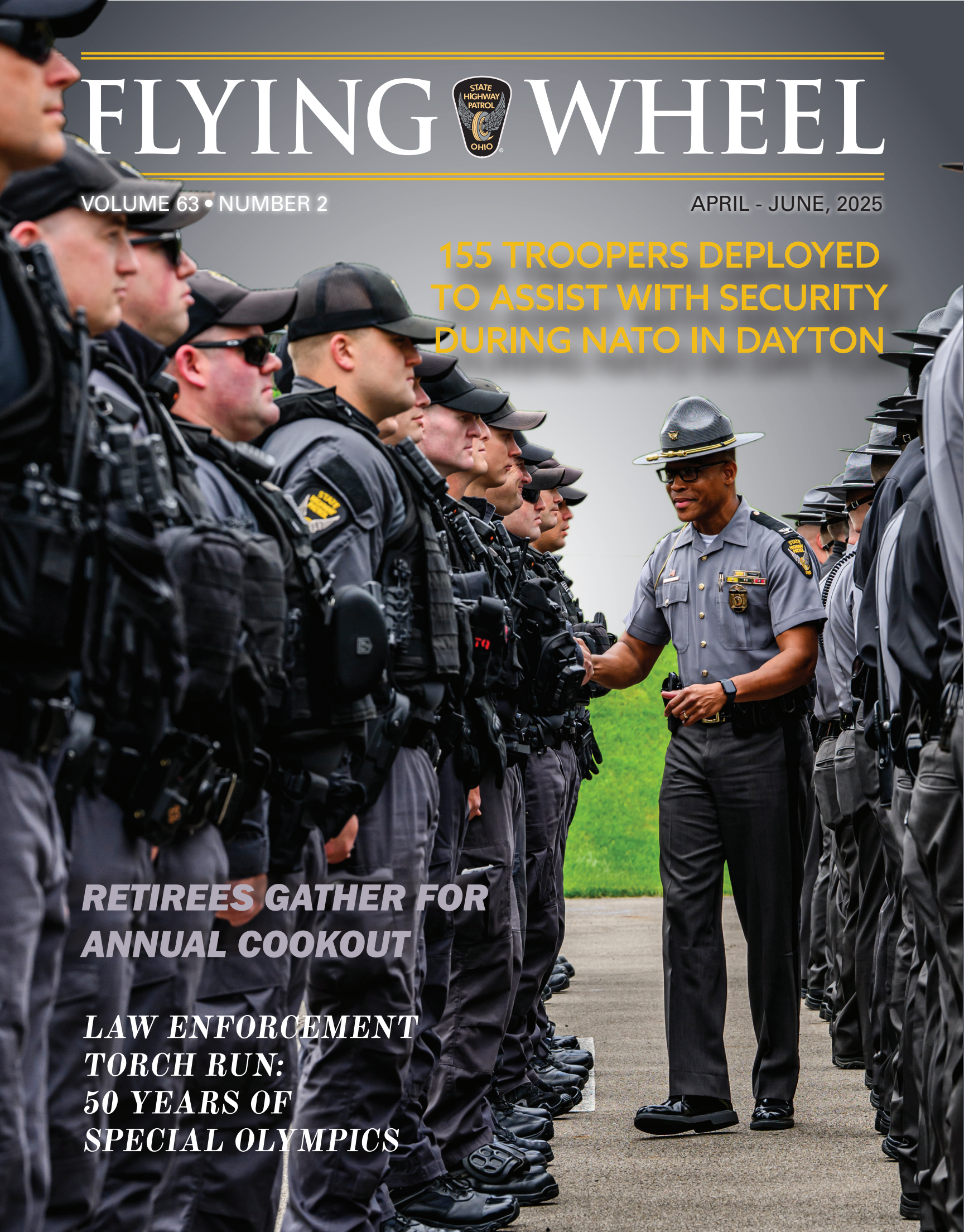




FLYING WHEEL

VOLUME 63 • NUMBER 2

APRIL - JUNE, 2025

**155 TROOPERS DEPLOYED
TO ASSIST WITH SECURITY
DURING NATO IN DAYTON**

**RETIREES GATHER FOR
ANNUAL COOKOUT**

**LAW ENFORCEMENT
TORCH RUN:
50 YEARS OF
SPECIAL OLYMPICS**

OHIO STATE
HIGHWAY PATROL

COLONEL'S LETTER



Across nearly 92 years of history, the strength of the Ohio State Highway Patrol has never come from a single moment. It comes from people, those who stand beside us and those that laid the foundation we continue to build on today.

In this issue of the Flying Wheel, we reflect on that strength through moments of fellowship, remembrance and service.

We recently celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Retiree Cookout, an event started by Colonel Paul Pride that continues to bring generations together. Colonel Pride had a vision – that the Patrol isn't something you leave when you retire. Each story shared, each handshake and hug exchanged, speaks to the depth of our connection. This event is more than a tradition, it's a reflection of what makes our Division unlike any other.

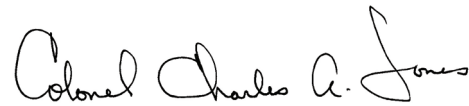
That same sense of connection was powerfully visible during this year's Memorial Ceremony, where we honored the 48 members of this Division who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to Ohio. It was a day filled with both solemnity and strength. A reminder that the call to serve lives on in the lives and character of those who continue to wear the Flying Wheel today.

That same character is at the heart of our ongoing mental health and wellness initiatives. This issue's Lighthouse article highlights how leadership can shape a culture of mental readiness, not just for the difficult days, but in the daily, steady work of supporting one another. It's a reminder that wellness is a shared responsibility, and that often, the strongest leaders are the ones who are first to check in, ask the hard questions and remind others they're not alone.

I say it often; everything we do begins with people. The people beside us, and the people we serve.

Thank you for continuing to serve, to support and to show what it means to serve with an unwavering purpose.

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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- \$34.22 per hour upon graduation

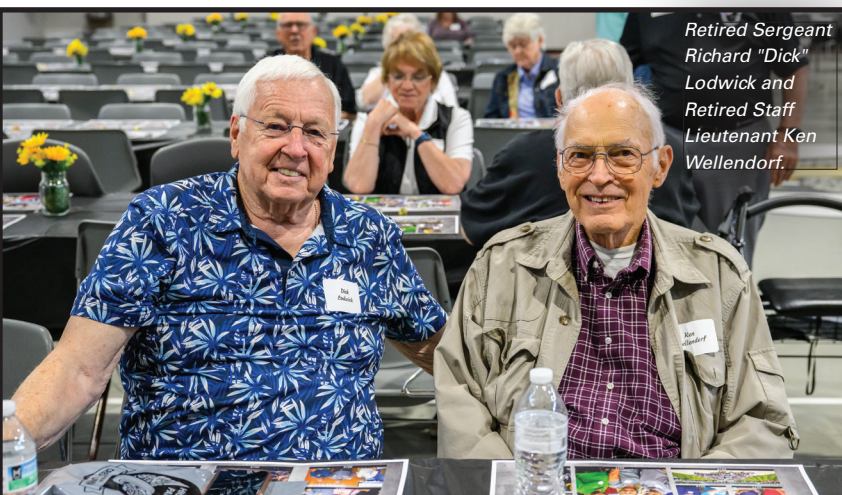


For more information, visit statepatrol.ohio.gov, or scan the QR code above.





*Retired Sergeant
Michael Webber,
Maggie Graven and
Retired Lieutenant
Colonel Peyton Watts.*



*Retired Sergeant
Richard "Dick"
Lodwick and
Retired Staff
Lieutenant Ken
Wellendorf.*

10TH ANNUAL RETIREE COOKOUT

On June 6, retired sworn officers and professional staff of the Ohio State Highway Patrol gathered at the Patrol's Training Academy for the 10th anniversary of the Retiree Cookout. The event, created in 2014 by Colonel Paul A. Pride and held in conjunction with Retiree Appreciation Month, continues to serve as a meaningful opportunity for members of the Patrol family – past and present – to reconnect and reflect.

Originally established in 2015, Retiree Appreciation Month was created to honor the enduring contributions of retirees. While the observance was later moved to June, the spirit of gratitude and recognition remains unchanged. Now in its 10th year, the Retiree Cookout stands as a cornerstone event that highlights the legacy of those who have served.

Upon arrival, attendees were greeted by several historic Patrol vehicles, coordinated by retired Sergeant Dale LaRue, and the Division's Airbus helicopter was showcased by the Aviation Section. These exhibits offered a powerful visual connection between the Division's rich history and its ongoing evolution.

Also in attendance were Trooper Paul E. Appleman and Hope, the Division's first therapy dog, who represent the Patrol's continued investment in mental health and wellness. Their presence served as a reminder of the Division's commitment to supporting the well-being of all members, active and retired.

During the formal program, attendees heard from



Retired lieutenants Arnie Schropp and Ernie Wilson stand next to their class photo for the 85th cadet class.



Lieutenant Johnnie H. Maier, retired Sergeant Stephen Stevenson, Linda Wade and retired Trooper Bill Wade.



Retired Trooper Neil Patton admires a vintage Plymouth Fury, used by the Patrol in the 1970s and early 1980s.



Cadets from the 177th class serve retired Sergeant Frank S. Day and other retirees at the cookout.

Colonel Charles A. Jones, who reflected on the importance of the retiree community and the enduring bond that defines the Division.

"It is a blessing to look out and see so many familiar faces," Colonel Jones said. "This event is more than a tradition, it's a homecoming. We get to gather as a Patrol family, share stories and remember what brought us together in the first place – serving our great state – with purpose."

Colonel Jones recognized the foundational vision of Colonel Pride, noting that the retiree event would not exist without his leadership. He also acknowledged the 50th anniversary of the Ohio State Highway Patrol Retirees' Association, praising the organization's role in maintaining connection and continuity across generations of service.

In a solemn moment of remembrance, attendees paused for a moment of silence in honor of the 35 retirees who passed away in 2024. Their service and impact were acknowledged with gratitude and respect.

Cadets from the 176th and 177th Academy Classes were present at the event, engaging with retirees and displaying the next generation of leadership within the Division. Their participation served as a powerful reminder of the mentorship and example set by those who came before them.

Following the program, attendees enjoyed time to reconnect, share memories and engage in the fellowship that defines the annual cookout. For many, it was a chance to revisit friendships forged through decades of service and to reflect on a career spent serving the citizens of Ohio.

Special thanks are extended to the State Highway Patrol Federal Credit Union, Ohio State Highway Patrol Retirees' Association, Ohio State Troopers Retirees Association and the Ohio State Highway Patrol Auxiliary for their continued support in making this event possible.

PATROL RECOGNIZED AT STATEHOUSE FOR PERFORMANCE IN INAUGURAL NATIONAL TOP TROOPER COMPETITION

On May 30, Governor Mike DeWine recognized the outstanding performance of the Ohio State Highway Patrol at the inaugural National Top Trooper Competition, hosted by the Texas Department of Public Safety. The ceremony, held at the Ohio Statehouse, also included Lieutenant Governor Jim Tressel and honored Trooper Samuel R. Hammon, Defiance Post; Trooper Sarah A. Korsten, Elyria Post and Trooper Adam T. Pollitt, Training Academy, for their exceptional representation of the Ohio State Highway Patrol on the national stage.

