YEAR – ELECTRONIC TECHNICIAN 3 JAMES D. JONES



Electronic Technician 3 James D. Jones, Bucyrus District Radio Shop, was selected as Electronic Technician of the Year. As an electronic technician 3, he supervises the radio shop, while supporting the Division by testing, maintaining, aligning and programming many types of communications and electronic equipment. Such equipment consists of radios, facility video security systems and all electronic-related equipment within a facility or vehicle.

Electronic Technician 3 Jones began his state career with the Ohio Air National Guard in January 1991. He joined the Patrol in April 2006 as an electronic technician 1 assigned to Central Install. In 2009, he was promoted to electronic technician 2 and transferred to the Findlay District Radio Shop. As an electronic technician 2, he also served at the Bucyrus District Radio Shop. He has been selected as Bucyrus District Electronic Technician of the Year twice.

FAMILY MEMBER RECOGNITION AWARD – ANNE NIEMEYER, COLUMBUS DISTRICT



Anne Niemeyer, of the Columbus District, was selected as the Ohio State Highway Patrol Family Recognition of the Year Award winner. Mrs. Niemeyer started the non-profit, Let's Back the Blue; an organization to encourage support, respect and appreciation for law enforcement while fostering and strengthening relationships between law enforcement and the communities they serve together.

DISTINGUISHED RETIREE AWARD – RETIRED DISPATCHER HEATHER DUNCAN, JACKSON DISTRICT



Retired Dispatcher Heather Duncan, of the Jackson District, was selected as Distinguished Retiree of the Year. Retired Dispatcher Duncan founded a non-profit, named Christmas Smiles, in conjunction with the Ross County Sheriff's Office. This program is dedicated to helping families with working guardians struggling to provide Christmas gifts for children and dinner for families. She has been instrumental in the local organization called Be Hear to be Heard. This is a new program for Ross and surrounding counties for the people that suffer from hearing loss, regardless of age. She also makes and donates safety belt covers which

alert law enforcement and first responders of health conditions the driver and/or passenger may have.

STATE AUXILIARY OFFICER OF THE YEAR – AUXILIARY OFFICER CASEY R. WILLIAMS



Auxiliary Officer Casey R. Williams joined the Ohio State Highway Patrol Auxiliary in October 2021, and has been assigned to the Piqua Post throughout his career.

In 2022, Auxiliary Officer Williams volunteered 540 hours of his time riding on patrol with troopers, responding to emergency callouts and assisting with Auxiliary trainings.

WILLIAM J. DUFFY AWARD OF EXCELLENCE – AUXILIARY SERGEANT ERIC HELLER



The William J. Duffy Award of Excellence requires a minimum of 300 volunteer hours per year over three consecutive years.

Auxiliary Sergeant Eric Heller joined the Ohio State Highway Patrol Auxiliary in August 2016, and has been assigned to the Cambridge Post throughout his career. In 2021, he was promoted to the rank of sergeant and remained at the Cambridge Post.

Auxiliary Sergeant Heller volunteered 1,400 hours during the last three years riding on regular and holiday road patrols with troopers, responding to emergency callouts, assisting with Auxiliary trainings and other

Auxiliary assignments. In the initial months of the pandemic, he helped set up and staff food distribution efforts in his district.

PARTNERS FOR SAFETY AWARD – DEANNA BRANT & BRIAN PLOW



The Partners for Safety initiative successfully blends statewide corporate partnerships with innovative initiatives at the local level. Partners for Safety involves a commitment of operational, public outreach and relations, and educational activities involving the Patrol and community residents. A lasting goal of the Partners for Safety effort is to promote a safer highway environment, reduce traffic crashes, achieve voluntary compliance with motor vehicle traffic laws, positively impact highway crime at the local

level and support other Patrol initiatives.

Executive Director Deanna Brant, Delaware-Morrow Mental Health and Recovery Services Board, was selected as a recipient of the Patrol's Partners for Safety award due to her expertise and thoughtfulness to help create and teach more than 800 employees Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) familiarization training. She also assisted countless Ohio State Highway Patrol troopers with finding mental health resources, trained Members Assistance Team personnel in the 40-hour CIT certification course and helped find resources for Patrol employees who have needed mental health assistance.

Separately, Associate Director Brian Plow, School of Media Arts and Studies, Ohio University's Scripps College of Communication, was also selected for the Patrol's Partners for Safety Award. He produced a series of training videos, so employees of the Ohio State Highway Patrol could learn from the stories and experiences of others who have been through trauma. His work resulted in numerous employees seeking help or evaluating their signs or symptoms of being exposed to stress and trauma. The videos helped reduce the stigma surrounding mental health conditions suffered by first responders.

DISTRICT WINNERS

OHIO INVESTIGATIVE UNIT

Agent Joe C. Chamberlain, Akron District
 Agent Woodser Rouse, Athens District
 Agent Andrew E. Penvose, Cincinnati District
 Agent Deven J. Hall, Cleveland District
 Agent Charletta T. Alston, Columbus District
 Agent Haley S. Wade, Toledo District

DISTRICT WINNERS CONTINUED

FINDLAY DISTRICT

Trooper of the Year Trooper Dana R. Skinner, Toledo Post
 Dispatcher of the Year Dispatcher Ashlee L. Tyree, Findlay Post
 Trooper Recognition Trooper Timothy S. Tillman, Findlay District Commercial Enforcement Unit
 Employee Recognition Lisa M. Clouse (Administrative Professional 4), Findlay District Headquarters
 Thomas W. Rice Leadership Sergeant Matthew N. Geer
 Electronic Technician of the Year Electronic Technician 3 Kraig A. Kent
 Motor Carrier Enforcement Inspector of the Year Trooper Timothy S. Tillman
 Distinguished Retiree Retired Lieutenant Jonathon A. Gray
 Family Recognition Award Rebecca VonSacken

BUCYRUS DISTRICT

Trooper of the Year Trooper Jesse T. Hoffer, Mansfield Post
 Dispatcher of the Year Dispatcher Michael W. Adams, Mansfield Post
 Trooper Recognition Trooper Bryan L. Butler, Bucyrus District Criminal Investigations Unit
 Employee Recognition Brandy N. Rohrbacher (Administrative Professional 1), Fremont Post
 Robert M. Chiaramonte Humanitarian Award Trooper Donte M. Hanns
 Thomas W. Rice Leadership Sergeant Brandon D. Spalding
 Electronic Technician of the Year Electronic Technician 3 James D. Jones
 Motor Carrier Enforcement Inspector of the Year Trooper Matthew D. Stoffer
 Patrol Family Recognition Erin Smith
 Distinguished Retiree Retired Lieutenant Gary D. Smith

