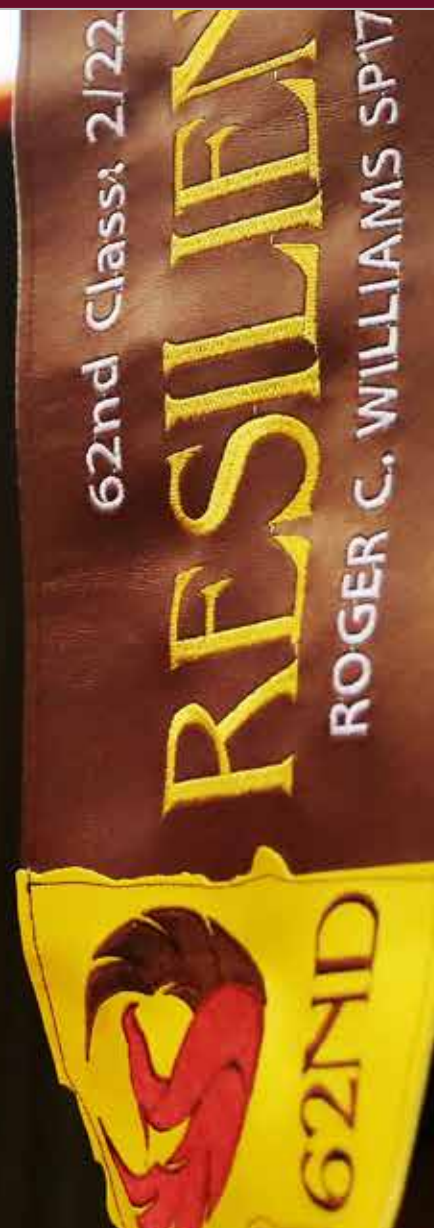


MINNESOTA TROOPER

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MINNESOTA TROOPER

Minnesota Trooper is published three times annually by the Minnesota State Patrol Troopers Association.

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What does the MSPTA do for its Members?

This is what your \$25 per paycheck provides:

- Negotiate the MLEA Contract
- Representation during an Internal Affairs Investigation
- Representation at Critical Incident
- Lobbying at the Capitol
- Representation in the Grievance Process
- Guidance on Worker's Comp Issues
- Education in Retirement Planning
- The *Minnesota Trooper* Magazine
- Quarterly District Association Meetings
- Hardship fund for members who experience a unique hardship such as a natural disaster, illness, or loss of home due to a fire
- Membership into the Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association including the Legal Defense Fund
- Membership into the National Trooper Coalition
- A voice on the State Patrol Equipment and Safety Committee



Mike LeDoux • MSPTA President

President's Report



Progress and Pride

As I write this president's message, the motion sickness from the legislative roller coaster has finally subsided. Progress on pay was made at the legislature during the regular session and signed into law as part of the omnibus public safety bill during the special session. Regardless of all the distractions of 2021, the MSPTA remained focused on utilizing the data provided by the legislative auditor to further address our wage disparity. Our membership was asked to rise to the occasion once again and did not disappoint. Despite another challenging year for our profession, we have strong bipartisan support at the Capitol. This support was clearly visible when agency initiatives came before their respective committees and ultimately reflected by the passage of these initiatives. This success should be a point of pride for our membership and should be the true barometer

used for determining our level of support in St. Paul, not the thirty second soundbites we have become accustomed to.

Although some may have questioned the timing of our initiatives or methods, for troopers, wait has almost always meant never. While patience may be a virtue, we had virtually tried everything possible to correct the pay issue, forcing us to rely on perseverance. We hope that the legislative intervention the last two years has been heard loud and clear. The pattern settlement process has and will continue to create issues with recruitment and retention if not addressed in future negotiations. Troopers are not average, so it is not unreasonable to expect compensation at levels at or above the average of similar positions outside of state service. Our membership should be proud that these MSPTA legislative efforts have now benefitted all state law enforcement officers regardless of rank or agency.

"Howe" did we make this progress? Thank Senator Jeff Howe for his tireless efforts on behalf of all state law enforcement officers. He began fighting on our behalf in 2018 and never let setbacks deter him from what he said was "the right thing to do". He is a statesman, patriot, and friend to all that wear a uniform whether it is for community or country. I would also like to thank Senate Majority Leader Paul Gazelka and Speaker of the House Melissa Hortman for their support and leadership on this issue. Thanks to Senator Scott Newman and Representative Frank Hornstein for allowing us the opportunity to bring our disparity issue before the Senate and House Transportation Committees. Without the support of these individuals and others we would not have made the progress we have.

As predicted, the contract expired before our membership had an opportunity to vote on it. Hopefully, the backpay and other issues have been resolved by the time my article arrives in your mailbox. I would like to thank the members of the negotiating team for their time and commitment on behalf of our membership. ♦

Mike #88

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Colonel Matt Langer

Colonel's Message



We Keep Going

Now that we are well over half way through 2021, it seems as though many of the challenges we faced last year continue to have a presence. First and foremost, fatal crashes in our state. It is indeed frustrating to know that speeding continues to lead as a factor in these fatal crashes. Across the world and certainly across the United States, similar patterns have been realized. I am appreciative of your daily efforts to combat this trend. We absolutely make a difference. One traffic stop at a time. Each interaction contributes to the impact of our organization. While law enforcement traffic stops in general have been declining markedly, we will be the leaders moving into the future. A focus on speed, distraction, impairment, and occupant restraint represent a data-driven approach to saving as many lives as possible. Minnesotans rely on us both to help them get where they are going efficiently, but also to help them get where they are going alive. Never doubt your efforts are saving lives.

Another challenge that persists is our continued work to assist across the state with civil unrest. The pipeline project has created a need for State Troopers to travel across the state to provide assistance. Many thanks to everyone who spent nights in hotels, doubled up, worked hot shifts, persevered through fatigue, and did so with extreme professionalism. The scrutiny for this type of work is intense, but you do a great job of rising to the occasion. At the time of this writing, we have

many members deployed with our DNR brothers and sisters at the State Capitol. My admiration for everyone who puts their life on hold and responds time and time again, is high. My admiration for families who function while their loved one is deployed and partners left to work the beat alone, is also high. Keep up the good work knowing this project, like others in the history of the State Patrol will provide lessons learned for the future.

It is an exciting time as we put into reality all that was provided by the last legislative session. Thanks to tremendous support from many, we have the funds to increase sworn member wages, deploy body worn cameras, increase staffing by 63 new State Trooper positions, increase our Capitol Security Officer ranks, and sustain these increases into the future. While many people are responsible for these successful initiatives, the truth is that your reputation and work both on-duty and off-duty is what garners our support. People pay attention to you. Your relationships in the communities you serve runs deep and certainly demonstrated an ability to transcend the many challenges with passing legislation of this nature.

Keep up the good work knowing you have my support. Despite a plethora of challenges on our plate, I believe in the State Patrol. I believe in our mission, that our work makes a difference, and most of all – I believe in you. ♦

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Remember when

1974 was a big year for the Minnesota Highway Patrol and events carried right through to 1975. Highway patrolmen were now referred to as state troopers and the organization became the Minnesota State Patrol. The familiar “Smokey” hat replaced the traditional garrison hat. The starting salary was increased to \$870 per month. The 24th training school was held in Arden Hills from April 1 to July 19. At the end, 17 men graduated.

There were a number of promotions in 1974 including Austin Clancy, Bill Fort, Jack Kittridge, Dick Wiberg, Dick Wutz and Ralph Church—all were promoted to sergeant. Owen Borchert and Roger Lenz were promoted to captains. Art Rinta was promoted to major.

