

# PATROL NEWS

March - April 2023

“Over 90 YEARS OF SERVICE & PROTECTION”



See cover page 3.



# From the Staff ...

**Major Corey J. Schoeneberg**  
**Administrative Services Bureau**



In June 1996, I was notified of my selection to enter recruit training. The letter provided a lot of information and suggested some form of stress management training was provided during orientation. I recall many things about the first day of recruit training, like misplacing my lanyard; being directed to go find the missing lanyard and forgetting my hat; returning to the classroom to retrieve the forgotten hat to find Lieutenant Chris T. Ricks parading around the classroom wearing my hat; and then mistakenly referring to Captain B. Chris Baker as a lieutenant. Oh, I recall managing stress during the first day of recruit training, but no recollection of any stress management training.

Fast forward to today and the topics of stress management, workplace wellness, and employee well-being have expanded greatly. All peace officers are now required to meet with a program service provider once every three to five years for a mental health check-in. We have a proactive, trained, Peer Support Team to provide peer-driven support services along with Critical Incident Stress Management assistance services. Our awareness of the impacts of stress have improved greatly; however, there remain barriers that prevent employees from getting the help they may need.

Finding ways to further support the safety, health, and wellness of every employee is the reason we invested in the Cordico Wellness app. Cordico's wellness solution will provide all Patrol employees, retirees, and their family members with on-demand access to wellness resources. The app contains videos, articles, and guides on financial fitness, healthy habits, nutrition, and much more. Cordico's wellness tools and self-assessments are designed to keep personnel healthy and effective at work and at home.

The Center for Disease Control describes well-being as the ability of individuals to address normal stresses, work productively, and realize one's highest potential. Once available, I encourage you to explore the Cordico app and realize your highest potential.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Corey Schoeneberg".

The official publication of the  
Missouri State Highway Patrol

*Celebrating Over 55 Years Of News*

## PATROL NEWS

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*The Patrol News is published by the Public Information & Education Division of the Missouri State Highway Patrol in the interest of all active and retired personnel. (573) 526-6115*

SHP-862

# PATROL NEWS

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"Over 90 YEARS OF SERVICE & PROTECTION"

Volume 57 • Number 5

## Social Media Snapshot

I LOVE how much respect our boys have for the men and women in Blue. Today the boys attended the Super Bowl parade and instead of the highlight being seeing the players drive/walk by (which don't get me wrong, they thoroughly enjoyed) it was getting a challenge coin from and picture with this MSHP Officer, after thanking him for his service. ❤️

#BlueLineFamily #RaisingThemRight



*Troopers who were part of the Kansas City Chiefs' victory parade detail enjoyed interacting with the crowd. Sometimes, the crowd interacted with them. The photo of Sgt. Liere Dancy (A) was taken from a short video of when the crowd surprised her by singing to her on her birthday.*

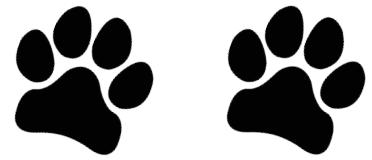
## Cover

*Trooper Callie A. Volle (Q/AD) serves as the Patrol's first female pilot and is assigned to the Aircraft Division, General Headquarters, Jefferson City, MO. She was appointed July 5, 2016, as a member of the 103rd Recruit Class. Tpr. Volle's first assignment was Troop C, Warren County. She transferred into the Aircraft Division July 1, 2022.*

*"In this position, I will be trained to fly the Patrol's Cessna 182s to conduct traffic flights around the state," said Tpr. Volle. "One of my goals is to achieve the ratings required in order to fly the King Air one day." She said her father inspired her to try flying and she was hooked after her first flight lesson. "Flying a plane is a challenge," she said. "You can never be the perfect pilot, but you are always striving for perfection each flight. I am proud to be a pilot in the Patrol's Aircraft Division. I feel that it is a distinguished position to hold, and I am honored to be the Patrol's first female pilot."*



# K9 Bady Retires!



*By Public Info. Spec. Cheryl D. Cobb (Q/PIED)*

Congratulations to K9 Bady upon his retirement March 1, 2023. Bady joined the Patrol in December 2017, after training in Cape Girardeau, MO. During his career, he performed 37 narcotics searches, 14 building searches, and tracked 18 people. Bady also gave 20 demonstrations to various civic groups. Bady located several firearms discarded by fleeing subjects. Thank you for your service, K9 Bady! #Whosagoooddog!



