



# SCDPS HIGHLIGHTS

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY NEWS

PROTECTING. EDUCATING. SERVING.

2021 | JULY

## SCDPS LAUNCHES SPECIALIZED TEAMS TO CURB AGGRESSIVE DRIVING, FOCUS ON DATA-DRIVEN ENFORCEMENT



The S.C. Department of Public Safety announced the creation of new specialized teams to help curb increasing trends of aggressive driving.

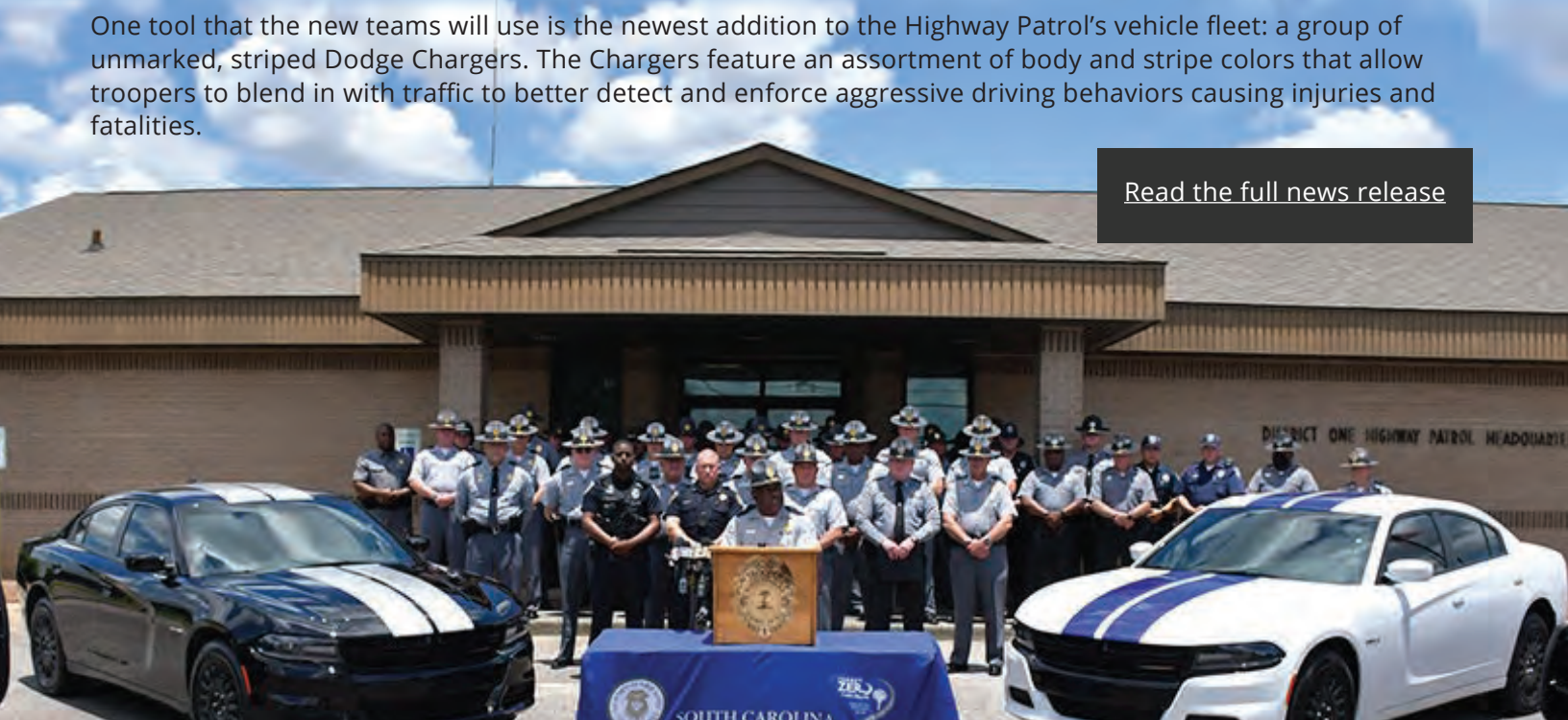
The new Area Coordinated Enforcement (ACE) Teams, announced June 30, include Highway Patrol troopers and officers from the State Transport Police. The teams were developed to provide assistance to the seven Highway Patrol Troops with a goal toward improving response times in areas of high call volumes and to reduce serious injury and fatal

collisions statewide. Working with the S.C. Department of Transportation, SCDPS uses its long-range Strategic Highway Safety Plan to guide enforcement efforts to areas most impacted by fatalities and collisions as well as in-house real-time dashboards and heat maps to show where those collisions are occurring and where additional enforcement is needed.

“During the past year, South Carolina has followed national trends of increased highway collisions, injuries, and fatalities,” SCDPS Director Robert Woods, IV said. “We also have seen a disturbing increase in aggressive driving behaviors, including speeds of over 100 mph, tailgating, drunken or drugged driving and road rage — all of which are unacceptable.”

One tool that the new teams will use is the newest addition to the Highway Patrol’s vehicle fleet: a group of unmarked, striped Dodge Chargers. The Chargers feature an assortment of body and stripe colors that allow troopers to blend in with traffic to better detect and enforce aggressive driving behaviors causing injuries and fatalities.

[Read the full news release](#)





MISS SOMETHING ON THE NEWS BREAK?

Check out the Archives page!

- SCDPS calendar (submit a DPS calendar event to “DPS Web Team”);
- Past issues of the newsletter
- State holiday calendar
- Old video content

Read News Break Today!

Do you have an upcoming event or news item for SCDPS Highlights or SCDPS News Break?

Contact: Teddy Kulmala TheodoreKulmala@scdps.gov



A MESSAGE FROM DIRECTOR WOODS

I recently had a chance to submit my column for the SC Trooper Magazine. And the opening of my message was “what a difference a year makes.” I want to reiterate those words here. I feel like we have traveled many miles since navigating around the restrictions we faced during COVID-19, and there is much to be optimistic about as we head into the second half of the year.