In 1975, the starting salary was increased to \$908 per month. 1975 was also the year that the rank of station sergeant was created. Dick Baumann was promoted to captain and Roger Ledding was promoted to sergeant.



Trooper Roepke, #59, receiving the 1974 Patrolman of the Year award



Dick Wiberg upon his promotion to sergeant



Gene Vincent at graduation time



Trooper Roger Eck receiving his diploma



The class of 1974



Trooper Jim Powell at graduation



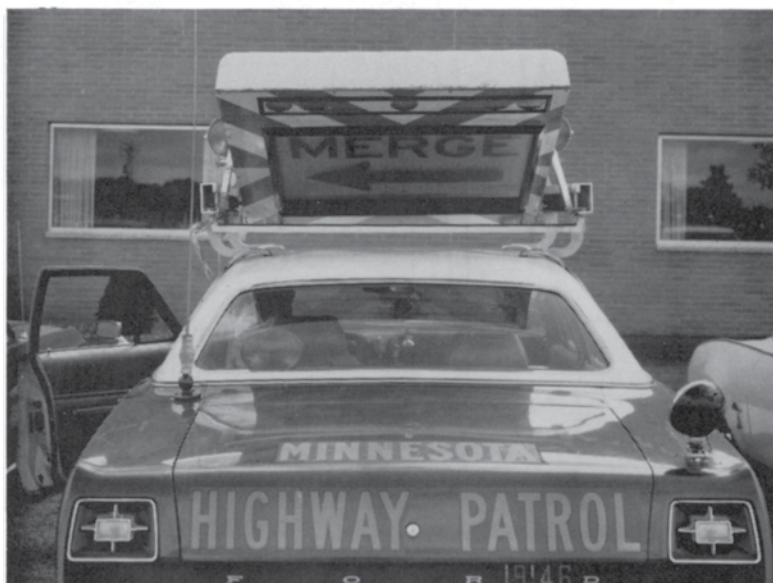
Walter Kosel, Jack Kittridge and Colonel Crawford



Patrol personnel eyeing a new helicopter: Howie Vetterick, Virg Karl, an unidentified Bell Helicopter representative, Dave Allen, Larry Presnall and Des Pepin



The accident investigation class of 1974



Vari Coms became a common sight on squad cars in 1974.

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Trooper Brad Salmi, #173, received a Lifesaving Award from Governor Wendell Anderson for his actions of April 29, 1974. On the left is Mrs. Salmi; on the right is Colonel Crawford.

Kevin Kittridge receives his badge, #13, from his father Jerry Kittridge while his uncle, Sergeant Jack Kittridge, looks on.



Helping Out

Contributed by Trooper Travis Pearson

Last June (2020) Coleraine Chief Pete Hussman was diagnosed with testicular cancer and began his journey of numerous treatments. He has to undergo several unexpected surgeries due to a blood clot in his carotid artery, infection in his chemo port multiple times. Finally, two last operations, lymph node removal and the removal of the last tumor that required the opening of his chest. Two days before his final surgery Andrea was rushed to the hospital with complications with Scleroderma, a condition she has suffered with for years. Andrea has an advanced and severe case of Scleroderma and was hospitalized for over a month at the U of M hospital. Her kidneys failed and she will be on dialysis permanently. Pete has been declared cancer free and Andrea's health is stable and both are at home recovering from their summer health scare. Pete has been out of work for over a year and it is unknown if Andrea will be able to go back to work. A raffle was held and raised over \$14,000 and the current Go Fund Me is just over \$20,000 and hopefully still increasing. The loss of income and illness has taken a toll on them and their two boys, hopefully with the help they have received will lighten their stress and hardship. Thank you to the Association for the donation. To donate go to: gofund.me/ebbe3ce8 ♦



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Minnesota State Patrol

62nd Trooper Training Academy



The 62nd Academy of the Minnesota State Patrol

The 62nd academy was an academy like no other. Due to Covid restrictions, you and your fellow cadets had to arrive alone on Sunday, February 21st, 2021 for family orientation. You had no family to accompany you and help calm your nerves. You sat fervently listening to how the next 14 weeks would play out. You sat intently listening and learning how core values would play a role in not only the academy but throughout your career as well as your life. That night you did not know how Respect, Integrity, Courage, Honor, and Excellence would be so integrated into the academy.

The first day happened to be the same day as the 43rd anniversary of the line of duty death for Trooper Roger C. Williams, SP178. Trooper Williams was tragically struck by a car while on foot during a traffic stop in Alexandria, Minnesota on February 22nd, 1978. The MSP 62nd Academy chose the class name of Resilient 62nd. The class chose this name to reflect on their resiliency

to stick with the hiring process, even after the initial academy was canceled. Months later, the academy was back on! The application process opened back up and applicants had to reapply. It also takes resiliency to stay dedicated to the profession when now, more than ever, law enforcement is under a microscope.

The MSP Training and Development Staff of the 62nd Academy would like to thank you for your devotion, persistence, and motivation in completing the requirements we put before you. You lived up to your class name and we are proud of who you have become. We would also like to recognize the families and friends who provided support to the cadets each week. Your conditional support was needed during this academy.

The staff of the 62nd academy would like to congratulate each of the new troopers and welcome them to the State Patrol family. Be well and stay safe.

-The 62nd Academy Staff



The MSP Training and Development Staff:

Captain Eric Barthel

Lieutenant Andrew Thelen

Lieutenant Karla Bearce

Technical Sergeant Preston Crusier

Technical Sergeant Rick Harjes

Technical Sergeant David Rock

Technical Sergeant Troy Morrell

Technical Sergeant Jon Wenzel

Administrative Support Senior, Navay Mar

Administrative Support, Sarah Robinson

Administrative Support, Kathy Craft

Academy Aide-de-camp:

Academy Staff Officer, Sergeant Scott Mattfield

Academy Staff Officer, Trooper Scott Rudeen

Academy Staff Officer, Trooper Lisa Lorenzen

Academy Staff Officer, Trooper Trevor Klatt

Administrative Support, Holley Gries

THE OATH OF A MINNESOTA STATE TROOPER

I _____, do solemnly swear,

To support the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution and laws of the State of Minnesota, and that I will faithfully and impartially discharge the duties of State Patrol Trooper employed and designated under and pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 299D, and all acts amendatory thereto;