CLEVELAND DISTRICT

Trooper of the Year Trooper Samuel D. Maddox, Ashland Post
 Dispatcher of the Year Dispatcher Chelsea L. Raugh, Medina Post
 Trooper Recognition Trooper Darrell M. Dowler, Cleveland District Criminal Patrol Unit
 Employee Recognition Michael J. Swartz (Infrastructure Specialist 2), Cleveland District Headquarters
 Robert Chiaramonte Humanitarian Award Sergeant Cristian Perrin
 Thomas W. Rice Leadership Sergeant Erica J. Gockstetter
 Electronic Technician of the Year Electronic Technician 2 Douglas A. Carnegie
 Motor Carrier Enforcement Inspector of the Year MCEI Drew J. Bauer
 Patrol Family Recognition Barry Rawson
 Distinguished Retiree Retired Lieutenant Stephanie A. Norman

WARREN DISTRICT

Trooper of the Year Trooper Leonard E. Karpinski, Hiram Post
 Dispatcher of the Year Dispatcher Kayla A. DeWitt, Ravenna Post
 Trooper Recognition Trooper Michael D. Royko, Warren District Criminal Investigations Unit
 Employee Recognition Valerie J. Maffitt (Administrative Professional 1), Warren District Criminal Investigations Unit
 Thomas W. Rice Leadership Sergeant Erik A. Golias
 Motor Carrier Enforcement Inspector of the Year Trooper Jeffrey A. Lauper

PIQUA DISTRICT

Trooper of the Year Trooper Ke'Von M. Huguely, Springfield Post
 Dispatcher of the Year Dispatcher Monica Huffman, Dayton Post
 Trooper Recognition Trooper Mark A. Murray, Licensing and Commercial Standards Unit
 Employee Recognition Krista L. Storer (Administrative Professional 1), Piqua Post
 Robert M. Chiaramonte Humanitarian Award Trooper Tyler F. Deal
 Thomas W. Rice Leadership Sergeant Christopher Colbert
 Electronic Technician of the Year Electronic Technician 2 Brian W. Oldham
 Motor Carrier Enforcement Inspector of the Year Trooper Stephen B. Garrett
 Patrol Family Recognition Tricia B. Cramer
 Distinguished Retiree Retired Trooper James R. Bennett

COLUMBUS DISTRICT

Trooper of the Year Trooper Jonathan M. Drake, Lancaster Post
 Dispatcher of the Year Dispatcher Morgan M. Robinson, Delaware Post
 Trooper Recognition Trooper Michael D. Rucker, Columbus District Criminal Patrol Unit
 Employee Recognition Lindi M. Miller (Administrative Professional 4), Columbus District Headquarters
 Thomas W. Rice Leadership Sergeant Jermaine D. Thaxton
 Electronic Technician of the Year Electronic Technician 2 Chad M. Morrison
 Motor Carrier Enforcement Inspector of the Year MCEI Steven R. Morgan
 Patrol Family Recognition Anne Niemeyer
 Distinguished Retiree Retired Captain Robert Markowksi (Posthumously)

CAMBRIDGE DISTRICT

Trooper of the Year Trooper Connor S. Nagel, Cambridge Post
 Dispatcher of the Year Dispatcher William L. Courtright, New Philadelphia Post
 Trooper Recognition Trooper Shawn F. Milburn, Cambridge District Criminal Patrol Unit
 Employee Recognition Misti D. Dempsey (Administrative Professional 1), Cambridge District Headquarters
 Robert M. Chiamonte Humanitarian Award Sergeant Brian W. Hawkins
 Thomas W. Rice Leadership Sergeant Todd L. Henry
 Electronic Technician of the Year Electronic Technician 2 James K. Howell
 Motor Carrier Enforcement Inspector of the Year Trooper Timothy L. Scott
 Patrol Family Recognition Melissa Brannan
 Distinguished Retiree Retired Trooper Charlie McLeish

WILMINGTON DISTRICT

Trooper of the Year Trooper Gideon K. Bayuo, Lebanon Post
 Dispatcher of the Year Dispatcher Mary C. Blust, Lebanon Post
 Trooper Recognition Trooper Kyle J. Klontz, Wilmington District Criminal Investigation Unit
 Employee Recognition Andrea R. Flores (Administrative Professional 1), Wilmington Post
 Robert M. Chiamonte Humanitarian Award Sergeant Jeremy J. Grillot
 Thomas W. Rice Leadership Sergeant Joshua L. Patrick
 Electronic Technician of the Year Electronic Technician 2 Brian E. Shepherd
 Motor Carrier Enforcement Inspector of the Year Trooper Jeremy B. Priest
 Patrol Family Recognition Chris Kirk

JACKSON DISTRICT

Trooper of the Year Trooper Christopher M. Newman, Portsmouth Post
 Dispatcher of the Year Dispatcher Melissa A. Pearce, Jackson Post
 Trooper Recognition Trooper Nathan E. Lawson, Jackson District Commercial Enforcement Unit
 Employee Recognition Connie E. Myers (Administrative Professional 1), Jackson Post
 Robert M. Chiamonte Humanitarian Award Sergeant Mark A. McFann
 Thomas W. Rice Leadership Sergeant Danny M. Calhoun
 Electronic Technician of the Year Electronic Technician 2 Steven D. Miller
 Motor Carrier Enforcement Inspector of the Year MCEI Adam E. Quinn
 Patrol Family Recognition Bridgette Malone
 Distinguished Retiree Retired Dispatcher Heather Duncan

GHQ

Dispatcher of the Year Dispatcher Elizabeth C.A. Bogue, Office of Finance and Logistics
 Employee Recognition Jessica L. Jones (Administrative Professional 4) Office of Criminal Investigations
 Employee Recognition Christopher C. Herbst (Administrative Professional 1) Office of Field Operations
 Employee Recognition Sharon K. Blackford (Human Capital Management Analyst) Office of Personnel
 Employee Recognition Brittany N. West (Customer Service Analyst 2) Office of Planning, Research and Development
 Employee Recognition Randall K. Bogue (Infrastructure Specialist 3) Office of Finance and Logistics
 Employee Recognition Todd E. Osborn (Security Officer 1) Office of Training, Recruitment and Diversity
 Trooper Recognition Trooper Steven J. Drew
 Trooper Recognition Trooper Paul E. Appleman
 Trooper Recognition Trooper Jeffrey S. Evans
 Thomas W. Rice Leadership Sergeant Brittany N. Noah
 Electronic Technician of the Year Electronic Technician 2 Kyle B. Haning
 Police Officer of the Year PO2 Balla Mbengue
 Distinguished Retiree Retired Sergeant Patrick McDonald

EAST PALESTINE TRAIN DERAILMENT RESPONSE

On February 3, 2023, a Norfolk Southern train derailed near East Palestine. The 50-car train crashed while carrying hazardous materials, causing a fire that burned for several days. Five of the derailed train cars were carrying vinyl chloride.

With the community in crisis, the Patrol responded.