The competition, which took place at the Texas Department of Public Safety Tactical Training Center in early May, brought together troopers from 15 states. Over three intense days, competitors faced a series of challenges designed to test every aspect of operational readiness, including tactical skills, driving, marksmanship, physical fitness and leadership. The event culminated in a team competition that reflected not just individual performance, but unity and preparation.

Trooper Hammon earned a second place overall national finish and a first place award in the leadership interview event. Trooper Korsten earned first place in a national driving event and was recognized as the top overall female driver in the nation. Their combined efforts, along with critical support from Trooper Pollitt, earned the Patrol a second place finish in the national team competition – an extraordinary achievement in a field of elite law enforcement professionals.

Trooper Pollitt played a vital leadership role as the team's leader and alternate. His work behind the scenes, from logistics to morale, was instrumental to the team's overall success.

The Patrol's leadership was also well-represented at the competition. Lieutenant Colonel Joshua M. Swindell, Staff Lieutenant Andre T. Swinerton, Training Academy and Staff Lieutenant Jerod L. Keyes, Office of Finance and Logistics, traveled to Texas to stand with the team and show support on behalf of the Division.

Governor DeWine's recognition of the performance of these troopers reflects the professionalism, preparation and heart that define the Ohio State Highway Patrol. Their success stands as a proud milestone for our Division – and it sets the bar for next year.

Ohio has been selected to host next year's National Top Trooper Competition.



Staff Lieutenant Andre T. Swinerton, Staff Lieutenant Jerod L. Keyes, Trooper Samuel R. Hammon, Trooper Sarah A. Korsten and Lieutenant Colonel Joshua M. Swindell with Texas State Troopers.



Trooper Sarah A. Korsten, Trooper Adam T. Pollitt and Trooper Samuel R. Hammon at the National Top Trooper Competition.



Trooper Adam T. Pollitt, Governor Mike DeWine, Trooper Samuel R. Hammon and Trooper Sarah A. Korsten at the Ohio Statehouse.

155 TROOPERS DEPLOYED TO ASSIST WITH SECURITY OPERATIONS DURING THE 2025 NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY IN DAYTON



From May 22-26, the city of Dayton hosted the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Parliamentary Assembly in recognition of the 30th anniversary of the signing of the Dayton Peace Accords. This was the first time in over two decades that the assembly convened in the United States, bringing together more than 600 delegates, officials and dignitaries from NATO's 32 member countries.

The presence of our personnel, including members of the Patrol's Intelligence and Public Affairs units, at the NATO Parliamentary Assembly played a vital role in the event being conducted without incident, while also giving those who wished to peacefully exercise their right to protest the ability to do so in a safe and law-abiding

environment. The Dayton Police Department was the lead security agency for the event. Recognizing the scale of the event and the need for enhanced security, they requested additional support from the Ohio State Highway Patrol. In response, the Patrol began working in partnership with various local and federal agencies on event security preparations.

To accommodate the event, a designated area of downtown Dayton was transformed into a secure zone known as "NATO Village," which encompassed key venues where meetings took place. This area was under restricted access, and to gain entry, credentials were mandatory.

For enhanced security, both an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and Tactical Operations Center (TOC) were established. The EOC served as a centralized hub for strategic planning, emergency messaging and interagency communication, while the TOC focused on real-time tactical coordination and resource allocation.

The Patrol's purpose at the event was to assist the city of Dayton and ensure the safety and security of both the members of the assembly and those who live within the city. In order to fulfill this purpose, 155 state troopers were deployed to Dayton to assist with security, crowd control and motorcades. Strategic deployment of our troopers around key venues, transportation routes and public access points served as a strong deterrent to potential threats.

The Patrol's coordination with our federal and local law enforcement partners created a seamless security network that provided both visible and behind-the-scenes protection throughout the event.

The success of this event underscores the critical role we play in upholding public safety. The Ohio State Highway Patrol was honored to answer the call to assist the city of Dayton, and we are grateful to all of our public safety partners for a safe and successful event.

ECHOES OF HONOR: PATROL HONORS THE FALLEN

On May 9, the Ohio State Highway Patrol gathered once again at the Training Academy to honor the 48 members who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to the state of Ohio. Families of the fallen, retirees, current personnel and public officials filled Leadership Hall, which faces the black granite wall and the Ellsworth Eternal Flame, both symbols of remembrance, sacrifice and enduring honor.

The Memorial Ceremony is a tradition of the Division, but more than that, it is a promise kept. A promise that the names etched in stone will never fade from our memory or from our mission. Colonel Charles A. Jones, Patrol superintendent, shared in his remarks, "We are surrounded by the echoes of their bravery, the echoes of their dedication and the echoes of their honor."

Colonel Jones reflected on the meaning of honor, not just in how the fallen served, but in how those still wearing the Flying Wheel must carry forward that legacy. "Honor is the very fabric of our profession," he said. "It is the integrity with which we carry out our duties, the respect we show everyone and the courage we exemplify, especially in the face of adversity."

This year's ceremony also remembered the late Reverend Richard D. Ellsworth, the Patrol's state chaplain whose presence became a source of comfort across the Division for more than 30 years. "He carried our burdens. He lifted our spirits. And in dark hours, he was a light that

guided us back to hope," said Colonel Jones. The eternal flame that is dedicated to Reverend Ellsworth and his wife, Linda, continues to burn as a symbol of the sacrifice made by the fallen and of the commitment to never forget them.

That commitment was seen in the presence of the families of the fallen, many of whom return each year, and in the continued support shown by retirees who remain deeply connected to the Patrol's mission. This year, two retirees returned to participate in the ceremony: Staff Lieutenant William D. Healy and Staff Lieutenant C. Lance Mathess.

The Memorial Ceremony is a deeply moving tradition, and nowhere is that more evident than in the roll call. Retired Major Robert W. Booker, President of the Ohio Highway Patrol Retirees' Association, read the names of the 48 fallen aloud. As each name was read, the bell was tolled and a rose was placed at the base of the granite wall in solemn tribute.

To honor each of the fallen across the state, the Memorial Fallen Flag Project was once again held earlier that morning. Troopers from local posts visited the resting places of the fallen and placed a United States flag at each site. "Each flag is a promise," said Colonel Jones. "A promise that their lives are not forgotten."



Sergeant Ryan R. Stanley tolls the bell at the memorial ceremony.

Honor Escorts included:

- Bucyrus District Trooper of the Year, Trooper Shane D. Spieth
- Warren District Trooper of the Year, Trooper Jaime Santiago
- Piqua District Trooper of the Year, Trooper Coleton J. Piatt
- Columbus District Trooper of the Year, Sergeant Brian K. Garloch
- Cambridge District Trooper of the Year, Trooper Jeremy L. Border
- Jackson District Trooper of the Year, Trooper Trent J. Thompson
- Police Officer of the Year, Police Officer 2 Joshua E. Wayt
- Retired Staff Lieutenant William D. Healy
- Retired Staff Lieutenant C. Lance Mathess

LAW ENFORCEMENT TORCH RUN FOR SPECIAL OLYMPICS



Trooper Alejandro Giraldo high fives Special Olympics athlete Riley Stang as they pass the torch to one another.

On Friday, June 13, the Patrol proudly participated in the final leg of the Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics. The event began at the Patrol's Training Academy and concluded at Jesse Owens Memorial Stadium at The Ohio State University, the site of the Special Olympics Ohio Opening Ceremonies.

Motorcycle, bicycle and mounted units from the Patrol and the Columbus Division of Police, along with other local agencies, ensured the route was safely navigated. Cadets from the Patrol's 176th and 177th Academy Classes, as well as a class from the Columbus Division of Police, ran in cadence, demonstrating their support and adding to the powerful visual impact of the event.

The arrival of the "Flame of Hope" at the stadium marked a significant moment for all involved. As the torch entered, athletes, supporters and spectators shared in a moment of celebration. Special Olympian Riley Stang addressed participants before the run, stating, "I am so thankful for the law enforcement team that has fundraised and, more importantly, given us the gift of your time, encouragement and friendship."

This year also marks the 50th anniversary of Special Olympics. A commemorative display is currently featured in Heritage Hall at the Training Academy.

176TH ACADEMY CLASS HERO RUN FOR REVEREND ELLSWORTH



Members of the 176th Academy Class, Training Academy staff and senior staff took part in the Hero Run on May 15, honoring Reverend Richard D. "Rev" Ellsworth. He served as the Patrol's State Chaplain for more than 30 years before his passing in August 2021. The eternal flame, located in front of the Patrol's memorial wall, is named for him and his wife, Linda.

Patrol instructors led cadets on a route near the Patrol's Training Academy and ended the run with a presentation to one of Rev's daughters, Pam Ellsworth Miller. The Hero Run gives Training Academy staff the opportunity to both guide cadets and honor the legacy of the Patrol's fallen. Previous Hero Runs have honored Trooper Robert Perez Jr., Trooper James R. Gross, Patrolman Carl L. Thrush and Trooper Wendy G. Everett.

PATROL MEMORIAL DAY HERO WORKOUT



On May 23, cadets from the 176th Academy Class took part in the annual Patrol Memorial Day Hero Workout. Major Michael D. Kemmer, Training, Recruitment and Professional Operations; Major Jacob D. Pyles, Planning, Research and Development; and Captain Jeffrey S. Davis, Training; joined cadets, Training Academy staff and troopers from across the state to challenge themselves to honor the memory of our fallen heroes. The challenge served as a reminder to never forget their sacrifice and let their memories inspire us to live each day with gratitude, strength and purpose. Ohio Strength hosted the event and CrossFit Crave provided coaches.

LIGHT OHIO BLUE HOLDS 10TH ANNUAL MEMORIAL CEREMONY AND CRUISER CARAVAN

The Ohio State Highway Patrol joined law enforcement agencies from across the state to participate in the annual Light Ohio Blue campaign from May 7-17, which honors law enforcement officers who have died in the line of duty and their surviving family members. The campaign also shows support for active law enforcement personnel from across the state.

To kick off the 2025 Light Ohio Blue campaign, a ceremony was held at the Chief James G. Jackson Columbus Police Training Academy on May 7.

The keynote speaker for this year's ceremony was Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost.

Light Ohio Blue also recognized four individuals with awards for their work to support law enforcement and their communities. Those who received awards included: Lieutenant Colonel Joshua M. Swindell, Blue Crier Award; Columbus Division of Police Sergeant Isaac Bridges, Officer of the Year; Al Coughlan Jr., Citizen of the Year and Franklin County Sheriff Dallas Baldwin, Peter Tobin Lifetime Law Enforcement Achievement Award. The Patrol's Public Affairs Unit was also honored for its lasting impact and dedication to Light Ohio Blue.

Following the ceremony, a Memorial Cruiser Caravan, comprised of more than 150 cruisers from law enforcement agencies from across the state, departed from Columbus and traveled through West Jefferson, Plain City, Hilliard and Upper Arlington, before ending in downtown Columbus. Throughout the caravan, all law enforcement vehicles displayed their emergency lights in an effort to, "light the sky blue."

For the duration of the 2025 Light Ohio Blue campaign, all Patrol posts added a blue light to the exterior of their buildings to show continued support.



Lieutenant Colonel Joshua M. Swindell, recipient of the Blue Crier Award.



