

# MINNESOTA TROOPER

Volume 39 • Number 3 • October 2023

## OFFICER OF THE YEAR

Celebrating Valor:  
Trooper **MEGAN BOSER**  
Receives the 2023 MPPOA  
Officer of the Year Award



The 67th Academy of the  
Minnesota State Patrol | Pg 11

OFFICER OF THE YEAR | PG 30



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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?

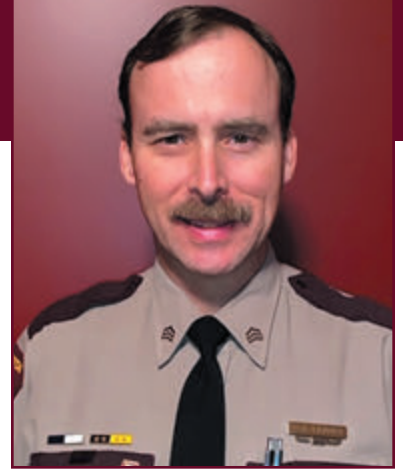
## This is what your \$30 per paycheck provides:

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- 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



## The Sacrifice of Seven: **BE WORTHY**

In the quiet shadows of heartache, we gather to pay tribute to the lives that burned bright with courage and dedication—lives that were cut short in the line of duty. The recent losses of seven valiant law enforcement officers from Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, and North Dakota have cast a somber veil over our communities, reminding us of the profound sacrifices made to keep us safe.

Their names, etched in our hearts forever: Police Officer Kevin Cram E.O.W. 09/13/23, Police Officer Jake Wallin E.O.W. 07/14/23, Deputy Sheriff Kaitie Leising E.O.W. 5/6/23, Deputy Sheriff Josh Owen E.O.W. 04/15/23, Police Officer Emily Breidenbach E.O.W. 04/08/23, Police Officer Hunter Scheel E.O.W. 04/08/23, and Police Officer Peter Jerving E.O.W. 02/07/23. They were more than law enforcement officers; they were guardians of our safety, protectors of our peace. As we remember their service and their sacrifice, we honor the essence of their commitment and the families they leave behind.

These officers wore their badges not as mere accessories, but as symbols of their unwavering promise to stand between danger and the innocent. Their dedication radiated through their actions, their willingness to confront adversity, and their resolve to uphold the law and protect the vulnerable.

In the communities they served, their absence leaves an irreplaceable void. The schools where they imparted safety lessons to young minds, the neighborhoods they patrolled with diligence, and the streets they walked with integrity—all bear the marks of their enduring presence.

Yet, even as we grieve, we draw strength from their legacy. They remind us that heroism is not confined to tales of fiction but is lived out daily by those who embrace duty with open arms. The fallen seven embody the spirit of sacrifice that has characterized law enforcement throughout history. It is a spirit that, even in the face of adversity, refuses to falter, to waver.

As we reflect on their lives, let us remember that their dedication knew no bounds. They stood tall against adversity; their resolve unshaken by the challenges they faced. They

served not for recognition, but for the profound satisfaction of knowing that their actions made their communities safer, their homes more secure.

Today, we bow our heads in reverence, and our hearts swell with gratitude. The fallen seven have left an indelible mark on our collective consciousness—a mark that reminds us of the true cost of freedom, safety, and security. In their memory, let us honor their sacrifice by standing together, united against the darkness that seeks to undermine the very values they upheld.

To the families, friends, and colleagues of these brave officers, we extend our deepest condolences and unwavering support. Your loved ones may have left this world, but their legacy lives on in the lives they touched, the protection they provided, and the example they set.

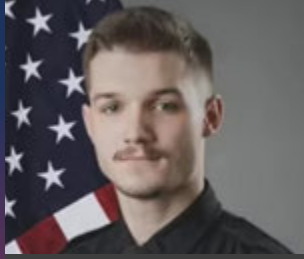
As the echoes of their service resonate through time, may their memory inspire us to stand resolute in the face of adversity, to cherish the values they defended, and to ensure that their sacrifice was not in vain. The fallen seven will forever be remembered as heroes, guardians of justice, and beacons of light in a world that sometimes seems dim.

Amidst the shifting currents of our times, there arises a solemn plea—a call to be worthy of the sacrifice made by those who stand on the front lines of safety. As we reflect on the steadfast commitment of these men and women who walk the path of



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Police Officer  
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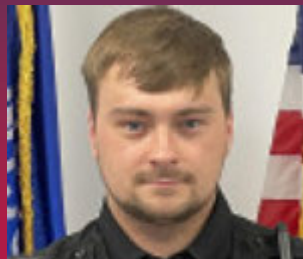
Deputy Sheriff  
Josh Owen



Police Officer  
Kevin Cram



Police Officer  
Emily Ann Breidenbach



Police Officer  
Hunter Timothy Scheel



Police Officer  
Peter E. C. Jerving

honor, let us not merely observe but engage, uplift, and protect. It's a responsibility that beckons us to reshape a culture that has veered off course in the past decade, a culture that has seen a significant rise in violence against our dedicated law enforcement officers.

In the face of danger, they step forward unwaveringly, to bridge the gap between chaos and order. Their actions are a testament to a courage that few of us can fathom, yet one that we depend upon unquestioningly. It's a pact that binds us together, a pact that extends beyond rhetoric and demands our action.

The legacy of these officers isn't confined to a single moment of tribute; it's etched into the fabric of every law-abiding society. It's etched into the collective commitment to stand by those who stand for us. To be worthy of their sacrifices is to truly understand the magnitude of what they willingly undertake.

As we navigate the complexities of law enforcement's calling, let us champion change through action, not just words. Let us advocate for legislation that mirrors the valor they embody—the laws that embolden the brave and protect the protectors.

But being worthy extends beyond legislative battles; it involves confronting the darker facets of our society with an unwavering gaze. Violence, the venom that threatens to corrode our communities, must be met with unyielding resolve.

Yes, reform is vital, a pursuit we wholeheartedly embrace, battling the cycle of recidivism with determination. However, we must also acknowledge that certain individuals pose a grave threat to our society, necessitating their prolonged separation from our communities.

The officers we honor today embarked on their journeys with an unwavering purpose—to patrol, to protect, and to preserve public safety. They heeded the call, embracing a duty that was never confined to a mere occupation. They ventured into the unknown, embodying the promise that if need be, they would offer the ultimate sacrifice for the communities they cherished.

The fallen officers are not simply mourned; they are remembered through a collective commitment to be worthy of their courage. Their legacy beckons us, calling us to safeguard our communities, to stand by our law enforcement officers, and to ensure that their sacrifices were not in vain. Whether it's through community programs, mental health resources, or acknowledging the challenges officers face, we all have a role to play in creating a safer environment for those who protect and serve. By being worthy of the sacrifice made by these heroes, we can ensure their legacy lives on, and that their dedication to safeguarding our communities is never forgotten. ♦

Mike #88



Colonel Matt Langer

## Colonel's Message



# THE BUSY SEASON

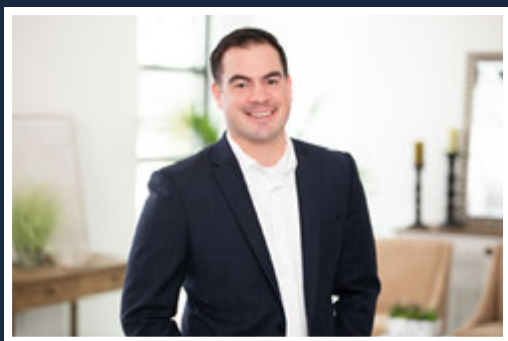
If only the title of this article was true! There is no busy "season" for the State Patrol these days. It truly is busy all of the time. Just last week, I was explaining the smattering of projects that are on the desk of our organization. Our primary mission of traffic safety continues to feel under attack as we deal with an uptick in fatal crashes, many of which as a result of particularly ridiculous driving conduct. Our efforts with education and enforcement make a difference, but it is difficult to overcome human decision-making with the reliability that we would prefer. The day-to-day work is important, as are projects like HEAT, Project 20(23), and the efforts surrounding WE Fest. What would happen on our roads without the Minnesota State Patrol's effort?

On top of our primary mission, we have 30 Troopers per day assigned to assist with State Fair security. To say that our presence is required at the gates has gone from opinion to fact in just a few years. We continue to provide high visibility patrols in the City of Minneapolis and added a week of patrols around the University of Minnesota campus to increase safety during move-in week activities. Our Mobile Response Team continues fairly regular deployments including a large

deployment at the end of August to help close a homeless camp that had increased rapidly in population and experienced the death of an individual the afternoon before it was closed. All of this happens in the midst of centralized in-service training. We know the staffing stress all of this creates.