The Aviation section flew first responders over the scene, which allowed them to see what was going on from above. A video downlink was provided to first responders and local government officials, so on their phones or computers they could see what the helicopter was seeing.

Troopers deployed to traffic control points so people could not endanger themselves or disturb the crash site.

Contentious large community forums were held for concerned community members. The Mobile Field Force Unit was utilized three times to ensure safety at those events, so members of the community could gather and exercise their constitutional rights, as well as voice their frustrations.

The Public Affairs Unit was critical to shaping the messaging and communications. East Palestine's Mayor Trent Conaway did not have a public information office or officer to coordinate traditional and social media when Division public information officers arrived. A regional public

information officer, Sergeant Ray Santiago, was assigned directly to the mayor's needs and assisted with social media and navigating all of the national media inquiries.

When there were threats against local officials of East Palestine, Patrol intelligence analysts completed threat analyses to help protect those local officials so that they could continue to protect their community.



OIU CELEBRATES 89 YEARS



Congratulations to our family members in the Ohio Investigative Unit (OIU) who on December 23 celebrated their 89th anniversary. From human trafficking, to trace-back investigations, to suspected illegal activity in liquor permit premises, the impact of their efforts are felt nationwide.

OIU's Service with a Purpose this year resulted in 3,870 cases, including more than 110 cases related to human trafficking/prostitution and 130 trace-back investigations. In the process of their investigations, more than 243 guns were seized. As a valued component of the Ohio State Highway Patrol, their public value is measured not just in lives saved, but in the quality of life their work provides in communities throughout Ohio.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SPECIALIST JOINS PATROL

In 2019, a partnership with the Ohio State Troopers Association was started to provide Ohio State Highway Patrol employees with resources in a manner that stigma from asking for help would be minimized. All sworn troopers will see Program Administrator 2 Jessica L. Curry, the Patrol's new behavioral health specialist, during their bi-annual graded exercise test (GXT). The behavioral health specialist (BHS) visits will be incorporated with the GXT process after the physical portion is completed. Troopers are the first group assigned to see PA2 Curry. They must attend the meeting, but their participation is voluntary. The hope is troopers take advantage of the resources and the opportunity to use the BHS meeting to start a path of healing from the exposure to traumatic/critical incidents or acute daily stress. Even if they choose not to speak with her, she will still provide resources to help with things such as getting better sleep and dealing with stress in healthy ways. The resources can also be used by their family members, understanding vicarious trauma directly effects families.

"Jessica is a great addition to the mental wellness program for our agency. With the start of this position, her main focus will be meeting with troopers during their GXT for a mental wellness check. The thought process behind adding a check-in with a behavioral health specialist to the GXT is to reduce stigma surrounding seeking help for a mental health issue. If the visit is mandatory and everyone from the Colonel down has to go, it will be common to see all employees meeting with her. It will hopefully decrease worries or concerns for what peers may "think", if they are seen in the Employee Wellness area. Jessica is available to all Division employees and anyone seeking assistance or resources will just need to contact her via phone or email. She will confidentially get you the information you or a friend or family member needs."

- Lieutenant Molly J. Harris, Staffing Services, on Program Administrator 2 Jessica L. Curry

Program Administrator 2 Jessica Curry, Staffing Services, began working on February 13 as the division's new behavioral health specialist. She graduated from Ohio Christian University with a bachelor degree in psychology and criminology. She also received a master's degree in criminal justice with a concentration in criminal behavior. She grew up as an Air Force Brat, born in Maryland, but has lived in Ohio for most of her life.



- *What are you most looking forward to in the position?*

I really love to help people any way I can. First responders and military personnel have a special place in my heart. Many of my family and friends are in law enforcement or military and I see the tremendously hard work they do and the little appreciation they get. I want to be that listening ear and the helping hand for those who deserve it, need it, and want it. In life, we don't know what we don't know. I am here to answer questions and talk about mental health, assist in grounding and calming techniques, and connect people with resources and mental health professionals for anyone in the Patrol and their families.

- *How can people reach you?*

My email is jlcurry@dps.ohio.gov.

HOLIDAY CARD CONTEST



The Patrol's Holiday Card Contest was held in late November for children who were up to 12 years old. The contest received several unique and special art submissions from many talented children. The winner of the contest was Bailey Bess from North Adams High School in Adams County. The winning entry featured a Patrol helicopter being pulled by reindeer that was spotlighting a Christmas tree and dropping presents, the flying wheel and a cruiser. The artwork was featured as the Patrol holiday graphic. Bailey's grandmother, Deborah Mcadow, is a dispatcher at our Batavia Dispatch Center.

The criteria for submitting artwork included having a "Happy Holidays from our Family to yours" message and one of the following – a Patrol helicopter, plane, canine, badge 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 11 days with artwork received from across the state.

K9 GRADUATION



Five K9 officers graduated February 6 from the Ohio State Highway Patrol. All the K9 officers were trained in-house and will become instrumental in continuing the mission to remove drugs from Ohio's roads and neighborhoods. Graduates include: (L-R) K9 Bandit with Officer Jared T. Lindig of the Fostoria Police Department, K9 Mari with Trooper Michael R. Wilson of the Columbus District Criminal Patrol Unit, K9 Viking with Deputy Keith F. Griffin of the Marion County Sheriff's Office, and K9 Titan with Deputy Richard K. Jones Jr. of the Greene County Sheriff's Office. Not pictured: K9 Legion with Officer Mitchell T. Chapman of the Norwalk Police Department.

CADET CLASS 170 GRADUATES



The Patrol's 170th Academy Class graduated on January 13 after 32 weeks of intense training. Ohio Governor Mike DeWine; Director Andy Wilson, Ohio Department of Public Safety; and Colonel Charles A. Jones, Patrol Superintendent; provided remarks. Major General John C. Harris Jr., Ohio Adjutant General, delivered the keynote address to the 23 members of the Patrol's 170th Academy Class. Judge Matthew P. Frericks, Marion County Court of Common Pleas, issued the Oath of Office.

Courses completed by the 170th class included crash investigation, criminal and traffic law, detection of impaired drivers, firearms, physical fitness, self-defense and emergency vehicle operations.

Trooper Nathaniel F. E. Snyder, Chillicothe

Post, was selected as class speaker and thanked the Academy and cadet family members for being supportive during their training.

Graduates reported to their posts on January 15. The graduates' first 70 working days were a field-training period under the guidance of a veteran officer. The new graduates were assigned to 19 of the Patrol's 59 posts.

BASIC CLASS 147 GRADUATES



Members of the 147th Basic Peace Officer Class received training certificates during a graduation ceremony held January 20 at the Ohio State Highway Patrol Training Academy. The 42 graduates assumed duties as peace officers for 20 Ohio agencies.

