January | February 2025

PATROL NEWS

OVER NINETY YEARS OF SERVICE AND PROTECTION



from the STAFF



Colonel Eric T. Olson
Superintendent

I have heard that retiring from the Patrol may be more difficult than getting hired. After searching high and low in just about every desk drawer, closet, glove box, and trunk I could find for my Patrol issued equipment from 34+ years, I believe this may be true. Motivated by the strong desire not to disappoint the Budget and Procurement Division should I be missing any items; I spent a few days making sure I got it right. This task brought back many memories and some thoughts about the future. A few specific items were particularly meaningful.

I found my black "catalog case" in my basement garage. I recall using it a great deal early in my career to transport books and report forms and to store other miscellaneous items in my trunk. We must have wiped out several rain forests printing the forms and manuals. The catalog case reminds me of the incredible changes in technology that have occurred, mostly for the better. While these changes can be frustrating at times, I know there will be many more ahead and we are not alone among law enforcement agencies, as we do our best to meet the critical need of technology development.

Located inside the case was an empty notebook for the storage of General Orders. The book is blue, with yellow writing. It has a zippered closure and my original badge number on the exterior. Again, I thought about the advantages we have today to quickly access important information. As I studied the notebook further, I recalled initialing each G.O. on the upper right corner, with the date, to demonstrate I had read and understood the contents, later to be inspected by a supervisor. We are fortunate to have strong, effective policy to provide guidance for the important jobs we do. Reading policy, understanding it, and implementing it has always been critical to our success and that will not change.

I was issued two pairs of handcuffs, Peerless #801328 and #801416. I recall reciting those numbers on occasion at morning inspections near the flagpole, during the academy. After a couple close calls and with some good fortune, I was able to maintain possession of both pairs over the years. Handcuffs remind me of officer safety and the great instruction we receive at our Training Division and from troop instructors.

Finally, I was cleaning out a desk drawer when I came across some reports and IOC's that pertained to breathalyzer maintenance, Type II permits, and other information about blood alcohol results. I immediately noticed who had written the material. It was authored by Sergeant Robert Kimberling, badge 511, in Troop H. Bob was our troop coordinator for Type II and I had frequent interaction with him on the topic. Sergeant Kimberling was killed in the line of duty on October 6, 1999. I stopped and thought about the interactions and friendship I had with Bob and what his leadership meant to our troop. We must continue to honor and respect our fallen troopers, support their families, and ensure our work and conduct pay tribute to their ultimate sacrifice.

I thank all of you for the contributions and commitment you make to the public and the Patrol every day. Most of all, I am thankful for your friendships and the camaraderie we have shared over the years. God bless each of you and the Missouri State Highway Patrol.

Eric T. Olson

CELEBRATING OVER 59 YEARS OF NEWS
PATROL NEWS
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Managing Editor

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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

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE MISSOURI STATE HIGHWAY PATROL

January | February 2025

PATROL NEWS

OVER NINETY YEARS OF SERVICE AND PROTECTION

Volume 59 • Number 4

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ON THE COVER

Colonel Eric T. Olson, Superintendent, retires.
See story on page 10.



The Missouri State Highway Patrol Annual Awards Ceremony and MASTERS Banquet will be held on Saturday, April 5, 2025, at the Holiday Inn Executive Center, Columbia, Missouri.

The awards banquet is open to all MASTERS members, MSHP employees, and their guest/spouse. In the past, the fee has been $40 per person, and we anticipate the same for this coming year. The banquet usually starts with a social hour at 5:30 p.m. with dinner immediately following, and then the presentation of awards. If you have any questions, please contact Dee Kempker at (573) 526-6159 or dee.kempker@mshp.dps.mo.gov.



Colonel Eric Olson, Tpr. Daniel Norton (C), Mr. Justen E. Meyer, and DPS Director Sandra K. Karsten pose for a photo at the December DPS Team Member of the Month ceremony at Troop C Headquarters.

Troop C - December DPS Team Members of the Month

Meghan Clouse (Q/PIED)
Public Relations Specialist

Two Troop C employees received the Department of Public Safety Team Members of the Month for December.

Trooper Daniel Norton, Troop C, was awarded the DPS Sworn Team Member of the Month for December 2024. On April 9, 2024, while Trooper Norton was patrolling in Jefferson County, he noticed smoke rising from a neighborhood and drove over to investigate. Upon arrival, he observed a large fire next to a home, which was already causing the siding to melt. Trooper Norton radioed for firefighters and then rushed to wake the family inside the home. Trooper Norton's attention to his surroundings and quick actions saved the family and minimized the damage to their home.

Mr. Justen Meyer, Senior Auto/Marine Technician at Troop C, received the DPS Non-Sworn Team Member of the Month for December 2024 for using his automotive expertise to locate key evidence for investigators. His assistance greatly advanced a three-year-old missing person case, which led to an arrest for homicide. In April of 2024, the Division of Drug and Crime Control was asked to assist with a 2021 missing person investigation in Jefferson County. It was determined the victim was shot while riding in a Toyota Camry, which was seized as evidence and processed at Troop C Headquarters. Mr. Meyer volunteered his expertise to investigators to help recover evidence. He removed the cover of the passenger seat, exposing the cushions, where key evidence was found. He then removed the vehicle's dashboard, which exposed the passenger airbag, allowing an intact bullet to be recovered. Mr. Meyer's assistance and knowledge sped up the process of locating evidence which led to an arrest.



Trooper Daniel Norton (C) receives his Department of Public Safety Sworn Team Member of the Month award from DPS Director Sandra Karsten.



Senior Auto/Marine Technician Justen E. Meyer (C) stands with DPS Director Sandra Karsten as he accepts his Department of Public Safety Non-Sworn Team Member of the Month for December award.

Patrol Hosts Northwestern University School of Police



Sgt. Bobby Knight
Nash County Sheriff's Office (NC)

The Missouri State Highway Patrol hosted the 10-week Northwestern University School of Police Staff and Command (SPSC) Class 592 from October 14 through November 22, 2024.