Members of the Public Affairs Unit, shown left to right: Public Information Officer 1 Logan P. Nowlin, Public Information Officer 1 Mariah R. McVeigh, Public Information Officer 1 Jonah M. Young, Project Manager 2 Jeffrey W. Grayson, Public Information Officer 2 Julie A. Akers, Public Information Officer 2 Mara E. Diaz and Staff Lieutenant Tiffany L. Meeks.



The crowd cheers and waves their flags as the Cruiser Caravan progresses.



Members of Cadet Class 176 and 177 wave to the crowd during the Memorial Cruiser Caravan.

HIGHWAY DEDICATIONS ACROSS NORTHEAST OHIO TO HONOR THE FALLEN



Members of the Dawson family join Colonel Jones and Ohio Senator Sandra O'Brien in unveiling the highway memorial sign.

Chief Radio Operator Walter Dawson

- On April 10, U.S. 422 between Warren-Burton Road and state Route 534 in Trumbull County was dedicated to Ohio State Highway Patrol Chief Radio Operator Walter Dawson. He was fatally injured in a Patrol car crash in Trumbull County on May 31, 1953.

Ohio Department of Public Safety Director Andy Wilson, Ohio State Highway Patrol Colonel Charles A. Jones and Ohio Senator Sandra O'Brien provided remarks at the ceremony, held at the Warren District Headquarters. Walter Dawson Sr. provided remarks on behalf of the family.



Patrolman William J. Keller - On June 30, the highway dedication for Patrolman William J. Keller took place at the Ravenna Post. Patrolman Keller was fatally struck by a pickup truck while outside of his patrol car handling a traffic stop on Interstate 76 in Rootstown in Portage County on October 14, 1972. The dedicated highway in Portage County runs along Interstate 76 between Lakewood and Industry roads.

Ohio State Highway Patrol Colonel Charles A. Jones and former Ohio Representative Gail Pavilga spoke during the ceremony. Patrolman Keller's daughter, Kristi Woodford, provided remarks on behalf of the family.



dedicated stretch of roadway is located in the southbound lane of state Route 46 outside of the Canfield Post to state Route 446. Dispatcher D'Apolito passed away on March 17, 2021, as a result of a medical emergency while on duty at the Canfield Dispatch Center.

During the ceremony, Ohio State Highway Patrol Colonel Charles A. Jones and Ohio Senator Al Cutrona spoke. Dispatcher D'Apolito's mother, Pattie D'Apolito, provided remarks on behalf of the family.

Dispatcher Anthony J. D'Apolito

- On June 9, members of the Patrol gathered at the Canfield Post for the highway dedication ceremony for Dispatcher Anthony J. D'Apolito. The



Patrolman James P. Gardner

- The highway dedication for Patrolman James P. Gardner took place on June 27 at the Canton Post. The dedicated highway runs along U.S. 62 between Western

and South Mahoning avenues in Stark County. Patrolman Gardner was the victim of a fatal traffic crash on February 28, 1948.

Ohio State Highway Patrol Colonel Charles A. Jones and retired Patrol Lieutenant and Ohio Representative Kevin D. Miller provided remarks during the ceremony. Raymond Gardner provided remarks on behalf of the family. Patrolman Gardner's great nephew, Lieutenant Erik A. Golias, delivered the invocation.

Left: Colonel Charles A. Jones, Patrol superintendent, former State Representative Gail Pavilga; Mildred (Milly) Keller, widow; Kristi Woodford, daughter; and Lieutenant Erik A. Golias, Ravenna Post commander.

18 MEMBERS OF THE 176TH ACADEMY CLASS GRADUATE

The Ohio State Highway Patrol's 176th Academy Class graduated from the Ohio State Highway Patrol Training Academy on June 20 after 28 weeks of intense training.

Trooper Jason B. Bolha, Findlay Post, was selected as class speaker, while four graduates received special honors for top performance in various fields of study at the Training Academy.

The honorees were:

- **Overall performance –**
Tpr. Brent T. Wilson, Chardon Post
- **Top performance in academics –**
Tpr. Micah S. Flatt, Wooster Post
- **Top performance in driving –**
Tpr. Ethan G. White, Dayton Post
- **Top performance in firearms –**
Tpr. Gabriel Q. Combs, Wapakoneta Post
- **Top performance in physical fitness –**
Tpr. Brent T. Wilson, Chardon Post



During the graduation, Colonel Charles A. Jones, Patrol superintendent, provided remarks. State Representative Haraz N. Ghanbari delivered the commencement address to the 18 members of the Patrol's 176th Academy Class. Judge David A. Trimmer, Fairfield County Court of Common Pleas, issued the Oath of Office.

Graduates reported to their assigned posts on June 22.

12TH OHIO PSLA CLASS GRADUATES



On June 13, the 12th Public Safety Leadership Academy (PSLA) graduated 35 law enforcement leaders from around Ohio, including 10 from the Ohio State Highway Patrol. Lieutenant Colonel Chuck Linek and Mark Weaver, an instructor for PSLA, addressed the graduates.

During the 11 weeks of accredited, college-level training, graduates learned skills necessary to manage any division

within a law enforcement agency. Each graduate earned a leadership certificate and 10 hours of academic credit through The Ohio State University John Glenn College of Public Affairs. During the class, they completed 274 hours of instruction on leadership, community engagement, public administration and contemporary issues in policing.

The graduates traveled to Washington, D.C., and the Flight 93 National Memorial in Shanksville, Pa., where they toured sites that shaped our nation's leaders and they attended specialized training for peace officers at the National Holocaust Museum. As part of a community outreach effort, graduates partnered with the Mid-Ohio Food Collective on May 29 to support a free food market, providing food to Central Ohioans in need. The event was part of the academy's commitment to fostering servant-minded leadership and giving back to the communities they serve.

Patrol personnel who graduated included: Lieutenant Brandi M. Allen, Expo Center; Sergeant Clarke W. Franz, Lancaster Post; Lieutenant Coby L. Holloway, Mt. Gilead Post; Sergeant Joshua W. Hunter, Administrative Investigations Unit; Lieutenant Daniel H. Jesse, Cleveland District Investigations; Staff Lieutenant Brian R. McFarland, Cambridge District Headquarters; Lieutenant Daniel W. Morrison, Lisbon Post; Lieutenant Jason P. Murfield, Mansfield Post; Lieutenant Chad E. Smith, Lebanon Post; and Lieutenant Garic B. Warner, Critical Communications Center.

JUNIOR CADET WEEK HELD



The Ohio State Highway Patrol held the annual Junior Cadet Week from June 22-26 at the Patrol's Training Academy. This year, 25 rising high school seniors interested in law enforcement had the opportunity to attend. The week is a five-day, intense and immersive training where junior cadets interact with troopers in the motorcycle unit, aviation unit, special response team, crime lab and criminal patrol/k-9 sections. Junior Cadet Week is a joint program of OSHP, Ohio American Legion – Buckeye Boys State, American Legion – Department of Ohio – Buckeye Girls State and the Ohio State Highway Patrol Auxiliary.

BUCKEYE BOYS AND BUCKEYE GIRLS STATE



Buckeye Boys State at Miami University.

Buckeye Boys State took place at Miami University in Butler County from June 8-15. Lieutenant Joseph M. Weeks, Xenia Post; Sergeant Brian K. Garloch, Bucyrus Post and Trooper Jamie Santiago, Chardon Post, served as their commanders. Colonel Charles A. Jones conducted an inspection and addressed the attendees during the graduation ceremony. The graduates included David Rike, whose father is Captain Scott C. Rike, Bucyrus District commander, who was in attendance. A memorial ceremony was also held, where Lieutenant Colonel Joshua M. Swindell delivered remarks.

Simultaneously, Buckeye Girls State was held at Bowling Green State University in Wood County from June 8-14. Buckeye Girls State was led by Sergeant Allison O. Mentis, Milan Post; Sergeant Dana R. Skinner, Van Wert Post and Sergeant Madison N. Moore, Expo Center. On June 11, Major Anne R. Ralston, Office of Personnel, conducted an inspection and spoke during the graduation ceremony.

During the week, the Public Affairs Unit conducted DRIVE to Live presentations at both locations.

Buckeye Boys State and Buckeye Girls State are educational leadership programs designed for rising seniors in high school. The programs provide hands-on experience in a democratic form of government and are sponsored by the American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary of Ohio.



Buckeye Girls State at Bowling Green State University.

LOST DOG BECOMES TROOPER FOR A DAY



On May 8, Sergeant Michael "Brett" Claxon, Canton Post, rescued a dog on Interstate 77. Before his new furry friend was safely returned to its owner, he was coaxed off the roadway and jumped right into the driver's seat of the cruiser. In the video (*viewable at the QR code below*), you can hear Sergeant Claxon ask the dog if he is going to be a trooper today. Eventually, the dog comes over for scratches from Sergeant Claxon, causing social media to paw-sitively fall in love. It looks like this furry friend really did want to be a trooper for the day.



Scan the QR code to watch video of the dog rescue.

TROOPER NEFF ASSISTS MOTORIST



On June 18, Ohio resident Kory Waite went to Facebook to express his gratitude towards Trooper Brian R. Neff and the Cambridge Post. When Waite, "overestimated the amount of gas left in the car," he found himself stranded with his two young daughters. Trooper Neff came to the rescue. Waite expressed that Trooper Neff was, "incredibly nice and very polite," treating the girls like family and even letting them take a ride in the cruiser.

KENTUCKY TORNADOES

On Monday, May 19, after devastating tornadoes struck Somerset and London, Ky. two days before, Trooper David L. Ellis, Regional Training Unit; Trooper Steven J. Drew, Regional Training Unit; and friends Blake Naylor and Steven Craddock, loaded donations into a truck and trailer and drove south. They asked their Georgetown community for assistance, and within 48 hours, friends and neighbors responded with overwhelming generosity, donating bottled water, baby supplies, hygiene items, pet food, cleaning supplies and clothing.

They coordinated with Kentucky State Police, FBI and local government officials. Every item was delivered to a makeshift government distribution hub in London, Ky. Inmates, volunteers and government officials assisted with unloading all of the items.

"This effort was fueled not by an organization, but by faith, friends and a shared commitment to serve," said Trooper Ellis. "I am truly humbled by the response and reminded of the good that exists when people come together for a common service with a purpose."



An assortment of items collected for donation.

CENTRAL INSTALL: GETTING YOU ROAD READY

In the heart of the Alum Creek Facility is one of the Patrol's most critical, yet often unseen, support units: Central Install. Officially part of the Office of Finance and Logistics, this team of highly skilled electronic technicians is responsible for transforming vehicles into mobile command centers and ensuring troopers have the equipment they need to do their jobs safely and effectively.

Every cruiser on the road, every emergency light that flashes, every radio transmission that links a trooper to dispatch – all of it begins here.

The work done at Central Install is deeply technical, but the impact is human. It's about more than cables and software—it's about lives. "My favorite part of my job is coming to the job every day," says Electronic Technician 2 William "J.J." Massey. "Our troopers are out there risking their lives and we are supplying them with their office space, as well as the tools they need."

An Electronic Technician 1 starts their journey under the mentorship of more experienced technicians, learning to install the infrastructure for a wide range of systems including radios, in-car video, sirens, emergency lights and even the vehicle repeater systems that keep troopers connected in areas where standard radios can't reach. These installs require hands-on customization, troubleshooting and a deep understanding of both electronics and the operational needs of law enforcement.