My explanation to someone about all that is happening was two-fold. One, I wanted to express the degree to which the organization was stretched thin. The amount of work on our plate is incredible. Two, I wanted to express my pride in the State Patrol. Time and time again, our people step up and deliver on the required mission. The breadth, scope, and pace of missions continues to surpass what we would desire. And yet, we continue to deliver. Believe me, people notice what we are capable of and they are thankful for it.

At the same time, everything above can take its toll. I hope you continue to find time off. Perhaps a long stretch of days away from work or even an afternoon off to cut the grass with peace and quiet. Either example, or anything in between, can serve as restorative breaks in a daily grind. Keep up the good work knowing you have my full support to tackle what we can predict, and what we cannot predict. I hope to see you soon! ♦



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# CULTURE AND TRADITIONS

The first Minnesota Trooper magazine I read after becoming commissioner of the Department of Public Safety (DPS) was the February 2023 issue. I remember clearly how the culture and traditions of the Minnesota State Patrol, past and present, came to life on the pages. As I flipped through the magazine, I found a great mix of stories about the latest graduating academy, a throwback memory of the Academy Class of 1985, and the list and photos of retired troopers, BCA agents and conservation officers who passed away in 2022.

My career would have overlapped with all but one of those law enforcement officers who died. It made me feel a bit nostalgic — and old!

I knew with each page that I read, and — from my experience over three decades of law enforcement — that you are full of pride for what you have always done: serve others. It reminded me of the many who have served admirably, and now those who carry on the torch of leadership and mentorship for others. This work, in the end, is not about the “me.” It is about the “we.” There is a greater purpose in what we do.

As we work our way through careers in public service, we can all likely remember at least one person who we looked up to, who we admired, who we trusted. Those mentors typically would offer support and give you advice. You also knew that they would be compassionate, but honest, when you needed constructive feedback. If you were in a difficult situation, facing trauma, or even when you needed someone to perhaps “keep you grounded,” that mentor was invaluable.

We continue facing challenges in our chosen profession. We knew it would not be easy, but this is the time for those who are gifted at leading and mentoring to continue serving with honor and pride. We all need that guidance, support and push to remember why we are here: To make a difference in the lives of those we serve.

The pride I feel in leading DPS, and in working with the State Patrol, continues on unabated. I recently reminded a team of senior leadership to feel pride in who they are, the uniform that they don each work day, and the incredible work that they do for the people of Minnesota. ♦

**I am proud of you. Blessings to you all.**



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# ONE ★ BY

Highway Patrolmen who lived in Elk River. The two officers started out in pursuit of the robbers and left Mrs. Brown sitting on the curb. They had the license number of the bandit's car. Finally, they spotted a car with the license number they were given and they gave chase. The bandits were driving a powerful car and there was a wild pursuit, at one point going off the highway and onto a side road. Brown's car was so close behind that the dust from the bandit's car made it impossible for Mike Auspos to see, and the car leaped a ditch, tore through a barbwire fence and careened wildly, but Auspos kept on. He raced Brown's big car across the field and through the wire fence on the other side, over the ditch and back onto the road. The chase continued.

When the Patrolmen's car got within sight of the bandit's car, the bank robbers began shooting. One shot ripped through Brown's windshield, and it developed later that the desperate men emptied four pistols as they shot at Brown and Auspos.

As the two cars were speeding across a bog on a rough road, Brown opened fire with a rifle. His first shot went through the rear window and the

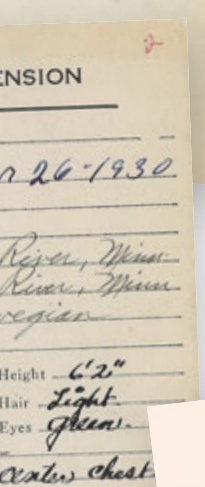
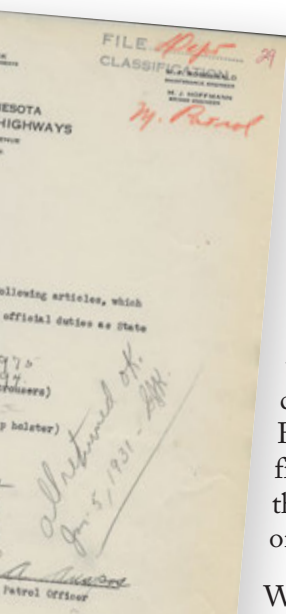
second ripped a huge hole at the seam of the gas tank. The bandit's car stopped, and a wounded man staggered towards Brown's car. Then, he fell in the road. A woman got out of the car and ran to the fallen man. The two officers passed them up and commanded the others to get out of the bandit's car. They repeated the order three times and then shot at the rear of the car. The remaining two men then surrendered. Earl found out that they had been waiting with sawed-off shotguns, and if he and Auspos had stopped to inspect the wounded man, they would have been shot. All three men were sentenced to prison and the bank's money was recovered.

Auspos was a Sherburne County deputy for eight years prior to joining the Highway Patrol in 1929. He was the first motorcycle officer in Sherburne County. In an article from the *Sherburne County Star* newspaper dated Aug. 11, 1921, Sherburne County Sheriff John Bitler said that he has assigned Deputy Auspos to watch for speeders on the highway. Brown was the Hennepin County Sheriff in 1920 and aided in getting Sherburne County a motorcycle. He recruited Auspos when he started to put together the Highway Patrol. Records show Auspos held badge #1 for a short time before he was issued badge #8.

Auspos resigned from the Patrol on Jan. 1, 1931 at his own choice. He was the Anoka County Sheriff from 1946 to 1960. He died Dec. 6, 1978. His son Mike recently retired from the Coon Rapids Police Department.

Richard C. Smith – Retired

State Patrol Archives  
Curator



# DAYS ★ GONE ★ BY

*Calling all golfers ...*

## Proposed golf tourney for troopers, retired troopers and guests

By Al Fitch

Retired Sergeant Larry Greenquist and I would like to propose and host the First Annual Trooper-Guest Golf Tournament to be held in Fergus Falls.

Here are our thoughts on it: A trooper or retired trooper would be permitted to bring one guest (wouldn't need to be a member of the State Patrol), and they would play as a two-person team. It would be a two-day tournament played on two difference courses: Pebble Lake Golf Course in Fergus Falls and Balmoral Golf Course at Otter Tail Lake. The first day's 18 holes would establish the flight you'd be playing in, and the second day would be the playoffs for the individual flights. We'd have a banquet the first evening. All flights would have trophies.

Tentative dates are Wednesday, July 16, and Thursday, July 17 (Wed-

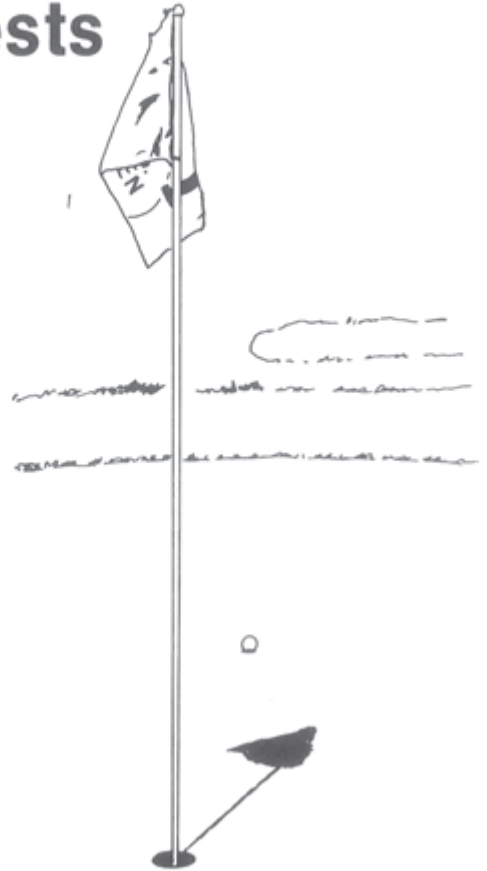
nesday at Balmoral, Thursday at Pebble Lake).

We haven't formulated the entrance fee, but it would cover green fees for the two days and the cost of the banquet.

We should be able to reserve a block of rooms at the Holiday Inn so that you can make room arrangements there if you wish.

We'd like to know if there is any interest in such a tourney before we make any plans. If you're interested, let me know with a postcard, radio or phone.

Al Fitch, SP113  
P.O. Box 934  
Fergus Falls, MN 56537  
Phone: 218/847-1550  
(District Office)



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# 37<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL TROOPER/GUEST GOLF TOURNAMENT

**T**he 37th Trooper/Guest Golf Tournament at Thumper Pond in Ottertail took place on July 19th and 20th. The event was once again very well attended. Golfers were greeted with a course in great condition and two days of fantastic weather.