22 students were enrolled. Eleven of the students were members of the Patrol, including Lt. John Dick (Q/PSD), Lt. Johny Ellsworth (Q/DDCC), Sgt. Matthew Halford (F), Lt. Steven Johnson (Q/FOB), Sgt. Jason Millsap (Q/DDCC), Capt. Mike Petlansky(Q/WPD), Lt. Greg Primm (A), Sgt. Bryan Salmons (F), Sgt. Scotty Sizer (Q/GD), Lt. Casey Utterback (F), Lt. Nathan Wallace (Q/PSD).

The remaining members of the class were from outside agencies. These students included Sgt. Greg Benson, Kearney PD (NE); Lt. Dale Burnett, Branson PD; Lt. Jeff Cook, O'Fallon PD; Lt. Miles Costa, Nash County Sheriff's Office (NC); Commander Michael Elwood, Sedalia PD; Sgt. Monica Furrer, St. Louis County PD; Sgt. Brandon Keene, Springfield PD; Sgt. Bobby Knight, Nash County Sheriff's Office (NC); Commander Kevin Tylar, Sedalia PD; Sgt. Tucker Schnerre, St. Louis County PD; and Lt. Arrethie Williams, St. Louis County PD.

SPSC is an intensive leadership and management education program designed to prepare experienced law enforcement professionals for success in senior command positions. Since its inception in 1983, the SPSC has graduated more than 21,000 students, including nearly 800 currently active chiefs and sheriffs. The curriculum focuses on critical command-level content such as planning and policies, media relations, organizational behavior, budgeting and resource allocation, human resources, and contemporary policing.

In addition to these topics, the program emphasizes budgeting, leadership concepts, and enhancing decision-making skills. The SPSC is staffed by instructors from all over the country, each bringing a wealth of prior law enforcement and command staff experience. This diverse and experienced faculty ensures that students receive a comprehensive and practical education, preparing them to lead with confidence and competence in their respective agencies.

Class number 592, in particular, boasts a wealth of experience and knowledge among its students. The class allows participants to gain a broader understanding of how things work not just in Missouri, but across different regions. Notably, two students traveled from North Carolina to attend the course, bringing unique perspectives and enriching the learning experience for everyone involved.

During each session of the Northwestern School, instructors and students vote for one member to receive the Kreml Leadership Award. Lt. Greg Primm of the Missouri State Highway Patrol won this award for his dedication, devotion, ethics, leadership, and justice for his actions during the 10-week course.

Congratulations ON YOUR RETIREMENT

For your years of dedicated service, loyalty, and selfless giving, we thank you.



CHRIS L. COLMAN
CVO Supervisor
Troop A
Retired January 1, 2025
35 years of dedicated service



STACEY L. HINSON
Program Assistant
Q/CJIS
Retired January 1, 2025
13 years, 10 months of dedicated service



JANE M. MCCLURG
Driver Examiner II
Troop H
Retired January 1, 2025
16 years, 6 months of dedicated service



KIMBERLY J. MCDOWELL
Comm. Op. III
Troop I
Retired January 1, 2025
25 years, 11 months of dedicated service



ROGER L. PHILLIPS
Captain
Q/DDCC
Retired January 1, 2025
26 years, 11 months of dedicated service



DALE B. POUNDS
Sergeant
Troop G
Retired January 1, 2025
20 years, 2 months of dedicated service



MARCUS S. REYNOLDS
Sergeant
Q/DDCC
Retired January 1, 2025
23 years, 2 months of dedicated service

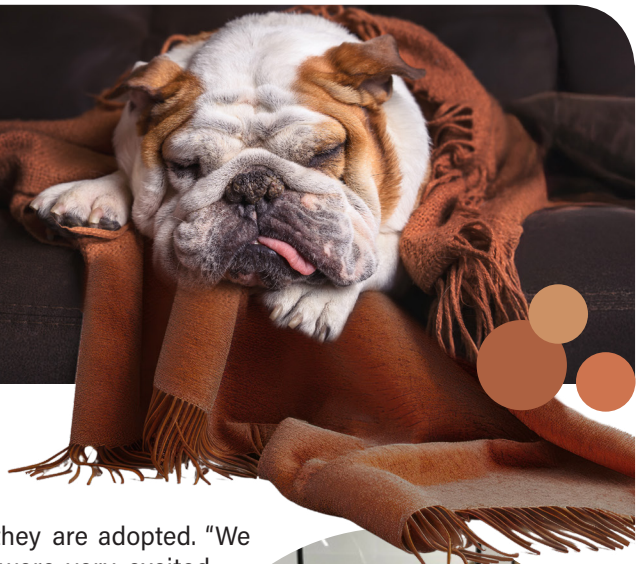


COLLIN M. STOSBERG
Sergeant
Q/RCOD
Retired January 1, 2025
28 years of dedicated service



GREGORY K. TESCH
Corporal
Q/GD
Retired January 1, 2025
16 years, 6 months of dedicated service

CVED "Jean Day" Donations go to DOGS IN NEED



Rebecca Van Ostran (Q/CVE)
Program Specialist

Each holiday season, personnel from the Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Division adopt a family for Christmas. This year, CVE decided to do something different by adopting the Columbia Second Chance Animal Rescue located in Boonville, Missouri. Second Chance Animal Rescue is a privately funded 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation created specifically for the rescue and care of animals. CVE made a charitable contribution of $450 using "Jean Day" money collected throughout the year. Employees also provided a box of items needed at the shelter including dog and cat toys, collars, leashes, food and scoops. On December 14, 2024, CVE employees Rebecca Van Ostran and Dana Koch, along with their daughters Heather Parrish and Olivia Koch (pictured right), delivered the items to the shelter where the four of them got to spend time with the dogs. Shelter employees explained their mission of rescuing animals from being euthanized and training them for their future foster and adoptive homes. The shelter also trains foster parents to ensure the dogs have everything they need when they are adopted. "We chose them and were very excited about donating to them as they do their best to rescue animals from being euthanized and give them a forever home and a better life," said Rebecca. "The animals were so grateful and dug right into the box of goodies to get their own toy picked out."

Rebecca said that although she can't speak for her entire office, she loved working with the rescue and hopes they can join forces again next year. Anyone interested in fostering or volunteering can find more information on the rescue's website: columbia2ndchance.org/foster.