Before a vehicle is ready for the road, it goes through a meticulous final inspection. Every wire is secured, every light is tested and every system is synced for seamless use in high-stress environments. Central Install technicians also repair and refurbish electronic equipment, breathing new life into devices that have endured the rigors of the road.

Electronic Technician 2s work independently, often traveling across districts to troubleshoot, repair or upgrade complex systems. They monitor signal performance and power output according to Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulations, ensuring communication is clear and compliant. From soldering tiny components to testing radio modulation, their technical skills are matched by their attention to detail.



Electronic Technician 2 William "J.J." Massey Jr. performs his duties at Central Install.

Whether installing routers in Patrol vehicles, calibrating speed measuring devices, programming VoIP phones, installing IP video security camera systems or programming entire radio templates, their work is also pivotal to the Division's digital backbone. When emergencies strike, these technicians are on call – setting up command vehicles, deploying tactical communication towers or establishing interoperable links between multiple law enforcement agencies.

Beyond the vehicles, electronic technicians support facility-wide communications, train users on the Multi-Agency Radio Communication System (MARCS) and serve as technical liaisons between federal, state and local partners. They track FCC regulation changes, suggest equipment upgrades and train the next generation of technicians.

Every clear transmission, every saved second in response time, every video recording that tells the story – Central Install, and our electronic technicians around the state, are the driving force behind the scenes.

The next time you see a fully equipped cruiser with its lights flashing down the highway, remember that it started with Central Install. A team that ensures that the tools of service are ready at every mile and with every call.

SAFETY STARTS HERE: THE VITAL ROLE OF LCS



Motor Vehicle Inspector Matthew A. Kelnhofer performs a school bus inspection.

The Ohio State Highway Patrol's Licensing and Commercial Standards (LCS) Section is a cornerstone of the Division's commitment to protecting lives and promoting safety on Ohio's roadways. The professionals in this section are comprised of Motor Vehicle Inspectors (MVIs), Motor Carrier Enforcement Inspectors (MCEIs) and certified Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV) Troopers who perform essential work that directly impacts both the general public and the commercial transportation industry.

Their responsibilities are expansive. Whether it's ensuring that every school bus transporting children is safe, confirming that a commercial vehicle's brakes and load limits are compliant, or inspecting salvage vehicles to deter auto theft, LCS carries out its duties with precision and consistency.

For the Motor Carrier Enforcement Unit, each day involves a combination of technical expertise and front-line enforcement. Troopers and inspectors conduct safety inspections on commercial motor vehicles in accordance with regulations from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) and the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO). These inspections take place at fixed scale facilities across the state and through mobile scale operations that deploy to high-traffic or high-crash areas.

The teams also enforce size and weight restrictions, using portable scales and specialized equipment to identify overloaded trucks or unsafe carriers before they can become a hazard to other drivers.

This dedication is evident in the day-to-day experiences of the unit's personnel. "Every day in LCS is a blessing, and it's the best job I've ever had," said CMV Trooper Daniel J. Harrison. "Each day brings something new, making the week fly by with a smile never leaving my face. Our schedule is always full, but it never feels like a burden because we genuinely love what we do."

That sense of purpose carries over to the Motor Vehicle Inspection Unit, which conducts rigorous safety inspections on more than 23,000 school buses statewide at least twice a year. If a school bus doesn't meet the required standards, it's immediately removed from service until it passes a follow-up inspection. The unit also inspects church buses and licenses private pupil transportation providers, reinforcing safety from every angle of student transportation. They support these efforts through leadership roles in statewide advisory committees and host training workshops in collaboration with educational and transportation partners.

Beyond school and passenger transportation, the unit also conducts more than 49,000 inspections each year on salvage and self-assembled vehicles. These detailed assessments not only verify safety compliance but also help identify stolen parts – playing a vital role in vehicle theft prevention across Ohio.

While enforcement and inspection remain at the heart of LCS, the section also places a strong emphasis on outreach and education. LCS partners with the trucking industry, state agencies and other law enforcement entities to conduct commercial vehicle safety presentations, assist with public displays and host hands-on training. These partnerships promote a shared understanding of the rules, encourage safer practices and help build stronger relationships between regulatory agencies and the industries they serve.

Recent collaborative efforts with the FMCSA, the PUCO and the Ohio Turnpike Commission have resulted in impactful enforcement operations, such as those along Interstate 70. These initiatives led to dozens of out-of-service violations and the identification of drivers operating without valid commercial licenses. They are clear examples of how strategic collaboration, coupled with technology like weigh-in-motion sensors and PrePass systems, allow LCS to act proactively and efficiently.

Each function within LCS supports the others. It's a team environment where inspectors, troopers and specialists bring their own areas of expertise but remain united in a shared goal: to protect lives, maintain the integrity of Ohio's roads and support the safe movement of goods and people throughout the state.

For those in LCS, it's more than a job. It's a mission – one that plays out in weigh stations, on school parking lots, during salvage inspections and along the shoulder of busy interstates. Their work is detailed and technical, and it touches nearly every aspect of roadway safety and commercial transportation. Thanks to their commitment, Ohio's roads are safer, stronger and better prepared for the future.

THE ½ UNITS ASSOCIATION SUPPORTS OUR FAMILIES



The ½ Units Association is an invaluable community dedicated to supporting the spouses of Ohio State Highway Patrol personnel. Originally formed in 2017 with the mission of, "strengthening and perpetuating relationships within the family of the Ohio State Highway Patrol," the association continues its vital work to this day.

The ½ Units Association provides support, promotes fellowship and strengthens bonds among all Patrol families. They achieve this by organizing active groups in each Patrol district and fostering opportunities for members to connect through shared planning and events.

It is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and there is no cost for membership. All members can join the association's Facebook group, attend activities, events and hold positions within the organization.

A key role of the ½ Units Association is to assist with orientation, helping new families understand and engage with the Patrol's unique culture. Beyond this, the association offers a wide range of beneficial services, including family activities, peer support, resources during critical incidents and educational opportunities. They are adept at guiding families to the proper resources when needed.

Led by its Board president, Michelle Davis, wife of Sergeant Matthew W. Davis, Fremont Post, the ½ Units Association is committed to fostering a strong relationship with our Patrol families and are actively looking for more individuals to join the organization. Other Board members include: Vice President Dispatcher Jean Paris, Cleveland Post; Secretary Danielle Sprockett, wife of Trooper Lawrence Sprockett, Warren Post; and Board Member Krista Jeffries, wife of Trooper Kent D. Jeffries, Fremont Post.

Your involvement is crucial in helping the ½ Units Association reach its full potential and continue its essential work.

For questions or more information on joining the ½ Units Association, please reach out to them at half_units@live.com.

OVER THE HILL CEREMONY CELEBRATES MEMBERS OF THE 127TH ACADEMY CLASS



Front row from left: Trooper Lea R. Mikes, Marietta Post; Lieutenant Colonel Joshua M. Swindell, Superintendent's Office and Captain William P. Haymaker, Cleveland District. Back row from left: Lieutenant David R. Sizemore, Office of Field Operations – Aviation Section; Sergeant Jason L. Snodgrass, West Jefferson Post; Lieutenant Kevin D. Dillard, Criminal Patrol Unit; Trooper Thomas N. Bee, Capitol Operations and Sergeant Fernando M. Chavez, Defiance Post. Not pictured: Lieutenant Rudolph L. Zupanc, Critical Communications Center.

Nine remaining active members of the 127th Academy Class were inducted as new members of the Patrol's Over the Hill Club at a ceremony held on June 4 at the Ohio State Highway Patrol Training Academy. The club recognizes troopers who have reached 30 years of service to the state of Ohio.

TROOPER LAWRENCE EARNs SECOND PERFECT GXT SCORE



On April 8, Trooper Ravonne R. Lawrence, Recruitment, earned a perfect score on the Ohio State Highway Patrol's Health and Physical Fitness Evaluation Graded Exercise Test (GXT). This is his second time achieving a 500 score. He previously

earned a perfect score in February 2023.

SAVED BY THE BELT EVENT HELD AT KINGS ISLAND



The Wilmington District held a Saved by the Belt event on May 9 at Kings Island in Warren County. Five individuals received framed Saved by the Belt certificates, license plates and license plate brackets. Kings Island provided each recipient and their family members with one-day admission tickets to the park.

MEDINA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE HONORS TROOPER ACCIAVATTI AND SRT



From left: Dispatcher Chelsea L. Saylor, Medina Post; Sergeant John Beeler, Special Response Team; Medina County Sheriff Terry Grice; mother of child who was kidnapped; Trooper Colin B. Acciavatti, Special Response Team; Sergeant Chris F. Castellanos, Special Response Team and Trooper David J. Pangburn, Cleveland Post.

On April 29, Trooper Colin B. Acciavatti, Special Response Team, along with other Patrol personnel were recognized at a Medina County Sheriff's Office awards banquet for their role in safely rescuing a child following an AMBER Alert in November.

AMERICAN LEGION HONORS CANTON POST



On June 27, Larry Stottsberry, American Legion Massillon Post 221, presented Lieutenant Kaitlyn M. Kowicki (shown left) and Canton Post personnel with a Certificate of Appreciation. The certificate was given to the Canton Post for their assistance with American Legion Programs within Stark County.

45 YEARS OF SERVICE



FCS2 John "Keith" Ferguson with Colonel Charles A. Jones.

Forensic Computer Specialist 2 (FCS2) John "Keith" Ferguson, Computer Crimes Unit, was presented with a certificate on May 1, recognizing his 45 years of service to the Patrol.

LIEUTENANT BEVER RECOGNIZED FOR 35 YEARS OF SERVICE



Colonel Charles A. Jones, Patrol superintendent, presented Lieutenant David J. Bever, Critical Communications Center, with a certificate at the Hub on June 26, recognizing his 35 years of service to the Patrol.

AUXILIARY STAFF MAJOR RECOGNIZED FOR 25 YEARS OF SERVICE



On June 23, Auxiliary Staff Major Brian Simpson, Granville Post, was recognized for 25 years of service to the Patrol.

STAFF LIEUTENANT THOMPSON RECOGNIZED



On June 24, Colonel Charles A. Jones presented Staff Lieutenant James M. Thompson with a certificate in recognition of his May 8 graduation from the Southern Police Institute at the University of Louisville, where Staff Lieutenant Thompson made the Dean's Scholars List.

TROOPER MITCHELL PRESENTED WITH OAPT AWARD



From left: Theresa Ritchie, OAPT 1st Vice President; Lieutenant Jacob D. Landis, LCS; Mike Miller, OAPT President; Trooper Sara E. Mitchell, LCS and Todd Silverthorn, OAPT 2nd Vice President.

Trooper Sara E. Mitchell, Licensing and Commercial Standards (LCS), became the inaugural recipient of the Distinguished Advocacy and Support Award for Industry Representatives on June 9 from the Ohio Association for Pupil Transportation (OAPT). The award recognizes those who exhibit unwavering support towards the transportation industry.



TROOPER PIATT RECEIVES AWARD

On May 19, Trooper Coleton J. Piatt, Springfield Post, received the Springfield Rotary Club's "Service Above Self" Award for demonstrating the values of service, fellowship, diversity, integrity and leadership in his professional and personal life.