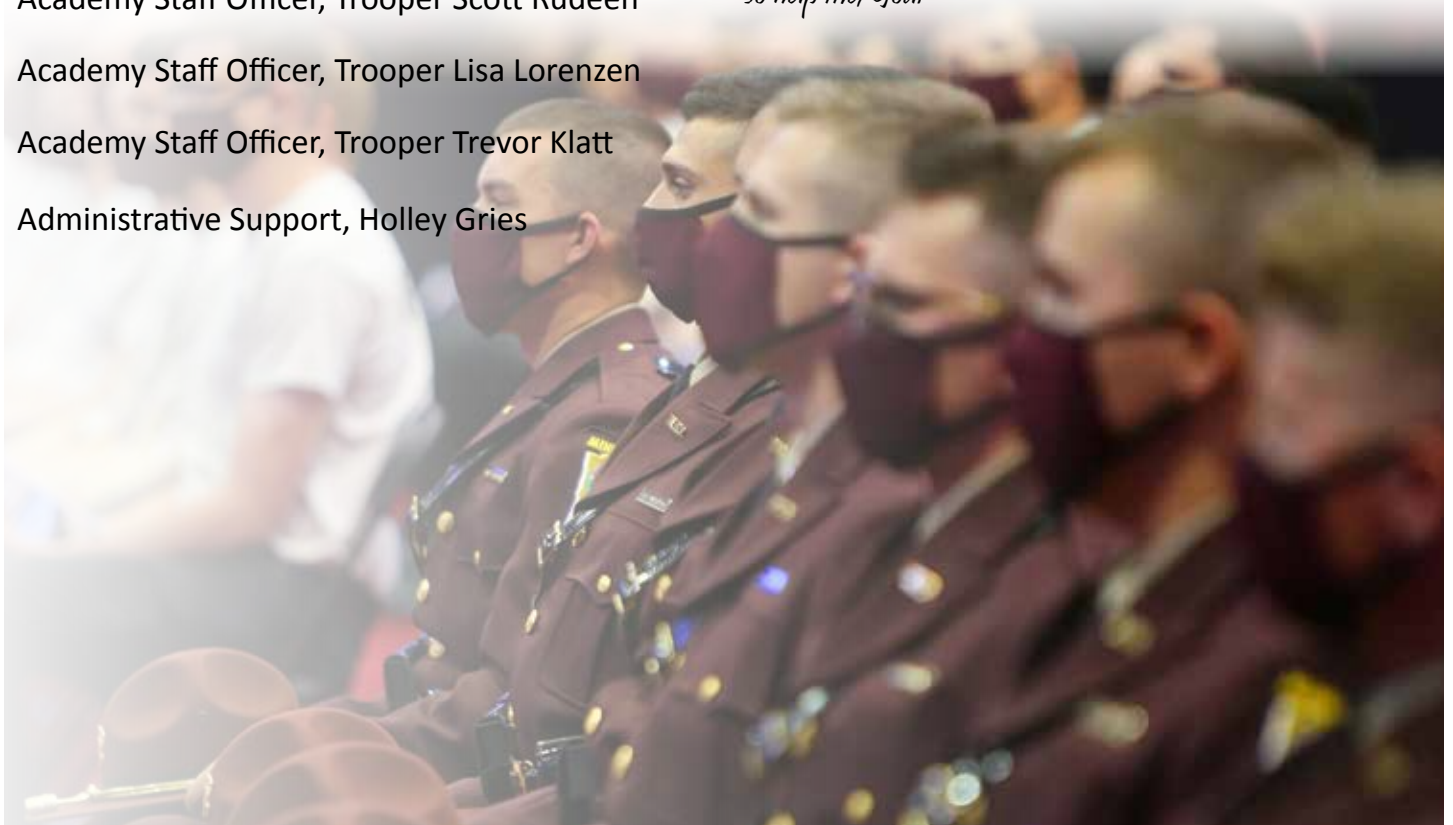
To serve the State of Minnesota and the United States of America honestly and faithfully and at all times fulfill my oath as State Patrol Trooper;

To be loyal to my supervisors and fellow Troopers and obey and enforce the law without fear, favor or discrimination as to class, color, race or creed;

To help those in danger or distress and, if necessity arise, lay down my life rather than swerve from the path of duty; and

To conduct myself at all times in accordance with the highest moral standards and never commit any act that will reflect discredit on the Minnesota State Patrol or any member thereof.

All this I solemnly swear to the best of my knowledge and ability, so help me, God.



The 62nd Academy of the Minnesota State Patrol

Colonel Matt Langer's Message to the Graduating Class

Let me start by mentioning that our DNR brothers and sisters are in mourning today regarding the loss of Conservation Officer Sarah Grell. And we mourn with them. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the Grell family, a family that has direct connections to current and former State Troopers.

Wow - this is a moment I look forward to each year. And this year, we have two of these moments. One for you, our traditional candidates who took a more direct route to this career. And second, for our LETO candidates who are with us today to witness your graduation, knowing their moment comes later this year after they complete the academy.

Let's start with something we did together when we visited on your first day in the academy at Camp Ripley. Take a deep breath - please. Now smile and relax. Let the feelings of accomplishment and pride soak in. You have so much to be proud of.

I want to thank the Governor, Commissioner Harrington, Assistant Commissioner Hodges and all of the members of the Department of Public Safety who help in our hiring process and for their support of the

Minnesota State Patrol. Our partnership with the Minnesota National Guard is incredible. Major General Shawn Manke, General Lowell Kruse, and the entire staff at Camp Ripley are invaluable to our ability to train the next generation of State Troopers. And our staff. Our training staff. They pour their hearts and souls into the development of others. It is amazing to see their passion first hand as they carry on a remarkable legacy that started back in 1929.

The mission of the Minnesota State Patrol is about traffic safety. We believe we can make a difference through our work related to assistance, education, and enforcement. Those elements of our mission statement, when skillfully applied by the members of our agency, make our roads safer. Sadly, today, we are standing in the midst of a large increase in traffic fatalities. Our work to combat that rise in tragedy is occurring as we speak and we are thankful today to be adding to our ranks because that means our ability to make a difference increases.

Our mission impacts every single Minnesotan. Whether you walk, bike, drive, or ride from point A to B, or love someone who does, our work matters. The manner in

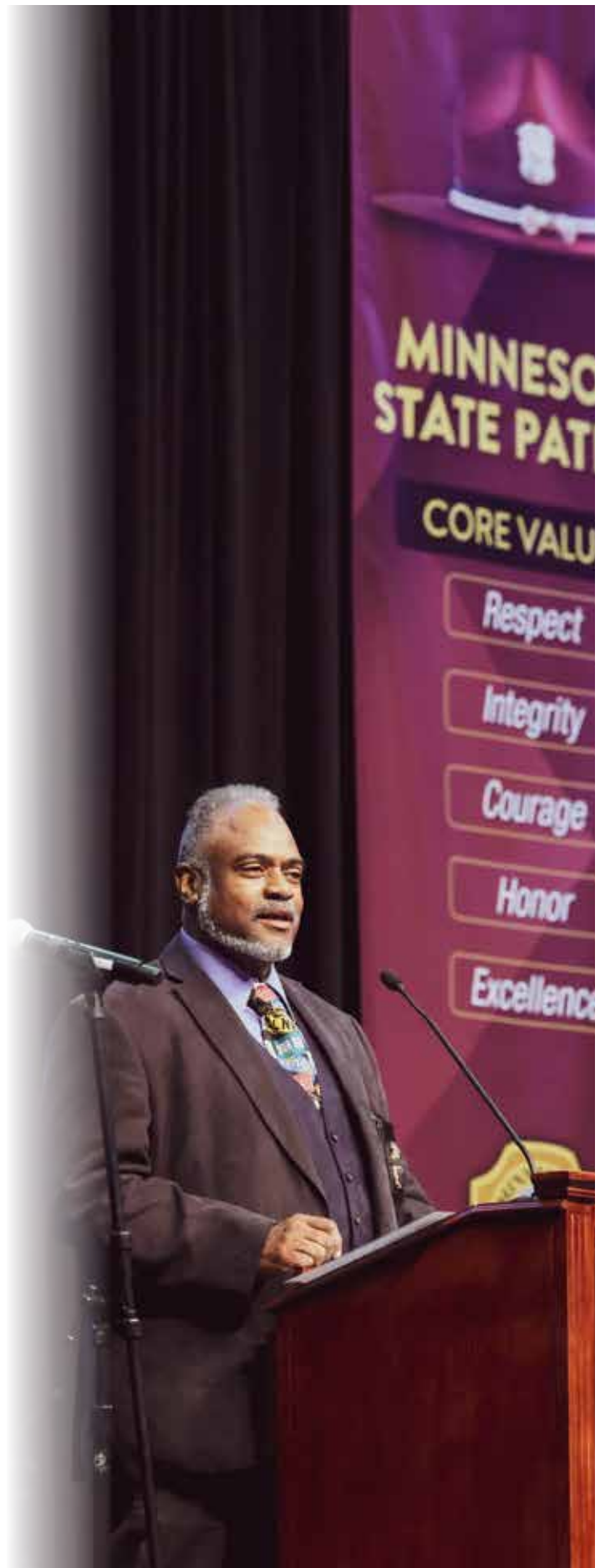


which we do our work also matters. We have core values. Values we believe in. Values that we would rather suffer as a result of than give up on. These are not just words - we live these values - on and off the job.