I to r: Rebecca Van Ostran (Q/CVE) and Dana Koch (Q/CVE) with their daughters, Olivia Koch and Heather Parrish at the Columbia Second Chance Animal Rescue, Boonville, Missouri

WITH sympathy

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

CVO Chief James Stone (A) - sister
Division Assistant Director Greg Rehagen (Q/FFD) - father
Tpr. Matthew Tucker (A) - grandfather
CVO Matthew McGraw (D) - mother
Ret. Cook Sonja Barborek - mother
Ret. Sgt. Alan Barborek - mother-in-law
Tpr. Collin Nichols (C) - father
Lt. D. Shane Green (A) - mother
Ret. Capt. Robert Howard - wife
CDL Examiner Stephen Williams (E) - brother
Ret. Chief Operator John Burgess - wife
Tpr. Zachary Ricker (C) - grandmother
Ret. Sgt. Bruce Johnson - mother
Ret. Tpr. Gary Paul - wife
Ret. Capt. John Prine - wife
Ret. Lt. Ralph Bledsoe - mother
DE Supvr. Jim Little (C) - mother
DE Supvr. Amy Cook (A) - husband
Automotive/Marine Services Supvr. Cody Hargis (Q/FFD) - grandfather
Ret. Sgt. Eric Volkmer - wife
Sgt. Paul V.J. Volkmer (I) - mother
Ret. Lt. Col. Paul V. Volkmer - daughter-in-law
Ret. Sgt. Scott Mertens - sister
Ret. Sgt. Scott Mertens - mother
Ret. Sgt. Eric Volkmer - mother-in-law
Sgt. Paul V.J. Volkmer (I) - grandmother
Sheila Ponder (Q/PRD) - mother
Lt. Jim Lowary (F) - father-in-law

From Interest to Impact



From the first day of the Academy to the day of graduation, Tpr. Brittney Romano (F) excels.

The Recruiter's Perspective: the Journey to Becoming a Trooper

Corporal R. Mike Malone (Q/RCOD)

One of the most rewarding parts of being a recruiter for the Missouri State Highway Patrol is witnessing an individual's transformation—from their initial interest in this career to becoming a recruit, navigating the challenges of the Academy, and ultimately taking their oath to become a Trooper. It's especially fulfilling to see them months later, picking up their first patrol car and excitedly sharing stories about their latest arrest or an unforgettable incident. Each moment fills me with pride and reminds me why this work matters.

When I was on patrol working the road, I stopped countless vehicles for speeding, DWIs, and other violations. I knew I was doing my part to make Missouri's roads safer, but I didn't always know or see the full impact of my actions. Did I save a life by stopping a drunk driver? Did slowing someone down prevent a future crash? Sometimes you just don't get to see the ripple effects of your work because you stopped them before the unthinkable could happen. However, deep down we all know we are making a difference.

As a recruiter, though, I get to see the transformation from start to finish. I meet people at the very beginning—when they're unsure if they have what it takes to join the Patrol. I watch as they push through the application process, train tirelessly for the Academy and in the Academy, and finally graduate, ready to serve and protect communities.

What's even more exciting is thinking about the impact these young men and women will have in the years to come. Each one of them has the potential to save lives, inspire others, and uphold the proud tradition of the Missouri State Highway Patrol and live the legacy. It's incredibly rewarding to see their determination and growth, knowing they're stepping into a role where they will make a real difference in their communities.

MSHP DIVE TEAM EXCELS AS ONE OF THE NATION'S TOP DIVE TEAM



Tpr. E.L. Montgomery poses in dive equipment used by the Patrol in the 1960s.



Dive members, then ranked Cpl. Dean A. Bartlett (F), Tpr. Rob W. Garrett (D), Sgt. Kurt C. Merseal (Q/WPD), and Tpr. Logan B. Monahan (E), completed technical diving qualifications in 2017.

Colonel Mike Turner, *Superintendent*

Since its inception in 1960, our Missouri State Highway Patrol Dive Team has grown from modest beginnings into one of the nation's top FEMA Type 1 public safety dive teams. The original team consisted of just four members with basic equipment, focusing on shallow-water recovery. After disbanding in 1966, the Missouri State Water Patrol reestablished the team in 1979, expanding its scope and capabilities. Following the 2011 merger of the Water Patrol with the MSHP, the team became part of the Field Operations Bureau, evolving into a nationally recognized public safety dive team with 12 members and over 170 years of combined recovery experience.

Today, the Dive Team is equipped to perform recoveries in all Missouri waterways, including caverns and caves, in any water condition, from deep open water to confined and hazardous spaces. With modern technical diving gear, team members can operate at depths of up to 300 feet while extending their bottom times beyond the limits of traditional scuba diving. This capability is crucial for deep-water searches, particularly when sonar systems cannot locate targets. Additionally, advanced tools such as underwater scooters enable divers to cover large areas efficiently while conserving energy and breathing gas.

Sonar technology plays a critical role in the team's operations. Using towed or vessel-mounted sonar systems, divers can locate objects or evidence from the surface with precision. Once an item is identified, divers follow a marked line to retrieve it, reducing the risk of entrapment and limiting time spent underwater. However, when sonar is not effective, divers employ techniques like contour searching (methodical sweeps at precise depth intervals) to confidently search areas obstructed by debris or standing timber.

Safety and training are at the core of the Dive Team's success. Members participate in rigorous skill tests, annual medical examinations, fitness evaluations, and continuous education to maintain peak readiness. Their expertise extends to handling high-risk environments, such as overhead conditions, swift currents, and extreme depths. The recent addition of a dive team medic has further enhanced safety, ensuring immediate medical attention for dive-related injuries. This role reflects the Patrol's commitment to the welfare of its personnel during complex operations.

While their primary mission is victim recovery and evidence collection, our Dive Team's advanced capabilities and training make them invaluable in all water-related incidents. From deep-water recoveries to confined-space rescues, their work supports law enforcement investigations and provides closure and justice for communities.