On July 27th, employees received the SCDPS Climate Survey, which is an opportunity for us to take a pause and collectively assess where we are as an agency and where we are headed. You are the key to our success, and I hope you will take a few minutes to answer candidly about issues that affect us all. The survey is one more step toward ensuring that your voices are heard as we continue to make meaningful change in the way we do business.

In this newsletter, you will see information about the recent Career Path Plan rollout as well as the implementation of the ACE (Area Coordinated Enforcement) teams, new Dodge Chargers and changes and updates to the Emergency Operations Center in preparation for hurricane season. There are also features about our amazing employees – from KUDOS to a story about a trooper celebrating 50 years in uniform.

Other areas focus on an effort to digitize years of paper files that had been stored in the Warehouse and Headquarters. This effort, coupled with SmartCOP, and using a data-driven approach to enforcement are all part of a cohesive path leading our agency into a more progressive, 21st century policing organization.

The SC Highway Patrol also recently announced organizational changes including the appointment of Lt. Col. John T. Manley as Deputy Commander of Operations within SCHP. Lt. Col. Manley has been a leader in helping us make the transition to SmartCOP and data-driven policing, and he will now oversee field enforcement and the implementation of this new path toward fatality reduction. Additionally, SCHP announced other organizational changes that will make us more efficient, compressing headquarters staffing and sending positions back to the field or restructuring units to operate more efficiently.

Thank you for all that you do. Your skills are the backbone of our organization and you drive and lead these innovations in our department. I want us to always keep our mission at the center of all that we do. The public is depending upon us to be good stewards of our budget and apply every resource where it is needed the most and that is in the area of public safety.

I hope all of you are enjoying some time off with your families this summer. I urge our troopers and officers to consider your personal safety on the roads as motorists enjoy the waning days of summer.



Robert G. Woods, IV

GENERAL ASSEMBLY GIVES STATE PAY RAISE; SCDPS CAREER PATH PLAN RECEIVES APPROVAL

SCDPS personnel received welcome news as the General Assembly finalized its budget for this fiscal year. Most state employees received a 2.5 percent general increase. In addition, SCDPS’ proposed law enforcement Career Path Plan was approved and signed by Governor McMaster, effective July 2, 2021.

The Career Path Plan takes into account the 2.5 percent general increase, and the pay adjustment is applicable to all SCDPS law enforcement classifications. That means an increase in the starting salary for troopers and officers and pay adjustment at each rank. The pay plan includes additional step increases within the ranks of Lance Corporal and Master Trooper.

“We know that our greatest challenge right now is in the area of personnel,” said SCDPS Director Robert G. Woods, IV. “As our state has suffered an increase in collision-related fatalities, we have pulled personnel from existing resources and created stopgap measures to enhance manpower, but ultimately, we must attract, recruit and hire more personnel.”

The new trooper/officer starting salary will increase from \$39,038 to \$44,075. Also included in the Career Path Plan is a new incentive to attract more pre-certified South Carolina-trained officers. SCDPS is now offering seasoned officers with five or more years of Class 1 South Carolina-certified law enforcement experience to join the department at the rank of Lance Corporal.



South Carolina Department of Public Safety Law Enforcement Officer Career Path - Effective July 2, 2021

CLASS CODE & BAND	STATE TITLE	RANK	CURRENT SALARY (Base Pay)	COMMENTS	REQUIREMENTS	SALARY* (Base Pay)
JC10/04	Law Enforcement Officer I	Trooper/Officer Trainee* (Non-Certified; Certified Candidates with less than 3 years of active law enforcement experience & Out of State Candidates)	\$39,038	After Graduation from CJA 0% increase; internal rank change to Trooper/Officer	High School Diploma or GED/ 21 years of age	\$44,075
JC10/04	Law Enforcement Officer I	Trooper/Officer Trainee* (Prior to DPS hire Certified with 3 years or more active law enforcement experience in South Carolina) ENTRY LEVEL	\$42,942	After training 0% increase; internal rank change to Trooper 1st Class/Officer 1st Class	High School Diploma or GED/ 21 years of age	\$46,125
JC20/05	Law Enforcement Officer II	Trooper 1st Class/Officer 1st Class	\$42,942		Serve 3 years as Trooper/Officer	\$46,125
JC20/05	Law Enforcement Officer II	Lance Corporal	\$47,235		5 Years SC Certified	\$49,385
JC20/05	Law Enforcement Officer II	Lance Corporal (+3 Years)	\$47,235		Serve 3 years as Lance Corporal	\$51,215
JC20/05	Law Enforcement Officer II	Master Trooper/Officer	\$50,736	Master Trooper/Officer rank created July 2, 2019	Serve 10 years (5-years SCDPS/5 years SC Certified)	\$53,045
JC20/05	Law Enforcement Officer II	Master Trooper/Officer (+3 Years)	\$50,736		Serve 3 years as Master Trooper/ Officer	\$55,697
JC20/05	Law Enforcement Officer II	Master Trooper/Officer (+5 Years)	\$50,736		Serve 5 years as Master Trooper/ Officer	\$58,349
Supervisory ranks Corporal through Lieutenant are awarded through a promotional process. Positions must be posted and applicants are interviewed and tested.						
JC30/06	Law Enforcement Officer III	Corporal	\$54,236		Promotional Process	\$62,434
JC30/06	Law Enforcement Officer III	Sergeant	\$61,083		Promotional Process	\$66,804
JC30/06	Law Enforcement Officer III	First Sergeant	\$65,822		Promotional Process	\$71,480
JC40/07	Law Enforcement Officer IV	Lieutenant	\$70,561		Promotional Process	\$76,177
JC50/08	Law Enforcement Officer V	Captain	\$82,146		Appointed by Agency Director	\$87,567
JC50/08	Law Enforcement Officer V	Major	\$90,571		Appointed by Agency Director	\$96,548
AH55/09	Program Manager II	Lt. Colonel/Chief	N/A	Determined by Director	Appointed by Agency Director	
UA03/00	Deputy Director	Colonel	N/A	Determined by Director	Appointed by Agency Director	

\* Includes a legislated 2.5% general pay increase.