TROOPER WHITE AND TROOPER MAGISTRI AWARDED PATROL'S DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDALLION



Colonel Charles A. Jones, Trooper Aaron B. White and Trooper Matthew Magistri.

On June 10, Cleveland District Criminal Patrol Trooper Aaron B. White and Trooper Matthew Magistri, Wooster Post, were awarded the Ohio State Highway Patrol's Distinguished Service Medallion by Colonel Charles A. Jones, Patrol superintendent. They were presented the award for their sense of urgency while assisting the Wooster Police Department in locating a suspect who fired multiple gunshots at one of their officers, then fled the scene. Trooper Magistri, deputies from the Wayne County Sheriff's Office and officers from multiple agencies located the suspect's vehicle. The suspect led law enforcement on a 23-minute chase, while firing shots at them. Trooper Magistri made intentional contact with the suspect's vehicle, which allowed him, Trooper White and other law enforcement to take the suspect into custody.

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK EVENT AT WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE



The 88th Security Forces Squadron at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base hosted a Police Week event that also served as friendly competition. Ohio State Highway Patrol personnel participated in two of the events, including the 5K Ruck March and Defenders Challenge. On May 12, participants carried a ruck, if they were able to do so, with a weight no more than 35 pounds. On May 14, teams of four or five people completed the Defenders Challenge. The competitors completed a series of

challenges starting with the Humvee push, inert weapon disassembly, downed officer and water jug carry, weapon reassembly, and finishing with a Humvee push.

Back from left: Trooper David S. Shubert, Medina Post; Trooper William B. Kanthers, Canton Post; Police Officer Balla Mbengue; Staff Lieutenant Geoffrey S. Freeman, Piqua District assistant commander; Sergeant James P. King, Delaware Post; Staff Lieutenant Lawrence V. Firmi, Investigative Services; Major David R. Brown, Field Operations; Lieutenant James Schlotterbeck, Wilmington District Investigations; Staff Lieutenant R. D. Hilderbrandt, Piqua District assistant commander.

Front from left: Lieutenant Colonel Joshua M. Swindell, Patrol assistant superintendent; Trooper Jacob A. Dassylva, Delaware Post; Sergeant J-Vonne Humphreys, Springfield Post; Trooper Nickolas B. Goodnite, Canton Post; Captain Daniel E. Springs, Piqua District commander; Trooper Debbie M. Delong, Capitol Operations; Trooper Nicholas V. Hermann, Bucyrus Post; Sergeant Richard A. Milstead, Xenia Post; Trooper Kody Gullett, Xenia Post.

GHQ



Staff Lieutenant Tiffany L. Meeks with her husband, Ryan, and daughter, Madison.

On April 12, Staff Lieutenant Tiffany L. Meeks, Public Affairs Unit commander, received the Scarlet and Gray Salute during the Ohio State spring game. She was recognized for her service and leadership to the community and state with the Ohio State Highway Patrol, U.S. armed forces and community outreach through Light Ohio Blue and other organizations.



SRT - May 14-15, the Patrol's Special Response Team hosted a meeting with SWAT commanders from our 6-State partners to discuss tactical debriefings, operations, equipment, tactics and more.

FINDLAY DISTRICT



Bowling Green Post - Trooper Ian D. Blackwood conducted a DRIVE to Live presentation on April 8 at Rossford Schools.

BUCYRUS DISTRICT



Marion Post - On May 9, Sergeant Andrew M. Kobosky attended a Cops & Kids Fishing event at the Marion County FOP Lodge.

Officers from Marion Police Department, deputies from the Marion County Sheriff's Office and Sergeant Kobosky fished and spent time with the children.

CLEVELAND DISTRICT



Medina Post - Lieutenant Bridget A. Matt took part in a "Coffee with a Cop" event held on May 15 at the Soprema Senior Center and Cafe in Wadsworth. Both Lieutenant Matt and Wadsworth Police Chief Dan Chafin were guest speakers and discussed safe driving tips for mature drivers.



Elyria Post - Trooper Justin P. Lister and Sergeant Dave S. Francway participated in the annual North Ridgeville Touch-A-Truck event on June 7. A great time was had by all, including this loveable pup-attrator who was hounding us with charm.



Canton Post - The Canton Post partnered with Stark County Safe Communities to present two "Saved by the Belt" awards at the Pro Football Hall of Fame on May 17. Troopers also participated in the 2025 Seatbelt Challenge, where teams competed in a seatbelt challenge obstacle course.

WARREN DISTRICT



Lieutenant Erik A. Golias, Sergeant Jeremy A. Kindler, Trooper Drew C. Nicolson, Trooper Jose E. Molina-Menendez and Trooper Jeremy R. Hartman. Also pictured was Brian Swick from All American Rucks and the Lake County Sheriff's Office, and Chief Dondoreffer from Waite Hill Police Department.

Above: Ravenna, Chardon, Ashtabula and Warren Posts - On May 17, Patrol personnel from the Warren District participated in the All American Rucks held in Painesville at Leroy Softball Fields to promote team building and community outreach.

Left: Warren Post - On May 9, Trooper Zachary J. Gray stopped by and spoke with third grade students at McDonald Grade School. He had the chance to speak about what it is like to be a trooper and answer many questions from the inquisitive bunch.

DISTRICT SPOTLIGHT — PIQUA DISTRICT

Troopers on the Tarmac: OSHP at the Dayton Airshow

Every June, crowds of over 75,000 spectators gather in Montgomery County to experience the Dayton Air Show firsthand, where they can enjoy aerial flight displays, ground displays, paid helicopter rides and more. This year, the event took place June 21-22, and featured the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds as headliners.



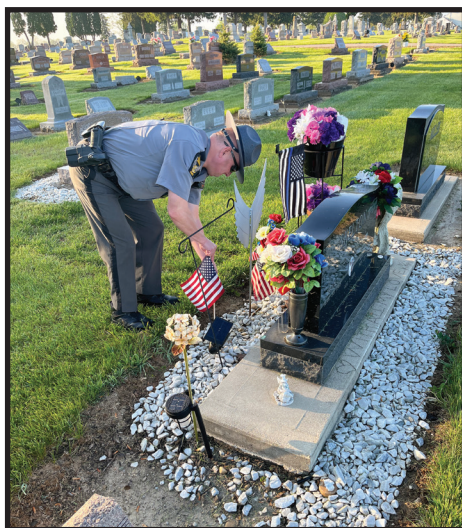
The Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSHP) has had a presence at the Dayton Air Show for more than 20 years. Starting in 2002, retired Lieutenant William "Bill" Peck was the first trooper to work the event. Soon after, retired Sergeant Jeff Kramer began working the detail alongside Dispatcher Kari L. Root, who is still employed with the Patrol and has had a major impact on the development of the Patrol's footprint at the Dayton Air Show.

The Patrol started with a small presence at the event, which has now grown to involve a wide range of aspects, including recruitment, security detail, providing first aid, traffic control and escorting military personnel and legislators, such as Congressman Michael "Mike" Turner. Today, troopers, electronic technicians, dispatchers and other personnel gather together to work the event. The Patrol also works closely with the Dayton Air Show committee, including Executive Director Kevin Franklin.

One major component of the event is community engagement. "We have the ability to reach members of the public and local stakeholders to put human nature to the badge," said Dispatcher Root. OSHP collaborates heavily with partners from local agencies at the event, including the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office, Dayton Police Department, Dayton Airport Police and the Dayton Bomb Squad. These collaborations show strength in numbers and partnership amongst the community.

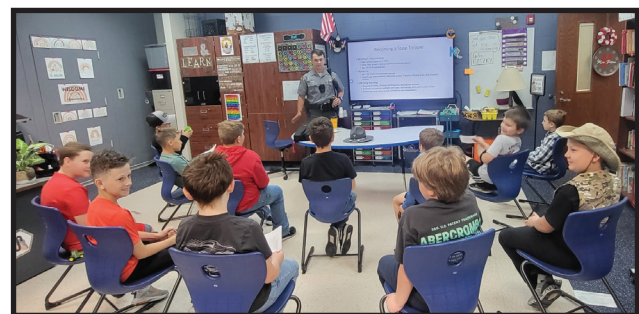
One especially unique aspect of the event is STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Day. On the first day of the show, students in grades five through eight are invited to gain hands-on experience with STEM and aviation activities, with assistance from local organizations. Officers are able to provide meet and greets with the students, forging a relationship with kids from the community in a positive setting.

OSHP also works closely with the Vandalia Police Department, Butler Township Security Detail and Montgomery County's Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) to provide assistance with traffic control. "Traffic safety is just as important as event safety," Dispatcher Root said.



Piqua Post
- On May 9, Trooper Steven L. Shafer placed flags at the graves of the Patrol's fallen in the Piqua area. He visited fallen Patrolman John G. Hough and fallen Motor Carrier Enforcement Inspector Kimra J. Skelton.

PIQUA DISTRICT



Piqua Post – Trooper Austin D. Menker met with middle school students at Fairlawn School on May 14 to conduct a DRIVE to Live presentation and discuss good decision making.

COLUMBUS DISTRICT



Granville Post - The Licking County Health Department hosted a Quick Click Challenge on May 21. Sergeant Scott T. Maul, Trooper Neil R. Everett, and Trooper Allen W. McCall were joined by Licking County Sheriff's Deputy Rachel Williams to compete. Everyone involved had a good time encouraging safety belt usage.



Granville Post - Trooper John A. Bowman, Granville Post, as well as public safety partners from Granville Police and Fire Departments and the Licking County Sheriff's Office, attended Kids Education and Recreation on May 13 to celebrate Police and Fire Week. The children inspected the police vehicles, a fire truck and met two K-9s.

CAMBRIDGE DISTRICT



Representatives from the Carroll County Sheriff's Office, the Village of Carrollton Police Department, the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District Rangers, and Sergeant William D. Bower and Lieutenant Johnnie H. Maier from the Ohio State Highway Patrol New Philadelphia Post were present for the proclamation.

New Philadelphia – On May 5, law enforcement representatives in Carroll County were recognized by the Carroll County Commissioner's Office in support of the Light Ohio Blue campaign. The County Commissioners, Donald E. Leggett II, Christopher R. Modranski, and Robert E. Wirkner, recognized local law enforcement and presented each agency with a Proclamation in support of Light Ohio Blue.



Zanesville Post - On June 24 and 25, Lieutenant Kristi J. Mistovich and Trooper Dylan J. King shared a traffic safety message on the dangers of distracted and impaired driving to youth participating in the Advanced Driving Clinic for Ohio Teens. The Division partnered with the Ohio Traffic Safety Office to offer advanced driver training to teen drivers or teens with a valid temporary permit. Teen drivers also participated in a skills course by Drive Team.

WILMINGTON DISTRICT



Above: Batavia Post – On May 9, troopers Benjamin P. Rackley, Louis L. Quiles and Austin H. McVay gave a DRIVE to Live presentation to students at New Richmond High School. They also participated in a simulated crash investigation and explained the Patrol's role in responding to, and investigating, a serious injury or fatal crash.

Right: Batavia Post – On May 21, Trooper Quintin A. Sandlin received an award for Excellence in Service at the annual Clermont County Law Enforcement Appreciation Banquet.



JACKSON DISTRICT



Happenings Bistro owner Jeff Plummer, Wellston Mayor Anthony Brenner, Wellston OHillCo Society president Aaron Dupree and Ohio State Highway Patrol Captain Craig S. Cvetan. Telegram Photo by Alex Shope.

here – law enforcement cooperates, we collaborate well together, and it ultimately benefits the community."