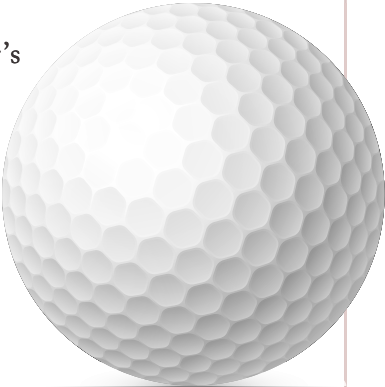
**ON DAY ONE** the low individual round for an active trooper was won by Joe Setnes (SP 494) with a score of 77. The low round for a retired trooper was won by Brian Erickson with a score of 81.

**ON DAY TWO** the team scramble was won by Melanie Cook (Retired SP 316), Doug Cook, Jeff Reuss, and Mark Greicar.

**A BIG THANK YOU** to Dayle Peterson for hosting this year's tournament!

The location of next year's tournament will be the New Ulm Country Club. The dates of the tournament will be Monday July 22nd – Tuesday July 23rd. Look for further information and registration forms in the next Trooper magazine! ♦

Kenny Dellwo SP 11



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L/R Senators Jasinski, Howe, and Limmer stopped by to show their support for the State Patrol

# A SHOWCASE OF HERITAGE:

## Vintage Patrol Cars Adorn the Capitol Grounds on May 16th

**O**n May 16th, the Capitol grounds were awash in Maroon and Gold, courtesy of the State Patrol and the Minnesota State Patrol Troopers Association. The occasion drew an enthusiastic crowd of both Capitol visitors and esteemed elected representatives. The troopers, standing tall amidst the historic ambience, not only showcased their antique cars but also proudly put on display the remarkable skill set and equipment that form the backbone of their duty to safeguard the people of Minnesota.

For those fortunate enough to be in attendance, the deep commitment that these troopers exhibit in their mission became palpable. Amidst the gleaming vintage cars, it was evident that the citizens of Minnesota hold a profound appreciation for the unyielding security, safety, and service that these dedicated law enforcement officers provide day in and day out. This event truly highlighted the symbiotic relationship between the troopers and the community they so valiantly serve, painting a vivid picture of mutual respect. ♦



Representative Tabke stopped by to show his support for the State Patrol

*Service*



# 67TH MINNESOTA STATE PATROL TROOPER TRAINING ACADEMY GRADUATION



**The MSP Training and Development Staff:**

- Captain Eric Barthel
- Lieutenant Andrew Thelen
- Lieutenant Kali Kleinschmidt
- Technical Sergeant Jimmy Buggs
- Technical Sergeant Rick Harjes
- Technical Sergeant David Rock
- Technical Sergeant Troy Morrell
- Technical Sergeant Dave Johnston
- Technical Sergeant Jason Halvorson
- Administrative Support Senior, Navay Mar
- Administrative Support, Sarah Robinson
- Administrative Support, Kathy Craft

**Academy Aide-de-camp:**

- Academy Staff Officer, Station Sergeant Kevin Adrian
- Academy Staff Officer, Trooper Steve Jepson
- Academy Staff Officer, Trooper Kristie Sue Hathaway
- Academy Staff Officer, Trooper Megan Boser
- 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 67th Academy of the Minnesota State Patrol

Colonel Matt Langer's message to the graduating class

It is fun to be amongst the first to congratulate you on your accomplishment today. A ton of hard work, sweat, perseverance, and commitment have been on display both at Camp Ripley and with your loved ones at home, in order to make today possible. In fact, today is made sweeter only because of all of that hard work.

Hosting a State Patrol academy is a massive undertaking. The support needed to embark on this necessary phase of becoming a State Trooper starts at the top. We have been fortunate to have the support of previous Governors and now in our fifth year with Governor Walz. Lieutenant Governor Flanagan, thanks for your support and for your attendance today. We also have a long history of bi-partisan support from legislators at the Capitol. We would not be very successful without support from the Commissioner's office at

DPS – thank you Commissioner Jacobson and others. Within DPS, we get support from human resources, internal affairs, communications, and financial staff too. And from the State Patrol, the rubber meets the road with the staff who give their all to make the academy successful. To the staff officers, support staff, and instructors – thank you for another job well done.

Hosting academies at Camp Ripley actually is part of a long history for the State Patrol. There is no place better for us to do what we need to do than Camp Ripley. We appreciate the working relationship with Major General Shawn Manke, General Lowell Kruse, and all of the staff at Camp Ripley.

To the family members who supported a cadet – thank you. Many of you managed a lot of extra duties over the past 14 weeks. You were part of a support



system to help your cadet accomplish their goal. One of the best parts about graduation is seeing the smiles of families that are once again reunited with the badge pinning.

The State Patrol is one big family. That means we laugh together. We celebrate together. We help each other. You could not survive the academy without teamwork. Now you join the larger team and continue that spirit of helping one another. As a family, we also grieve together. When the going gets tough, we turn to each other and lean on each other. The relationships formed in the academy and the relationships you will form with co-workers will stand the test of time and any adversity that comes your way.

Just last week I was sitting in a presentation from a marketing firm vying for State Patrol business to help with some recruitment initiatives. One of the representatives from the firm asked what it is about the State Patrol that we wished the public knew – but did not know. Without hesitation, I said it is our people. We have top-shelf people at the State Patrol. We work hard to hire the best people we can find. And then we get to work on making them even better.

Through training, opportunity, and holding each other accountable. You should know that you are entering an organization full of wonderfully talented and caring people. People who believe in our mission of traffic safety and who believe in the State Patrol. Without our people, we would be nothing at all.

I could pluck a hundred names out of my mind and start talking about them as one of these top-shelf people. Each one of them would be mortified at being selected. Humility is a big part of our foundation as an organization. So I will choose to irritate someone who has since retired. Perhaps it saves him a little embarrassment. Surely word will never travel back to him that I am choosing to speak about him.

Brad Bordwell retired as Captain of our Brainerd district. He started with the State Patrol in 1995 and retired last year. Brad had all of the qualities we look for in a State Trooper. He is remembered for many positive traits, not the least of which was his work ethic. He was the kind of State Trooper you hoped your family would encounter whether they needed help or perhaps got pulled over by him. Given his





work ethic, there was a pretty good chance of encountering him one way or another over his career. If you were pulled over by Trooper, Lieutenant, or Captain Bordwell, three things were sure to occur. 1) You would be informed of the unsafe behavior that led to the traffic stop. 2) You would receive a citation. 3) You would leave that traffic stop with a positive impression of the State Patrol. At the same time, if you got pulled over for trailer lights that weren't working, you'd probably get a warning and then Brad would get some tools out of his trunk and help find the ground wire that was loose so the lights would work again. He was that kind of trooper.

He was also the kind of person that would go home from work and stop to buy a couple dozen crappie minnows so he could go fishing with a colleague who needed some help. The kind of help that could only be provided by being together and sharing what was on their mind and heart. The kind of help that in many parts of our state – Brainerd being one of them – that fishing can provide.

You could learn a lot from Trooper Bordwell's experience, especially sitting on this stage as our newest graduating class. On his last day of work, I had the chance to visit with Brad. I'll never forget it because he was so gracious and humble. Upon reflecting back on his career, he said he owed everything to the State Patrol. He said everything he has is because the State Patrol provided for him and his family. Vacation time, his house, boat, relationships, paying college tuition for kids, etc. was all because of his job and that he loved his job as a State Trooper. It was a remarkable conversation centered in gratitude.

You are each a long ways away from retirement – and that is a good thing. I challenge you to think about how you can do this critical work for our state, with the work ethic and mindset of someone like Captain Brad Bordwell.

Your mindset will matter in this career. Getting through the academy is hard. Very hard. I remember the thought in 1999 was just about survival. To get through it. To endure it. Now looking back on it,

I have an entirely different reflection. It was about training. It was about the training staff in 1999 having complete ownership over the product they were producing as State Troopers. To ensure every cadet was trained to the standard that Minnesotans expect when they think about our State Troopers. You have just experienced the investment of best-in-class training to prepare you to be healthy, wise, and successful State Troopers.

As you embark on this new chapter in your life, keep our core values alive. Demonstrate them in all that you do. On-duty and off-duty. They will always keep you on the good side of whatever comes.

Respect – treat others with respect. Two weeks ago I attended a symposium on racism in the criminal justice system. Throughout the day, there was a lot of really difficult conversation. Throughout the day, there was also praise for the State Patrol. Three examples were provided to me. Examples that went back as far as 10 years. Examples of people who have experienced exemplary interactions with State Troopers. One of them being life-changing as told through the eyes of the individual’s mother. The common

theme across these three examples?

Respect. Never underestimate the power of treating people with respect.