*K9 Bady worked with his partner, Sgt. T.J. Adams, in the Troop B area.*



*While assisting a local police agency in the execution of a search warrant, Bady located more than 30 pounds of marijuana, a pound of cocaine, six pounds of meth, and a pound of heroin.*



*K9 Bady*

*Success during training leads to play time!*



*Sgt. T.J. Adams (B) and K9 Bady trained regularly.*





# Cpl. Lairmore Rescues Driver In Danger

By Capt. Andy O. Tourney (Q/GD)

A trooper can work their entire career and never quite be in the right place at the right time to save someone's life. At 5:40 a.m. July 27, 2022, Corporal Louis B. Lairmore (Q/GD) had that opportunity. He was in an unmarked vehicle and in civilian attire while he commuted to work at Bally's Casino during a torrential downpour on northbound Interstate 435 in Kansas City. Cpl. Lairmore came upon the scene of a four-vehicle traffic crash that had just occurred. One vehicle was on the concrete median wall of the bridge over a railyard. The vehicle was perched precariously with both driver side wheels hanging over the wall. Cpl. Lairmore activated his emergency equipment and stopped behind the vehicle. The initial concern was the driver might attempt to exit the vehicle and fall to his death more than 100 feet below.

Cpl. Lairmore attempted to contact the driver, who was disoriented and unaware of his surroundings. Both doors on the right side of the vehicle had been wedged into the vehicle frame. The right front door would not budge. In the pouring rain, Cpl. Lairmore coached the driver to climb carefully into the back of the vehicle. He then forced the



(center) Cpl. Louis Lairmore (Q/GD) and his wife, Maggie, stand with (l to r) Col. Eric Olson, DPS Deputy Director Kevin Bond, Capt. Andy Tourney (Q/GD), and Cpl. Greg Tesch (Q/GD) after the award presentation.

right rear door open and pulled the driver from the vehicle. Cpl. Larimore escorted the driver to the safety of his patrol vehicle. Prior to local responders and police arriving, Cpl. Lairmore prevented this disoriented motorist from exiting his vehicle and falling from the bridge. He also removed the possibility of the driver being injured if the precariously positioned vehicle was struck by another vehicle and plunged from the bridge. Tragically, only yards away, another motorist who exited his vehicle fell over the median wall to his death.

On January 10, 2023, Cpl. Lairmore, accompanied by his wife, Maggie, accepted the December 2022 DPS Sworn Team Member of the Month during a ceremony at General Headquarters. Department of Public Safety Deputy Director Kevin Bond and Colonel Eric T. Olson presented the award.

“Corporal Lairmore’s commitment to service and the safety of others was exemplified by his actions on July 27, 2023,” said Col. Olson. “We are all very proud of how he handled this difficult situation.”

## Save The Date!

The St. Louis Cardinals' First Responder Game Night will be at 6:45 p.m. Monday, September 18, 2023. The Missouri State Troopers Association has purchased 300 tickets at a discount rate and may be able to purchase more if the first 300 are sold. In addition to the reduced ticket prices, the Troop F Honor Guard will present the colors before the game. MOSTA will provide more information when the tickets become available. We hope to see you and your family there!



# Chiefs Kingdom Welcomes Troopers

By Sgt. Andrew J. Bell (A)

The Kansas City Chiefs victory parade welcomed approximately one million people on Wednesday, February 15, 2023. Approximately 50 Patrol personnel were assigned to the parade in downtown Kansas City, MO. At the request of the Kansas City (MO) Police Department, the Missouri State Highway Patrol assisted with pedestrian traffic safety along the parade route. Additional Patrol employees performed other duties such as governor security, emergency operations center overwatch, undercover surveillance, radio communications, and logistical support. The Patrol



*This picture of the Union Station celebration rally provides some idea of how many fans came to celebrate their Chiefs.*

worked collaboratively with nearly 20 different agencies. Communications personnel ensured our troopers were able to communicate with each other and the various agencies. Due to the scope of the event, interoperability was vital for the safety of the citizens as well as the officers assigned to the detail.

“The Victory Parade detail was an excellent opportunity to work side-by-side with other law enforcement agencies,” said Capt. Steve V. Wilhoit (A). “Our troopers were on showcase, standing along the entire length of the parade route. Our men and women served this detail with professionalism and compassion, ensuring the safety and fun for everyone. It was a sight to see.”

*KCPD Sergeant Jake Becchina, KCPD Officer Donna Drake, and Sergeant Andy Bell (A) worked together along the parade route.*



Troopers assigned to the parade route had to be on their post no later than 6:30 a.m. The parade began at 11:30 a.m. at Berkley Park near Second and Grand Avenue. The parade moved south on Grand Avenue to Pershing Road then traveled west on Pershing Road to Main Street, ending at Union Station where the celebration rally

took place at approximately 1:30 p.m. Troopers remained at their posts until approximately 4 p.m. to ensure a safe and secure environment for all attendees.

Throughout the detail, troopers interacted with thousands of spectators and endured the elements. It wasn't as cold as the 2020 victory parade, but with a sustained wind of 15 mph and an occasional 30 mph wind gust, many layers were necessary to remain

*Captain Steve Wilhoit (A) helps a cluster of fans take a good group picture.*





# — Chiefs

Continued from page 6.



*Trooper Madeleine Mennemeyer (A) hands a football back to a young man.*



*Capt. Steve Wilhoit (A), Sgt. Shawn Griggs (Q/DDCC), and Lt. Scott Ballard (Q/FOB) found the best background for a photo prior to the parade.*

warm. Several of the attendees praised the troopers for their dedicated service throughout the day. The highlight of the day was when a handful of fans found out it was Sergeant Liere R. Dancy's (A) birthday and serenaded her.