This donation perfectly showcased the Division's ongoing commitment to serve Ohio beyond patrol duties.

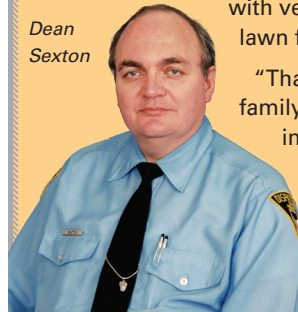
Friends of Flying Wheel

Clayton Sexton, known as Dean, dedicated years of service to the state of Ohio. After a long career at the Ohio Veterans' Children's Home, he transitioned into a career with the Ohio State Highway Patrol. Dean initially served as a dispatcher at the Hamilton Post, before becoming a maintenance technician at the Lebanon Post, where he retired in 2006. Dean developed relationships with those he worked with, finding a true sense of belonging in those friendships.

During the NATO conference, the Patrol worked alongside Dean's son, Andrew "Andy" Sexton, General Counsel for the Dayton Police Department. He fondly recalled his father's effort to continue his connections long after his retirement by regularly reading the Flying Wheel magazine.

The Patrol's commitment to Dean extended past his post-Patrol life. When he passed away in October 2014, leaving behind a wife and two sons, troopers regularly made contact with Dean's family to ensure they had everything they needed. Andy said they would shovel the sidewalk, pick up groceries, assist with vehicle maintenance and mow the lawn for them.

Dean
Sexton



"That was very important to my family," Andy said. "I can only imagine every family in a similar situation would appreciate, or does appreciate, what was done for us. This is something that I feel should continue."

Donation to Wellston Community Organization

During the 2024 Jackson District Awards Banquet at the Happenings Bistro in Wellston on March 13, an unexpected act of generosity from Wellston Mayor Anthony Brenner, who attempted to cover the cost of all meals, led to a heartwarming donation.

Since Patrol policy prevents accepting such gratuities, and money to cover expenses had already been collected from all attendees, the Jackson District made a decision to redirect the collected funds to the Bistro's charity of choice. The recipient chosen was the Wellston OHillCo Society, a local organization dedicated to community betterment. A check for \$600 was presented to support the city's beloved annual Christmas light display, a cherished tradition for residents.

As Captain Craig S. Cvetan, Jackson District commander, told The Telegram News, "People do it right."

RETIREES – By Captain Rob Jackson, Retired

Retired Lieutenant Gary Smith

Years Served: Summer of 1971 as a Cadet Dispatcher, Fall, 1974 - July, 2000

Cadet in the 99th Academy Class

Assignments: Trooper - Defiance Post (including as a Williams County Resident Trooper) and Mansfield Post, Sergeant - Piqua Post and Mansfield Post, Lieutenant - Circleville Post and Mansfield Post

Since retiring from the Division in 2000, Lieutenant Gary Smith has not slowed down, as he continues to live a very active life. With Gary's wife working full-time as an elementary educator, he continues to work full-time. He began as a jail administrator for the Richland County Sheriff's Office, and has also worked part-time in a local golf course pro shop and increased his golfing hobby while also serving as a basketball, volleyball and baseball official. Other jobs since retirement include being an attendance officer for several local schools, a fine hearing officer for the Mansfield Municipal Court, a campaign manager for a U.S. Senate candidate, a Richland County Coroner's Investigator, manager of a health and wellness facility, a spinning class instructor and currently as a part-time security contractor for the Patrol at the Riffe Building and Statehouse security checkpoints.

In addition to the above, Gary volunteers with Meals on Wheels and the Richland County Park District by helping maintain the B&O Richland Bike Trail by mowing, weeding and removing tree roots. He also works with a local group, fixing up old or donated bicycles for the needy. Additionally, Gary sits on the Richland County Bar Association Grievance Committee as one of the lay citizen members.

Gary and his wife Jan have two children and two grandchildren, and they frequently travel to visit with them in Florida.

Gary misses the camaraderie and togetherness of his Patrol days, and the many special memories he made over the years. Along with traveling to some special spots around the world, Gary also reconnects with fellow retirees at the Mansfield Post during monthly breakfasts and the Snowbird/Sunbird reunions.

Where are they now?



Gary and his wife, Jan, with their grandson, Finn.

Public Service Announcement!

Remind your friends and family to stay safe from scammers:

- **Warning signs it could be a scam:**
 - YOU are the only person who can fix/help/resolve a financial problem.
 - You have NEVER MET the other party in person.
 - There is an URGENT and IMMEDIATE need for you to send funds.
 - The other party insists on payment via GIFT CARDS, WIRE TRANSFERS, PAYPAL/VENMO/CASHAPP/ZELLE or BITCOIN.
- **Stay financially safe**
 - Don't answer unsolicited calls, texts or direct messages within apps.
 - Don't use the number listed in a text or email or direct message to call someone back. Independently verify the contact information through a trusted source.
 - Don't allow a third party to connect to your PC or phone.
 - Slow down. Talk over the request with a trusted family member or friend. Get a second opinion on whether the scenario seems logical.
 - Never buy gift cards and give someone the numbers off the back.
 - Never send money to someone you met online.
 - Never dial *72 plus a ten-digit number on your phone.



Message From HPRS Executive Director

Retirement Benefits and Planning

Staying informed about your HPRS retirement benefits is essential for making the most of your financial future. As policies and programs like health reimbursement arrangements, pension benefits and Social Security evolve, keeping up with changes ensures you are best prepared for the next chapter.

Regularly reviewing your HPRS active member data, Social Security statements and staying informed about your retirement benefits in general, can help you avoid costly mistakes or missed opportunities. Additionally, reading the monthly newsletters and meeting minutes available on the HPRS website (www.ohprs.org) can provide valuable insights.

Alongside staying informed, managing your retirement funds wisely is key to long-term financial security. Start by creating a realistic budget that reflects your lifestyle and anticipated expenses. Diversify your investments to reduce risk and work with a financial planner to ensure your portfolio aligns with your retirement goals.

In your retirement years, be cautious about large withdrawals and try to stick to the 4% rule - withdraw no more than 4% of your retirement savings annually to help ensure your funds last. Also, keep an emergency fund separate from your main retirement accounts to cover unexpected costs without disrupting your long-term plans. By staying informed and managing your funds carefully, you can enjoy a more secure and fulfilling retirement.

Best Regards,



Carl Roark, Ph.D. HPRS Executive Director



HIGHWAY PATROL AUXILIARY

The Ohio State Highway Patrol Auxiliary, an all-volunteer force that provides assistance to troopers in the course of their duties, is accepting applications. To inquire or apply for a position in the Auxiliary: email OSHPAux@dps.ohio.gov or apply online: <https://statepatrol.ohio.gov/recruit/auxiliary.html>



**CAPTAIN KEVIN A. KNAPP,
COLUMBUS DISTRICT
HEADQUARTERS**

Captain Kevin A. Knapp, Columbus District Headquarters, retired on May 22, after 33 years with the Ohio State Highway Patrol. He joined the Patrol in January 1992 as a member of the 122nd Academy Class. He earned

his commission in June of the same year and was assigned to the Mt. Gilead Post. As a trooper, he was named District Trooper of the Year and Post Trooper of the Year in 1997. He was promoted to sergeant in 1998 and transferred to the Milan Post to serve as assistant post commander. As a sergeant, he also served at the Bucyrus and Delaware posts, Police Officers and the Governor's Residence Detail. He was promoted to lieutenant in 2011 to serve as post commander at the Delaware Post. In 2015, he was promoted to staff lieutenant to serve as assistant district commander at the Columbus District Headquarters. He was promoted to captain in 2020 to serve as commander at the Columbus District Headquarters.

Captain Knapp earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in criminal justice from Ohio Dominican University in 1991. In 2010, he received a certificate from the Northwestern University's School of Police Staff and Command.



**STAFF LIEUTENANT JOHN S.
CARRICO,
PIQUA DISTRICT
HEADQUARTERS**

Staff Lieutenant John S. Carrico, Piqua District Headquarters, retired on April 4, after 37 years with the Ohio State Highway Patrol. He joined the Patrol in January 1987 as a cadet dispatcher assigned to the

Portsmouth Post. In 1990, he became a member of the 119th Academy Class. He earned his commission in June of the same year and was assigned to the Wapakoneta Post. As a trooper, he was named Post Trooper of the Year three times. He earned the Ace Award for excellence in auto larceny enforcement once. He was promoted to sergeant in 2003 and was assigned to the Piqua Post to serve as assistant post commander. In 2007, he was promoted to lieutenant and was assigned to the Wapakoneta Post to serve as post commander. In 2019, he was promoted to staff lieutenant and assigned to the Piqua District Headquarters to serve as an assistant district commander.

In 2008, he received a certificate from the Northwestern University's School of Police Staff and Command.



**LIEUTENANT MICHAEL E.
WARNER,
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIVE
SERVICES**

Lieutenant Michael E. Warner, Cambridge and Jackson districts Office of Investigative Services, retired on May 9, after 33 years of service with the Ohio State Highway Patrol. He joined the Patrol in May 1992 as a member of the 123rd Academy Class. He

earned his commission in November of the same year and was assigned to the Athens Post. As a trooper, he was also assigned to the Zanesville Post and the Cambridge District Office of Investigations. He was named District Trooper of the Year once and Post Trooper of the Year four times. He was promoted to sergeant and was assigned to the St. Clairsville Post to serve as assistant post commander. As a sergeant, he also served at the Zanesville Post, Cambridge District Criminal Patrol, Office of Investigative Services and the Southeast Regional Criminal Patrol Unit. In 2017, he was promoted to lieutenant and transferred to the Office of Investigative Services. As a lieutenant, he also served at the Cambridge District Office of Investigative Services.



**SERGEANT AARON M. HAYES,
JACKSON POST/ D9**

Sergeant Aaron M. Hayes, Jackson Post, retired on June 20, after 26 years of service with the Ohio State Highway Patrol. He joined the Patrol in June 1999 as a member of the 134th Academy Class. He earned his commission in December of the same year and was assigned to the Athens Post. As a trooper, he was named Post Trooper of

the Year twice and received the Ace Award for excellence in auto larceny enforcement once. In 2010, he was promoted to sergeant and was assigned to the Marietta Post. As a sergeant, he also worked at the Athens Post.

Sergeant Hayes served in the United States Army from 1992 to 2000.



**SERGEANT TIMOTHY A. HENN,
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIVE
SERVICES**

Sergeant Timothy A. Henn, Office of Investigative Services, retired on June 20, after 26 years of service to the state of Ohio. He joined the Ohio State Highway Patrol in June 1999 as a member of the 134th Academy Class. He earned his commission in December of the same year

and was assigned to the Springfield Post. As a trooper, he also served at the West Jefferson Post and the Office of Investigative Services. In 2011, he was promoted to sergeant and was assigned to the Marysville Post to serve as assistant post commander. As a sergeant he also served at the West Jefferson Post.

Sergeant Henn earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in criminology from The Ohio State University in 1997.