Integrity – tell the truth. That is easy when times are good. It is more difficult to tell the truth when it might be unflattering. But, the truth always prevails. The truth is the signal that will cut through all of the noise. Integrity cannot be taken from you, it requires you to give it away. Never give it away.

Courage – act with courage. You have already demonstrated it by signing up for this profession and by going a step further and saying, “I want to be a State Trooper” which requires the academy you just completed. Courage also means standing up for what you believe in. Never hesitate to raise your hand when you see something that needs to be addressed. It is the expectation of you to be the voice of good in the world.

Honor – honor those who have gone before us. Honor them by remembering their sacrifice. Certainly those who gave the ultimate sacrifice, but also those who gave so much to improve our agency and develop our standing in communities across Minnesota.



We have the tremendous responsibility to carry on the legacy of one of Minnesota's finest institutions. That requires intentional action on our part along with an aversion to apathy.

Excellence – pay attention to the small stuff. It matters. Every interaction matters. Wearing your hat, shining your brass, use of language, and keeping yourself organized – it all matters. It is who we are. The public should (and does) demand excellence from their Minnesota State Patrol. Our job is to deliver on that demand each and every time. While we are not perfect, we strive for excellence. Human beings are never perfect, but it is often easy to spot the human beings who are driven toward excellence.

Our core values are vital to the State Patrol. They mean something to us. They are hand in glove with our mission. You have the opportunity to go out into the world, to go up and down the highway, and to make a difference. That difference will be made by

a focus on changing behavior and by living our core values while doing so.

I often try to work a quote into my commencement address. This weekend, while meticulously waxing my wife's vehicle (maroon, I might add) while listening to country music, Tim McGraw's "Humble and Kind" song struck a chord with me. I've heard it many times, but maybe never listened to all of the lines. Of course, staying humble and kind is the expectation of you as a member of the State Patrol. But the line "Don't hold a grudge or a chip and here's why – bitterness will keep you from flying" seems appropriate today. Don't ever let anything keep you from flying, including being bitter.

Congratulations on your accomplishment. Welcome to the family – we are fortunate to have you and I am thankful to get to work with you toward our goal of making Minnesota's roads safer.



## Trooper Issac Stephens' Message

Let me begin by saying on behalf of the 67th Academy Class, thank you to all of the family, friends, loved ones, distinguished guests, and partners who have taken time out of their schedules to be here and to celebrate with us today. It is because of your support that the 23 of us are able to sit here today and take this next step in our careers as Minnesota State Troopers. We are especially honored to have Lt. Governor Flanagan, Commissioner Jacobson, leaders from our armed forces and allied agencies, along with members of the Minnesota legislature here today. The weight that your positions place on your schedules is substantial so we are honored that you chose to spend this time here with us this morning. And lastly, I would like to personally thank my fellow cadets for electing me to speak today on their behalf. This is one of the greatest honors of my life and I am beyond humbled to share this stage with you all.

On February 12th, 2023 the 23 of us were together for the first time. It would be days before we could remember each other's names, and weeks before we could pronounce them correctly. But that first Sunday evening, we all shared at least one thing in common: we were there to become Minnesota State Troopers. But this was a title that would have to be earned over the following 14 weeks.

We were promised from the beginning that we would be challenged, pushed, and stretched in ways most of us had never experienced. It was a promise that was kept. From our chaotic start at 4:30 in the morning of day one when we were face down in the snow doing countless pushups and leg raises until we pulled out of the gates of Camp Ripley for the final time just this past Friday, we most certainly were pushed physically, mentally, and emotionally to our limits. And while some of the challenges were expected, there were some surprising ones as well. Under the stress of those first few weeks, simple tasks like counting, putting our pants on correctly or remembering our left from our right suddenly seemed to be insurmountable obstacles to our success. Some of us even struggled to remember that our last names are written on the back of our sweat-



shirts and not the front. But we would slowly learn to conquer these problems as the weeks progressed, even going so far as to learn the difference between “Right Face” and “Forward Face” whether or not we had our glasses on.

But what we would come to learn over those 14 weeks goes far beyond those things. We learned how to communicate, how to work together as a team, and how to step up and lead when moments called for a leader. The number of people we have to thank for those lessons is substantial.

Sgt. Buggs, Sgt. Adrian, Trp. Jepson, Trp. Hathaway, and Trp. Boser: we owe our growth to your constant vigilance and dedication to our success. While we thought our weeks and days were long, yours were longer. You arrived before us, left after us, woke up earlier, and stayed up later just to ensure that we had every opportunity to get to this stage today. You taught us the core values of the State Patrol: respect, integrity, courage, honor, and excellence, by living them out in front of us day after day. You taught us what being a good partner looks like, and we will strive now to be the kind of partner that you hope shows up to assist you on a call. While many of us never thought in those first weeks that gratitude would one day be our primary feeling towards you

all, the truth is we cannot say “Thank you” enough for all of your work and mentorship over these last 14 weeks.

We would also like to thank Coach Janna and the rest of the coaches from the YMCA who gave their time to us. You taught us that fitness begins in the mind. You showed us all that if we conquer our minds, we can push our bodies far past the point we thought possible. You taught us that comfort is a slow death, and that the short-term pain of discipline is far favorable to the long-term pain of neglecting our health.

To our chefs, we want you to know that from day one you have been a beacon of light that we looked forward to three times a day. You went above and beyond to provide us with food that was truly exceptional. We were told from the beginning to consider our food as fuel to keep us going, but for us, every meal was a moment of hope in the day.

To the numerous instructors who taught us over the last 14 weeks, we are beyond thankful that you chose to share your time and experiences with us. No matter how long the academy seemed at times, there wasn't a single class where we weren't wishing for more time to learn, practice, or ask just one more question or go down one more rabbit trail. And to all of the unseen hands that worked in the background



so that we could focus on our training, thank you. Your quiet, selfless service helps make the State Patrol Training Academy the best law enforcement training in the state, and among the best in the country. Lastly, but most certainly not least, to my fellow cadets...congratulations! We have finally made it! The friendships we have built over the last 14 weeks will last a lifetime, and I am truly grateful to have gone through this academy with each one of you. As we take this step into a new chapter together, I want to leave you with a few final thoughts.

There is a well-known quote from the ancient Roman poet, Juvanel that in the original Latin goes, "Quis custodiet ipsos custodus" and it is often translated in two ways: "Who will watch the watchers?" and "Who will guard the guardians themselves?" I want to address both of these translations because I believe they offer two unique perspectives and questions that we should consider moving forward.

The first translation, 'Who will watch the watchers' is more commonly used to discuss the issue of who

holds to account the individuals who have been imbued with great power or authority. It is a topic that has been broadly, and at times viciously debated in our nation over the last decade and especially in the last three years, but it is a dilemma that is discussed as far back as Plato's Republic and beyond. But it is a question that is worth remembering as we take the road. "Who will be watching?"

Who will be watching when you pull over a car on 694 at 7:30 in the morning? Who will be watching when you stop an impaired driver in the dead of night miles from any kind of back up? Who will be watching when you pull in behind a vehicle of a single mother trying to change a tire in the freezing rain? Who will be watching when the opportunity to "get away" with something presents itself?

As cadets we are taught the core values of the State Patrol; respect, integrity, courage, honor, and excellence. Not only do we learn them, but we are shown the value of buying into them whole-heartedly, and for good reason, because you do not know who is