"The improvements and enhancements of the Dive Team's capabilities have drastically mitigated and expedited our ability to safely make recoveries for those families impacted with a water related fatality," said Assistant Dive Team Leader Sergeant Charles W. Hoff (Q/WP). "In many cases I've found over the years, the grieving process is delayed until the recovery of a loved one has been made. Being a part of that recovery brings a sense of fulfillment and purpose with our calling."

Our Dive Team's commitment to excellence, innovation, and public safety sets a high standard for dive teams nationwide, making them a vital asset to Missouri and its neighbors.

A Career Carved Through

COMMITMENT

The Retirement of Colonel Eric Olson

MISSOURI STATE HIGHWAY PATROL

SERVICE AND PROTECTION





Captain Danielle E. Heil (Q/RCOD) offers Ret. Colonel Eric T. Olson a heartfelt handshake of congratulations at his retirement reception.

Emilee Kuschel (Q/PIED)
Public Relations Specialist

> "They were very good troopers and taught me a lot. I worked with many great people over the years and listing all of them would be impossible."
> — Col. Eric T. Olson

From the moment Colonel Olson arrived at the Academy, he knew he would need to prioritize commitment in order to graduate and become a trooper with the Missouri State Highway Patrol. "I was in a July class, and it was very hot. I recall taking the first PT test on the blacktop road by the treatment plant," said Colonel Olson. "It was difficult, but I knew there were no options but to complete the training."

During his second week at the academy, his first roommate, a former military member, quit, but not before teaching him the right way to make his bed. He said that several of his classmates supported each other during their time at the academy, sharing fun and interesting adventures. "I enjoyed the camaraderie with classmates... After I retire, there will be two members of the 63rd recruit class still on the Patrol, Julie Kerr and Mark McClendon," said Col. Olson.

His perseverance served him well as he embarked on his career, and Colonel Olson said he learned much from those around him. "My field training officer was Keverne McCollum. She got me started on a good path. Dave Eads was the corporal in my first zone and taught me a lot about how to patrol rural Missouri... Sergeant John Elliott, Corporal Tim Deshler, and Troopers Dale Chenoweth, Jim McDonald and Larry Allen were in my new zone. We became very close and spent a lot of time together off-duty as well. Our zone consistently led the troop in enforcement efforts," said Colonel Olson.

"They were very good troopers and taught me a lot. I worked with many great people over the years and listing all of them would be impossible."

Colonel Olson said that in addition to other MSHP members, he received advice and help from other agencies and entities during his first few years as a trooper. "I was very fortunate to be surrounded by people with a great deal of experience in the criminal justice system. I recall a prosecutor in my first zone calling me to his office to discuss how I could improve criminal arrest reports. He trained me on how to write a report that would withstand scrutiny in court."

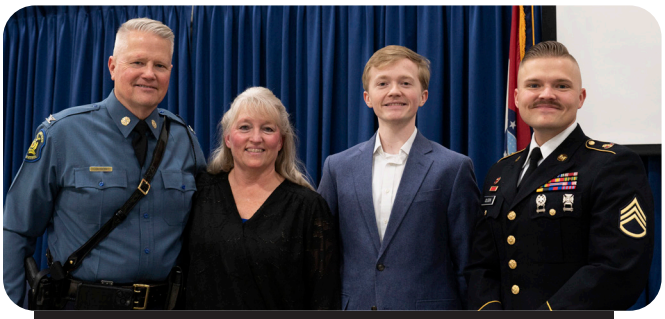
"One of the sheriffs in my zone took an interest in my driving... He asked me

some good questions and I really didn't have any good answers; however, the fact he cared enough to talk to me about the officer safety risks in driving, I never forgot. I appreciate those people taking interest in my career and the reputation of the Patrol," said Colonel Olson.

Colonel Olson said that among the many interesting historical events and experiences he's had throughout his career, he is most proud of how the Patrol works to uphold their mission to serve and protect the people of Missouri. "I have tried to stay committed to the mission the best I can. We have an important role in the law enforcement community in Missouri. I believe the work the Patrol performs makes a positive impact on the lives of Missourians and it takes all of our commitment to deliver these services," said Colonel Olson.

Colonel Olson said he isn't sure what he'll do after retirement, but he plans to spend it with his family, exploring hobbies, traveling, and reflecting on all the blessings in his life. "I have always admired those who have the next chapter all planned out. That is not me. I stay in the moment, until it is done. I plan to work at something in the future, just don't know what that is yet."

During his tenure with the Patrol, Colonel Olson has impacted many lives and his legacy with this agency will continue to be remembered with pride and gratitude.



Ret. Colonel Olson thanked his wife Ronda and two sons, Lance (far right) and Garett for their continued support throughout his career with the Patrol.



(l to r) Major Paul D. Kerperin, Major Ben C. Jones, Major Corey J. Schoeneberg, Ret. Colonel Eric T. Olson, Lt. Colonel David A. Flannigan, Colonel Michael A. Turner, Major Christopher S. Jolly, and Major Scott A. Shipers



Ret. Colonel Olson poses with family after his retirement celebration.

















On January 30, at 11 a.m., many special guests attended the farewell party for Colonel Eric Olson, including Colonel Olson's wife, sons, parents, sister, and daughter-in-law, as well as other extended family members.

Col. Olson's sons both spoke during the reception, recounting the impact their father has had on their lives. The elder son, Lance Olson, said to his father, "Thanks for being such a great role model and for the sacrifices you've made along the way. You're truly my best friend."

Garett Olson, Colonel Olson's younger son, said that though he was often busy with his work at the Patrol, "He's always made time to come to every event for me, my brother, and my mom."

Several of Colonel Olson's current and former coworkers spoke at the event, telling stories and sharing jokes of their time with the colonel. They shared how Colonel Olson had influenced them with his steadfast moral code that never wavered, regardless of the situation.

Colonel Nathan Fulk with the Iowa State Patrol said, "He does the right thing at the right time for the right reason. He embodies that … He is a selfless leader who has earned our respect."

He presented Colonel Olson with an award plaque in appreciation of their collaboration and friendship.

Colonel John Bolduc of the Nebraska State Patrol said to Colonel Olson, "Your professionalism has been an inspiration to me."