Troopers and civilian personnel assigned to this detail hailed from

Troops A and H, as well as Field Operations Bureau, the Division of Drug and Crime Control, Governor's Security Division, and the Communications Division.

"The crowd was great," said Lieutenant Scott A. Ballard (Q/FOB). "They were in a good mood and happy to see the Patrol. It was

probably the best crowd I've seen while working on a security detail." Lt. Ballard said the crowd on either side of the street remained behind the barriers and enjoyed playing catch across the road. "When the football landed on the street, we tossed it back to them."

## Top 10 Career DWI Arrests

Tpr. Larry F. Byndom, retired — 1,348

Cpl. Ronald W. Eakins (E) — 1,227

Cpl. John L. Mason (Q/DDCC) — 1,208

Sgt. Shane R. Monk (D) — 1,173

Sgt. Blaine L. Adams, retired — 1,163

Sgt. Nicholas D. Berry, retired — 1,101

Cpl. Aaron A. Engelhart (A) — 1,029

Sgt. Mark A. Winder, retired — 949

Lt. Richard C. Fletcher Jr., retired — 938

Cpl. Michael L. Scoggins (E) — 856



# Traffic Stop Leads To Arrest

By Sgt. Mike P. McClure (D)

Corporal Eric L. Mueller (D) was honored with the DPS Sworn Member for the month of January 2023 related to a traffic stop which led to the arrest and conviction of a subject who was in possession of child pornography. A ceremony took place January 26, at Troop D Headquarters in Springfield, MO.

At approximately 6:29 a.m. July 28, 2020, Cpl. Mueller observed a white 1998 Ford F-150 pass his location on westbound U.S. Highway 60 in Webster County, MO. The Ford displayed expired Missouri license plates, which gained Cpl. Mueller's attention. After the Ford passed his location, he overtook the vehicle and initiated a traffic stop.

Through computer checks, Cpl. Mueller determined that the driver was a registered sex offender in Missouri, having been convicted of possessing child pornography. Cpl. Mueller also determined that the vehicle he was driving was not listed on his registry. After the computer check, Cpl. Mueller returned to the driver and questioned him about his phone, social media accounts, and the existence of any illegal photographs. Without further prompting, the driver opened his cell phone photo gallery and displayed several images of what appeared to be underage girls.



After accepting the DPS Sworn Employee of the Month award, Cpl. Eric Mueller (D) and his wife, Ashley, posed for this photo with DPS Director Sandra Karsten (l) and Col. Eric Olson (r).

Cpl. Mueller arrested the driver, who was later charged and convicted of felony possession of child pornography. The man was sentenced to 15 years in prison.

“Corporal Mueller’s work in this case is a great example of the importance of delivering high quality law enforcement services to the citizens of Missouri, one traffic stop at a time,” said Colonel Eric T. Olson. “I commend him for his attention to duty and adherence to the Patrol Core Values.”

Col. Eric Olson congratulates Cpl. Eric Mueller (D) at the award presentation.





# K9 Zsolti Retires!



*By Public Info. Spec. Cheryl D. Cobb (Q/PIED)*

Congratulations to K9 Zsolti upon his retirement March 1, 2023. Zsolti joined the Patrol in May 2020 after training at Riverview Canine in Cape Girardeau, MO. During his career, Zsolti deployed 104 times (including 62 vehicle sniffs) and performed 34 tracks, 13 call-outs, and two building searches, and made four apprehensions. He assisted in the seizure of 825.1 pounds of marijuana, 98.13 pounds of methamphetamine, 6.25 pounds of hashish, 2.2 pounds of cocaine, 56 opioid pills, and smaller amounts of heroin, edibles, MDMA, and THC concentrate. Zsolti sniffs also yielded two weapons and \$322,440 in U.S. currency. His partner, Sergeant R. Brooks McGinnis (A) said in retirement, Zsolti will most likely try to play with and annoy his replacement in the program. Thank you for your service, K9 Zsolti.



*Zsolti deploys with Troop F SWAT to assist with a manhunt in the Troop B area.*



*Zsolti's sniffed to the seizure of 633 pounds of marijuana.*



*Zsolti trained regularly and took his work seriously.*



*Zsolti knows how to relax.*



*Zsolti is seen here with this handler, Sgt. Brooks McGinnis (A).*



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# *Congratulations On Your Retirement!*

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Walter L. Burr III  
Sergeant  
Troop D