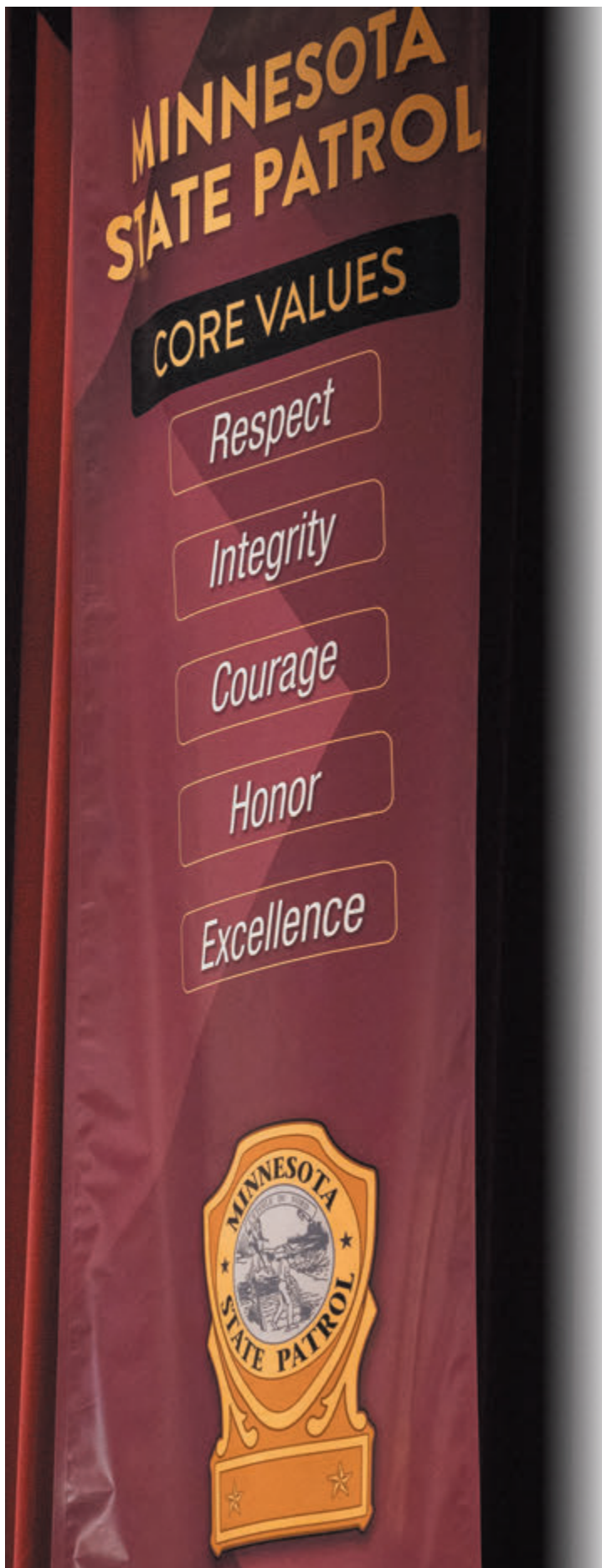


watching. You may never know who is watching when you make a traffic stop at the worst possible time for the driver, so you treat every single one of them with respect, no matter how they treat you. You may not know who is watching you when you think you are alone, so we always place our integrity and the integrity of our agency at the forefront of our actions. You may not know who is watching when you have to make a difficult arrest without backup because you are in rural Minnesota and all other agencies are understaffed, so you must be courageous and uphold the law when doing so may cost you more than just a scuff on your boots. You may not know who is watching when you sacrifice your own comfort to spare a single mother from changing a tire in the freezing rain, so you act with honor... At times there may be no one watching, and at times the whole world may be

watching. But in that moment, you may never know who is watching you, the watcher of the roads, highways, and byways of Minnesota. So remember our core values. Buy into them. Live them. Because those who do watch, will not quickly forget.

The second translation is the more literal one, "Who will guard the guardians themselves?" It is a question that we must ask ourselves rather than one that the world asks of us. Who will guard the guardians? We must guard each other. We as troopers, we as peace officers, we as Minnesota state officials, and we as a part of the law enforcement community as a whole, must guard one another. Please do not misunderstand me, I do not mean that we ought to guard each other by perpetuating a code of silence in order to cover up mistakes or poor judgment, but rather, we must guard each other by holding one another to the





highest standards.

We must guard each other by looking after one another, by being a voice of reason and calm in a chaotic scene. Being an ear that listens with kindness and empathy when the weight of our duty becomes too much. Being a student of those who have come before us and a mentor to those who will come after us. Guard one another by being willing to speak out against misconduct or declining standards, even when it seems like yours will be the only voice. Guard one another by asking questions, and always being willing to give an honest answer. Just as we hold to our core values of respect, integrity, courage, honor and excellence in our interactions with the citizens of Minnesota whom we serve, hold onto those values in your dealings with each other, even in the most heated of disagreements.

In holding to these values as we go through this career together, we guard one another from lapses in judgment and from being overwhelmed by the inevitable build-up of tensions and emotions. We guard each other from the temptation to take out our stress and frustrations with the world on each other, our families, our friends, the communities we serve and our partners. We guard each other by holding one another accountable to our core values as MN State Troopers. We must guard one another so that we may watch and guard our states roadways and the citizens who travel upon them to the highest standard. Class, as we take the roads in FTO and later in our solo patrols, and throughout the years of service to come, remember our core values and ask yourself, who is watching the watchers, and who is guarding the guardians?



# Minnesota State Patrol's 67th Graduating Class



**Trp. Oscar Aragon-Aguilar SP687**

I was born in California but raised in South Minneapolis for over 20 years. I worked in the financial field for two years. I also worked as a delivery driver for FedEx for over a year. My hobbies include working out, spending time with family, and playing sports. I am assigned to the Minneapolis station.



**Trp. James Breeden SP571**

I grew up in Nashauk, MN and graduated from the Nashauk-Keewatin High school in 2003. I attended Hibbing Community College and graduated in 2005. I was hired with the Keewatin Police Department in 2005, where I worked until my move to the Minnesota State Patrol in 2023. I am married and have three children. My family and I enjoy spending time on the water and at the golf course. We live in Hibbing and I am currently assigned to the Hibbing station.



**Trp. Zachary Caldwell SP684**

I was born and raised in Minnesota. I grew up in the Forest Lake / Chisago Lakes area. I have a bachelor's degree from the University of Northwestern, St. Paul in Biology. Prior to joining the State Patrol, I was an EMT in the north metro. I worked with refugees at Fort McCoy, WI after the Afghanistan withdrawal. I am assigned to the Mounds View station.



**Trp. Hunter Dupey SP682**

I am originally from Farmington, MN and graduated high school in 2018. In 2022 I graduated from Bemidji State University. While attending college, I worked at the Minnesota Juvenile Center as a juvenile corrections officer. In my free time I enjoy being outdoors, hunting and fishing. I joined the state patrol through the traditional program but had no previous law enforcement experience. I am assigned to the Saint Paul station.



**Trp. Corey Haddy SP681**

I am originally from Outing, MN but graduated from Anoka High School in 2015. I went to Dunwoody College thereafter to pursue a degree in Computer Networking Systems. After college, I moved to Florida for a few years before moving back to Minnesota. I worked a couple of different jobs before I found out about the LETO program. When I am not at work, I like to play with and train my dog Kona, workout, and go to different theme parks with my girlfriend Lizzy. I am currently assigned to the Minneapolis station.



**Trp. Dalton Hoffman SP676**

I am originally from Le Center, MN and graduated high school in 2018. After high school, I attended college at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, MN. After graduating high school, I began working at Kerfoot Canopy Tour outside of Henderson, MN as a zip line tour guide and worked there for about five years. I also worked in the Career Development office at Gustavus and graduated college in December of 2021. I was hired on through the LETO program and I am assigned to the Mounds View station.



**Trp. Benjamin Huebner SP556**

I am originally from Hutchinson, MN, and now live in Red Wing. I attended college at Alexandria Technical and Community College for Law Enforcement and graduated with an associate's degree. I also attended college at Minnesota State University, Mankato where I graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice. My hobbies include: weightlifting, hunting, and fishing. I am assigned the Red Wing station.



**Trp. Nicholas Kirick SP678**

I am originally from St. Joseph, MN. I have a Bachelor's Degree in Animal Science from North Dakota State University. After college, I worked in the landscaping business for nine years before beginning work as a Correctional Officer as the St. Cloud Prison. I enjoy hanging out with friends, being outside and working out. I was hired through the LETO program and I am assigned to the Hibbing station.



**Trp. Dylan Kriese SP379**

I am from Alexandria, MN currently live there with my wife. My wife and I enjoy outdoor activities and spending time on one of the many lakes in the area. I started my law enforcement career in 2019 with the Douglas County Sheriff's Office. I have been a truck driver for the MN Army National Guard for the last eight years. I am assigned to the Morris station.



**Trp. Michael Mays SP685**

I was born in Saint Paul but have moved back and forth from St. Paul and St. Louis, MO over the course of my life. Prior to the Minnesota State Patrol, I was a police officer with Minneapolis for over ten years. Prior to being sworn, I worked as a Minneapolis Community Service Officer. I have six children with my wife. My hobbies include movies with my family and traveling to different ice cream shops with my wife. I am assigned to the Minneapolis station.



**Trp. John Peterson SP691**

I am originally from Browerville, MN. I enlisted in the Air Force, active duty, just after high school and served as a munitions system specialist for twenty one and a half years. I am married to my beautiful wife, Elaine and proud father of three girls; Sophia, Penelope, and Talia. I was hired through the LETO program and give credit to my cousin, Trooper Isaiah Godding, for pushing me to apply. I am assigned to the Hibbing station.



**Trp. Casey Roisland SP692**

I grew up in Oklee, MN. I worked in customer service for over ten years before going back to college for law enforcement. I worked as a deputy sheriff for seven years before joining the Minnesota State Patrol. My wife Julie and I have three kids; Lindsey, Eric and Gavin. We enjoy camping, kayaking and snowmobiling. I am assigned to the Hallock station.