## 30-YEAR SCHP VETERAN PROMOTED TO LIEUTENANT COLONEL

By Teddy Kulmala



**Lt. Colonel, J. T. Manley**

Manley began his career in Berkeley County in 1991, transferring to Horry County in Troop Five in 1994. He was promoted to Corporal in Troop Seven, Orangeburg, in 2005. Manley later was promoted to Sergeant in Orangeburg and Calhoun counties in 2008 and then to First Sergeant in Aiken in 2010. In 2013, he was promoted to Lieutenant in Troop Six and then to Captain of Troop Six a year later. He was transferred to Troop One as Captain in 2018 and, most recently, was promoted to Major in Field Operations in June 2019.

The South Carolina Department of Public Safety has promoted John Travis Manley to Lieutenant Colonel of the South Carolina Highway Patrol. In his new role as Deputy Commander of Operations, Manley will oversee the field majors and Troop Operations.

Manley, who has served with the Highway Patrol since August 1991, was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel on June 29. He previously held the position of Major in Field Operations and before that was Commander of Troop One (Columbia) and previously Troop Six (Charleston).

“Lieutenant Colonel Manley has invested 30 years and his entire career in serving the South Carolina Highway Patrol,” said SCHP Colonel Chris Williamson. “He has excelled in managing field operations as well as in an administrative capacity, where he has done an outstanding job of overseeing the agency’s transition to SmartCOP, which is our new Field Base Reporting and Records Management software.

Manley began his career in Berkeley County in 1991, transferring to Horry County in Troop Five in 1994. He was promoted to Corporal in Troop Seven,

## PATTERSON PROMOTED TO MAJOR, SHELTON BECOMES TROOP ONE CAPTAIN



**Major E. Patterson**

Major Patterson has served as the commanding officer of Troop One since June 2, 2019.

Everick Patterson, who was formerly captain of Troop One, has been appointed to the rank of Major to fill the vacancy being created by the promotion of Lt. Col. Manley. Major Patterson is a 24-year veteran of the Highway Patrol who has demonstrated exceptional leadership abilities in enforcement and support operations.



**Captain C. M. Shelton**

majority of his tenure in Troop One.

Captain Christopher M. Shelton is being laterally transferred from the SCDPS Office of Strategic Services, Accreditation, Policy and Inspections (OSAPI) to serve as the new Troop One Commander, filling the vacancy created by the promotion of Major Patterson. In his outstanding 29-year career with the Highway Patrol, Captain Shelton spent the

## SCHP ANNOUNCES REORGANIZATION, PROMOTIONS

By Teddy Kulmala

The S.C. Highway Patrol announced a reorganization within the division that includes dissolving some units and expanding field operations.

In a June 29 memo to employees, Col. Christopher Williamson explained that the Target Zero Teams will be dissolved as part of the plan, the goal of which is to streamline units and concentrate resources where they are needed most.

“Our primary goal is to ensure that the Troops have adequate resources to manage the increase in calls for service and collisions and respond to the surge in travel and aggressive driving behaviors we have experienced since COVID-19 restrictions were lifted,” Williamson wrote.

Members of the existing Target Zero Teams will be reassigned to either serve as members of the Safety Improvement Team or return to field Troops as enforcement troopers. They also may be assigned to one of the newly-created Area Coordinated Enforcement — or, ACE — Teams. The teams were developed to provide assistance to the seven Highway Patrol Troops to improve response times in areas of high call volumes

and reduce serious injury and fatal collisions statewide. SCDPS will use its long-range Strategic Highway Safety Plan to guide enforcement efforts to areas most impacted by fatalities and collisions as well as in-house real-time dashboards and heat maps to show where those collisions are occurring and where additional enforcement is needed.

The functions of Troop 11 will now reside in Troop 10. The Insurance Enforcement Unit will now be housed in Troop 8, which will continue to house the Safety Improvement Team.

As part of the reorganization, Lt. Col. J.T. Manley was promoted from the rank of Major to be the Deputy Commander of Operations, overseeing field majors and Troop Operations.

“We firmly believe that these changes, combined with our use of data to guide enforcement efforts, will impact highway collisions and fatalities and better serve you — our dedicated and hardworking troopers,” Williamson said.



SCHP Col. Chris Williamson discusses the use of new, unmarked vehicles to reduce highway fatalities.

[Watch video](#)



## MAJOR UPGRADE BRINGS EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER INTO THE DIGITAL AGE

By *Teddy Kulmala*

The Department of Public Safety's Emergency Operations Center underwent a major upgrade that not only brought it into the digital age, but also allows emergency officials to carry out their operations from Blythewood instead of traveling to the S.C. Emergency Management Division.

The new-and-improved EOC on the basement level of Headquarters was unveiled in June, just in time for the annual hurricane lane reversal exercise. The focal point of the upgrades are the 16 television screens on the main wall, which formerly had just three projector screens and now can provide emergency officials with 16 separate feeds or four large feeds. The screens can show everything from weather maps to traffic cameras to live television. Renovations to the adjoining situation room, including a large flat-screen television, were included in the upgrades.

Plans for the upgrades got underway in 2020, when officials realized that COVID-19 guidelines would not allow all of the necessary players to operate out of the Emergency Management Division in West Columbia, according to Captain Christian Logdon of the Highway Patrol's Emergency Management Unit.

"We started looking back at our Emergency Operations Center, which needed updating and refreshing on some of the technology," Logdon said. "We reached out and said, 'What can we do better? What can we improve? And how can we get it done?' That was kind of the catalyst that started us with improving our EOC and making it more capable and more functional for our staff."

It had been 10 years since the center's last major upgrade, Logdon said. The most recent upgrades and renovations were made possible by COVID-19 grant funding.

If there is a major event, like a hurricane, it won't be just SCDPS personnel working in the EOC, Logdon said. The State Law Enforcement Division, the Department of Transportation, the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Probation, Parole and Pardon Services all would be working at the EOC in Blythewood.