He presented Colonel Olson with a gift in recognition of their friendship and the work they had done together. He said that, as opposed to the Iowa State Patrol's Colonel's gift, his would "actually" be useful. He gave Col. Olson a duck call.

Lt. Colonel Flannigan said, "He has dedicated probably thousands of hours of his own time to making sure things are done right."

Major Scott Shipers said, "Colonel Olson sets the standard for competence and commitment."

Several legislators were also in attendance, including the newly inaugurated Governor Mike Kehoe, Missouri State Senator Mike Bernskoetter, and State Representative Dave Griffith, as well as several other members of the Missouri House of Representatives and the Missouri Senate. Governor Kehoe presented Colonel Olson with an award for his service and dedication, praising his commitment to the values and mission of the Patrol. "You recognize a leader when you see one," said Governor Kehoe.

Missouri State Senator Mike Bernskoetter and Missouri State Representative Dave Griffith presented Colonel Olson with resolutions from the Missouri Senate and the Missouri House of Representatives, respectively.

"Honor, respect, courage: all those traits certainly apply to Colonel Olson," said Missouri State Senator Mike Bernskoetter.

Colonel Olson also received recognition and awards from several other agencies, including the Kansas City Police Department, Midwest HIDTA, presented by Executive Director Daniel Neill, MASTERS, and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), St. Louis Division.

The retirement party concluded with cake and many congratulations and well wishes from friends, family members, coworkers, and esteemed colleagues of Colonel Olson.

An Attitude of Service

Emilee Kuschel (Q/PIED)
Public Relations Specialist

The Missouri State Highway Patrol played an essential part in each moment of inauguration day. During the inauguration, troopers stood with the newly inaugurated Governor Mike Kehoe on the steps of the Capitol, amongst the crowd, and at the edges of the celebration in the blistering cold weather, coordinating to ensure the event was safe for all who were there.

After a situation that required quick thinking and self-control, Governor Mike Kehoe honored Trooper Trey A. Gaedke (C) and Trooper Justin D. Hedrick (C) during the Salute to Heroes ceremony. Their bravery and composure during a pursuit and officer involved shooting was recognized.

Though some began their day before sunrise, the Missouri State Highway Patrol stood watch at the Inaugural Ball, ensuring the safety of the newly inaugurated governor and all the attendees until after midnight. Troopers could be found around every corner of the Capitol, on each floor, hallway, and staircase. They provided vital support to Governor Kehoe, the guests, and the State of Missouri, fulfilling their duties with precision, honor and care.

Not only did the troopers work hard to keep the party-goers safe, but they also presented a kind hello and a positive presence during the event. Attendees walked up to them, asking questions, needing directions, and more. The troopers were always happy to help, whether the task consisted of helping an elderly woman find a seat or guiding a guest to the bathrooms.

All day, MSHP troopers stood watch, honoring their oaths as they worked to ensure elected officials could swear theirs. Some came from troops far away from Jefferson City. Some stood for hours on end, and some worked through aching feet, icy hands and hungry stomachs, but they did it all with an attitude of service for the protection of all those around them. In this, their commitment is clear, and their willingness to take on any task for the people of their beloved state is showcased.





Missouri State Highway Patrol provides security at the gubernatorial inauguration of Mike Kehoe.

WITH HONOR AND GRIT, 122 DOESN'T QUIT

Dr. Mark Pottorff (Q/PIED)
Curator

Members of the 135th Army Band, representing the Missouri National Guard, played music to welcome family and friends of the 122nd Recruit Class on a cold December morning for graduation in the Academy gymnasium. Captain Joseph L. Armistead, (Q/TND) then greeted the large crowd, and with the order from Colonel Eric T. Olson, he told Sergeant Andrew A. Armstrong, "the colonel has given the command, present the class for graduation." On Sgt. Armstrong's command, the thirty members of the 122nd Recruit Class marched into the gymnasium to a cadence of "Hail, Hail State Patrol" led by class commander Trooper Kevin L. Francom.

Once the class was in place, Patrol Chaplain Kevin Kappler of U.S. Missions offered the invocation. The Troop F Color Guard then presented the U.S. and Missouri flags, as the 135th Army Band played the national anthem.

Missouri Attorney General, Honorable Andrew Bailey gave the keynote address, expressing how humbling it was for him to "be here in an assembly of heroes." He continued, stating that the Highway Patrol is different and is the guardian of law and order…the spear's tip in the difference between chaos and anarchy and the rule of law.

He thanked the families of the graduating class, without whom, "none of this would be possible." Mr. Bailey said the press often speaks of the sacrifice made by members of law enforcement, "but it is important that we recognize the sacrifices you make as well."

To the members of the 122nd Recruit Class, he said, "Thank you for committing your professional careers and your lives to this institution of excellence." He reminded the class that everything they will do as an officer of the MSHP, will reflect not only on this institution of excellence, but on the state of Missouri and our criminal justice system.

AG Bailey told the graduates, "Your behavior in uniform and out, will reflect the values of our state." He concluded his words by reminding the class members that their challenge



is vast, and "we appreciate your commitment; we honor your sacrifices."

Sgt. Armstrong prepared the class, and Missouri Supreme Court Justice, the Honorable Robin Ransom, stepped forward to administer the Oaths of Office. As each member of the class recited the oath to support the laws and constitution of the United States and of Missouri, the Highway Patrol gained thirty new troopers. After the class gave their oaths, Dr. Keith Zoromski, Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs from Mineral Area College, in Park Hill, MO, conferred associates degrees to seven members of the class.

Colonel Olson and AG Bailey then stepped forward to present the 122nd Recruit Class with their commissions. As is tradition at Patrol graduations, members of the graduating class who have immediate family members currently employed or retired from the Patrol received their commissions from the Colonel, AG Bailey, and their family member. The 122nd had four members receive their commission from family members; they were the following: Trooper Corbin Dougherty from his father, Sergeant Shawn Dougherty (G); Trooper Lance Estes from his son, Trooper Kolby Estes (I); Trooper Dustin Howell from his brother, Trooper Dalton Howell (C); and Trooper Kemp Stewart from his father, Sergeant Rich Stewart (A).