**Trp. Philip Schlee SP690**

I am originally Elkton, MN. I have been married to my wife Stephanie since 2013. We have two children, Payton and Layla. We all enjoy spending time outdoors and traveling together. I graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in History with the intent to become a teacher. The path to be a teacher changed over time as my interest in the state patrol grew. I had the privilege of going through the LETO program. My family is proud to be part of the Minnesota State Patrol family. We're excited to make my assigned station in Marshall, MN, home.



**Trp. Cody Schyma SP688**

I am originally from Monticello, MN. I have been married to my wife, Paige, since 2021, and we have one son named Theodore. As a family, we enjoy spending our free time fishing and trying new restaurants. Our favorite restaurant is The Buff, in Big Lake, MN. Before the MN State Patrol, I worked for Sherburne County Sheriff's Office for six years. I joined the state patrol to focus on traffic safety. I am assigned to the Minneapolis station.



**Trp. Austin Smith SP529**

I am originally from Norwood Young America, MN. I now reside in Bemidji, MN. I graduated High school in 2020 and then went to college where I got my two year degree in electrical powerline work. I have worked for my dad at our family owned gas station. I also did landscaping for three years before being hired with the State Patrol through the LETO program. I am assigned to the Bemidji station.



**Trp. Ian Smith SP689**

I am originally from Decorah, Iowa, but moved to the Twin Cities for college in 2018. I have a bachelor of arts degree from Hamline University and completed my skills program at Hennepin Tech. Previously, I worked for the Washington County Sheriff's Office as a Water Patrol Deputy. I am married to my wife Gabrielle. Outside of work, I enjoy spending time with my wife and family, fishing, being outdoors, reading, and playing guitar. I am assigned to the Rochester station, which is where we now live.



**Trp. Issac Stephens SP387**

I am originally from Sterling, KS. I moved to Minnesota in 2017 and currently reside in St. Paul with my two year old son, Oliver. I completed my Bachelor's degree in Biblical and Theological Studies at Oklahoma Wesleyan University and attended Tulsa Welding School shortly afterwards. Prior to joining the State Patrol, I worked as a welder in the aerospace industry building engine and exhaust parts for a variety of aircraft. I joined the State Patrol through the LETO program. I am assigned to the Mounds View station.



**Trp. Timothy Vaagenes Jr SP683**

I am originally from Circle Pines, MN, but now live in Pine City. I am married to a MN State Trooper and we have a son and daughter. We enjoy spending our free time on our pontoon, camping and family weekend barbeque's. I have a Bachelor's Degree from Metropolitan State University with a major in law enforcement and a minor in criminal justice. Before joining the state patrol, I was a correctional officer for eight years and a sheriff's deputy for nine years. I am currently assigned to the Hinckley station.



# “SPLIT ROCK 67TH”



**Trp. Mark Vande Steeg SP680**

I am originally from Boca Raton, FL. I recently relocated back to Minnesota from Tampa, FL for the opportunity to join the MN State Patrol LETO program and be closer to my family. I have a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration. Prior to joining the Patrol, I worked in corporate expansion. I enjoy many outdoor activities when not at work. I am assigned to the West Metro.



**Trp. Jack Williams SP686**

I am originally from Hastings, MN and graduated from high school in 2018. I attended college at Concordia University in Nebraska. I was also a member of the men's golf team. I graduated with my Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice in 2022. I enjoy spending my free time fishing, golfing, and spending time at our cabin in Wisconsin in my free time. I was hired through the LETO program and I am assigned to the Virginia station.



**Trp. Alexander Wright SP573**

I am originally from White Bear Lake, MN. I enjoy hunting, fishing, and golfing. I graduated from Hill Murray High School. I obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration and Economics from the University of River Falls in 2021. Before joining the State Patrol, I was an account representative for State Farm. The LETO program opened up applications in 2022, and I was able to begin my career in law enforcement. I am stationed in the West Metro.

The State Patrol's Core Values

**RESPECT  
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HONOR  
EXCELLENCE**

Mission Statement

*Protect and serve all people in the state through assistance, education, and enforcement; provide support to allied agencies; and provide for the safe, efficient movement of traffic on Minnesota's roadways.*



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# HELP 'DONUT BOY' SHATTER A WORLD RECORD!

**T** Tyler Carach AKA: the Donut Boy has traveled the country thanking Law Enforcement Officers for over half his life. He has made it his mission to give as many Officers donuts as possible. I first met him in 2016 at Police week in D.C. where he was feverishly handing out awesome donuts and thanking each of us. I have kept in touch with him and his mom since then as they travel the country on their mission. He is turning 16 this November and wants to break the current world record of the largest collection of Police patches. Let's help him shatter the current world record of 10,050 that has been held in the UK since 2009.

Patches can be mailed to: Tyler Carach PO BOX 553 Atmore, AL 36504 OR relayed to SP333 at ISS by October 21, 2023 and I will send them all at once.

More information can be obtained by scanning the QR code with your cell phone or on Facebook "Donut Boy attempts to break world record". Questions can be sent to him at [donutpoliceofficer@gmail.com](mailto:donutpoliceofficer@gmail.com). ♦

Photos courtesy of: Sgt. Kyle Toavs (Golden Valley, MN PD), Officer Dave Groth (retired Plymouth, MN PD) and T/ Sgt. Wade Erickson, T/ Sgt. Wade Erickson and spouse Michelle Erickson



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# CELEBRATING VALOR:

## Trooper Megan Boser Receives the 2023 MPPOA Officer of the Year Award

**A**midst the resonating applause and camaraderie of the 101st annual convention, a remarkable moment unfurled on June 10, 2023. Trooper Megan Boser emerged as a shining embodiment of dedication and courage. In a historic stride, she secured her place as the first female recipient and the second trooper ever to be honored with the esteemed MPPOA (Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association) Officer of the Year award, a distinction she richly deserved.

Trooper Boser's achievement resonates beyond the accolade itself. Her name now echoes alongside those who have exemplified unparalleled bravery and unwavering commitment to safeguarding the lives of citizens and fellow officers. Her journey to this point has been marked by resolute determination and a steadfast heart, traits that were on full display as she was bestowed this prestigious recognition.

The honor was presented by none other than Arik Matson, a previous "Officer of the Year," a poignant passing of the torch from one exemplar of valor to another. Trooper Boser's