*Retired February 1, 2023.  
25 years, seven months  
of dedicated service.*



Keith A. Kinsey  
Corporal  
Q/GD

*Retired February 1, 2023.  
25 years of dedicated service.*



Kindel C. Ward  
Trooper  
Q/GD

*Retired February 1, 2023.  
22 years of dedicated service.*



Mark A. Winder  
Sergeant  
Troop E

*Retired February 1, 2023.  
29 years, six months  
of dedicated service.*



Bruce F. Baker  
Trooper  
Troop F

*Retired March 1, 2023.  
25 years, one month  
of dedicated service.*



Nicholas D. Berry  
Sergeant  
Troop B

*Retired March 1, 2023.  
28 years, four months  
of dedicated service.*



Mark A. Bielawski  
Lieutenant  
Q/TND

*Retired March 1, 2023.  
28 years, three months  
of dedicated service.*





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# *Congratulations On Your Retirement!*

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Michael L. Cary  
Trooper  
Troop D

*Retired March 1, 2023.  
28 years, two months  
of dedicated service.*



Stephen M. Conant  
Chief MVI  
Troop H

*Retired March 1, 2023.  
20 years, seven months  
of dedicated service.*



Robinson R.  
Fichtner  
CVO Sprv.  
Troop A

*Retired March 1, 2023.  
25 years, seven months  
of dedicated service.*



Brian S. Hagerty  
Sergeant  
Q/DDCC

*Retired March 1, 2023.  
28 years, eight months  
of dedicated service.*



Roger D. Martin  
Chief Oper.  
Q/CommD

*Retired March 1, 2023.  
22 years, one month  
of dedicated service.*



James A. Pragman  
Sergeant  
Q/DDCC

*Retired March 1, 2023.  
27 years, five months  
of dedicated service.*



Raymond T. Rees  
Sergeant  
Troop G

*Retired March 1, 2023.  
31 years, two months  
of dedicated service.*





# Finding Support thru Faith, Family, & Community

By Sgt. Andrew J. Bell (A)

Faith, family, community ... three words that struck a chord with nearly a dozen trooper spouses on the evening of January 19, 2023. The Troop A Spouse Support Group reunited and kicked off the new year by gathering at Abundant Life Church in Lee's Summit, MO, for fellowship, spiritual growth, and practical advice. Lead Pastor Phil Hoper, a former police sergeant and SWAT team member with the Kansas City (MO) Police Department, hosted the event. This was a special opportunity for those present to hear a former police officer's story about the many seasons of life he and his family endured, both the better and the worse.

Captain Steven V. Wilhoit (A), Lieutenant Barry A. Kumpf (A), and Sergeant Andrew J. Bell



*Pastor Phil and Mrs. Christa Hoper spoke with troopers' wives at Abundant Life Church in Lee's Summit, MO.*

(A) greeted each spouse as they arrived. Several wives were familiar with each other; a few were new to the group. When it was time to get started, Capt. Wilhoit introduced Pastor Phil and thanked each spouse for their commitment. Additionally, Pastor Phil's wife, Christa, joined everyone to share her perspective as a former law enforcement spouse.

Pastor Phil and Christa were transparent when speaking about their experiences and his eight years with KCPD. His police career included a variety of demanding assignments and difficult schedules. He spoke about the struggle of dividing time and energy between the police department and his family. Christa shared a story about going into labor with their second child while Pastor Phil was at an emergency SWAT operation. Their son was already born before Pastor Phil received word she was in labor.

"Despite the many challenges while [I was] with KCPD," said Pastor Phil, "I never lost hope."

Pastor Phil said he entered the law enforcement profession as a Christian, worked every assignment and shift as a Christian, and never shied away



*KCPD Sgt. Phil Hoper is pictured with his patrol vehicle (1997).*

from an opportunity to share the gospel. Pastor Phil told a story of a particular officer he was partnered with during his time working the overnight shift. This officer was going through a divorce and struggling with several aspects of his life. Pastor Phil spoke to him about living as a Christian, but the officer was reluctant to surrender to God and accept Jesus Christ as his savior. The partnership continued for many days, weeks, and months, and the officer came to Pastor Phil and asked him for help understanding and knowing Christ. Soon after they began talking about God, the officer accepted Jesus Christ as his savior. The officer went on to fix his brokenness and save his marriage.

Before leaving KCPD, Pastor Phil was recognized with the Distinguished Service Award, the department's second-highest honor; the Channel 9 Gold Award for Valor (local television station); and was named one of the National

# — Support

*Continued from page 12.*

Tactical Officers of the Year in 1997. This unique background prepared Pastor Phil for his ultimate calling, to minister to others as a pastor for more than 23 years.

Pastor Phil's journey of faith and walk with Christ is

exceptionally captivating and inspiring. His emphasis on faith, family, and community left everyone encouraged. The stories shared from his previous police career were relevant and resonated with the group. Throughout the evening, there was laughter, nods of affirmation, and some tears. The spouses appreciated Pastor

Phil's compassionate wisdom and posed a variety of questions. The evening was incredibly impactful for those needing spiritual and practical advice. At the conclusion of the meeting, there was a sense of hope, and the spouses expressed a desire to continue fellowship with one another.