Respect. We treat others with respect. While we are not always on the receiving end of respect, we exemplify respect in our words and actions. Maya Angelou once famously said, “People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.” We know this to be true. Just a couple of weeks ago, a woman sent a note to say that while she was disappointed about being pulled over, she admitted she was in the wrong and wanted to express her thankfulness about being treated with kindness by Trooper James Lanoue. That is a day to day example, but the same is true on the other end of the spectrum like with Trooper Bryan Bearce used unconventional strategy to safely stop a pursuit with a woman in mental health crisis. He skillfully and competently dealt with the driver and her two young children, all while demonstrating respect and complete mastery when it comes to de-escalation. A few days later, the woman’s mother brought cookies to the office to express her thanks to Trooper Bearce for helping her daughter that day. Treating others with respect is paramount in every interaction.

Integrity. We tell the truth. Integrity is the one thing that cannot be taken from you - you have to give it away. Never do that. Our legitimacy as an organization, as a profession, and as an individual relies on integrity. Nothing else matters if we cannot be trusted.

Courage. It takes courage to do this work. It always has, and it always will. But it takes particular courage to enter the “arena” as President Teddy Roosevelt described in 1910. It seems fitting that we are literally here in an “arena” today. His famous quote, used by many contemporaneous authors on leadership starts by saying, “It is not the critic who counts, not the per-





son who points out how the strong person stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the person who is actually in the arena." That is you. It took courage to enter the academy, enter the profession, and enter the arena. Never let go of that courage to continue showing up to make a difference.

Honor. We honor those who have gone before us. You certainly know our fallen Troopers by name. We honor them through our actions. In honoring those who have come before us, we embrace the responsibility we have to continue preparing the Minnesota State Patrol for the future. We are fortunate to be standing on the shoulders of others. Each time you wear that uniform, you are representing every other State Trooper. And each time I am wearing mine, I am representing you. There should be gravity to that feeling, because it matters.

And **Excellence.** You cannot graduate without demonstrating a commitment to excellence. Excellence is not perfection. Excellence is about reflecting on your actions in pursuit of something better. Excellence is a journey, it is not a destination. It is not about being first, it is about being the best that we can be. Why? Because being first might not be good enough. Excellence is something we must each own individually if we wish to be viewed with excellence as an organization.

One of the best-selling psychology books of all time is by M. Scott Peck, "The Road Less Traveled." I remember reading it a long time ago. The opening sentence has always stuck with me. "Life is difficult." Seems a little heavy for the opening line of a self-help book. But it is true - and once you realize that truth, it brings perspective. Life is about experiences. Actually, Peck says, "Life is a series of problems." Again, not very inspirational. But he goes on to say you have to choose whether or not you wish to moan about them or solve them. He talks about discipline as a key to navigating life. He explains that without any discipline, you can-

not solve any problems. With some discipline, some problems can be solved. But, with total discipline, we can solve all problems.

This is true of the academy. Without a doubt, if we were writing a book about the academy, a fitting first line would be, "The academy is difficult." And if the written word was not enough, opening wake up on the first day of the academy provides a whole new meaning to the word difficult. But you dug in. You worked hard. You pulled together as a team. You grew. You had the courage to be in "the arena." And you stayed because you believed in yourself and by believing in yourself, you believed in each other. You exhibited discipline. Not some discipline, because that is not excellence. Instead, you demonstrated total discipline. And in the end, as you marched in here today, I could feel that you believed you could solve all problems - together - and now with the rest of the organization. Discipline indeed, is a very good thing.

So far, if you are keeping track, I have quoted Maya Angelou, Teddy Roosevelt, and M. Scott Peck. It would make sense then, to turn our attention to Rafael Nadal,

right? Arguably, one of the greatest tennis players - ever. In a recent 60 Minutes interview, Rafael Nadal said a couple of things that I think are relevant here today as we commemorate your graduation. A moment that represents the beginning of your career.

First, Nadal was asked about his admission that he has self-doubt about his game when he steps on the court. Seems odd for someone who is one of the best players of all time. But, Nadal explained how he thinks self-doubt is a motivator. He believes it is healthy to have doubt. Why? Because it keeps you from being arrogant. That is good advice for us. Arrogance is a quick path to trouble. Every time. Do not confuse confidence with arrogance. Those are two totally different adjectives. And, with two totally different results if we are concerned with how they make people feel after interacting with us. Motorists will remember confidence positively and arrogance negatively, guaranteed.

Second, Nadal was asked how many racquets he has destroyed while on the court - comparing him to some of his competitors who have a history of slamming racquets out of frustration. His answer? Zero. Why?



Nadal said destroying a racquet would demonstrate losing control of his emotions. And, his family would not allow that behavior.

This academy experience was transformational. You were put under intense stress and deprived of sleep. You learned from that experience and you grew. You honed your ability to maintain control over your emotions. This analogy between policing and tennis might be unconventional, but it is important. Do not lose control of your emotions. It is not who we are as an organization. It is not who we are as State Troopers. And as part of a family, we do not allow it of each other.

Take care of yourself on this journey just like you have in the academy. By being intentional about your own self-care - physically, mentally, and spiritually, but also by being intentional about taking care of each other. Human beings are remarkably resilient. The State Patrol is remarkably resilient. That is because we look after each other. We care about each other - with intention.

As you enter the first hours of your career, let me share with you an email I received from a trooper who re-

tired earlier this year. "As I look back on my 32 year career, the great times, the really dark times, and all of the families I have become close with through the investigations I worked, there is nothing I would change. It is in those darkest times that our true character is tested, it is in the times things did not go the way I wanted and that God gives us the opportunities to improve and grow. Without growth I would not be who I am today - a proud Minnesota State Trooper entering the last few hours of a phenomenal career.

In closing, there is good in the world. We have the opportunity to be the purveyors of everything excellent about policing. When I first started, our general order required us to wear our campaign hats at a "jaunty" angle. Plain language has removed that term, but I think it still applies. Jaunty means having or expressing a lively, cheerful, and self-confident manner. Be jaunty today, and for your entire career. I support you. I support your families. I am thankful for you earning the ability to walk across this stage today as a Minnesota State Trooper. Remember - that badge you are about to wear is a symbol of public trust. Think about that each time you shine it and pin it on your shirt.

Congratulations!





Trp. Collin Adair SP289

I am from Andover, MN. I am newly married. In my off time, I enjoy volunteering, fishing, hunting and distance running. I worked retail while attending college. I attended North Hennepin Community College for an Associate's degree in Law Enforcement. I also attended Bemidji State University and received a Bachelor's degree in Wildlife Biology. I am assigned to the Mounds View station.



Trp. Lucas Bachman SP239

I am from Hastings and currently hold a Bachelor's Degree from the University of Minnesota Twin Cities and a Law Enforcement Degree from Rasmussen College. Before coming to the State Patrol, I worked at Dell Technologies. In my spare time I enjoy spending time with my family and girlfriend, cooking, and working out. I am assigned to the Minneapolis station.



Trp. Chaz Barrera SP152

I was born and raised in St Paul and am currently assigned to the St Paul station. I graduated from high school in 2015. After a couple years of college, I decided to get into law enforcement. I transferred to Metro State where I earned my Bachelor's degree in Law Enforcement. I joined the State Patrol because of the training, standards, benefits, freedom, and the role they play in law enforcement. My long term goal with the patrol is to get on SRT or the K-9 Unit. Outside of work, I work out, play tennis, bike, play with my dog, watch movies, and spend time with friends and family.