The 21-week basic course began in August. The course was developed by the Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission and offers comprehensive instruction in more than 150 topics, including criminal law, traffic law, community relations, physical training, self-defense, firearms, emergency vehicle operations, standardized field sobriety testing and electronic speed measuring devices.

Mark T. Williams Jr., Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife, was selected as class speaker by his fellow class

members and addressed the assembly.

Lorain County Sheriff Phil R. Stammitti, Director-At-Large, Buckeye State Sheriffs Association, was the featured speaker for the ceremony and addressed the graduates and an audience of friends, relatives and law enforcement officers. Ohio Department of Public Safety Director Andy Wilson and Colonel Charles A. Jones, Patrol superintendent, both provided remarks.

OPERATION SANTA'S SLEIGH

For the fourth consecutive year, the Ohio State Highway Patrol joined law enforcement, fire departments and EMS from around Ohio for Operation Santa's Sleigh on December 29. During the event, first responders lined the roads outside four of the five Ohio Children's Hospitals in Akron, Cincinnati, Columbus and Dayton, and the state's two Veterans Homes in Georgetown and Sandusky. The annual event brings cheer to those who need it most during the holiday season.

Operation Santa's Sleigh traditionally takes place on December 23 but was postponed until December 29 due to a significant winter storm that impacted the entire state. The event at Cleveland's children's hospital was cancelled entirely.

The Patrol's sworn personnel were encouraged to participate in marked cruisers if operationally feasible. For the first time, Colonel Charles A. Jones authorized that Division-marked cruisers could be adorned with holiday decorations for the parades at each location.

Off-duty personnel, family members and professional staff also participated by riding in cruisers.

In Columbus, four inspiring youth received special honors as they were sworn-in for the event as junior fire chief, junior police chief, Ohio State Highway Patrol junior colonel and Union County junior sheriff in front of hundreds of first responders.

Ohio State Highway Patrol Junior Colonel Gabriel Rosvanis received his badge from Colonel Charles A. Jones. Junior Colonel Gabriel, 7, lives in Marion where his mom Juanita works security at the court alongside the Marion Police Department. His interest in law enforcement started in 2020 with a desire to learn what officers do and how to engage them with a spirit of community. Colonel Gabriel is autistic with sensory process disorder, also known as SPD, which is a condition associated with a sensitivity of loud noises. Gabriel has been a guitar player since he was age 5. He plays the *Star-Spangled Banner* and *You Have a Friend in Me*, which many people know from the movie *Toy Story*. In fact, he played *You Have a Friend in Me* for the Marion Police Department on Valentine's Day.

Columbus Division of Fire Junior Chief Luke Hageman received his badge from Columbus Division of Fire Chief Jeffrey Happ. Columbus Division of Police Junior Chief Addisyn Renz received her badge from First Assistant Chief LaShanna Potts. Junior Chiefs Luke and Addisyn were both sworn in by Assistant Director of the Columbus Department of Public Safety Robert Stewart. Junior Union County Sheriff Ali LeMasters received her badge from Union County Sheriff Jamie Patton.

The Junior leadership for the Columbus event served as judges for the best decorated vehicles in the Deck your Sleigh contest. The Columbus Division of Police took first place.

Start making plans now - The 2023 Operation Santa's Sleigh is scheduled for December 23.



FINDLAY DISTRICT

On January 17, Trooper Joseph J. Nicholson, Defiance Post, joined an Indiana State Police trooper at the state line on US 20 in Williams County. Troopers from both states worked in conjunction as part of an ongoing partnership with police agencies across the county to make thousands of miles of US 20 safer. Additional troopers from the Findlay, Bucyrus, Cleveland and Warren districts are also participating in the initiative.



On January 1, Lieutenant Jordan L. Schwochow and Dispatcher Jamie K. Mariano, both of the Bowling Green Post, and Lieutenant Bradley P. Longo, Sergeant Jason R. Metzger and Cadet Intern Marceana Rae Black, all of the Toledo Post, attended a law enforcement American Sign Language training session at Perrysburg High School. Patrol personnel learned basic sign language to assist them in the course of their duties from high school students and staff.



BUCYRUS DISTRICT

On January 19, the Mansfield Post hosted an Open House and Recruitment Event to open their doors to members of the community and potential recruits. Quite a few people stopped by to see the post, the #JoinOSHP semi, patrol cars and to meet troopers, dispatchers and our professional staff.



On January 11, Trooper Steve J. Bacs, Norwalk Post, and Trooper Christopher H. Beyer and Motor Carrier Enforcement Inspector Richard J. Bittner, both of the Bucyrus District, talked about traffic safety with personnel from Coles Energy in Milan.



CLEVELAND DISTRICT

On December 5, Trooper John L. Gray of the Akron Post dropped off new and gently used coats to the Haven of Rest Ministries in Akron. The Haven of Rest has been serving the community of Akron for the past 80 years by providing many different services to those in need. One of the ways they do this is by distributing clothing to those in need, and those on the road to recovery from addiction. In October, Trooper Gray facilitated a month-long coat drive, with a goal of collecting 50 coats to donate to the Ministry. There were 74 total coats collected and donated.

The Ashland County Prosecutor's Office recently started an officer of the month award. On January 5, Prosecutor Christopher R. Tunnell announced that Trooper Samuel D. Maddox of the Ashland Post was the second recipient and the December 2022 Officer of the Month in recognition of his felony apprehensions and 2022 District Trooper of the Year award.



WARREN DISTRICT

On February 7, Trooper Nick Cayton of the Canfield Post was awarded a certificate and coin for his distinguished service to the citizens of Mahoning County. The award is given out annually by the American Legion Post 177 in Canfield. Pictured with Trooper Cayton is Commander Kubitza of Post 177.

On December 25, troopers from the Lisbon Post took a break from the ice cold weather and spread a little holiday cheer. Troopers were out wishing the local nursing home residents a Merry Christmas while sharing candy canes, stories and hot cocoa.



PIQUA DISTRICT

The Marysville Post sponsored the Britton family during its 2022 Holiday Community Outreach Program. The Britton's had experienced financial hardships as a result of ongoing medical complications from surgeries and follow-up procedures in early December. The Marysville Post collected \$900 for rent, household goods and presents for the two children. They delivered these items just before Christmas to make the Britton's holidays just a little brighter.



On February 18, Trooper Ke'Von Huguely of the Springfield Post, Chief Deputy Gary Cox, Clark County Sheriff's Office, and Sergeant Thomas Potter, Springfield Police Department, received the Law Enforcement Commendation Medal from the George Rogers Clark Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution. This award is presented annually to those who have served with distinction and devotion in the field of law enforcement.



COLUMBUS DISTRICT

Members of the Columbus District participated in a Shop with a Cop event at the Grove City Meijer on December 12.