## DPS Honors Weddle, Blackston

*By Sgt. Mike A. Mitchell (I)*

On February 15, 2023, Colonel Eric T. Olson and DPS Director Sandra K. Karston presented Sergeant Greg A. Weddle (I) and Corporal Shawn M. Blackston (I) with the DPS Sworn Team Member of the Month award for February 2023. This recognition stemmed from a traffic stop conducted by Sgt. Weddle in October 2022. Sgt. Weddle stopped a vehicle for a traffic violation at the end of his shift. After the driver failed to produce proper identification, Sgt. Weddle requested assistance from Cpl. Blackston and his assigned fingerprint scanner.

The driver was identified and a warrant for her arrest was discovered. The warrant entry also had an attached missing person entry for an abduction that occurred 13 years prior in the state of Texas. During the investigation, it was determined that the abducted child, now 17 years old, was safe at a location in the St. Louis area. The child and his father were reunited after 13 years.

Sgt. Weddle and Cpl. Blackston's efforts revealed the importance of 'looking beyond'



*Col. Eric Olson, Capt. Eddie Blaylock (I), Cpl. Shawn Blackston, Sgt. Greg Weddle, DPS Director Sandra Karsten, Lt. Greg DuBois (I), and Major Mike Turner (Q/FOB) gathered at Troop I Headquarters for the DPS Sworn Team Member Of The Month award presentation.*

during a traffic stop. We have all had those instances at the end of our shifts where getting home to our family is of utmost priority. Sgt. Weddle took the additional time at that last stop and reunited a father and son after 13 years of separation.

"I couldn't be more proud of Sgt. Weddle and Cpl. Blackston for their actions in this case," said Captain Eddie A. Blaylock (I). "They are such hard workers

and this incident shines a light on the importance of enforcing simple traffic violations and what they can lead to. Sgt. Weddle made that one last traffic stop on his way home to secure, which led to great interviewing and follow up by him and Cpl. Blackston. As a result, a young man was reunited with his father and family after nearly 14 years. We are so proud of Greg's and Shawn's actions that evening. They changed the lives of an entire family forever!"

March-April 2023/Patrol News 13



# Patrol History Trivia

## *Chicken-napping Case Solved!*

This report does not indicate in what year the incident occurred, but the troopers named point toward it happening in the agency's early years. It's originally titled, "Statement as to the number of chickens found, where and when found, and how returned to Mrs. South."

*Friday, September 30, Sheriff Bert Wheatley, Patrolman J.F. Judkins, Patrolman Herb Brigham, Ned Young, and Jeff Taylor went to Frank Spencer's farm in Jackson County. There, the men caught three buff Orpington chickens. Sheriff Wheatley went over to a nearby field where a man was sowing wheat. Sheriff Wheatley brought the man back to Frank Spencer's farm and Ned Young, Patrolman Judkins, and Sheriff Wheatley went over to the man's house to talk to his wife. Patrolman Brigham and Jeff Taylor stayed at the Frank Spencer farm. Then, Sheriff Wheatley came back to Frank Spencer's farm and Ned Young and Patrolman Judkins went to Spencer's Cafe, leaving Sheriff Wheatley, Jeff Taylor, and Patrolman Brigham at Spencer's farm. Ned Young and Patrolman Judkins got Mr. & Mrs. Frank Spencer at their cafe and brought them back with them to Frank Spencer's farm.*

*Sheriff Wheatley and Jeff Taylor took Mr. and Mrs. Frank Spencer in Sheriff Wheatley's car and went back to Spencer's Cafe on [Missouri] Highway 71. Ned Young, Patrolman Judkins, and Patrolman Brigham came to Frank Spencer's Cafe in Patrolman Judkins' car. Mr. and Mrs. Spencer got the Spencer car ready and Mrs. Frank Spencer drove her car to the Highway Patrol station at Lee's Summit. Sheriff Wheatley and Jeff Taylor followed Mrs. Spencer in Sheriff Wheatley's car to the Patrol station at Lee's Summit.*

*Patrolman Judkins, Patrolman Brigham, and Ned Young searched the Frank Spencer Cafe and found 27 buff Orpington chickens in the basement of the cafe. They searched the Frank Spencer Cafe at the invitation and consent of one Gene Frost, who was employed there, just after the arrest of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Spencer at the cafe. The three buff Orpington chickens found at the Frank Spencer farm previously were in a sack in Patrolman Judkins' car. The three buff Orpington chickens found at the Frank Spencer farm plus the 27 buff Orpington chickens found in the basement of Frank Spencer Cafe made a total of 30 buff Orpington chickens accounted for. Virgil Dill, who worked for Mr. and Mrs. Frank Spencer, stated that*

*five or six buff Orpington chickens had been killed the morning of September 30th for use in the cafe.*