Minnesota State Patrol's 62nd Graduating Class



Trp. Benjamin Bauer SP9

I am originally from Brooklyn Park, MN. I graduated from high school in 2014 before enlisting in the Minnesota Army National Guard where I served seven years as an Infantryman. I attended Bemidji State University and played baseball while earning my criminal justice degree. I then moved to Moorhead where my girlfriend Hailey and have lived for the past two years. I am assigned to the Hallock station.



Trp. Benjamin Dorren SP201

I am originally from Colorado and moved to Alexandria in 2018. Prior to the State Patrol, I completed two years of volunteer work traveling across the U.S with a nonprofit. I was able to see the immense differences in culture and diversity throughout the country. In both Colorado and in Minnesota, I spend as much time as I can outdoors. I try to mountain bike whenever I get the chance, but I enjoy a long hike in the wilderness just as much. I met my girlfriend here in Minnesota, and we both love to explore new places and spend time out on the lake or at a State Park. I am assigned to the Worthington station.



Trp. Patrick Fay SP78

I am originally from New Ulm, MN. I graduated high school in 2004 followed by attending Alexandria Technical College. I have been married to my high school sweetheart for 11 years, and together we have two very energetic girls, Haylee and Whitney. As a family, we enjoy camping and traveling. Prior to the State Patrol, I had the opportunity to work as a Deputy Sheriff and Police Officer. I enjoy the aspects of interdiction and hope to further my knowledge base with the State Patrol. I am currently assigned to the Windom station.



Trp. Marshall Freeman SP54

I am originally from St. Paul Park Minnesota. Before joining the State Patrol, I served nine years active duty Air Force, with three years as a canine officer. My goal with joining the State Patrol is to become a canine officer and continue to pursue my dreams. I am a father of three. I have a 3 year old (Marshall), two year old(Skyler), and a two month old(Greyson). My hobbies are to enjoy the outdoors with the family and projects on the house. I am currently assigned to the Richfield station.



Trp. Nolan Goebel SP232

I grew up in Elk River, MN and still live in the area. I enjoy spending time on the lake and playing beach volleyball with friends. I have my Bachelor's Degree in Psychology from Saint John's University. Prior to joining the State Patrol, I worked various security jobs and was as a Community Service Officer. I am assigned to the Maple Grove station.



Trp. Zachary Gruver SP290

I was born in Phoenix, AZ and moved to Moorhead, MN in 2001. I attended Minnesota State University Moorhead where I obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice. I have been married to my high school sweetheart for almost two years. We have two dogs, a Husky and a German Shepard mix. I worked as a Corrections Officer for the Clay County Jail and was a Patrol Officer for both the city of Moorhead and Glyndon prior to joining the State Patrol. I am assigned to the Bagley station.



Trp. Valerie Hauser SP6

I am from Sleepy Eye, Minnesota. I have an A.A.S. Degree in Criminal Justice- Corrections with a SKILLS certificate. Prior to joining the State Patrol, I had experience working in corrections, dispatch, and law enforcement. In my free time, I enjoy horseback riding with my family and spending time with friends. I am assigned to the New Ulm station



Trp. Jacob Inglett SP181

I am from La Crescent, MN. I enjoy hunting, fishing, kayaking, and training my two Labs, Bella and Gus. I am a 3rd Generation Minnesota State Trooper, following my father and grandfather, Mark and Milton Inglett. My career goal is to become a DRE and a Crash Reconstructionist. Prior to the MSP, I was a police officer at La Crescent PD. I am assigned to the Rochester station.



Trp. Aitana Johnson SP89

I was born in Atlanta, GA but moved to Minnesota at a young age. I come from a family of 13 people and will be the first peace officer in my family among the children, not including my father who was a peace officer before pursuing law School. I have two German shepherd puppies, Sultan and Ragnar. Besides staying busy with my family or German shepherds, I keep myself busy by traveling. I am assigned to the East Metro.



Trp. Gabriel Jones SP265

I grew up in the Alexandria area with my parents and two younger brothers. I graduated in 2020 from Alexandria Technical and Community College with my law enforcement degree. I enjoy exercising and swimming. I am assigned to the Thief River Falls station.



Trp. Timothy Knutson SP4

I'm originally from Faribault, MN. After graduating high school in 2008, I enlisted in the Army Reserves/MN National Guard. I served in both the Engineer Corps and the Infantry. In addition, I deployed to the Middle East in 2010. I graduated from MSU: Mankato with a Bachelor's Degree in Law Enforcement and I've worked as a licensed police officer for 6 years. I have been married to my wife, Leah Knutson, for 5 years and we have a two year old daughter, Emma Knutson. I am assigned to the Mankato station.



Trp. Cole Lundeen SP262

I am originally from Detroit Lakes MN. I graduated high school in 2014. After high school I went to MSU: Moorhead and received my bachelor's degree in criminal justice in 2018. Shortly after receiving my degree, I was hired by the Polk County Sheriff's Office where I worked as a deputy for two years before joining the Minnesota State Patrol. In my free time I enjoy bow hunting and being outside. I am assigned to the Thief River Falls Station.

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Trp. Herbert Moon SP248

I am originally from Ellendale, MN. I am married and have 3 children who keep me busy all the time. Prior to joining the State Patrol, I was a Deputy with the Le Sueur County Sheriff's Office. I enjoy traveling and spending time with family. I am assigned to the Fairmont Station.



Trp. Hannah Potts SP281

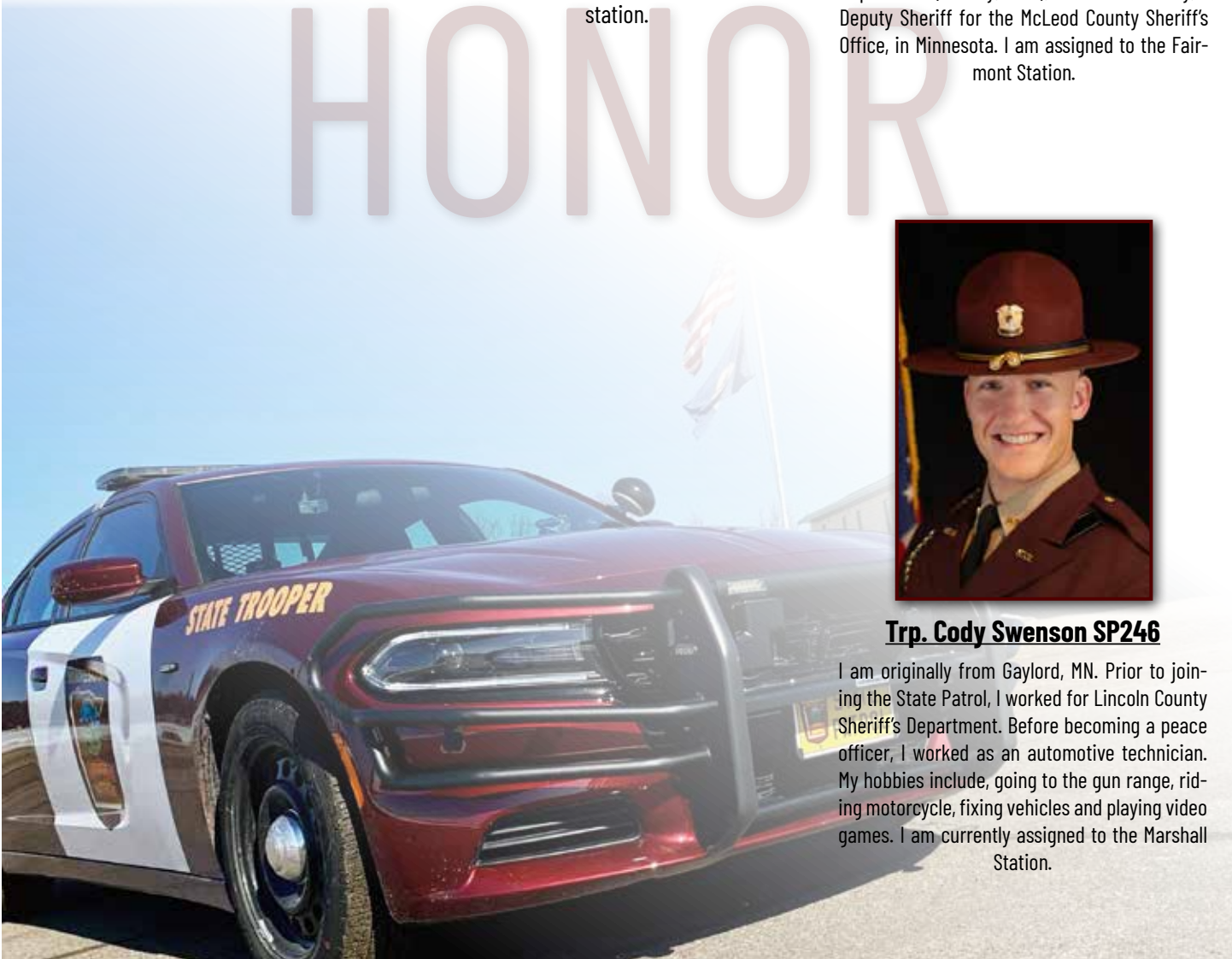
I am originally from St. Paul, MN. I graduated from Harding Senior High School in 2014, and St. Cloud State University in 2018 with a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice. I enjoy photography, camping, and hiking along the north shore with my husband. I am excited to be following my dream of being a state trooper. I am assigned to the St. Paul station.