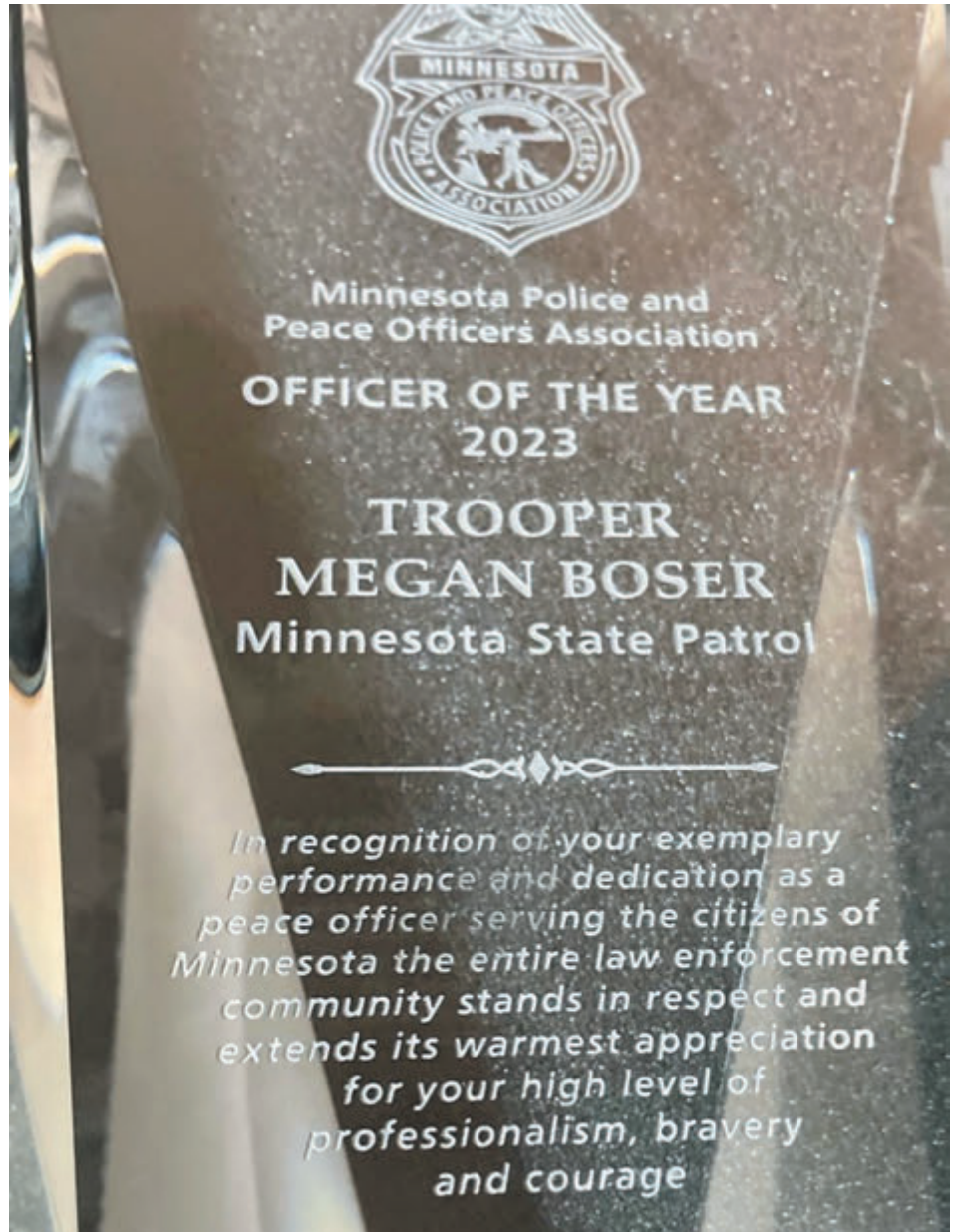


Department of Public Safety Commissioner Bob Jacobson and Trooper Megan Boser

resolute dedication to protecting her comrades and the residents of Minnesota is a testament to the vital role law enforcement plays in maintaining the fabric of our society.

Trooper Boser's valor extends beyond words; it is woven into the fabric of her actions. By her unswerving determination, she not only averted potential loss of life but also put a decisive end to a perilous criminal operation. Her actions were a testament to the finest qualities a law enforcement officer can possess – swift thinking, dauntless action, and unwavering devotion to the safety and welfare of all.

As we stand in admiration of Trooper Megan Boser's extraordinary achievement, we also pause to reflect on the challenges that law enforcement officers encounter daily. The 2023 MPPOA Officer of The Year Award is not merely a recognition; it is a resounding acknowledgment of the sacrifices and dedication that define the lives of those who stand guard against danger. ♦



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# LEGIONVILLE

## School Safety Patrol Training Center

**S**chool safety patrols were first created more than 100 years ago in Minnesota. The idea originated Feb. 21, 1921, with Sister Carmela of the Cathedral School in St. Paul. That's when the first patrolmen were stationed at the intersection of Kellogg Boulevard and Summit Avenue in St. Paul. In 1922, the city of St. Paul made it part of the school system and the St. Paul Police Department. It was also adopted as a statewide program by the Minnesota Highway Patrol.

In 1935, Earle Brown, the first chief of the Minnesota Highway Patrol, asked the Minnesota American Legion to help create a uniform program of training and support. The next year, the American Legion started a statewide program held at the Crow Wing County Fairgrounds in Brainerd, with two years at Camp Ripley, until 1956. The Training Center was staffed by members of the Minnesota Highway Patrol, qualified legionnaires and support staff.

In 1948, the Minnesota American Legion set up a committee to raise funds to construct a permanent training center for the school patrol. Six years later, in 1954, the Parker family donated the original 560-acre site on North Long Lake. A later

addition of land raised the total to 610 acres with 1,500 feet of shoreline beach. The property contained some buildings, including a large barn which was converted to an all-purpose unit of classrooms, office, canteen, first aid room, a large theatre. A modern dining hall, seven dormitories, and two cabins for staff have been since been built creating the modern Legionville School Safety Patrol Training Center.

Each summer, kids between the ages of 8-13 attend Legionville and are sponsored by an organization in his or her hometown. The typical patroller is a student entering fourth, fifth, or sixth grade. The patrollers are selected to represent their school at Legionville by the school patrol advisor of their school and local personnel.





The State Patrol has been very active in the program focused on crossing guard patrol, pedestrian safety, bike safety and internet and cell phone safety. Campers are also taught first aid, swimming, canoeing and fishing. The State Patrol helicopter flies in for a presentation for each session, which is one of the kid's favorite memories.

The Troopers Association donated \$5,000 which was used to purchase a waterslide, two paddle boats, four paddle boards and other sports equipment needed for their recreational time. Thank you to the Troopers Association for the donation and helping keep the kids entertained in an active way while they learn how to keep themselves and others safe.

School safety patrols were first created more than 100 years ago in Minnesota. The idea originated Feb. 21, 1921, with Sister Carmela of the Cathedral School in St. Paul. That's when the first patrolmen were stationed at the intersection of Kellogg Boulevard and Summit Avenue in St. Paul. In 1922, the city of St. Paul made it part of the school system and the St. Paul Police Department. It was also adopted as a statewide program by the Minnesota Highway Patrol.

In 1935, Earle Brown, the first chief of the Minnesota Highway Patrol, asked the Minnesota American Legion to help create a uniform program of training and support. The next year, the American Legion started a statewide program held at the Crow Wing County Fairgrounds in Brainerd, with two years at Camp Ripley, until 1956. The Training Center was staffed by members of the Minnesota Highway Patrol, qualified legionnaires and support staff.

In 1948, the Minnesota American Legion set up a committee to raise funds to construct a permanent training center for the school patrol. Six years later, in 1954, the Parker family donated the original 560-acre site on North Long Lake. A later addition of land raised the total to 610 acres with 1,500 feet of shoreline beach. The property contained some buildings, including a large barn which was converted to an all-purpose unit of classrooms, office, canteen, first aid room, a large theatre. A modern dining hall, seven dormitories, and two cabins for staff have been since been built creating the modern Legionville School Safety Patrol Training Center.

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*continued on page 35*

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*continued from page 33*

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Sergeant Troy Christianson



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**Daryl Voller**

# PLANES, TRAINS, **AND** UNUSUAL ENCOUNTERS



**O**n June 16 at approximately 1259 hours, RCO Jordan Weidenhaft (RTMC) fielded a call reporting a small single engine aircraft had landed on Isth 35 northbound near the Culkin rest area. The pilot appeared to be fine with no need for medical assistance. The aircraft experienced

engine failure and the private pilot opted to land the plane on the interstate. RCO Weidenhaft managed the event and dispatched all appropriate resources including Trp. Bronson Wehr (2700).



## IN LOVING MEMORY 1971-2023

**To all current and retired members,**

**O**n behalf of our family, I want to express a sincere thank you. Thank you to everyone who supported Tammy and I

for 2.5 years while she battled her cancer. Thank you to everyone who has surrounded our family with love and support after she passed away on August 18th. She was so proud to be part of the State Patrol family and member

of Backing the Blue Line, who knew her as "Mrs.159".

In times like these, words can sometimes be inadequate for the gratitude we feel from each and everyone of you. Please know that your generosity will never be forgotten.

Sincerely,

Aaron Churness and family.



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# WHAT'S NEW FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT...

Mark Schneider  
LELS General Counsel

## To Toke or Not to Toke... That is the Question

Effective August 1, 2023, it became legal for individuals 21-years-of-age and older to possess cannabis paraphernalia, 2 ounces or less of adult use cannabis flower in a public place; and 2 pounds or less of adult use cannabis flower in the individual's private residence. *See, Minn. Stat. §342.09(9)(1)*. However, federal law prohibits the possession or use of marijuana as it is considered a Schedule 1 controlled substance. *21 U.S.C. Section 812*. Likewise, the policies of many law enforcement/public safety agencies prohibit the use of controlled substances; in addition to being under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance while on duty. Moreover, those policies usually require an employee to follow the constitution, statutes and rules of federal and state governments.

As a public safety employee, you should not use or possess marijuana notwithstanding the legalization of marijuana in Minnesota. Violation of federal law would trigger a review of the use or possession of marijuana in violation of an agency's or public employer's applicable policy. Furthermore, a violation of federal law would trigger an investigation to review whether you violated any applicable law, statute or rule.