*The night of October 1st, Sheriff Wheatley returned to the Frank Spencer farm and found five more buff Orpington chickens. This made a total of 35 buff Orpington chickens recovered at the Frank Spencer farm and in the basement of the Frank Spencer Cafe. Along with the five or six buff Orpington chickens killed and cleaned for use in the cafe, a final total of 40 or 41 buff Orpington chickens were accounted for on the night of September 30th. Patrolman Judkins, Patrolman Brigham, and Ned Young brought 12 buff Orpington chickens to the Highway Patrol station at Lee's Summit, leaving 18 buff Orpington chickens in the basement of Frank Spencer's Cafe. Sheriff Wheatley and Patrolman Judkins returned to the cafe and brought back the other 18 buff Orpington chickens to the Highway Patrol station at Lee's Summit. These 30 buff Orpington chickens were brought by Sheriff Wheatley to the home of Mrs. Charles South and left with Mrs. Charles South. The following night of October 1st, Sheriff Wheatley and [Ned] Young went to the Frank Spencer farm, got the other five buff Orpington chickens, and returned them to the home of Mrs. Charles South and left them with her.*



# Gregory Named CVO Of The Year

By Public Info. Spec. Cheryl D. Cobb (Q/PIED)

“It’s important to recognize our employees for the good work they do,” said Captain Kevin C. Kelley (Q/CVED).

Members of the Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Division gathered in the second floor conference room of the Waggoner Building for a special ceremony March 7, 2023. They were there to present the first-ever Commercial Vehicle Officer Of The Year award to Commercial Vehicle Officer Jason L. Gregory (G).

CVO Gregory was recognized for his assistance with training and the CVO Class. “He never says, ‘No,’” said Capt. Kelley. The captain also recognized Mrs. Gregory and Troop G Captain Bruce D. Fisk for their support of CVO Gregory’s training assignments. “We couldn’t do what we do without Jason’s help,” said Capt. Kelley. “Jason’s expertise is second to none.”

CVO Gregory joined the Patrol on May 11, 2003, and is assigned to the portable scale truck. He spends his days enforcing the law and educating commercial vehicle drivers, as well as assisting at commercial vehicle crashes or traffic stops. He says he enjoys teaching and handles courses on North American Standard Inspection Procedures Part A and B, and defensive tactics.

“I’m honored to be the first to receive this award,” said CVO Gregory. “It’s nice to know the



*CVO Chief Brandon Whittington (Q/CVED), CVO Jason Gregory (G), and Capt. Kevin Kelley (Q/CVED) paused for this photo after the presentation.*

division appreciates my work.”

CVO Gregory said he encourages others to explore a career as a commercial vehicle officer with the Patrol. “It’s a specialized part of law enforcement, and you have to stay abreast of the updates to federal and state laws and regulations. It’s rewarding in the fact that you are helping the community in a way nobody notices.”

CVO Gregory said he has stopped commercial vehicles with drivers who were operating under the influence of drugs and alcohol, some of whom were impaired while they were transporting drugs. He’s encountered people wanted for assault and kidnapping, as well as people on the terrorist watch list, people the FBI was actively tracking, along with active outlaw motorcycle gang members and MS13 members. He meets a

wide range of people, from those who are productive members of society to those active in the criminal world.

“They are all driving commercial motor vehicles and you never know who you are going to stop next,” he said. “No one really sees the dangers posed by commercial vehicles. If they’d seen the vehicles I inspect, I think a lot of drivers wouldn’t drive on the highway.”

“Jason is a great, first CVO Of The Year for all he does, said Capt. Kelley. “The division can’t accomplish our goals without our commercial vehicle officers in the field. Our employees are the backbone of the Patrol and the CVE division.”

Congratulations, Commercial Vehicle Officer Gregory!



# WPD NAMES HONORARY TROOPERS

*By Capt. Mike A. Petlansky (Q/WPD)*

On February 23, 2023, the Highway Patrol and the U. S. Coast Guard recognized Captain Mark Barnett and Mr. Jerry Bailey, both Capital Sand employees, for their actions rescuing a man floating in the Missouri River on September 16, 2022, near Chesterfield, MO. The presentation occurred during the Missouri River Navigators Meeting at the Farm Bureau building in Jefferson City, MO. Sergeant Dustin J. Duffie (C) wrote up the Honorary Trooper nomination and Major Mike A. Turner (Q/FOB) presented the certificates to Captain Barnett and Mr. Bailey. Representatives from the Coast Guard Sector St. Louis also presented certificates of appreciation for their efforts.



*Pictured with several members of the Coast Guard are (l to r) Mr. Jerry Bailey, Captain Mark Barnett, Lt. Stephen Burgun (Q/WPD), Major Mike Turner (Q/FOB), and Capt. Michael Petlansky (Q/WPD).*

## **START YOUR ENGINES!**

Kansas Speedway and the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund are teaming up for the Kansas Speedway NASCAR Cup Series race on Sunday, May 7, 2023, designating it First Responders Day. Join us as we celebrate and honor the commitment of law enforcement, first responders, and public safety personnel who keep our communities safe. This offer is available to all law enforcement personnel, first responders, public safety, corrections, friends, family, and the general public. Special pricing for tickets starts at \$54.25. All fans that purchase through this special offer will receive an exclusive Kansas Speedway branded challenge coin and \$10 from each ticket will be donated to the NLEOMF. Order online at [nleomf.org](http://nleomf.org). For questions regarding the event, group orders, or to avoid service fees, contact Kansas Speedway Account Executive Shea Daley at 607-300-6103 or by email at [sdaley@nascar.com](mailto:sdaley@nascar.com).