Trp. Bennett Sukalski SP241

I am originally from Fort Dodge, Iowa. I grew up in a Government family, moving around the U.S. In 2010, I moved to Minnesota and attended St Cloud State University where I where I obtained my B.A. and M.S. in Criminal Justice Studies. Prior to joining the State Patrol, I served as a Community Service Officer for the St. Cloud Police Department; Police Officer for the Ankeny Police Department (Ankeny, Iowa); and most recently, a Deputy Sheriff for the McLeod County Sheriff's Office, in Minnesota. I am assigned to the Fairmont Station.

HONOR



Trp. Cody Swenson SP246

I am originally from Gaylord, MN. Prior to joining the State Patrol, I worked for Lincoln County Sheriff's Department. Before becoming a peace officer, I worked as an automotive technician. My hobbies include, going to the gun range, riding motorcycle, fixing vehicles and playing video games. I am currently assigned to the Marshall Station.



Trp. Alexander Vukelich SP500

I am originally from Brainerd, MN. I graduated from Bemidji State University in 2020 with a degree in Criminal Justice. I enjoy being in the outdoors hunting, fishing, trapping, or hiking. Before joining the State Patrol, I worked for the Crow Wing County Sheriff's Office as a part-time deputy. I am assigned to the Rushford station.



Trp. Nathan Walbaum SP40

I am originally from Baudette and have an 11 year old daughter. I served four years in the United States Army as an Infantry soldier. Prior to coming to the State Patrol, I was a deputy in Lake of the Woods county and most recently a deputy in Grand Forks county. In my free time, I enjoy hunting, fishing, kayaking, and hiking. I am passionate about physical fitness and staying healthy. I am stationed in Thief River Falls.



Trp. Matthew Wooding SP23

I am originally from Lake City, MN. I graduated high school in 2017. I attended RCTC and received my associates degree in law enforcement. Prior to being hired with the State Patrol, I worked in healthcare. In my free time I enjoy hiking with my dog and fishing. I am assigned to the Albert Lea station.

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2020 MPPPOA Legislator of the Year



Senate Majority Leader Paul Gazelka was presented with the 2020 MPPPOA Legislator of the Year award at the annual convention in June. The 2020 convention was canceled as a result of COVID. Members of the MSPTA were able to get a photo after the presentation. Leader Gazelka has been a steadfast supporter of the Troopers Association and law enforcement statewide his entire legislative career. He was

instrumental in the success of our wage disparity legislation as well as other legislative initiatives important to us. He believes in providing the necessary resources for law enforcement, so we have the talent, tools, and training to serve the residents of Minnesota. He is a true statesman, and we congratulate him and thank him for his commitment to Minnesota. ♦

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Matson Strong Legislation Passes

On June 29th troopers had the privilege of escorting Arik and Megan Matson at the Capitol while the Matson Strong legislation was passed by both the House and Senate. Waseca Officer Matson was critically injured after being shot in the head while investigating a possible prowler in January of 2020. While overcoming incredible obstacles during recovery, the Matson family lobbied the legislature for this important change. The profession owes them a debt of gratitude for their time and commitment to this cause. This legislation was originally introduced by Senator Jasinski and Representative Petersburg and included in the public safety bill during the special session. This bill increases penalties for individuals convicted of serious assault on a police officer, judge, prosecutor, or corrections officer. Jim Mortenson, the Executive Director of Law Enforcement Labor Services, provided the MSPPTA with the photos and the message below.

LELS was honored and privileged to be with Arik & Megan Matson, MPPOA (Brian Peters) and Waseca County Attorney (Rachel Cornelius) at the MN Capitol today. Both Arik and Megan Matson were recognized on both the Senate and House floors as the Matson Strong bill is on the verge of being voted upon, passed and signed into law with the Public Safety bill. The Matson Strong bill will enhance the sentencing guidelines for anyone who uses a firearm against a police officer. We also want to give a little shout out to our MSP friends who made sure we were well protected and helped guide us around the Capitol all morning. We especially want to thank all of the Senators and Representative that made this law possible! #MATSONSTRONG ♦



Pictured below (L-R): Sgt. Nick Folger (4700), Lt. Mike Lee and Sgt. Tom Sarych (2400), Officer Matson, Sgt. Phil Jergenson (2500), Trp. Dan Ryan and Jake Anderson (2500)

2021 MPPPOA Legislator of the Year



Senator Julie Rosen was presented with the 2021 MPPOA Legislator of the Year award at the annual convention in June. Members of the MSPTA were able to get a photo after the presentation and express their appreciation for her long-standing support of the Troopers Association. Senator Rosen was instrumental in 2018 for the success of the pension bill helping shepherd the bill through the legislature in her

role as Chair of the Pension Commission. She has supported troopers on pensions, pay, and continues to express her support of our profession. She frequently acknowledges the service and sacrifice law enforcement officers make every day in their respective communities. She is deserving of this recognition and Minnesota is fortunate to have someone of her caliber serving in the legislature. ♦

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Run-A-Muck Presented with Donation

On 06-03-2021 Trooper Robyn Birr SP 565 presented a check donation to the Run-A-Muck ATV Club on behalf of the Minnesota State Patrol Trooper's Association. From left to right in the picture is Jeremy Birr (President), Trooper Robyn Birr (SP 565), Kim Chambers (Treasurer), Chris Sheff (Secretary), and Kirk Haglin (Vice President). Run-A-Muck ATV Club is a state and federally recognized 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The club is a group of ATV enthusiasts that strive to stimulate and advance the general welfare and safety of ATV riding, including safety training and education to the youth, promote the exchange of ATV information and trail updates, promote existing trails and create new trails and to be a recognized and respected organization that will benefit our community.