Even attending a party where others are smoking marijuana could become problematic for licensed peace officers and other public safety employees in the event their employer obtains a blood or urine sample to determine whether the employee has ingested or used various drugs. As we know, THC remains in a person's bloodstream for up to

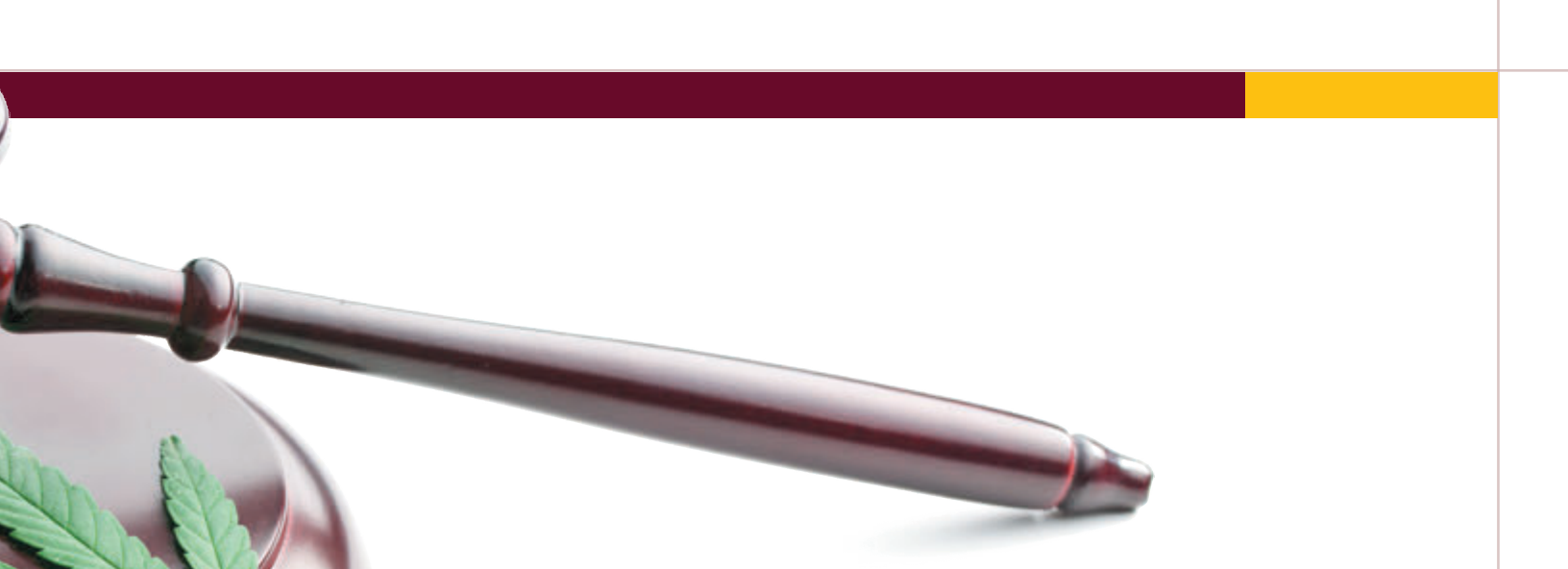
*“As we know, THC remains in a person's bloodstream for up to 30 days or more. Even secondhand smoke from marijuana can trigger a positive test result.”*

30 days or more. Even secondhand smoke from marijuana can trigger a positive test result.

If you are involved in a critical incident, accident or officer involved shooting, it is standard practice for the investigating agency to request a sample of your blood for testing. Many agency and public employer policies also require an employee to provide a sample of their blood/urine for testing in the event they are involved in a crash while on duty or involved in a critical incident.

You should consult with your attorney prior to providing a blood/urine sample, whether involved in a crash, internal investigation or officer involved shooting/critical incident, to determine whether a blood/urine sample should be provided and the consequences if one is not provided.





The answer to the question – To Take or Not to Take – is a simple No. Under current policies and federal law, use or possession of marijuana is prohibited or illegal. Therefore, should you use or possess marijuana even within the limits provided by Minnesota law, you may still be subject to an internal affairs or other investigation.

### POST Board Reporting Obligations of Licensees

On May 30, 2023, new POST Board Rules became effective concerning conduct that occurs on or after June 1, 2023. One of the new Rules shortened the time period for a licensee to report any situation that would trigger disciplinary action by the POST Board. Prior to the change to the rule, a licensee had ninety (90) days to report to the board and chief law enforcement officer any incident which “the licensee reasonably believes would constitute grounds for disciplinary action under any of the board’s regulatory provisions.” Minn. R. 6700.1610, Subp. 2. A licensee is now required to report such incident or conduct to the board and chief law enforcement officer (CLEO) within **ten (10) days** “after learning of the reportable event.” Minn. R. 6710.1600, Subp. 3. Prior to the rule change, the POST Board/Complaint Investigation Committee interpreted the rule that an officer must self-report the conduct when their agency sustains an internal affairs complaint or when an officer is arrested or charged with a criminal act contrary to the Standards of Conduct. See, Minn. R. 6700.1600.

To complicate matters, the new POST Board Rules were amended to remove the requirement for a conviction in order to trigger the self-report obligation or POST Board discipline. At the same time, the rules broadened the standard

from a conviction to “engage in” prohibited conduct related to law enforcement authority or other misconduct. As a result, licensees must report an incident or conduct that the officer “engaged in” that the officer reasonably believes would constitute grounds for discipline by the POST Board. See *Summary—New Standards of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officers*, provided by the Board of Peace Officers Standards and Training.

The ambiguity of “engaged in” and “reasonably believes” have not been further defined or limited. Therefore, licensed peace officers are put in a difficult position in terms of what to report, when to report or if they must report conduct or an incident to the POST Board. There are many legal and other implications, including self-incrimination, due process and other issues. While it remains somewhat clear that if an IA complaint is sustained or a licensed peace officer is arrested or charged with a criminal act, the ten (10) day self-reporting

obligation would be triggered at that point. A reporting obligation exists when the conduct occurs or when the allegation is made depending on whether the officer reasonably believed he or she engaged in such prohibited conduct.

As a result, you should consult with your attorney in order to discuss any incidents you are involved in to determine whether the reporting obligation to the POST Board has been triggered and how the notice will be provided to the POST Board. We are happy to assist you in any way to answer any questions regarding this process. I understand the POST Board is reviewing what their expectations are regarding officer obligations under the new rules. As a result, please look for future updates. ♦

**Thank you and stay safe.**

*“If you are involved in a critical incident, accident or officer involved shooting, it is standard practice for the investigating agency to request a sample of your blood for testing.”*

# A VISIT WITH CONRAD URKE

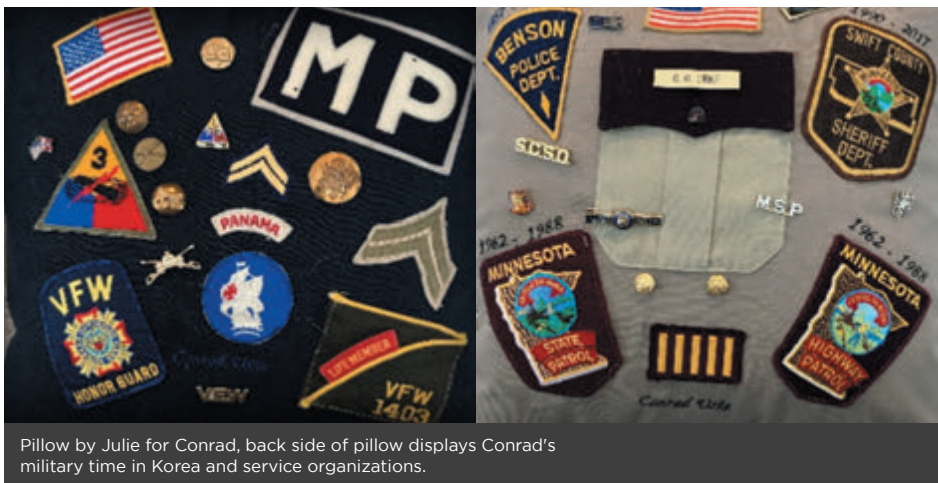
## Retired SP 335

On Saturday September 16, 2023 while attending a funeral in Willmar I had a conversation with a couple from Benson, MN. They surprised me with information about their friend Conrad Urke, MSP classmate from the class of 1962. They advised me that Conrad was confined to the Knute Nelson Memory Care facility, a memory care unit in Alexandria and provided me with the phone number for Julie Urke, Conrad's daughter. A conversation with her made it clear I needed to see Conrad soon. I called Louie Kamrowski in Fergus Falls, another 1962 classmate. We made arrangements to visit Conrad and his daughter the following Tuesday. It is sad to see what age sometimes does to us but we are grateful for the 92 years Conrad and his family gave to us.



Conrad Urke with his daughter Julie Urke.


An interesting note about Conrad during the patrol class: Conrad's wife gave birth to twins, a boy and a girl. When Conrad asked if he could be excused to go see his family, he was told he could but would not be able to return. Wisely he waited until Saturday. Ken Kammen SP 18



Pillow by Julie for Conrad, back side of pillow displays Conrad's military time in Korea and service organizations.



Louie Kamrowski SP 315, Conrad Urke SP 335, and Ken Kammen SP 18, all from class of 1962.







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