Colonel Olson addressed the class, thanking the many family members who were present to support their new troopers. He also thanked the Human Resources, Recruiting and Community Outreach, and Training divisions who "all work collaboratively very well together" to get recruits to and through the Academy to graduation.

Speaking directly to the class, Colonel Olson congratulated them for having "demonstrated the commitment ... to get through a rigorous training environment like this." He reminded them how important that commitment will be when they "step out here into your next chapter of your Patrol career." Colonel Olson meets with each member of each class prior to graduation, and he told the 122nd he was impressed by their "motives to become members of the Missouri State Highway Patrol." He told the class that having an "occupation that allows us, each day, the chance to go make someone's difficult situation a little bit better is a true privilege."

During his time with each recruit, Col. Olson asked how the Patrol could be improved, and the responses ranged from "more protein in the cafeteria, more sleep, imagine that, and even one suggested new buildings." He concluded his comments by again thanking the new troopers for their commitment to service and told them, "If there is ever anything I can do for you along the way of your career path with the Patrol, please let me know."

After the colonel's words, Capt. Armistead told those in attendance that, "this is actually Colonel Olson's last graduation ceremony, as he is retiring February first." He thanked the Colonel for his support of the Training Division over the past six years and wished him the best in retirement.

During their time at the Academy, each recruit class competes for four awards that are presented by the Colonel at graduation. The first three awards are for physical fitness, academics, and firearms proficiency. Trooper Kevin Francom won the Physical Training Award, and Trooper Ryan Brown was presented the Academic Award. The firearms competition in the 122nd Recruit Class was extremely tight, with ties for third and for first places. As a result of the tie for first, Troopers Louis Baggerly and Trooper Corbin Dougherty competed in a shoot-off to determine a winner. As a result of the shoot-off, Trooper Dougherty won the Firearms Award. The final award presented is the Superintendent's Award, presented to the recruit who scored the most points overall during their time at the Academy. Trooper Corbin Dougherty received the Superintendent's Award.



1. Tpr. Ryan Brown was honored with an award for academic performance.

2. Tpr. Dustin Howell accepted his graduation certificate along with a hug from his brother, Tpr. Dalton B. Howell (C).

3. Tpr. Corbin Dougherty stands with Colonel Eric Olson after accepting the Superintendent's Award. He also received the Firearms Award.

After the first trimester of training, each recruit class elects class officers. The 122nd elected Trooper Michael Rudy as class chaplain, Trooper Brittney Romano as vice commander, and Trooper Kevin Francom as class commander. The class commander acts as a liaison between the class and Academy staff, as designated class leader, and as the class spokesperson. Tpr. Francom spoke to those in attendance, expressing the 122nd's "deepest gratitude" to family and friends "for your presence here today as we celebrate this significant milestone." He said, "the past 25 weeks have been challenging and transformative" but the class had "faced every task head-on."

Tpr. Francom told his classmates that their journey was about more that acquiring law enforcement skills, but about "building resiliency, fostering discipline, and developing the courage to stand firm in the face of adversity." He concluded by again thanking the families of the new troopers, stating that "from Recruit Class 122, 'With honor and grit, 122 doesn't quit.'"

Congratulations to the Patrol's thirty newest members, the 122nd Recruit Class.

What SURPRISED You?

Dr. Mark Pottorff (Q/PIED)

In preparation of the 122nd Recruit Class's graduation, I had the chance to ask the class about their experiences at the Patrol Academy. Each class has unique experiences during their time, and I asked the 122nd, "What is something that happened during your time at the Academy that you did not expect or that surprised you?" Here are their responses:

"The level of constant stress. You know you are going into a stressful environment, but I believe it is hard to really know until you are in it. Once you get in it, it is important to remember why you are there." — Recruit Forrestt R. Jones

"What surprised me was when the instructors would stay long nights to help make sure we were prepared." — Recruit Devin J. Bittick

"How physically demanding it was." — Recruit Mike J. Rudy

"What surprised me the most was when we went back to calisthenics in week 23." — Recruit Canaan L. Park

"I was not expecting such a high drop-out rate, especially with the accelerated class." — Recruit Martha A. Minarik

"I did not expect the stress combat and building search training to be as fun as it was. I was surprised how much composure was needed when instructors were roasting recruits." — Recruit Cody A. Naramore

"How bad the OC spray hurt!" — Recruit Kemp M. Stewart

"I would say what I didn't expect is the different ways to punish you. It could be serious or funny. Even though you got punished, you could still have a good laugh about it, during and after." — Recruit Collin A. Clinton

"I did not expect to form such a bond with so many of my classmates. We truly have become like brothers and sisters." — Recruit Ryan W. Brown

"The lack of sleep." — Recruit Austin L. Gillispie

"President Trump responded to our graduation invitation!" — Recruit Adam C. Moran

"It surprised me that the instructors participated with us throughout morning PTs." — Recruit Corbin M. Dougherty

" I didn't expect to like the instructors as much as I do. They're all great people and great teachers." - Recruit Brittney S. Romano

"I was not expecting the rooms to be so dusty." — Recruit Colton R. Cavanaugh







"The Academy was a lot more physically intense than I thought it would be." — Recruit Jacob W. Nuttall

"The lack of sleep and long runs." — Recruit Kyle R. Goddard

"I was not expecting the instructors to workout with us during morning PT." — Recruit Lance J. Estes

"I did not expect to drink as much caffeine as I did." — Recruit Dean M. Hagenhoff

"How bad OC hurt and its lasting effects." — Recruit Austen E. Harrison

"I didn't expect OC spray to hurt so bad." — Recruit Reese E. Tayloe

"Fire alarm night!" — Recruit Dustin B. Howell

"I did not expect this much lack of sleep throughout the Academy." — Recruit Hunter R. Burks

"How little sleep I would get, and how much I would work out with little sleep." — Recruit Grant M. Garrett

"All the swimming I had to do." — Recruit Heisser A. Pujols-Bido

"Recruits snitching on each other and causing the entire class to get in trouble." — Recruit Jackson D. Lock

"How serious working out can be." — Recruit Johnny D. Healy

"The mattress Eiffel Towers and messages on the common area mirror." — Recruit Joshua D. Bedingfield