The Run-A-Muck ATV Club Board Members were grateful for the donation and thank the Minnesota State Patrol Trooper's Association on behalf of their club. ♦



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The Great Minnesota Get Together

By Richard Orpen SP 49



It seemed that as soon as the policing structure utilized by the Minnesota State Fair dissolved, talk of the Troopers working the Fair started. Headquarters has always been reluctant to commit Troopers to the fair. On the surface the State Fair is not part of our traffic safety mission and we were already being pulled in so many directions. It didn't take long for organizers to realize they would not have enough officers to work the State Fair if they didn't get the Troopers on board. Colonel Langer was able to come to an agreement that the Troopers would be paid overtime, only work the entrance gates of the State Fair and would defer all criminal matters to the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office. And that is how after 92 years the Troopers were finally tasked with working the Great Minnesota Get Together.

Admittedly there were many apprehension surrounding the Fair. How would the crowds be? Would there be protests at any of the gates? How would Covid-19 affect what Troopers had to do at the Fair? What am I going to do at a gate for 10 hours? I would be lying if I said I didn't have doubts even as I signed on to work the first day of the State Fair.

Driving into the Fairgrounds at 0500 hours was a surreal experience. I have walked those same streets countless times with my friends and family but

coming in a squad to an all but deserted State Fair was something else entirely. I had a sense that something amazing was going to take place. Roll call started promptly at 0530 hours in the Aurthur Blakley Police Department. Roll call as a Trooper is a somewhat foreign experience, but it was nice to talk with other Troopers from around the state. Nothing is ever free at the State Fair, except blessedly coffee and donuts at roll call!

Captain Gieger, dubbed that morning as the Captain of Everything, got us off to a good start. His advice for wearing our mask was "somewhere between never wearing it and always wearing it." That turned out to be great advice as every gate was unique in its own way and Troopers are smart enough to figure it out. Captain Gieger handed out gate assignments and Troopers slowly drove their squad cars through the fairground to start the first ever shift for Troopers at the State Fair.

During the first few days of the Fair, anyone from the Metro not working the Fair was tasked with maintaining order at the Capitol and the Governor's mansion. What a difference a few miles can make!

Of all the things I was thinking I would experience I wasn't prepared for what working the fair was actually like. The

first people I met were security guards and State Fair tickets takers. We spent a lot of time with those two groups and I was surprised to learn that working the fair gets into people's blood. On my first gate assignment I worked with a father who was working his 54th state fair and his daughter who was working her 16th state fair. I jokingly asked, "So apparently the State Fair doesn't have a nepotism policy?" They replied that they have an unofficial policy on nepotism in that it is highly encouraged. I worked at another gate where the supervising ticket taker was in her 45th year at the fair. She was so dedicated to working the fair that many years ago she even worked the fair while being 9 months pregnant and had her water break at Gate 7 on Labor Day!

At all but two gates Troopers were working solo, as a result we got to know the staff real well. Troopers were able to meet many interesting people while working the gates. Many of the ticket takers have professional careers but they always take two weeks off to work the fair. Many are retired and working the fair is the only job they do all year. Whatever their experiences, each gate has many of the same people come back year after year. Working different gates felt like getting a glimpse into a small family unit.

Much of our time at the gates was spent

simply being a positive presence. We turned on that Trooper Charm (not taught at the academy) and interacted with people in a positive manner. Many Troopers experienced the same things I did while monitoring a gate. I gave countless high fives, fist bumps, elbow bumps and yes even handshakes. Kids wanted to speak to us and others took pictures with us. It wasn't all sunshine and rainbows though. Troopers had to do actual work. Some had to maintain order while hordes of people tried to exit at once, some had to assist Ramsey county with keeping trouble makers out of the fair, some had to help reunite lost children with their parents, and some had to assist with scooter vs pedestrian crashes (yes, crashes, as in more than one. People are crazy at the fair.)

Lieutenant Cornish told me he was driving down a street in the golf cart when suddenly a cell phone dropped from the sky and bounced several times in front of the cart. He noticed he was under the sky tram and a couple was shouting they dropped their phone as they floated away. He grabbed the phone and took it to the end of the sky tram, where it was turned back over to them – actually unharmed.

I was working the main gate when someone led a lost child to me. He was five years old and had been missing for over an hour. I advised dispatch that I had him and was instructed to walk him to his mother, on the complete opposite end of the fair! At first the little guy didn't want to hold my hand and I quickly figured out how he had come to be in his current state. That little rascal would follow beside me for a while and then get distracted by some unseen force and quickly start to skip away. I finally got him to hold my hand as we walked but that only lasted for a short time and I ultimately ended up carrying him to his ever so grateful mother.

The 12 days of the State Fair were long and hot. There were a lot of unknowns before the event but the Troopers did what Troopers often do. We made the best of the situation and not only did the job that was asked of us, but did went above and beyond. Each gate I worked at had only amazing things to say about the Troopers that preceded me. Whether we work the State Fair in the future or not, I know one thing for sure; in 2021 the Troopers came to the Fair and it was a huge success. ♦



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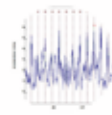
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Softball Update

On September 18th East Metro Troopers participated in the 1st Annual Sgt. Cory Slifko Memorial Softball Tournament in Farmington. A total of 16 law enforcement teams gathered from across the state to not only play softball, but to honor Sgt. Slifko and support the Invisible Wounds Project. In addition to the games, the event hosted a silent auction, raffle items and kids activities.

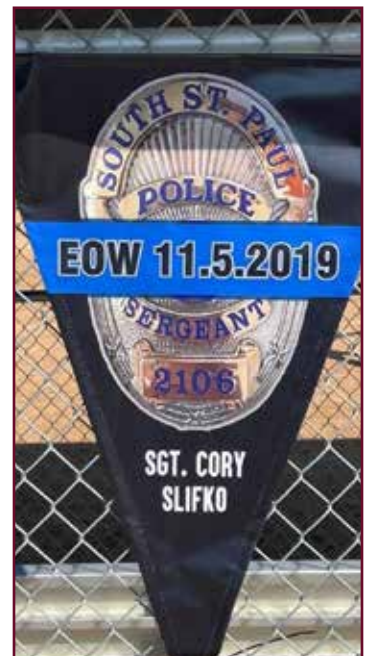
The Invisible Wounds Project is a non-profit organization committed to raising awareness and providing services to Minnesota's military, first responders, front-line medical staff, corrections, dispatch, and their families, relating to mental health, PTSD and suicide issues free of charge. Over \$42,000 was raised during the tournament which was donated in Sgt. Slifko's memory to The Invisible Wounds Project.

The East Metro Team started the day off by defeating Burnsville PD in the opening round but they were quickly humbled by Bloomington PD in the second round. Congratulations to Bloomington PD as they ultimately won the tournament.