[Watch the Interview](#)

## STP #SAFEDRIVE ENFORCEMENT

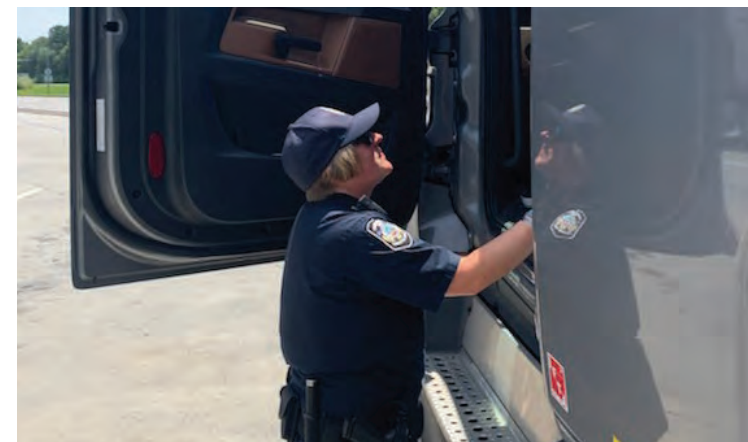
A special shout-out to our South Carolina State Transport Police officers for working hard during the #SafeDRIVE enforcement and education period along I-95 June 22-24. #SafeDRIVE is a multi-state event, where South Carolina partners with other law enforcement agencies from Virginia, Florida and Alabama. STP officers focused on Commercial Motor Vehicle safety, specifically monitoring dangerous and distracted driver behaviors, vehicle compliance checks and the enforcement of state and federal laws governing commercial motor vehicles.



*M/Officer T. Starling*



*Officer C. Austin*



*Corporal J. Cooper*

## BPS K9 RE-UNITED WITH HANDLER AT STATE HOUSE



*Joseph Graves, Cane and BPS L/Cpl. Jess Driggers*

A sweet reunion took place at the State House as a retired Bureau of Protective Services (BPS) bomb dog was reunited with his former Marine handler, Joseph Graves. The last time they saw each other was during their deployment in Afghanistan in 2013. Graves says he searched for his K-9 pal for more than a year but had no success after being separated immediately after deployment.

Little did he know, Cane was retiring from military service and was being adopted by the South Carolina BPS, where he served with the agency for more than six years before retiring in 2020. This reunion was made possible thanks to Legislative Council staff member, Andrea Sparks, who was able to locate Graves on social media. Thanks to her commitment, she was able to bring the two together after more than seven years apart. The event also brought together both of Cane's handlers, including Graves, and BPS Lance Corporal Jess Driggers.



## 2021 FALLEN TROOPER SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE

On April 30, 2021, the South Carolina Highway Patrol remembered the 51 patrolmen and troopers who have given their lives in service to their state. The 2020 service was not held due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to remembering our fallen troopers, SCDPS unveiled memorial walls in our headquarters that honor the service and sacrifice of these fallen troopers and patrolmen. The ceremony has been held each year since 2003 to remember the fallen troopers. In 2012, SCDPS placed the new Highway Patrol Memorial Wall on the grounds at Blythewood Headquarters.



Watch the Service

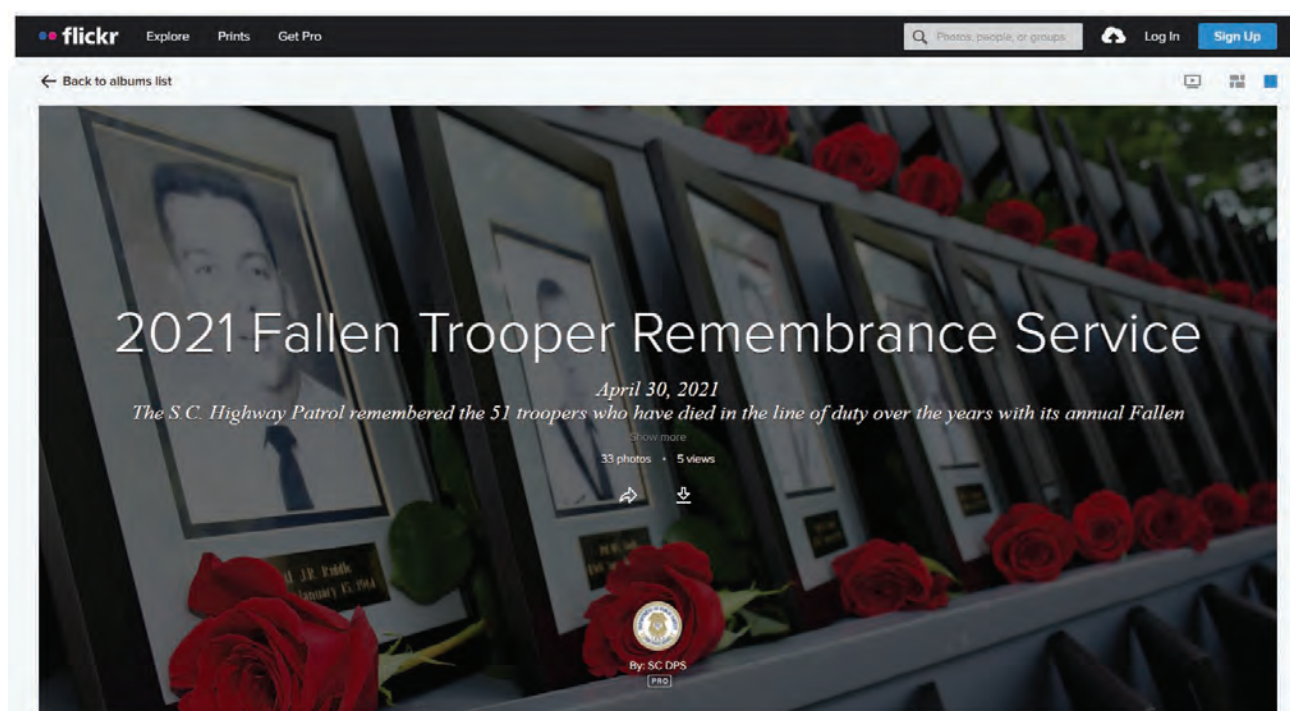


## MEMORIAL WALLS HONOR FALLEN STATE TROOPERS AND PATROLMEN

The S.C. Department of Public Safety has unveiled two memorial walls that honor the 51 patrolmen and state troopers who died in the line of duty while serving the state.