# SOCIAL MEDIA GURU GOES ABOVE & BEYOND

By Public Info. Spec. III Cheryl D. Cobb (Q/PIED)



On February 27, 2023, the buzz of conversation and muted laughter throughout the room indicated something was happening. The DPS Nonsworn Team Member of the Month ceremony was about to begin, and employees had gathered to congratulate Public Information Specialist III Meghan E. Basinger (Q/PIED), who was being honored with the February 2023 award.

Major Corey J. Schoeneberg (Q/ASB) welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming. He then shared the nomination and congratulated Meghan.

*“Missouri State Highway Patrol Public Information Specialist III Meghan E. Basinger, Public Information and Education Division at General Headquarters, is the February 2023 DPS Nonsworn Team Member Of The Month. Ms. Basinger creates content, manages, and monitors the Patrol’s multiple social media accounts as well as the email addresses linked to the accounts. On August 25, 2022, the social media account received an email*

*from a female experiencing a mental health crisis without providing a location. The female stated she had been in a traffic crash earlier, that her depression was “90 times worse,” and that she was having “some very bad thoughts.” Ms. Basinger then utilized information in the email to identify the female through her social media accounts. Another email from the female indicated she was suicidal. Utilizing the information provided by the female and Ms. Basinger, the Patrol was able to determine the traffic crash occurred in the Troop I, Rolla, MO, area. The information was forwarded and Troop I and the Rolla Police Department developed further information, identified the female, and located her. Ms. Basinger’s actions allowed personnel in Troop I to take the appropriate action to help a person in need and prevent a tragic conclusion. Ms. Basinger’s attention to detail, dedication to her duties, and her strong work ethic led to a positive outcome to what could have been a tragic loss of life.”*

*Lt. Eric Brown (Q/PIED), Capt. John Hotz (Q/PIED), DPS Director Sandra Karsten, Public Info. Spec. III Meghan Basinger (Q/PIED), and Major Corey Schoeneberg (Q/ASB) are pictured.*

“This was outstanding work by Meghan and her commitment was evident in the writeup,” said Major Schoeneberg. “Everything she does for the agency she does with her whole heart.” He then presented a challenge coin from the colonel, saying the Patrol Core Value of resourcefulness comes to mind regarding Meghan’s actions.

Department of Public Safety Director Sandra K. Karsten congratulated Meghan and presented a DPS challenge coin. “This wasn’t her role, but she embraces the core values in such a way that she recognized this person needed help.”

After Meghan expressed her appreciation for the award, Captain John J. Hotz (Q/PIED) spoke, “This is just one example of what Meghan does every day. She’s been filling two roles in our division since last April. When she noticed this, she went above and beyond.”

“On behalf of the entire organization, congratulations,” said Major Schoeneberg. “Meghan’s sense of responsibility to her position, the organization, and this individual goes a long way in the service we provide the public.”

# Deaths

## John W. Jones



John W. Jones, 78, of Lowry City, MO, died Monday, January 16, 2023, at St. Luke's Hospital on the Plaza. He graduated from Lowry City High School in 1962. He attended Moler Barber School, then worked at a Barber Shop in Versailles, MO. On June 17, 1965, John was drafted into the U.S. Army. He attended basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, MO, and military police training at Fort Gordon, GA, and Fort Dix, NJ. He was then transferred to Vicenza, Italy. He was honorably discharged in June 1967. He was appointed to the Missouri State Highway Patrol as a member of the 34th Recruit Class on October 1, 1967. He served in Troop H, Harrison County, and the casino in St. Joseph, MO, as a member of the Gaming Division, General Headquarters. He retired August 31, 1996. John's survivors include his wife, April, of the home, two sons, and four grandsons. The Patrol family extends its sincerest sympathy to the Jones family.

## Sandra K. Cole



Sandra Kay "Sandi" Cole, 62, of Holts Summit, MO, died Wednesday, January 25, 2023, at her home surrounded by her family. Sandi grew up in Jefferson City, MO, and graduated from Jefferson City High School in 1978. She was married to James A. "Jim" Claus on May 27, 2012. She worked for the state of Missouri for 33 years, 29 of which were dedicated to the Missouri State Highway Patrol. Sandi was the recipient of several awards throughout her time with the Patrol. Following her retirement from the Patrol, the National Institute for Safety Research (NISR) hired Sandi as a quality control analyst.

Sandi is survived by her loving husband of 10 years, Jim; two sons, one stepson, her father, three sisters, one brother, six grandchildren, many extended family members, numerous close friends, and her beloved cardinal birds, Johnny and June. She was preceded in death by her mother, Gloria Sanning.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions are suggested to the Rape and Abuse Crisis Service (RACS) or Special Olympics by mailing all donations to P.O. Box 95, Jefferson City, MO 65102. For

more information about Sandi, visit the Freeman Mortuary website at [www.freemanmortuary.com](http://www.freemanmortuary.com). The Patrol family extends its sincerest condolences to Sandi's family.