"The fire drill!" — Recruit Kevin L. Francom

Obituaries



Carol J. Wright

CAROL WRIGHT

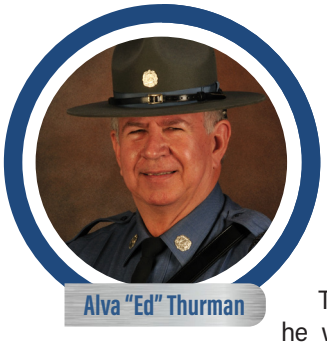
Carol June Wright, 86, of Macon, MO passed away on November 13, 2024. She worked for the Missouri State Highway Patrol from June 10, 1968, to September 1, 2000. Carol was a member of the Callao Christian Church and enjoyed her animals, gardening, and especially spending time with her family. Carol is survived by her two children, six grandchildren, 13 great-grandchildren, one brother, one nephew, one niece, and other extended family members. The family suggests memorial contributions be made to the Callao Christian Church or the Callao Cemetery Association (Locust Grove Cemetery). To learn more about Carol, visit the Hutton & McElwain Funeral Home website. The Patrol extends its sincerest condolences to the Wright family.



Teddy J. Casady

TEDDY CASADY

Teddy (Ted) Junior Casady, 86, of Macon, MO, passed away on Thanksgiving morning, November 28, 2024, at his home surrounded by family. Ted graduated from Livonia High School in 1955 and worked different farm-related jobs until joining the US Army from 1960-62. In the Army he was a Chaplain and was designated a marksman (rifle), last serving in the 51st Infantry at Fort Hood, TX. After discharge, Ted served as a commercial motor vehicle inspector in Troop C from 1963 – 1966 until assigned to the Missouri Patrol Academy at Rolla, graduating in April 1966. Ted was assigned to Troop B, in Hannibal until 1979, and in Macon, MO from 1979 until retirement in 1996. He was promoted to sergeant on August 1, 1983. He was the "bear in the air" and the "eye in the sky" as he flew the Highway Patrol airplane during his years in Macon, supporting Troop B and other troops throughout Missouri, including special assignments for the governor and key government leader visits. After retirement, Ted drove commercial 18-wheel trucks for Bangert and PSI Trucking companies for many years across the United States from Maine to California, admiring as much of the beauty of the United States as possible. Ted is survived by his wife Van and his children, his nine grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, and numerous extended family members. The family suggests memorial contributions be made to the First Baptist Church of Macon. To learn more about Ted, visit the Hutton & McElwain Funeral Home website. The Patrol extends its sincerest condolences to the Casady family.



Alva "Ed" Thurman

ALVA THURMAN

Alva Edwin "Ed" Thurman, of Niangua, departed this life on December 3, 2024, at his home at the age of 73. Ed was a dedicated state trooper and pilot for the Missouri State Highway Patrol, Troop D, for 38 years where he was admired by many. It was an occupation he truly loved. In retirement, he enjoyed spending time on his farm in Niangua, MO. He found great joy in the company of his children and grandchildren. They were a source of immense pride and happiness for him. Ed is survived by two sons, a stepdaughter, son-in-law, brother, sister, grandchildren, step-grandchildren, and two step-great-grandchildren. The family suggests memorial contributions be made to the Connor Rogers Scholarship and left in care of Fraker Funeral Home, Inc. To learn more about Ed, visit the Fraker Funeral Home, Inc. website. The Patrol extends its sincerest condolences to the Thurman family.



Virginia I. Paul

VIRGINIA PAUL

Virginia Irene Paul, 79, of Harrisonville, MO, passed away peacefully on Saturday, December 7, 2024, at the Kansas City Hospice House in Kansas City, MO. Virginia was a 1963 graduate of Smith-Cotton High School in Sedalia. Virginia was a Drivers Examination Clerk for the Missouri State Highway Patrol in the Harrisonville office for 21 years, retiring in 2004. Virginia loved spending time with the grandkids, and enjoyed music and line dancing. She is survived by her husband, Gary Paul; two daughters, two brothers, seven grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, and numerous nieces and nephews. To learn more about Virginia, visit the Atkinson Funeral Home website. The Patrol extends its sincerest condolences to the Paul family.



Charles E. Kincaid

CHARLES KINCAID

Charles Ed Kincaid, 89, St. Joseph, Missouri, passed away Friday, December 20, 2024. Ed grew up in Trenton, Missouri and graduated from Trenton High School. He retired as a corporal after serving for 32 years with the Missouri State Highway Patrol. Ed is survived by his wife, Connie, his children, sister, brother, 9 grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren, and Earl, who knew he was good for another cat treat if he gave him the right look. Regarding memorials, the family suggests you please donate to a charity of your choice to honor the memory of Ed. To learn more about Ed, visit the Heaton-Bowman-Smith & Sidenfaden Chapel website. The Patrol extends its sincerest condolences to the Kincaid family.



William J. Hollingsworth

WILLIAM HOLLINGSWORTH, JR.

William "Bill" Jewell Hollingsworth Jr., 94, passed away Sunday, December 22, 2024, surrounded by his family. Bill was a graduate of Benton High School and dedicated his life to serving his community and country. Bill worked as a tractor mechanic for Massey-Harris before serving honorably in the United States Army and embarking on a distinguished 32-year career with the Missouri State Highway Patrol. Bill also served on the board of the Missouri Association of State Troopers Emergency Relief Society (MASTERS) for many years. He is survived by his children, seven grandchildren, and 14 great-grandchildren. He also leaves behind his long-time friend, Alice Hersh. The family suggests memorial donations may be made online to Missouri Association of State Troopers Emergency Relief Society (MASTERS), Tunnel To Towers at Tunnel to Towers Foundation, or a charity of your choice. To learn more about Bill, visit the Bram Funeral Home website. The Patrol extends its sincerest condolences to the Hollingsworth family.



We Remember.