The walls, located in the main lobby and in the basement level hallway at SCDPS headquarters, were completed in December 2020 and dedicated April 30, 2021 as part of the Fallen Trooper Service of Remembrance. Each wall bears a photo of each of the 51 troopers and patrolmen killed in the line of duty in South Carolina.

"As you know, this display has tremendous significance for the families of our fallen troopers, but it also hits close to home for the surviving comrades of those 51 men who lost their lives while serving our state," Col. Christopher Williamson, Commander of the Highway Patrol, said in a memo to employees. "These memorials, like the granite one in front of our Headquarters Building, are a solemn reminder of the tremendous sacrifice of service, which must never be forgotten or overlooked."





## STP USES ELECTRONIC CART TO LET STUDENTS EXPERIENCE THE DANGERS OF IMPAIRED, DISTRACTED DRIVING

By Teddy Kulmala

The S.C. State Transport Police are using an innovative new tool that doesn't *tell* students about the dangers of impaired or distracted driving, but lets them experience those dangers.

STP began offering the federally sponsored "Drive to Zero" program in 2018 to curb traffic fatalities involving impaired or distracted driving, according to Lance Cpl. Shane May, one of the instructors. A federal review found that South Carolina ranked among the top three states in the country for these kind of fatalities, but was near the bottom of the country in education.

"The STP command staff came up with a plan to get something across that actually makes an impact on people without just a slide show or distorting their



eyes ... to actually let people feel the impacts of being distracted with their phones or with alcohol but without distorting their vision," he said.

The center of the program is an electronic cart, complete with gas and brake pedals and a steering wheel, which the operator drives on a course marked by orange cones. The instructor follows behind with a remote control, which activates features on the cart that simulate impaired or distracted driving.

By activating the "Impaired" function, all of the driver's actions – from braking and accelerating to steering – are slowed down by four seconds, according to May. When

May activates the distracted-driving function, the cart behaves as though the driver has taken his/her eyes off the road for about 100 yards. At a speed of 55 mph, a car will travel about 100 yards while the driver looks down at a text message, May said.

May and Master Officer Travis Glover teach the course all over the state, mostly to high school students but also to commercial trucking school classes. While younger drivers today are not driving impaired at the rate of older drivers, driving distracted is just as dangerous.

"Statistics say that when you're on the phone for that four seconds, you're the exact same equivalent of being a .14 alcohol level anyways, so you're intoxicated every time you text," May said. "They're just so surprised that can happen to them when they're with their electronic devices, that it can get away from them that quickly."

While the COVID-19 pandemic put a damper on presentations, things have picked up recently, May said. They already have 75 presentations scheduled for this coming school year.



[Watch the Interview](#)

## SCDPS GOES DIGITAL WITH HUMAN RESOURCES FILES



By Teddy Kulmala

SCDPS is going digital, migrating from paper files to digitizing decades of documents, creating a more secure and accessible way to access files.

"This is an exciting step forward for us and for the agency," said Human Resources Director Tonya Chambers. "This has taken a tremendous amount of planning to ensure that everything is properly archived, but this process will ultimately make the files more secure and accessible."

There are about 500 boxes in the warehouse alone containing Human Resources files, some of them dating back to the early 1980s. Currently, locating a file involves searching between shelves stacked floor-to-ceiling with boxes, pulling the appropriate box down and flipping through the files inside to retrieve it.

"We have no more space," said Robin Austin, a program assistant in the Office of Human Resources. "There's no more space at Headquarters." She went on to add: "There are pallets all in the aisles that can't be put on these shelves because there's no space," she said.

OHR staff, led by Austin as the project manager, have begun the process of inventorying each box, sending the documents to be scanned into a database and then sending the paper files to be archived. That leaves SCDPS with digital copies of each file, which are examined before the paper copies are destroyed to make sure they are clear and legible. The project comes on the heels of other projects, like the SmartCOP digital dashboard, and is part of the agency's overall shift into

the digital age.

"This is exactly what needs to happen," Austin said. "Everything needs to be put in electronic format so that we can find it, we know where it is, it's pretty, it's neat and we don't have to worry about coming in here and lugging boxes around."

Digitizing the files will clear up space not just at the warehouse, but also in the file room at Headquarters.

In the future, Chambers said, all new files will be scanned and stored digitally – moving the agency forward in its effort to go digital.





## 'YOU JUST KEEP MOVING': TROOPER REFLECTS ON 50 YEARS OF SERVICE

By *Teddy Kulmala*

What's the secret to working over 30 years in law enforcement, retiring and then coming back to work another 20 years?

Ask Master Trooper John Wayne Valdario Sr., and he'll tell any new trooper it's all about a love for helping people, and treating others the way you want to be treated.

"Look them in the eye when you talk to them," said Valdario, 74. "And talk from your heart and not from the top of your head. The difference is, your heart will tell them how to talk with them, and your head is nothing more than just playing the same script over and over again, and you won't remember it."

A native of Massachusetts, Valdario always wanted to be a police officer as a child, and after enlisting in the U.S. Air Force in 1966, he planned to return to New England and join the Massachusetts State Police. After leaving Vietnam in 1968, Valdario requested assignment to a city on the east coast of the United States, preferably in Massachusetts.

Instead, his orders were for Aiken, S.C.

"I had to look on a map to find out where it was," he said chuckling.

At the Sno-Cap Drive-In in Aiken County, where Valdario worked, patrolmen from the S.C. Highway Patrol would come in for coffee. During a conversation, a patrolman asked Valdario if he had considered a career in law enforcement, and he told them about his plans to work for the city police in Aiken before returning to Massachusetts to work for the state police there.

"He said, 'No, you need to come work for the Highway Patrol,'" Valdario recalled. "Because back in those days they were looking for military people."

Valdario applied and started training in January 1970. Back then, patrolmen were educated at the trade school just outside of Cayce, Valdario said. They were housed in a building on the campus and shared a



*Master Trooper J. W. Valdario*

classroom space with nursing classes. The driving academy was on public highways.