**SERGEANT SCOTT R. MOORE,
ST. CLAIRSVILLE POST / D7**

Sergeant Scott R. Moore, St. Clairsville Post, retired on May 2, after 24 years of service with the Ohio State Highway Patrol. He joined the Patrol in March 2001, as a member of the of the 137th Academy Class. He earned his commission in September of that same year and was assigned to the Cambridge Post. As a trooper, he was also assigned to the St. Clairsville Post, Special Response Team (SRT) and the Aviation Unit. In 2019, he was promoted to sergeant and was assigned to SRT.



**TROOPER STEVEN J. BACSI,
NORWALK POST / D2**

Trooper Steven J. Bacsí, Norwalk Post, retired on May 30, after 24 years with the Ohio State Highway Patrol. He joined the Patrol in March 2001 as a member of the 137th Academy Class. He earned his commission in September of the same year and was assigned to the Milan Post. As a trooper, he also served at the Berea District Operations and Bucyrus Commercial Enforcement units. In 2024, he was designated as a Master Trooper.

Trooper Bacsí served in the United States Navy from 1991 to 1994.



**TROOPER JOSHUA N. BAKER,
GEORGETOWN POST / D8**

Trooper Joshua N. Baker, Georgetown Post, retired on June 27, after 20 years with the Ohio State Highway Patrol. He joined the Patrol in May 2004 as a member of the 142nd Academy Class. He earned his commission in November of the same year and was assigned to the Ironton Post. As a trooper, he also worked in Wilmington District Investigations. He earned the Criminal Patrol Award twice and the Ace Award for excellence in auto larceny enforcement once.



**TROOPER DAVID E. BLUBAUGH,
CANTON POST / D3**

Trooper David E. Blubaugh, Canton Post, retired on April 1, after 24 years with the Ohio State Highway Patrol. He joined the Patrol in September 2000 as a member of the 136th Academy Class. He earned his commission in March of the following year and was assigned to the Marion Post. As a trooper, he also worked at the Delaware Post. In 2024, he was designated as a Master Trooper.

He earned an Associate's Degree in criminal justice from the University of Akron in 1991.



**TROOPER JOSHUA D. GARRETT,
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIVE
SERVICES**

Trooper Joshua D. Garrett, Office of Investigative Services, retired on April 25, after 27 years of service with the Ohio State Highway Patrol. He joined the Patrol in March 1998, as a cadet dispatcher at the Lancaster Post. He became a member of the 134th Academy Class in June 1999. He earned his commission in December of that same year and was assigned to the Wilmington Post. As a trooper, he was also assigned to the Lancaster Post and Capitol Operations. He was designated as a Master Trooper in 2024.



**TROOPER ANN M. GEER,
SWANTON POST / D1**

Trooper Ann M. Geer, Swanton Post, retired on April 4, after 21 years with the Ohio State Highway Patrol. She joined the Patrol in September 2003 as a member of the 141st Academy Class. She earned her commission in March of the following year and was assigned to the Toledo Post. As a trooper, she also served at the Bowling Green Post and Findlay District Criminal Patrol. She was named District Trooper of the Year once and Post Trooper of the Year three times. She earned the Criminal Patrol Award 11 times.

Trooper Geer earned an Associate's Degree from the University of Toledo in 1992.



**TROOPER LAWRENCE P. ST. CLAIR,
FINDLAY POST / D1**

Trooper Lawrence P. St. Clair, Findlay Post, retired on June 11, after 41 years with the state of Ohio. He joined the Ohio State Highway Patrol in May 1992 as a member of the 123rd Academy Class. He earned his commission in November of the same year and was assigned to the Findlay Post. He also worked at the Fremont Post. In 2024, he was designated as a Master Trooper.

Trooper St. Clair served in the United States Army National Guard from 1984 to 2012 and has served in the United States Army Reserve since 2012.



**TROOPER CHARLES M. JACKSON,
CLEVELAND DISTRICT INVESTIGATIONS**

Trooper Charles M. Jackson, Cleveland District Investigations, retired on June 12, after 26 years of service with the Ohio State Highway Patrol. He joined the Patrol in June 1999 as a member of the of the 134th Academy Class. He earned his commission in December of that same year and was assigned to the Milan Post. As a trooper, he was also assigned to the Elyria and Cleveland posts, and the Bucyrus District Investigations. He was named Post Trooper of the Year in 2002.

He earned the Criminal Patrol Award five times and the Ace Award for excellence in auto larceny enforcement three times. In 2024, he earned the designation of master trooper.

Trooper Jackson served in the U.S. Army from 1993 to 1998.



**TROOPER MATTHEW L. THARP,
CAPITOL OPERATIONS**

Trooper Matthew L. Tharp, Capitol Operations, retired on April 25, after 32 years with the state of Ohio and the Ohio State Highway Patrol. He began his state service in January 1993. He joined the Patrol in March 2001 as a member of the 137th Academy Class. He earned his commission in September of the same year and was assigned to the Athens Post. As a trooper, he was also assigned to the Lancaster Post, Executive Protection, Criminal Investigations, Security Services and Columbus District Investigations. In 2025, he was designated as a Master Trooper.

Trooper Tharp served in the United States Marine Corps from 1987 to 1991.



**TROOPER MICHAEL S. TRADER,
CLEVELAND DISTRICT CRIMINAL PATROL**

Trooper Michael S. Trader, Cleveland District Criminal Patrol, retired on June 13, after 30 years of service to the state of Ohio. He joined the Ohio State Highway 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 Wooster Post. He also served at the Hiram, Ashtabula and Cleveland posts, as well as the Warren and former Berea districts Criminal Patrol units. He was named Post Trooper of the Year in 2001. He earned the Criminal Patrol Award 12 times and the Ace Award for excellence in auto larceny enforcement once.



**TROOPER JASON L. TURNER,
CHARDON POST / D4**

Trooper Jason L. Turner, Chardon Post, retired on June 13, after 21 years with the Ohio State Highway Patrol. He joined the Patrol in September 2003 as a member of the 141st Academy Class. He earned his commission in March of the following year and was assigned to the Batavia Post. As a trooper, he also served at the Hiram and Cleveland posts, and the Training Academy. He earned the Criminal Patrol Award twice.

Trooper Turner served in the United States Navy from 1994 to 2000.



**DISPATCHER PATRICK P. BOWSHER,
VAN WERT POST / D1**

Dispatcher Patrick P. Bowsher, Van Wert Post, retired on April 1, after 27 years with the state of Ohio. He began his Ohio State Highway Patrol career in April 1997 as a dispatcher and was assigned to the Van Wert Post. He also served at the Defiance Post and Van Wert Dispatch Center. He was named State Dispatcher of the Year in 2024, District Dispatcher of the Year twice and Post Dispatcher of the Year four times.



**STATISTICIAN 1 JODEAN L. BURR,
OFFICE OF PLANNING,
RESEARCH AND
DEVELOPMENT/CRASH
FARS**

Statistician 1 Jodean L. Burr, Office of Planning, Research and Development/Crash FARS, retired on April 1 after 22 years of service with the state of Ohio. She began her Ohio State Highway Patrol career in July 2011 as a Data Entry Operator 2 assigned to Security and Communications/Traffic Statistics.

In 2013, she became a statistician 1 in Traffic Statistics/Crash FARS.



**ADMINISTRATIVE
PROFESSIONAL 1 JOANNE M.
CAPLEA,
CANTON POST / D3**

Administrative Professional 1 Joanne M. Caplea, Canton Post, retired on April 30, after 21 years with the Ohio State Highway Patrol. She began her Patrol career as a dispatcher assigned to the Canton Post. As a dispatcher, she also served at the Canton Dispatch Center. In 2010, she became a secretary and was assigned to the Cleveland District Headquarters. She was promoted to administrative professional 1 in 2012 and was assigned to the Canton Post. As an administrative professional 1, she also served at the Ravenna Post.



**FINANCIAL ANALYST
SUPERVISOR MICHELE K.
FLANERY,
FISCAL SERVICES**

Financial Analyst Supervisor Michele K. Flanery, Fiscal Services, retired on June 30, after a total of 42 years with the state of Ohio. She began her career with the Patrol in 1986 as an account clerk 3 in Finance and Logistics. Later that year, she transitioned into a dispatch position at the West Jefferson Post. In 1988, she was promoted to an accountant/examiner 3 in the Office of Fiscal Services. In 1994, she was promoted to accountant/examiner supervisor 1 and remained in Fiscal Services. In 2015, she was promoted to accountant/examiner supervisor 2 and later that same year, she transitioned to a financial analyst supervisor until her retirement.



**IT PROJECT MANAGER 2
NELSON GONZALEZ,
OFFICE OF FINANCE AND
LOGISTICS/LEADS**

IT Project Manager 2 Nelson Gonzalez, Office of Finance and Logistics/LEADS, retired on May 30, after 15 years with the state of Ohio. He began his Ohio State Highway Patrol career in August 2022 as an IT Project Manager 2 and was assigned to LEADS.

In 2017, IT Project Manager 2 Gonzalez earned a Master's Degree in project management from DeVry University's Keller Graduate School of Management. In 1992, he earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Interamerican University of Puerto Rico.

He served in the United States Army National Guard from 1980 to 1982.



**DISPATCHER LISA M.
HOFFMAN,
CANTON DISPATCH
CENTER**

Dispatcher Lisa M. Hoffman, Canton Dispatch Center, retired on May 30, after 36 years with the state of Ohio. She began her Ohio State Highway Patrol career in May 1989 as a member of the 118th Academy Class. She earned her commission in November of that same year and was assigned to the Athens Post. As a trooper, she also served at the Massillon, Akron and Ravenna posts. Due to an on-duty injury, she was assigned to the Medina Post as a dispatcher and later transferred to the Canton Post where she spent the remainder of her career.

Dispatcher Hoffman earned an Associate of Arts degree in criminal justice from the University of Akron in 2001.



**CUSTOMER SERVICE
ASSISTANT 2 TAMARA M.
JOHNSON,
CENTRAL RECORDS**

Customer Service Assistant 2, Tamara M. Johnson, Central Records, retired on April 30, after 31 years with the state of Ohio and the Ohio State Highway Patrol. She began her state service in 1993 with the Ohio Department of Public Safety. In 1997, she joined the Ohio State Highway Patrol as a clerk 3 in Central Records. In 2000, she was promoted to a customer service assistant 2 and remained in Central Records.



**ELECTRONIC TECHNICIAN 3
DANA A. REASONER,
COLUMBUS DISTRICT
HEADQUARTERS**

Electronic Technician 3 Dana A. Reasoner, Columbus District Headquarters, retired on April 4, after 32 years with the state of Ohio. He began his Ohio State Highway Patrol career in April 1993 as an electronic technician 1 and was assigned to Technology Communications. In 1996, he was promoted to electronic technician 2 at the Columbus District Headquarters. In 2001, he was promoted to electronic technician 3 and was assigned to General Headquarters.



**CUSTOMER SERVICE
ASSISTANT 3 TAMMIE A.
ROSEBORO,
CENTRAL RECORDS**

Customer Service Assistant 3, Tammie A. Roseboro, Central Records, retired on June 30, after 32 years with the Ohio State Highway Patrol. She began her state service in 1993 as a clerk 2 in Central Records. In 1996, she was promoted to clerk 3 and remained in Central Records. In 2000, she was promoted to customer service assistant 2 and to customer service assistant 3 in 2017.