Frozen TEARS

THE FORT LEONARD WOOD MP MURDERS

Ret. Sgt. J.B. King

I was a fairly young trooper when Troop I gave me a radio call at 1:18 p.m. on January 13,1977. Troop I told me they had received a phone call from a man who said he was the father of a missing/runaway young girl, and he also knew the location of three additional missing youths. He gave his location as 12 miles south of Interstate 44 on Missouri Highway 17. I arrived at his roadside location almost an hour later because we had eight inches of snow on the roadway at the time. The man immediately jumped from his vehicle and began yelling at me. Finally, he calmed down a bit and then he pointed to his car and asked me to do something, because the girl in the car had been shot in the chest. This was my introduction to a case that would change our community and deeply affect me.

The young lady identified herself as Juanita Deckard and she was one of four missing kids from the night before. Troop I did not know about the missing kids and this was our first knowledge of that incident. She had two bullet wounds; however, they were minor wounds. She began telling me about the night before and being on a double date with her friends, Anthony Bates (18), Wesley Hawkins (18), and Linda Needham (16). All four of the young people were from the Plato, Mo. area. As they drove across Fort Wood around the midnight hour on the south side of the base an MP vehicle using red lights stopped them.

A uniformed MP ordered them out of their car. Handcuffing her two male companions, he arrested all four of them for armed robbery and ordered them into his vehicle. The MP started to drive off, then stopped. Without warning, he drew his gun, turned in his seat and shot the two boys sitting in the back seat. Then he drove to a secluded cabin on the Roubidoux River in a remote part of the base. There, he sexually assaulted the girls before shooting them. Finally, he buried all four victims in a snowbank and drove away.

Juanita then explained that she had played dead when he kicked her and waited in the snowbank until she'd heard him drive away. She then got up and located two of her friends and tried to rouse them without success. She could not find the third victim. Juanita then began walking across the live-fire ranges on Fort Leonard Wood west toward Missouri 17 until she reached a home off base. The homeowner allowed her to use the phone, and Juanita called Linda's father who came to the residence and picked her up. While they waited for Mr. Needham to arrive, the homeowner helped her clean up and gave her some fresh clothing to wear.

The detailed information Juanita provided led me to believe me this criminal was not an imposter; he was an active-duty MP. I don't remember exactly what I said to Troop I Communications, but I do remember indicating my communications would be priority and to not ask questions because of all the local people who used police scanners. Once I'd arranged for back-up federal officers to handle the case, since the crimes had occurred on the federal reservation, I returned to the vehicle and continued to question Juanita for more details. When the federal officers arrived on scene, I was able to give them the details Juanita had supplied. The federal backup included one MP driving what turned out to be the vehicle used in the murders.

In 1977, we had a two-man FBI office on Ft. Wood because we had organized crime groups who were fighting each other to control the drug and vice crimes here in Pulaski County. The FBI immediately took over this case and quickly established Military Police Officer Spc. 4 Johnny Lee Thornton as the suspect. Later that evening, Thornton called the MP Command Post. During that call, discussions regarding his surrender occurred. Thorton was taken into custody January 13.

Thornton was tried in federal court and despite his insanity defense he was found guilty on all four charges. He was sentenced to three life terms and one 20-year term in prison. The judge ordered all sentences to be served consecutively. Thornton is currently housed in the federal penal system in Tucson, Arizona.

(This article is an excerpt from my book, "Frozen Tears: The Fort Leonard Wood MP Murders." For a detailed account of the murders and ensuing court case, I invite you to pick up a copy.)





MARCH 1997—People are passionate about cellular phones. Those who rely on them can't imagine life without the incredible freedom, convenience, and security they offer. Those who don't have them resent the presumed arrogance of drivers who believe they are so important they can't use a pay phone or wait until they reach their destination before making a call.

Some people believe they create enough of a distraction to turn otherwise decent drivers into serious hazards. But while people have caused crashes while using the devices, cellular phones also boost safety.

The Cellular Telecommunications Industry Association says there are currently 38 million cellular subscribers, and it estimates there will be 60 million by 1998.

The Association also estimates that cell phone users make more than 500,000 emergency calls to 9-1-1 dispatchers each month.

Cell phones help stranded motorists get out of trouble faster. They steer lost drivers back in the right direction. They also can quickly summon rescue personnel to crash scenes.

But even some dedicated cell phone users admit talking on the devices can put them in a daze and lead them to forget their primary responsibility on the road - driving safely.

Watsons named Honorary Troopers, Moberly Police Officer Corporal Nate West receives Commendation Letter



Sophia and Rachel Watson are pictured with their Honorary Trooper Awards, along with (back row) Moberly Police Department Corporal Nate West, Mr. Jeff Dalton, and Sergeant Keegan Kindle (B).

Sgt. Justin S. Dunn (B)

On November 21, 2024, Captain Erik A. Gottman, commanding officer of Troop B, Macon, presented honorary Missouri State Highway Patrol Trooper certificates to Sophia and Rachel Watson and a Letter of Commendation to Moberly Police Officer, Corporal Nate West, at the YMCA in Moberly, MO. The Patrol presents the "Honorary Trooper Certificate" to citizens who are nominated by a trooper for bravery or heroic efforts that reflect the qualities of a Missouri State Trooper.

On August 9, 2024, Sergeant Keegan Kindle (B) was exercising at the Randolph Area YMCA in Moberly, MO. Around 1:10 pm, Sergeant Kindle was alerted by YMCA staff to a man lying on the ground near an elliptical machine. Sergeant Kindle prompted staff to call for emergency medical services. Sergeant Kindle assessed the man and felt no carotid pulse in the victim's neck. He immediately began CPR. Shortly after he began CPR, two members of YMCA staff aided him, Rachel and Sophia Watson. Rachel prepared an AED while Sophia delivered rescue breaths. Another off-duty police officer, from Moberly Police Department, Corporal Nate West, also assisted with lifesaving measures. The AED was utilized, and a shock was delivered to the victim.

A short time later, the victim, Mr. Jeff Dalton, regained a pulse and began breathing on his own. Mr. Dalton regained consciousness before being transported by Randolph County Ambulance District personnel to University Hospital in Columbia, MO, where he recovered.

MISSOURI STATE HIGHWAY PATROL
General Headquarters
P.O. Box 568
1510 E. Elm St.
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0568



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Retired Col. Olson receives recognition from Missouri Governor Mike Kehoe for his service with the Missouri State Highway Patrol during his retirement celebration.