Valdario's first patrol car was a 1968 Ford two-door. It had a two-channel radio, and the only equipment Valdario carried on his belt was a six-cylinder gun with six rounds and a pair of handcuffs.

"I was a little apprehensive to begin with, but as time went on it got a little bit easier," Valdario said of being a rookie officer.

One thing that didn't get easier was working an accident in which a child was killed.

"Any accident that had to deal with children was always a heavy one," he said. "You didn't have time to dwell on a lot of stuff. You just kind of put it back in the back of your head and moved on to the next situation. You just kept moving."

So, Valdario kept moving through his career, rising to the rank of First Sergeant in Richland County and then Lieutenant at District 1 headquarters before being transferred and promoted to Major with the State

Transport Police after STP was created in 1993.

"It was a challenge," Valdario said of making the move to the newly-formed STP. "I wasn't expected to be there that long; it was just enough to get it up and running. But I saw that there was a need to stay there, because it had a bunch of guys that were wanting to get this thing up off the ground and to continue on."

Valdario retired from STP in December 2001 because he was activated with the Air National Guard after the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks. During his two years with the Air National Guard, he remained in the Midlands area and worked for the Pine Ridge Police Department. In 2003, he and his wife saw Carl Payne, a lieutenant in the Insurance Enforcement Unit, while running errands, and Valdario's wife asked if they were hiring.

Valdario returned to the Highway Patrol that year, working in the Insurance Enforcement Unit. He found that visiting houses to confiscate the plates and licenses of people who were under suspension for insurance violations was a different ballgame than pulling them over on the highway, and it still required a degree of compassion. Most of the time, he said, the person's problems with their insurance stemmed from a financial matter.

"I'll tell them I'm here to confiscate the license plate and your driver's license, but if you'll listen to me, I'll also tell you how to handle this when you go to the DMV," he said. "When you're on a person's private property, it's a little bit different than when you're on the highway. In fact, it's a lot different because it's just you and them."

It's not uncommon for people to get irate over a trooper confiscating their tag and license, Valdario said. When he explains the situation and offers to help, the mood changes.

"I'll tell them, 'At least — whether you like this or not — I

got you stopped in your yard and not out there (on the highway),'" he said. "That would have cost you a lot of money. And if I didn't stop you here and you got into an accident out there, you'd be in a whole lot more trouble than you are right now."

Valdario acknowledges that the law enforcement profession — and the attitudes toward law enforcement — have changed since he entered the field. Still, he says, "I try to be above that and let people know I want to be treated the same way I'm treating you."

Valdario's duties aren't limited to the Insurance



Enforcement Unit. He writes other violations and works collisions in Lexington County. When not on the job, he enjoys working on cars, hiking in the Upstate, traveling with his wife, and volunteering with their church's youth program.

"It's been an exciting career," he said. "It has. And I know that one day it's gonna have to draw to a close. It may be tomorrow, it may be sometime next year, it may be whenever. If they have to watch where I'm stepping, it's time to go. As long as I've got my health and all, we're doing fine."



## SCDPS, LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES WORK TOGETHER TO ENSURE PUBLIC SAFETY ON STATE HOUSE GROUNDS, DOWNTOWN

By Teddy Kulmala

Before the deadly riot at the U.S. Capitol on January 6, and before the FBI sent out a warning about possible armed protests at all 50 state capitols in the days leading up to Inauguration Day, the Bureau of Protective Services was already monitoring activity surrounding possible demonstrations at the S.C. State House.

Even as the riot in Washington, D.C. unfolded on January 6, a smaller demonstration was in progress at the State House in Columbia, according to BPS Chief Matthew Calhoun.

"We were monitoring the national events, and there were satellite events for the local folks who could not travel (to Washington)," Calhoun said. "We had been monitoring that over the Christmas holiday and into the new year."

A memo sent out by the FBI after the January 6 attack warned law enforcement about possible armed protests at all 50 state capitols in the days leading up to Inauguration Day. Calhoun said BPS stayed in contact with the FBI, State Law Enforcement Division and local law enforcement to see if they had information on groups or individuals planning such events in Columbia.

"We look at the groups and their following online," Calhoun said of planning for a possible event with only a few vague details. "We speak with other law enforcement agencies where these groups may have had interactions or previous events, whether it's the crowd size or the feel of the group, how they've acted, how they've interacted with counter-protestors."

In the days before the Columbia protest, SCDPS announced its collaboration with SLED, the Richland County Sheriff's Department and the Columbia Police Department to ensure the safety and security of the State House complex and those planning to attend the demonstration.

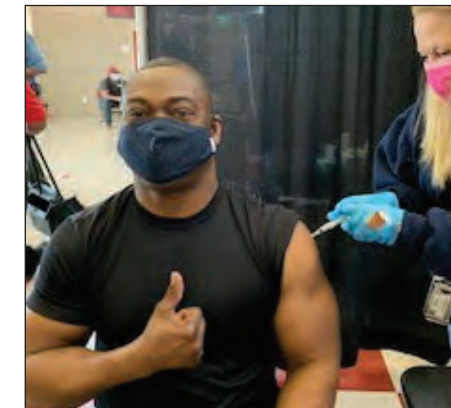
In the end, BPS officers made no arrests throughout the events, which remained peaceful.



BPS Chief Matthew Calhoun



## CLINIC AT SCDPS VACCINATES LAW ENFORCEMENT, FIRST RESPONDERS



The S.C. Department of Public Safety partnered with Prisma Health to hold a COVID-19 vaccine clinic in Blythewood.

The drive-through clinic was set up in the parking lot of SCDPS Headquarters for several hours in the spring, during which Prisma healthcare workers administered doses of the Johnson & Johnson one-shot vaccine. Prisma Health partnered with state and federal first responders, law enforcement and support staff for the clinic, which was aimed at getting first responders and law enforcement officers vaccinated.

A similar clinic was held in North Charleston.