The East Metro team would like to thank Hiway Federal Credit Union for sponsoring our team and purchasing our game shirts. We appreciate their support of our agency and this cause. We look forward to playing in next year's tournament. ♦



(front row left to right: Dave Johnson, Andy Gibbs, Jill Frankfurth, Mike Gensmer)
(back row left to right: Brent Egan, Eric Micek, Jesse Einhorn, Kevin Adrian, Gordon Shank, Peter Bachhuber, Anthony Mains)
not pictured Peter Jackson





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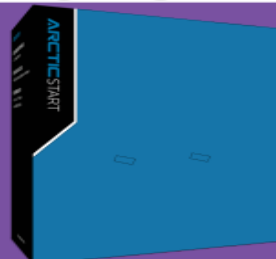
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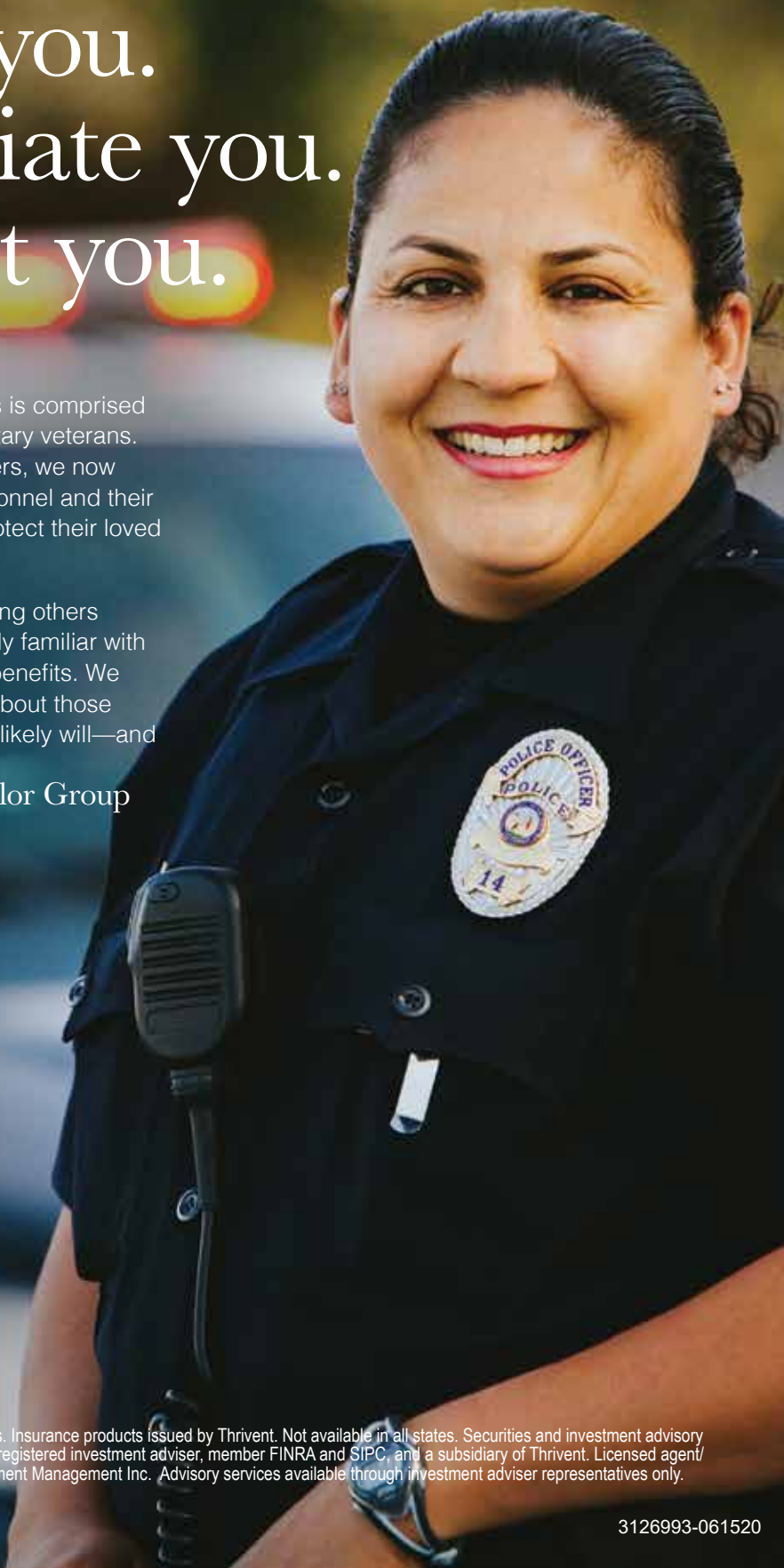
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35th Annual MSPTA Golf Tournament

By Curt Thurmes

The 35th Annual MSPTA Trooper/ Guest golf tournament finally happened. The location for the 35th tournament was hosted at The Wilderness at Fortune Bay Casino. This is the finest golf course we have played this tournament at. It has been rated in the top 10 in the state for the past 10 years. The original date was in July of 2020. The Governor prohibited 144 people getting together so it was postponed and moved back one year to July 14 and 15, 2021. A very small amount of us took the Wilderness's hospitality and honoring the price we were quoted in July 2020. The two that counted the most were the last two standing that have attended every trooper tournament. Mat Hodapp and Steve Pillsbury did not want to let the other have a one up on the other. The 2020 tourney that wasn't was still a blast with the 15 or so that played this course.

Move to 2021 Covid concerns were in the rear-view mirror. All 144 Participants were at the Tournament. This marks the first time the tournament has been sold out in over 20 years. There were not a lot of donations because of Covid. But those that did donate stepped up very big. We had several major donations and we all should take very serious notice and support these businesses. The Minnesota Troopers Assn have always made a major contribution towards this event. The Hiway Federal Credit union has been a top donator for decades. If you are looking to any banking or need a loan you should definitely look towards Hiway they are very competitive in the market and they support us. The other major contributor was Holiday Station Stores for the second year in a row. They have stepped up with a very big donation. I know if I need fuel, I choose Holiday as should all of you should once again they step up and support us we in turn should support them. The last major contributor is McDonald Eye care. If you are in the metro area and need an eye exam look them up and give them your business. Last ones I just want to thank are the two beer distributors that donated several cases of product, JJ Taylor and Castle Danger brewery.

The accommodations at Fortune Bay were fantastic. This was the furthest North we have ever been. The weather cooperated as we had very warm temperatures and very little wind. The only problem was a little smoke in the air from

the Canadian fires burning north of the border. The border was just a few miles away. You must give kudos to the staff at Fortune Bay to make our stay very memorable. The food we had for the lunches on the golf course were very good. The banquet was flat out exceptional. The walleye and beef were cooked to perfection as well as everything else. The Wilderness golf course hit it out of the park. The course was in excellent shape. The views on each hole were magnificent. The greens rolled so smooth and some might say very fast. I would go back to this course over and over again. The staff at the Wilderness were so great to work with from the very first phone call to set this tournament up to the final minute we were there. They went over the top to make this a special event for the 35th anniversary. Rachel from the Wilderness stated we were one of the best groups and very respectful of their staff. We have been asked to return from the Wilderness staff.

The best part of this tournament is the people. This tournament is pure and simple is so much more than a golf tournament. This is a social gathering and meeting from one corner of the state to the other. I have met so many great people at this event. People I have never worked next to or with. I have made some great relations purely from this tournament. I sometimes sit back and watch the interaction from very young to well-seasoned folks have conversations and tell stories. This is the single most important thing the Assn does other than represent your best interest in contract negotiations. I can attest that is extremely frustrating at times. This tournament must continue. Others need to step up and be the leader and host this. It is not all about having all kinds of door prizes. Those are nice but it is about meeting friends you know and meeting new friends you have yet to meet. Support each other help those that might be having a difficult time because you never know when you might need a little pick me up. Remember to support those that support us without them this tourney would not happen. Do not let this end 35 years and counting long into the future.

Thank you for the kind words so many went out of the way to say to myself and Cindy.



36th Annual M.S.P.T.A. Trooper/Guest Golf Tournament



DATE:

JULY 14 & 15, 2022

All Active and Retired Troopers, State Patrol Supervisors, RCO's, CVIs, Support Staff, and their guests are eligible.



CONTACT PERSON

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TOURNAMENT MANAGERS: SALLY JONES & LINDY MAANUM 320.842.7901

CHECK-IN: 8:00 AM TO 9:30 AM ON THURSDAY

TEE-OFF TIMES: THURSDAY- 10:00 AM SHOTGUN START

FRIDAY- 9:00 AM SHOTGUN START

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JULY 15-FOUR PERSON SCRAMBLE

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••• Four person teams determined from the first day scores •••

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(Or average score for 18 holes)

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