## James P. Corsentino



James P. Corsentino, 77, of Springfield, MO, died February 9, 2023. Jim grew up at Lake of the Ozarks from age 15. After high school, he joined the U.S. Navy and spent three years as an aircraft and engine mechanic. After being discharged from the Navy, Jim applied and was accepted into the Missouri State Highway Patrol on June 1, 1967. He was stationed in Troop I and lived in Waynesville, MO, then Lebanon, MO, and Rolla, MO. He retired at the rank of sergeant on June 1, 1996. He was proud to have been part of the Patrol. Jim is survived by his wife, Ruth, and one son. The family asks that in lieu of flowers donations be made to the local MS Society. To read more about Jim, visit the Greenlawn Funeral Home website at [www.greenlawnfuneralhome.com](http://www.greenlawnfuneralhome.com). The Patrol family extends its sincerest condolences to the Corsentino family.



## Sympathy

*Our deepest sympathy goes to the following personnel who have lost a member of their family:*

Ret. CVO Larry E. Masterson - father  
Sgt. John R. Henry (B) - grandmother  
Cpl. Nic J. Greiner (H) - grandmother  
Sgt. Travis L. Williams (Q/DDCC) - father  
DE Chief Kim V. Crewse (G) - father  
Cpl. Stacy J. Crewse (G) - father-in-law  
Tpr. J. Alan Crewse (G) - grandfather  
Ret. Sgt. Greg D. Smith - father  
Cpl. Rhonda M. Shanika-Croy (Q?GD) - mother-in-law  
PRD Tech. III Melanie R. Branson (Q/PRD) - grandmother  
PRD Tech. III Roger D. Branson (Q/PRD) - wife's grandmother  
Ret. PRD Tech. III Nina D. Holtmeyer - mother  
Ret. Clerk IV Lisa L. Kempker - mother  
Ret. Crim. Intel. Analyst II Beth A. Holtmeyer - mother  
Lab Manager Susanne R. Fleetwood (Q/CLD) - mother  
Crim. Intel. Analyst Alec G. Fleetwood (Q/MIAC) - grandmother  
Ret. Sgt. W.D. "Rusty" Bourg - wife  
Tpr. Andy J. Foss (A) - grandmother

# Thank You

I would like to thank the Patrol family for the overwhelming display of love and support provided to my family and me following Debbie's passing. I am grateful for those of you who generously donated to the American Diabetes Association on Debbie's behalf. The friends and relationships she acquired will be forever special.

*Ret. Sgt. W.D. Rusty Bourg*

## Looking Back ... in the Patrol News

### 45 years ago ...

*March 1978* — While appearing for a concert in Columbia, MO, Johnny Cash took time to record several public service announcements dealing with observance of the 55 mph speed limit.

### 35 years ago ...

*April 1988* — An announcement indicated the Patrol's second annual softball tournament was scheduled for July 1988. With enough teams

enrolled, the tournament would be two days and include a hog roast. It was going to take place in Moberly, MO, at the Knights of Columbus Park.

### 25 years ago ...

*March 1998* — The agency celebrated the 74th Recruit Class graduation in this issue. One story recognized Commercial Vehicle Officer Linda Stafford (H) who was named DPS Employee of the Month for January 1998. CVO

### 15 years ago ...

*March/April 2008* — The Sergeant Carl Dewayne Graham Jr. Memorial Highway dedication was featured. It was announced that Criminal Intelligence Analyst II Connie E. Farrow (Q/MIAC) had been named Division of Drug and Crime Control's Civilian of the Year for 2007. The new MULES training unit was pictured. These employees would henceforth be known as UCR trainers/QA auditors.

Stafford recognized things weren't as they appeared during a commercial vehicle inspection and requested assistance. As a result, 325 kilograms of cocaine was seized.

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# Sergeants Mark 25 Years On Dive Team

*By Capt. Mike A. Petlansky (Q/WPD)*

On February 28, 2023, Major Mike A. Turner (Q/FOB) visited with the Patrol's Dive Team as they performed their annual physical fitness test at the training tank. He took that opportunity to recognize Sgt. Kurt C. Merseal (Q/WPD) and Sgt. Charles W. Hoff (Q/WPD) for serving 25 years as public safety divers. Sgt. Merseal, the Dive Team leader, and Sgt. Hoff, assistant Dive Team leader, joined the Water Patrol's Dive Team together in October 1997. They have led the Patrol's Dive Team through personal sacrifice and commitment. Both have a constant drive to improve the team's capabilities regarding safer and more efficient methods of recoveries in dive operations. The duo's strongest leadership characteristic is their ability to maintain the Dive Team's strong cohesion and morale, while focusing on the development of future leaders on the team. Thank you for your leadership, Kurt and Charles!



*(l to r) Sgt. Kurt Merseal and Sgt. Charles Hoff (both Q/WPD) have served on the Dive Team for 25 years.*