## DPS COMPLETES ROLL-OUT OF NEW, UPGRADED BODY ARMOR FOR ALL OFFICERS

By *Teddy Kulmala*

Department of Public Safety officers are a little safer while patrolling the roadways of South Carolina, thanks to upgraded body armor to replace the agency's line of vests that were due to expire soon.

Among the features in the new Safariland vests is a rifle plate, which can protect an officer from a rifle round and coincides with the roll-out of the new patrol rifles. Another feature DPS officers will notice is that, in addition to a vest worn under the uniform, they receive an outer carrier that is worn over the uniform. The outer carrier features a Velcro patch denoting the officer's status as a state trooper, STP officer or BPS officer.

The outer carrier was part of a package deal that SCDPS negotiated with the manufacturer, Safariland, according to Sgt. Jack Parrish of Support Services. The department replaces its line of body armor every five years.

The agency ordered just over 600 pieces of body armor, said Parrish, who spent two days at each Troop office starting in late February so that officers could bring in their old body armor and exchange it for the new armor.

One detail SCDPS officers may — or may not — notice has nothing to do with the body armor, but rather the box it comes in. On one side of the box, Safariland notes that their products have saved more than 2,100 officers. On the other side of the box is a list of some of those officers, including former South Carolina state trooper Paul Wise.



[Watch the Interview](#)

## RETIRED SCHP COLONEL H. "RED" LANIER PASSES AWAY

SCDPS, Richland County Sheriff's Department, family and friends said goodbye to retired SCHP Colonel H. "Red" Lanier on March 24, 2021 at New Heights Baptist Church. Colonel Lanier made many enhancements during his time as commander to include the current shoulder patch worn by troopers today; the creation of the SCHP S.W.A.T. Team; the physical fitness program; and the introduction of high-performance vehicles to the fleet (Ford Mustang).

Lanier graduated in Patrol School Class #19 on April 29, 1957, and was assigned to Dillon County. S.C. Patrolman Lanier served in the Pee Dee area until he was promoted to Sergeant in District One on August 1, 1971, and moved to Columbia. There he was promoted to Lieutenant and later to District Commander. Captain Lanier was promoted to Major/Assistant Director of Field Operations in 1981.

On June 30, 1987, Major Lanier was promoted to Colonel and served as the Commander of the South Carolina Highway Patrol until his retirement on August 4, 1990. After his retirement from the Highway Patrol, Colonel Lanier worked for the Richland County Sheriff's Department for 20 years.



*Retired SCHP Colonel H. "Red" Lanier*



*SCHP Honor Guard at Col. Lanier's graveside. Photos Courtesy of Richland County Sheriff's Department.*



*Colonel Williamson presents the flag to Mrs. Lanier.*



## IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT UNIT MOVES TO SLED ON AUGUST 2ND



*Inv. Roger Brock, Sr. Inv. Michael Johnson, Lisa Radvansky, Admin. Assistant, Lt. Eddie Johnson, Unit Commander, Sr. Inv. Darrell Hudson, Inv. Whit McMahon. Not pictured: Sr. Inv. John Cardona.*

Director Woods recognized and thanked the Immigration Enforcement Unit on July 1st for its service to SCDPS and the State of South Carolina since its inception in 2011. The Unit will be moved to SLED as part of the State Appropriations Act, which was effective July 1, 2021.

Lt. Eddie Johnson and his team were recognized for their commitment to excellence in enforcing state and federal immigration laws. Lt. Johnson was commended for “creating a vision for the Immigration Unit, building it from the ground up, developing a distinctive level of expertise in immigration laws and procedures and extensively training law enforcement in South Carolina in immigration law.”

The mission of the Immigration Enforcement Unit is to deter, disrupt and eliminate criminal activity associated with illegal immigration by enforcing immigration laws pursuant to Federal and State statutes. In addition, IEU develops immigration enforcement training programs to be offered to local law enforcement agencies; assist local law enforcement agencies with proper implementation, management and enforcement of applicable immigration laws.

## SCDPS TEAMS UP WITH PALMETTOPRIDE FOR LITTER ENFORCEMENT

SCDPS announced a statewide crackdown on littering as part of a partnership with PalmettoPride during the Great South Carolina Cleanup Week, April 12-18. SCHP and STP conducted special enforcement with an emphasis on littering on our roadways. According to PalmettoPride, more than 80 percent of littering is intentional. PalmettoPride also says that 21 percent of roadway litter comes from unsecured loads. Anyone who sees a motorist littering can report them by calling 1-877-7LITTER (1-877-754-8837).



## 2021-2022 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

There were three important bills that passed during the 2021-2022 legislative session.

**S 131 Capitol Grounds** – This bill redefines “capitol grounds” and gives the House and Senate Sergeant at Arms enforcement power. It was signed into law May 17, 2021, and is effective immediately.

**H 3094 Open Carry with Training Act** – This bill allows an individual to openly carry a firearm on his/her person and in his/her vehicle, so long as certain training has been completed. The governor signed this bill into law on May 17, 2021 and it becomes effective on August 15, 2021.

**H 3011 Driving on Right Half of Road** – This bill provides a \$25 penalty for driving in the inner-most left lane (subject to several exceptions) and requires SCDOT to erect signage informing the public of the same. The Governor signed this bill into law on May 17, 2021, and the law becomes effective August 15, 2021. Only warning tickets may be issued for the first 90 days after the effective date.

In addition, **H 4100 Appropriations Act** passed and establishes the DPS operating budget and modifies the agency in the following manner:

1. Career Path Plan ([see page 3](#));
2. The Immigration Enforcement Unit will be transferred from DPS to SLED.
3. The School Resource Officer grant program will be transferred from the Department of Education to DPS.



**HURRICANE SEASON IS UNDERWAY  
AND WILL RUN UNTIL - NOVEMBER  
30TH. VISIT SCEMD'S VIRTUAL  
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[Download a copy](#)



## ‘WE’RE BROTHERS NOW’: RETIRED SCHP TROOPER FINDS KIDNEY DONOR IN PATROL SCHOOL CLASSMATE

By Teddy Kulmala

When a South Carolina state trooper in need of a transplant posted a social media plea for a kidney donor, people from across the country offered to get tested to see if they were a match. He found his match not just in South Carolina, but in a classmate from Patrol school.