**INFRASTRUCTURE
SPECIALIST 2 DOUGLAS M.
SCOTT,
WARREN DISTRICT
HEADQUARTERS**

Infrastructure Specialist 2 Douglas M. Scott, Warren District Headquarters, retired on June 30, after 26 years with the state of Ohio. He began his Patrol career in 1998 as a network administrator 2 assigned to the Warren District Headquarters. He was promoted to infrastructure specialist 2 (IS2) and remained at the Warren District Headquarters.

IS2 Scott earned a Bachelor of Science degree in computer science in 2004 from Youngstown State University.

He served in United States Navy from 1978 to 1982.



**ADMINISTRATIVE
PROFESSIONAL 4 PAMELA
H. WALKER,
OFFICE OF FINANCE AND
LOGISTICS**

Administrative Professional 4 Pamela H. Walker, Office of Finance and Logistics, entered disability retirement on May 1, after a combined 20 years with the Ohio State Highway Patrol. She began her Patrol career in March 1999 as a secretary assigned to the Jackson Post. In 2005, she was promoted to executive secretary 1 assigned to the Jackson District. In 2012, she became an administrative professional 1 assigned to the Columbus District. In 2013, she became an administrative professional 3 in the Office of Investigative Services. She was promoted to administrative professional 4 in 2013 and transferred to the Office of the Superintendent. As an administrative professional 4, she also worked in the Office of Personnel, and Security and Communications.

Administrative Professional 4 Walker earned a certificate of business and office education from Collins Career Technical Center/Lawrence County Joint Vocational School in 1978.



**MAINTENANCE REPAIR
WORKER 2 THOMAS R.
WINTER,
LIMA POST / D1**

Maintenance Repair Worker 2 Thomas R. Winter, Lima Post, retired on June 30, after 29 years of service with the state of Ohio. He began his Patrol career in February 1997 as a maintenance repair worker 2 assigned to the Van Wert Post.

POST-PATROL PROFESSIONS

Chief Deputy Michael Gore, Lawrence County Sheriff's Office

For retired Lieutenant Michael R. Gore, retirement was never about stepping away, it was about continuing to serve the community he has always called home.

Now serving as Chief Deputy of the Lawrence County Sheriff's Office, Gore brings the same heart for service that defined his 32-year career with the Ohio State Highway Patrol into every aspect of his current role. But for him, it goes far beyond law enforcement.

"I just have a heart to be a public servant; it's just been easy for me," Gore said. "Reverend Ellsworth always said that putting service above self was paramount, and that always just stuck with me."

Gore's inspiration to pursue a career with the Patrol came from a place of personal loss and profound respect.

While in college at the University of Rio Grande, his brother was tragically killed in a car crash. It was a moment that became a turning point. "I just kept feeling that there was something more I could've done," Gore said. "Troopers were always talking about me joining the Patrol and at that point, my belief in the Patrol's mission started. And it never wavered."

He joined the Patrol in 1986 as a cadet dispatcher, graduated with the 116th Academy Class in 1987 and retired as a lieutenant in 2018. His career was defined by structure, mentorship and a long list of people who helped shape his approach to leadership.

"There are so many people that were influential depending on where I was in my career," he said. "But one of the biggest things I learned was this – leadership is an act of influence, not authority. That's what you do as a leader – you influence."

That mindset made his transition into the Chief Deputy role feel seamless. Longtime friend and Lawrence County Sheriff Jeff Lawless offered him the opportunity shortly after his retirement.

"When September 18, 1987 came, and I raised my right hand and swore to serve and protect, there was never an expiration date," Gore said.

And that promise has carried through. Whether he's overseeing operations, mentoring young deputies or showing up quietly in his community, Gore still lives by the same values.

"I've told young people who come into this job, if you don't have a servant's heart – if you truly don't want to help people – this may not be the career for you," he said.

He encourages others nearing retirement to plan ahead and stay engaged. "You need to establish a time, whether it's ten years out or five, and start thinking about what's next," he said. "There's no better agency on this planet where you have the ability to network like you do in the Patrol."



"To the Ohio State Highway Patrol it was a true pleasure to witness this officer and this little boy interact with each other. The little boy thanked him for his service and the officer went to his cruiser and brought him back a junior . . . badge. The excitement on this little boy's face made my day." - Sam Burch on Facebook

Comments received via social media.

". . . I want to send a "Job Well Done" to Trooper Wilford for his action of assisting an elderly lady by changing a flat tire for her on the side of the road. One of my nephews saw his action while he was driving and made it a point to find out who the patrolman was so he could pass on his thoughts of what the patrolman did. Congratulations Trooper Wilford for a job well done." - User on X

DIRECTOR'S CORNER



Department of
Public Safety



Men and women of the Ohio State Highway Patrol,

I cannot tell you enough, how proud I am of each and every one of you. In my time as Director, I have had the opportunity to ride with every district. I have spent countless hours at the Academy with the staff and cadets. I have flown with aviation, trained with SRT, and been on stops with criminal patrol. I have had the ability to spend time with almost every section within the Patrol. Through every experience, I have walked away impressed by the discipline, dedication, and expertise of each and every one of you. I love everything you do and everything you stand for. The citizens of this state are so incredibly fortunate to have you standing guard and keeping them safe.

As you continue to represent the honor and tradition of this great organization, I encourage you to exhibit your pride and esprit de corps at the unit level. One of the things I loved about my time in the army is the camaraderie and pride we always displayed at the platoon, company, and battalion level. I always believed that I was part of the best platoon, in the best company, and the best battalion in the army. That sense of unit pride always drove me to do my best as an individual soldier so that I would uphold the standards, expectations, and honor of my unit. We were always competing against other platoons, companies, and battalions to be the best unit at whatever task was before us. Whether it was shooting, physical fitness, tank gunnery, or combatives, everyone worked together to be the best. As a result, we pushed the other platoons, companies, and battalions, to be the best versions of themselves. Everybody improved. Everybody sharpened their edges. Everyone experienced growth.

The Ohio State Highway Patrol has a long and storied history as one of the best law enforcement agencies in the country. As recently shown by Troopers Hammon, Korsten, and Pollitt, we can compete against and dominate other agencies from across the country. I hope all of you swells with pride and love for this organization every time you put that uniform on. To that end, I asked two things of you as we continue to move forward. First, when we have an opportunity to compete against other law enforcement agencies, let's take them.

Physical fitness competitions, ruck marches, shooting, driving, tactical competitions, technical competitions, I don't care what the contest is. Nothing breeds camaraderie and sharpens the edge like competition. I'm so proud of you, I want to showcase your skills and talents by winning and dominating law enforcement related competitions.

Second, I would like to see each district and specialty section continue to showcase their own identity and esprit de corps. Many of our districts already display their guidons, and we're now expanding this effort to ensure that each district and main section is equipped with its own guidon and accessories. Originating from ancient civilizations, the guidon has long symbolized unit identity, pride, and cohesion. While your first allegiance will always be to the Ohio State Highway Patrol and all it stands for, these guidons will serve as visible symbols of your pride in your district or section, a way to reinforce your unique contributions to the collective mission. Extending this tradition across the Patrol further strengthens identity and pride at every level.

Again, I cannot express in this written article what an honor and pleasure it is to serve with you. In my tenure as your Director, I can only hope to push and inspire you in the same way you push and inspire me.

LET'S GO!!

Andy Wilson

Director

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER



Attune: Finding Harmony in the Chaos

Daily duties bring "noise" – radio traffic, sirens, reports, phone calls, tense situations and critical decisions. With that kind of pressure, it's easy to lose life's harmony and peace. That's why it is important to be "attuned."

The word attune is defined as, "to bring into harmony, to adjust, to listen, to align." Just like experienced musicians who tune their instruments regularly to be successful, we need to "tune" our thoughts and behaviors to successfully serve others.

The process begins with awareness and recognizing where you're "off." Maybe it's how you talk, the pace at which you're living or a broken relationship you have ignored. You must slow down enough to notice when you are out of tune, be humble enough to admit it and then adjust to fix the issue.

Harmony doesn't happen by accident. It requires empathy, clear communication, daily check-ins and boundaries rooted in respect. It begins with a choice – to pause and ask, "Where do I need to adjust?"

In a world that pulls us in one hundred different directions, the strength of a peacekeeper organization lies not just in action, but in alignment. When you're in tune, your presence brings peace. And peace is exactly what this world needs.

Blessings,

Reverend Phil Hurlbert

State Chaplain





The Lighthouse

Mental Health Resources for Your Voyage Through Life's Challenges

Shifting the Focus Toward Long-Term Wellness for First Responders and Communities

The Tusky Valley bus crash on November 14, 2023, was not just a tragic event on Interstate 70 in Licking County, but also a defining moment for the Ohio State Highway Patrol's ongoing commitment to mental health and wellness.

The crash claimed the lives of three Tusky Valley High School students and three chaperones, and injured many others. Responders from multiple agencies provided emergency care, conducted investigations and offered immediate crisis support to those impacted.

A lesser-known story about the crash is its ripple effect. The impact didn't stop with the victims or their families. It extended long beyond the initial crisis, affecting first responders, community members, educators and even professionals in adjacent fields.

This underscores the reality of post-traumatic stress. The effects of trauma are not limited to the day of the incident. They can manifest in different ways for months or years afterward.

The Patrol's work spilled over organically into long-term support for Tuscarawas County, creating safe spaces for those most impacted. Peer support officers from the area stepped in to guide families through their grief.

During the Tusky Valley bus crash response, the cooperation between different entities was vital.

Counselors from Tuscarawas Valley schools, pastors from local churches, Franklin County Sheriff's Office chaplains and the Patrol's Member Assistance Team (MAT) collaborated with the Ohio Attorney General's Office Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) and local resources to provide ongoing emotional support. BCI's peer team worked with civilians involved with the crash, and chaplains, MAT and local mental health agencies assisted the school staff, students and families to process their grief.

This type of outreach marks a shift in first responder wellness. Rather than closing the book on an incident once the initial response is complete, the Patrol and other agencies are now prioritizing long-term wellness for both first responders and affected communities.

Sergeant Timothy K. Bullock, from the Employee Wellness Office, describes this approach using the concept of post-traumatic growth. The idea that individuals can navigate trauma in a way that fosters resilience.

"When we talk about post-traumatic growth, it takes it outside the box of 'There's an incident, we work through it, and we're good.' Sometimes, the process lasts months or even years depending on a person's involvement," Sergeant Bullock said. "Recognizing those triggers and highlighting the resources available throughout that process is important."

Lieutenant Molly J. Harris, commander of the Employee Wellness Office, emphasizes a key takeaway for all Patrol employees and community members is having an awareness of the wellness resources available.

"No matter your role, whether you're a first responder, a civilian or anyone affected, there are resources out there. And through the Patrol's network, we can guide people to the right support, even if we're not the ones providing it directly," Lieutenant Harris said.

For Patrol employees, those resources can be accessed through the Mental Health and Wellness internal Gateway site. Additional information can be obtained by contacting Lieutenant Harris at mjharris@dps.ohio.gov



Colonel Charles A. Jones with NTSB chair, Jennifer Homendy, at the I-70 bus crash news conference.

NEED HELP? If you or someone you know is in crisis, call or text 988, or chat [988Lifeline.org](https://988lifeline.org) for 24/7, confidential support.

If you are a current OSHP employee, visit the link to "Mental Health & Wellness" under The Gateway.

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