In November, Ohio Department of Public Safety School Safety Planner Cheryl L. Helsel, her daughter, Alaina, and husband donated several bags of homemade stuffed animals to be distributed during the holidays to kids. Lieutenant Colonel Joshua M. Swindell received the donation in the Shipley Building atrium. The stuffed animals were given to the Ronald McDonald House in Columbus during Operation Santa's Sleigh in December.



CAMBRIDGE DISTRICT

Lieutenant Laura C. Taylor and Trooper Jennifer Makris of the New Philadelphia Post delivered Cambridge District’s donations to Noah’s Hope on January 10. The Cambridge District collected 20 fleece blankets, 50 stuffed animals, 300 toothbrushes and hundreds of toys for the children who receive services from Noah’s Hope.



WILMINGTON DISTRICT

On December 12, Dispatcher Mary C. Blust of the Lebanon Dispatch Center donated food items to the Lebanon Food Pantry and Sugartree Ministries. Dispatcher Blust organized a friendly competition to collect the food items between our Batavia, Lebanon and Wilmington dispatch centers.



Trooper Scott T. Prebble of the Georgetown Post coordinated a holiday event to sponsor children in need at North Adams High School for Christmas. Through his detailed plan and preparation, the event was a huge success and he made several children’s holidays brighter.



JACKSON DISTRICT

The Portsmouth Post teamed up with some students from Shawnee State University for a Shop with a Trooper event in December.



GHQ

On January 16, Colonel Charles A. Jones was honored to be the keynote speaker at the Peace and Freedom Committee, Sixteenth Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Breakfast Celebration in Marion. Area youth who participated in the oratorical/essay/poetry/and art contest held in January were recognized.



OVER THE HILL



Congratulations to the new members of the Patrol's "Over the Hill" club. On January 11, members of the 124th Academy Class achieved 30 years of service. Pictured are back (left to right): Trooper Donald J. Herink, Sergeant Frederick J. Cook, Staff Lieutenant James M. Faunda, Sergeant Joseph D. Baisden, Staff Lieutenant Wayne V. Price and Lieutenant Alan T. Ogden. Front (left to right): Captain Jerrod A. Savidge, Sergeant Robert L. Burd, Trooper James D. Williams and Major Shawn P. Davis. Not pictured: Trooper Michael W. Maddock.

YEARS OF SERVICE AWARD



In December, members of the Patrol's senior staff recognized Staff Lieutenant John S. Carrico, Piqua District, for his 35 years of service to the state of Ohio.

HIGHWAY PATROL RETIREMENT SYSTEM

Why does HPRS need to make changes to the health care benefits?

HPRS was authorized on January 1, 1974, by House Bill 54 to provide health care benefits to members, if sufficient funds are available to do so. The Health Care Fund (HCF) was established, and with low health care costs, there was sufficient solvency for quite a while. However, health care costs increased significantly. National Health Expenditure data indicates that health spending has increased in the last five decades, from \$353 per person in 1970 to \$12,914 in 2021. If the increases to health spending kept pace with inflation from 1970 to 2021, expenses would only have increased to \$1,951, instead of the dramatic increase to \$12,914.

HPRS health care benefits have been modified several times over the last decade in an effort to provide a sustainable benefit. The changes resulted in increases to copays, deductibles, out-of-pocket limits, etc. Although these changes resulted in the cost savings targeted, the rising costs of health care, especially prescription costs, continue to threaten the sustainability of our HCF. Projections indicate that without significant changes, the HCF will be depleted in approximately 12 years. To make a substantial impact on the solvency of the HCF and ensure a future benefit to our youngest members, the need for major change is imminent and required.

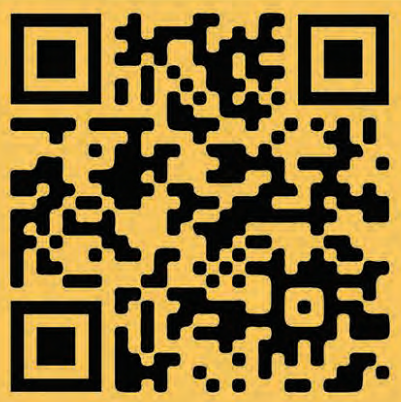
By switching from a group medical plan to a Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA), HPRS will be able to continue offering current and future retirees assistance with the cost of health care. In January 2022, the Medicare-eligible group (age 65 and older) was moved to an HRA, which added solvency to the HCF. A project is underway to transition the pre-Medicare group (age 65 and below) to an HRA in January 2024. These changes are critical and necessary to help ensure a sustainable health care benefit. Please stay informed on all benefits by reading the HPRS monthly newsletter.

Best Regards,

Carl Roark, Ph.D.
HPRS Executive Director



Are You Ready To Build Tomorrow?



Become a Trooper:

- Paid Academy training
- \$30.38 per hour upon graduation
- \$5,000 signing bonus for graduating cadets

Recent changes to application process:

- Age requirement is now 20-39 to apply
- Uniform policy change now allows tattoos

Minimum Requirements:

- U.S. Citizen
- High School diploma/GED
- Valid driver license, less than 6 points
- Become a resident of Ohio prior to graduation



www.statepatrol.ohio.gov

#JoinOSHP

STATE HIGHWAY PATROL FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

CEO Landis Retires

On December 3, 2022, State Highway Patrol Federal Credit Union Chief Executive Officer Becky Landis retired after 13 years. Former CEO Landis was approved for an honorary associate membership into the Retirees' Association last fall, prior to her retirement. Thank you for your service.

Pictured to the right Becky Landis and Lieutenant Colonel Chuck Linek.



New CEO Leads SHPFCU

Let's meet the new CEO of SHPFCU, Danielle Chatfield-Beres

• *What is your vision for the Credit Union?*

I want us to be the first place OSHP staff think of when they need loans or deposit services. As a not-for-profit financial cooperative, we often have some of the best available rates and lowest levels of fees. I want to make sure people don't pay more for those services by going somewhere else. Additionally, one of my personal passions is financial education and we will be ramping up our work on the financial education front. I want no credit score left behind, and for all OSHP staff to feel like they can comfortably retire when the time comes. While many members of the Patrol have excellent credit and growing nest eggs, there are also individuals who have colorful credit and limited savings. We have recently partnered with a company called Greenpath Financial to provide one-on-one budgeting assistance and credit counseling resources. In addition, we'll be hosting financial education and savings planning events for people at different stages of their financial lives. In the coming years we will be rolling out additional products and services to make it even easier for our members to reach their financial goals. We are the only financial institution 100 percent dedicated to the Patrol and we hope everyone reading this will compare our services to their current providers to see if we can bring better value. Your financial health is our priority.



CEO Danielle Chatfield-Beres
State Highway Patrol FCU
dberes@patrolcu.com (614) 431-0784 x. 1141

AUXILIARY SHOE GIVE

Throughout the month of December, the Ohio State Highway Patrol Auxiliary donated 4,000 socks to Rock City Church's Christmas Shoe Give. The Auxiliary partnered with the church, the Ohio State Highway Patrol, Columbus Division of Police, Whitehall Division of Police and the Franklin County Sheriffs' Office at nine different events in and around Columbus. At each event, school-age students were given a new pair of shoes and socks.

Over the years, the Auxiliary has donated over 20,000 socks to school kids through the annual shoe gives.



RETIREES

Where are they now?

By Captain Rob Jackson, Retired

Retiree: Charles "Charlie" Morrison

Career: March 1985 - April 2008

Assignments: Circleville Post, Columbus District, Central Install GHQ Technology and Communication Services.

Charles "Charlie" Morrison, after a six year stint as a Circleville police officer, came to the Division as a dispatcher. He continued his public safety service to the citizens of Ohio progressing to the chief electronic technician in the state, specializing in the Multi Agency Radio Communications System (MARCS).

Upon retirement, Charlie didn't slow down as he continued serving the public in several capacities, while also pursuing many other diverse interests. As a retiree, Charlie served in the Bexley Police Department as a technical officer, worked as an IT security professional for The Savings Bank, became a licensed auctioneer and owner of a local auction house, and became a licensed real estate agent and broker manager. In addition, Charlie continued his service as a 21-year member of the Teays Valley School Board and served with the Pickaway County Sheriff's Office Reserve Unit as

the technical manager. Charlie also spent many years as a high school basketball and soccer official, along with many other local and charity organizations in the Central Ohio area.

Charlie and his wife Rhonda enjoy trips on their Honda trike and spending time with their kids and grandkids at their cabins in Tennessee. When asked about things he misses from his time at the Division, Charlie said he liked the people he worked with and missed the collaboration of the staff working on the implementation of MARCS.



Keeping in touch with other retirees is something Charlie enjoys, but admits this doesn't happen as much as he likes. He really enjoyed his co-workers and misses the daily interaction, reflecting that it was a special time to be part of the Ohio State Highway Patrol.



DARREN T. HUGGINS
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIVE SERVICES

Staff Lieutenant Darren T. Huggins, Office of Investigative Services, retired on December 15, 2022, after 32 years of state service. He began his state career with the Ohio Department of Youth Services as a parole officer in

January 1991. He joined the Patrol as a member of the 129th Academy Class in May 1997. He earned his commission in November of that year and was assigned to the Sandusky Post. As a trooper, he served at the Chardon Post and Cleveland Operations. In 2009, he was promoted to the rank of sergeant and transferred to Human Resources. As a sergeant, he also served in the Administrative Investigations Unit and the Hiram Post. In 2016, he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant and transferred to the Cleveland District Criminal Investigations Unit. In 2022, he was promoted to the rank of staff lieutenant and transferred to the Office of Investigative Services.

Staff Lieutenant Huggins earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in economics from The Ohio State University in 1988, and a Master of Arts degree in criminal justice from Tiffin University in 2004. He also earned a Master of Business Administration degree in business administration from Kent State University in 2015.

Staff Lieutenant Huggins served in the United States Army Reserve from 1989 to 2009, serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom.



LEVENTE D. BERRY
OFFICE OF PLANNING, RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Lieutenant Levente D. Berry, Office of Planning, Research and Development, retired on January 12, 2023, after 27 years with the Patrol. He began his Patrol career in April 1994 as a cadet dispatcher

assigned to the former Berea District Headquarters. He began training as a member of the 128th Academy Class in February 1997. He earned his commission in July of that year and was assigned to the Hiram Post. As a trooper, he also served at the Chardon and Cleveland posts, as well as the Cleveland District Office of Investigative Services. In 2011, he was promoted to the rank of sergeant and transferred to the Office of Personnel and Recruitment. As a sergeant, he also served in Security Services, Expo Center, and in the

Office of Training, Recruitment and Diversity. In 2019, he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant and remained in the Office of Training, Recruitment and Diversity.

Lieutenant Berry earned a Bachelor of Science degree in criminal justice from Cleveland State University in 1995, and a Master of Public Administration degree in criminal justice administration from Columbia Southern University in 2022.



ERIC S. DAMRON
CRITICAL INFORMATION CENTER

Lieutenant Eric S. Damron, Critical Information Communications Center, retired on February 1, 2023, after 24 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 Granville Post. As a trooper, he also served in Capitol Operations and the Patrol's Training Academy. In 2014, he was promoted to the rank of sergeant and remained at the Patrol's Training Academy. As a sergeant, he also served in Capitol Operations. In 2017, he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant and transferred to the Patrol's Training Academy.

Lieutenant Damron served in the United States Air Force from 1992 to 2000. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology from The Ohio State University in 2006.



JOSEPH A. GEBHART
PIQUA POST / D5

Lieutenant Joseph A. Gebhart, Piqua Post, retired on February 10, 2023, after 33 years with the Patrol. He began his Patrol career in May 1989, as a cadet dispatcher assigned to the Van Wert Post. He began his training as a member of the 119th Academy Class in January

1990. He earned his commission in June of that year and was assigned to the Piqua Post. In 1992, he earned the Ace Award for excellence in auto larceny enforcement. He was selected as Post Trooper of the Year twice. As a trooper, he also served at the Dayton, and the former Eaton posts. In 1999, he was promoted to the rank of sergeant and transferred to the St. Clairsville Post to serve as an assistant post commander. As a sergeant, he also served at the Dayton, Springfield, Xenia, the former Eaton and Piqua posts. In 2014, he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant and remained at the Piqua Post to serve as post commander.

Lieutenant Gebhart earned a certificate in advanced leadership training from The Ohio State University's John Glenn College of Public Affairs, Public Safety Leadership Academy in 2017.



**TIFFANY L. APPOLLONIO
COLUMBUS DISTRICT
HEADQUARTERS**

Sergeant Tiffany L. Appollonio, Columbus District Headquarters, retired on January 28, 2023, after 29 years with the Patrol. She began her Patrol career in January 1994, as a cadet dispatcher assigned to the Ravenna Post. She began her

training as a member of the 128th Academy Class in February 1997. She earned her commission in July of that year and was assigned to the Georgetown Post. As a trooper, she also served at the Mt. Gilead, Delaware and Circleville posts, Capitol Operations, Training Academy, and in the Office of Personnel and Recruitment. In 2017, she was promoted to the rank of sergeant and transferred to the Columbus District Headquarters.



**LISA D. GRAHAM
TRAINING ACADEMY**

Sergeant Lisa A. Graham, Training Academy, retired on December 30, 2022, after 21 years with the Patrol. She joined the Patrol in March 2001 as a member of the 137th Academy Class. She earned her commission in September of that year and was assigned to Capitol Operations.

As a trooper, she also served at the West Jefferson and Columbus posts and at the Patrol's Training Academy. In 2016, she was promoted to the rank of sergeant and remained at the Patrol's Training Academy.

Sergeant Graham served in the United States Marines Corps Reserve from 1998 to 2009, serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.



**JASON E. HIGHSMITH
MARYSVILLE POST / D5**

Sergeant Jason E. Highsmith, Marysville Post, retired on January 3, 2023, after 25 years with the Patrol. He joined the Patrol in October 1997 as a member of the 130th Academy Class. He earned his commission in May of the following

year and was assigned to the West Jefferson Post. In 2001, he earned the Criminal Patrol

Award and the Ace Award for excellence in auto larceny enforcement. As a trooper, he also served at the Patrol's Training Academy, the Central Ohio Motorcycle Unit and the Marysville Post. In 2012, he was promoted to the rank of sergeant and transferred to the Marysville Post to serve as an assistant post commander.

Sergeant Highsmith served in the United States Marine Corps.



**GARY T. WOLFE
NEW PHILADELPHIA POST
/ D7**

Sergeant Gary T. Wolfe, New Philadelphia Post, retired on February 4, 2023, after 25 years with the Patrol. He joined the Patrol in October 1997 as a member of the 130th Academy Class. He earned his commission in May of the

following year and was assigned to the Ashland Post. He earned the Trooper Recognition Award twice. As a trooper, he also served at the former Massillon Post and the former Massillon District Headquarters Commercial Enforcement Unit. In 2010, he was promoted to the rank of sergeant and transferred to the New Philadelphia to serve as an assistant post commander.



**RYAN E. ELSEY
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIVE
SERVICES**

Trooper Ryan E. Elsey, Office of Investigative Services, retired on December 9, 2022, after 23 years with the Patrol. He began his Patrol career in December 1998 as a cadet dispatcher assigned to the Xenia Post. He began his training as a

member of the 135th Academy Class in February 2000. He earned his commission in September of that year and was assigned to the former Eaton Post. As a trooper, he also served at the Dayton, West Jefferson, Columbus and Delaware posts, Columbus District Investigative Services, and in the Office of Criminal Patrol.



MICHAEL W. GURLEA
WARREN DISTRICT
CRIMINAL
INVESTIGATIONS UNIT

Trooper Michael W. Gurlea, Warren District Criminal Investigations Unit, retired on December 16, 2022, after 25 years with the Patrol. He joined the Patrol in October 1997 as a member of the

130th Academy Class. He earned his commission in May of the following year and was assigned to the Canfield Post. In 2010, he transferred to the Warren District Criminal Investigations Unit.

Trooper Gurlea served in the United States Army and Army National Guard from 1993 to 1996, and the Army National Guard from 1996 to 2004.



MONTEI M. SEXTON
CAPITOL OPERATIONS

Trooper Monte M. Sexton, Capitol Operations, retired on February 10, 2023, after 23 years with the Patrol. He began his state career in February 1999 with the Richland Correction Facility as a corrections officer. He began his training as a member of the 139th Academy

Class in April 2002. He earned his commission in October of that year and was assigned to the Norwalk Post. As a trooper, he also served at the Bucyrus Post.

Trooper Sexton served in the United States Air Force from 1994 to 1998, serving in Operation Desert Storm.



ANGELA R. SPITLER
PIQUA DISTRICT
COMMERCIAL
ENFORCEMENT UNIT

Trooper Angela R. Spidler, Piqua District Commercial Enforcement Unit, retired on December 19, 2022, after 28 years with the Patrol. She joined the Patrol in February 1994 as a member of the 126th Academy

Class. She earned her commission in July of that year and was assigned to Wapakoneta Post. In 1997, she earned the Superintendent's Citation of Merit Award. As a trooper, she also served at the Dayton and the former Eaton posts.



DRU A. PRATER
NEW PHILADELPHIA POST
/ D7

Dispatcher Dru A. Prater, New Philadelphia Post, retired on December 19, 2022, after 11 years with the Patrol. She joined the Patrol in April 2011 as a dispatcher assigned to the Cambridge Dispatch Center. As a dispatcher, she also

served at the New Philadelphia Dispatch Center. In 2018, she was selected as Post Dispatcher of the Year.

Dispatcher Prater earned a Bachelor of Arts degrees in accounting and economics/business from Muskingum University in 2017.



TAMMY S. RENFRO
LISBON POST / D4

Dispatcher Tammy S. Renfro, Lisbon Post, retired on December 17, 2022, after 22 years with the Patrol. She joined the Patrol in June 2000 as a dispatcher assigned to the Lisbon Post. As a dispatcher, she also served at the Canfield Post and the Lisbon Dispatch Center. She

was selected as Post Dispatcher of the Year four times.



GLEN L. MAFFITT
WARREN DISTRICT
COMMERCIAL
ENFORCEMENT UNIT

Motor Carrier Enforcement Inspector Glen L. Maffitt, Warren District Commercial Enforcement Unit, retired on December 30, 2022, after 33 years with the Patrol. He joined the Patrol in November

1989 as a CDL driver license examiner 2 assigned to the Warren District Headquarters. While at the Warren District Headquarters, he also served as a driver license examiner 1. In 2001, he was promoted to motor carrier enforcement inspector and transferred to the Warren District Commercial Enforcement Unit.



JOHN T. RAMMEL
PIQUA DISTRICT
COMMERCIAL
ENFORCEMENT UNIT

Motor Carrier Enforcement Inspector John T. Rammel, Piqua District Commercial Enforcement Unit, retired on February 3, 2023, after 31 years with the Patrol. He joined the Patrol in September 1993

as a dispatcher assigned to the Wapakoneta Post. In 1995, he was promoted to dispatcher 2 and remained at the Wapakoneta Post. In 2002, he was promoted to motor carrier enforcement inspector and transferred to the Piqua District Commercial Enforcement Unit.



GERALD T. WINNETT
CAMBRIDGE DISTRICT
COMMERCIAL
ENFORCEMENT UNIT

Portable Load Limit Inspector Gerald T. Winnett, Cambridge District Commercial Enforcement Unit, retired on January 6, 2023, after 28 years of state service. He began his state service with the

Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction as

a locksmith and correction officer in January 1997. He joined the Patrol in August 2018 as a portable load limit inspector and was assigned to the Cambridge District Commercial Enforcement Unit throughout his career.



ROBERT E. BLACK
FLEET MANAGEMENT

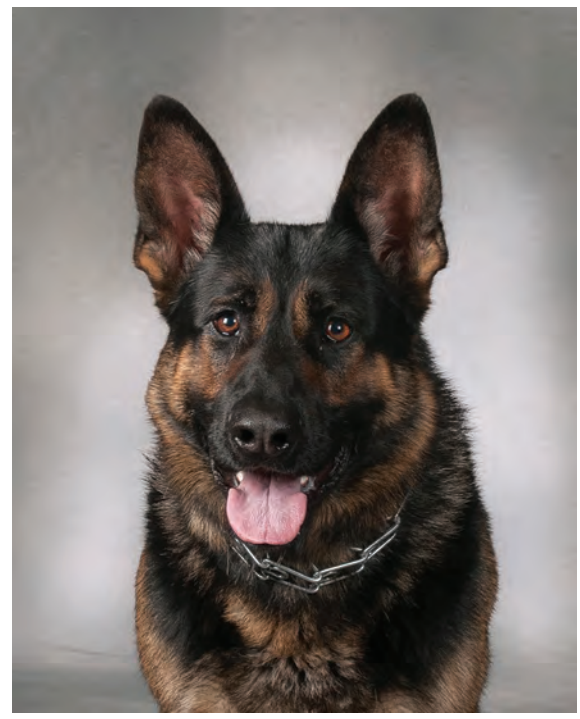
Motor Fleet Coordinator Specialist Robert E. Black, Fleet Management, retired on December 30, 2022, after 16 years with the Patrol. He joined the Patrol in November 2006 as an automotive body repair worker 1 assigned to Fleet Management.

As an automotive body repair worker 1, he also served in Fiscal Services. In 2015, he was promoted to motor fleet coordinator specialist and transferred to Fleet Management.

Motor Fleet Coordinator Specialist Black served in the United States Air Force from 1973 to 1976, serving in the Vietnam War.

PATROL MOURNS LOSS OF K9 BRUNO

The Jackson District Criminal Patrol Section and the Patrol mourns the loss of K9 Bruno. Bruno was put to sleep on December 30, 2022, after an aggressive form of cancer was discovered while being treated for an illness at the OSU Veterinary Medical Center. Bruno celebrated his 10th birthday on November 3. He began his career with the Patrol on June 4, 2014, and served alongside his partner, Trooper Ryan Day. Bruno was a dual purpose German Shepherd and had several significant seizures during his career. He was the most senior dog within the Division prior to his passing.



HIGHWAY HIGHLIGHTS

Comments received via social media.



Jenelle Williams

Private Message to Ohio State Highway Patrol

Hey! My boyfriend and I got a flat on the turnpike a little bit ago and Trooper Ray Santiago stopped to check on us. Our little jack broke and he had one and let us use it. He was so nice! I just wanted to send a little shout out to him! Our joke now is we will pray PRIOR to changing the tire so God is with us the whole time so we are all safe pulled over on the side of the road and also that he gives the little jacks in our vehicles some extra strength as well. We are very grateful! Thanks again so much! Give that guy a raise ❤️🙏

TRI STAR

Tri Star Career Compact

2h · 🌐

Ohio State Highway Patrolman Rob Gatchel speaks to Tri Star students about safe driving. Thanks to trooper Gatchel for taking time to help our students see the importance of safe driving. [#drivesafe](#) [#teamwork](#) [#CareerTechOhio](#)



Ales Ficko

Feb 10, 2023

Hello! Today at 9:01 am I was stopped by your trooper. I was driving little too fast on 75S in Miami county. I would officially like to thank to both troopers for being extremely professional and polite. I didn't get a ticket but even if I would have, my respect for all the troopers would remain the same! Thank you all for all the service you are providing, for all hard work you are doing just to keep us safe! Thank you and I appreciate every one of you! [Show Less](#)



Cassie Hayes

Feb 28, 2023

I'm a mom who wanted to send thanks to your officer who stopped and helped my son w a flat on 16 a bit ago. He was changing his tire and it was close to the road and one of your officers pulled up to check on him. I know they don't have to but driving by on the other side to turn around to come to my son and seeing an officer, checking his bolts, warmed my heart. Thank you guys for what you do. It is truly appreciate it! [Show Less](#)

Private Message to Ohio State Highway Patrol



2022 Leadership Awards



CHAPLAIN'S COMMENTS



When my children were small, I was the go-to guy to get splinters out of little hands, and in some cases, little feet. I didn't have the luxury of the modern splinter outs, so I used the more primitive "poker and pinchers", as my children called them. If you were to have asked them, they would have described the use of a needle and tweezers as some form of Medieval torture. I don't mean to brag, but I could perform that routine procedure in about five seconds flat.

One of my children was not convinced of my unparalleled ability. It so happened that this same child got a splinter in their hand. I offered my assistance in removing the splinter, but they wanted nothing to do with my use of the poker and the pinchers. I was a great parent until I became one. Since becoming a parent, I have lived every day trying to do the best I could. Sometimes I get it right. Sometimes I get it wrong. In this case, we wanted to allow this child to make the decision about their own care. Our thought was that they would only endure the pain for a little while and that the pain would motivate them to change their mind about the poker and the pinchers. This turned out to be an epic parenting fail. When more than a week went by and the hand was swollen, hot to the touch, and was bright red, we decided that it was time to intervene, regardless of the fear. We explained that the splinter had to come out. I did everything I could to make it as quick and painless as possible. My wife served as the distraction. I used Lidocaine to alleviate as much pain as possible. Wielding nothing but the poker and the pinchers, I went to work. Even with the infection, I was under ten seconds. I was putting the Band-Aid on and my child didn't know that I already had the splinter out.

To be perfectly honest, the behavior seemed ridiculous to me. That is, until I saw those same tendencies in me. I don't know about you, but when I am hurting, I have to fight the natural tendency to withdraw, isolate, and pull away from those who can, and would, help me if I would give them the chance. I tend to do this with friendships, but I also have to wrestle with the temptation to do the same thing with God. In these times of wrestling, it becomes extremely easy for me to slip into dysfunctional behaviors in an effort to kill the pain. It is almost as if I am afraid that God will be repulsed by my wound, or at very least my condition. I have found over and over again, when I finally turn to Him in my brokenness, never once have I received judgement. Rather, He sees me through eyes of compassion.

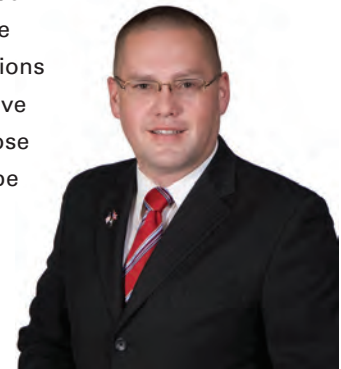
My belief that God is a good Father who always wants what is best for His children is bedrock to my faith and theology. If this is true, God must be heartbroken to see His children struggle under burdens they were never meant to carry. Sometimes these started off as minor irritations that got under our skin, but in time, left unattended, these can become quite painful and serve as a constant reminder. God wants to help us. I want to encourage you to invite Him into those places that are causing you pain. Even if He has to use the poker and the pinchers, you will be better for it.

Blessings!

Reverend Phil Hurlbert

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Phil Hurlbert".

State Chaplain



FLYING WHEEL

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

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Ohio Department of Public Safety
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