John Dorroh, Darrell Smith

“We’re brothers now,” retired SCHP Sgt. Darrell Smith said of his donor, John Dorroh. “We’re family.”

Smith, 49, was diagnosed with renal failure in September 2019. He had recently gone for a six-month checkup with his urologist, who called Smith while he was working in Beaufort County as Hurricane Dorian threatened the S.C. coast.

“I’m down here with the hurricane. I can come as soon as I get home,” he recalled telling his doctor. His doctor responded: “No, this is life and death. I need to see you today.”

Smith returned to Columbia, where his doctor gave him the diagnosis and recommended he start dialysis immediately. He soon began daily dialysis treatments at home, spending nine hours every night tethered

to a machine that cleaned his blood. At work he was reassigned to the SCDPS Central Evidence Facility, since he was not allowed to lift more than 25 pounds at the risk of rupturing the catheter that was surgically stitched into his abdomen for treatments.

When doctors told Smith he needed a new kidney, he began the lengthy process of getting placed on the United Network for Organ Sharing list, or UNOS. After getting a spot on the South Carolina list, Smith was told he could be waiting five to eight years for a kidney. In Georgia, the wait was five to 10 years.

“It was discouraging,” he said of getting that news after months of daily dialysis treatments. “Five to 10 years — that’s a long time.”

Normally a private person, Smith said he kept his diagnosis and search for a kidney quiet until an exchange he had with a doctor, whose life was saved by a kidney donation from a family member.

“How can you expect people to help you if you don’t put your story out there and let people know you need a kidney?” Smith recalled the doctor asking him. So, Smith’s wife published a post on social media, which garnered responses from people across the country expressing their willingness to get tested and see if they were a match for Smith. Among those who saw the post



was Dorroh, a classmate of Smith’s and DPS coworker of his for several years. The two graduated from patrol school in June 2003. Dorroh worked for the Department of Public Safety until 2016, and now is a transportation supervisor in Lexington School District 1 and a part-time officer with Pelion Police Department.

“I told my wife, I feel like there’s a calling,” Dorroh said after seeing the Facebook post. “Something’s telling me to go get tested to see if I’d be a match.”

In November 2020, Dorroh began the testing process. In late April, he got a call from the Medical University of South Carolina.

“They told me I was a match for Darrel,” Dorroh said. “Of course, the emotions hit then.”

Wanting to give Smith the good news in person, Dorroh called and asked if they can get together soon, under the guise of allowing their wives to finally meet each other. Smith obliged, and they had Dorroh and his wife over for burgers and hot dogs the next night.

“I was getting nervous,” Dorroh said. “I told him, ‘You know I’ve been doing this testing process. And I just wanted to let you know that I’m a perfect match.’”

After tears of joy that night, they were scheduled for surgery on May 12 — less than three weeks away. The morning of the surgery, they arrived at the hospital together, checked in together and waited together until Dorroh was called back. Dorroh said his main concern going into surgery, and even after he woke up from anesthesia, was making sure Smith was OK.

“I wasn’t too worried about what was going on around me,” he said. “I wanted to make sure that he was OK and that the kidney was working.”

Both men came out of the surgery fine, and Dorroh’s kidney is now functioning well in Smith’s body. After several days of recovery, first in the hospital and then in a Charleston hotel, the men and their wives returned home. Smith has returned to Charleston each week since the surgery for follow-up appointments, and said his progress will soon allow him to move to virtual appointments.

“I’m doing great,” he said. “Everything’s great.”

During a recent family trip to Tennessee, Smith said he

wanted to go out walking with his wife. They planned to walk just one mile but ended up walking three. Dorroh, who was cleared to resume driving, came to visit Smith regularly after they returned home. They still do things together, like fishing, and their families have gotten closer through this experience.

“We’re brothers now. We are brothers,” Smith said of Dorroh. “It’s like a new family. And his family is my family now. I hang out with them, they hang out with me. I don’t even think it’s a friendship; it’s more like a brotherhood.”

For Dorroh, who after 20 years as a law enforcement officer knows what it’s like to save a life, the act of giving an organ to someone else touched him on a different level.

“I’ve stopped a lot of (drunk drivers), I’ve stopped a lot of things from happening prior to, I’ve gotten to



scenes quick enough to call or keep somebody from bleeding out,” he said. “But, none of them even come close to what I’ve done now, to a person that I can see the difference. You can actually see the difference you’ve made. So many times in law enforcement, you say, ‘I hope that person lives. I hope I got to them quick enough.’ You never really hear anything about it. But this is a story that doesn’t ever leave you.”



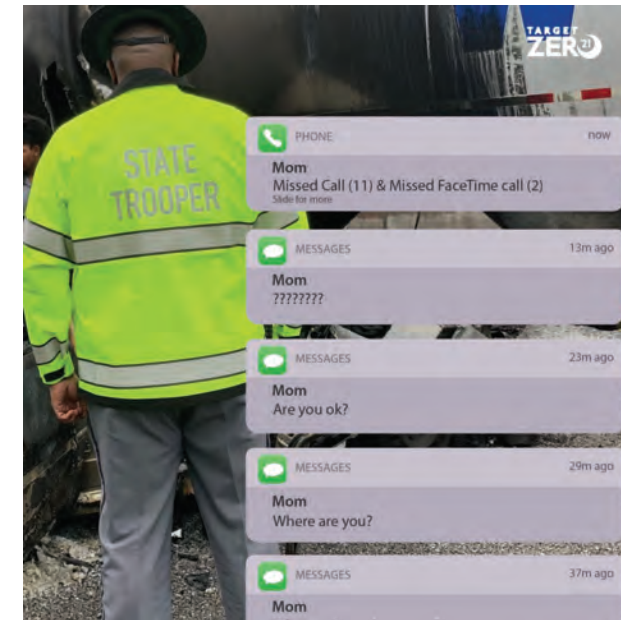
## PAID MEDIA ROUNDUP

SCDPS is running paid social media advertising, Target Zero '21, to educate the public and provide safety tips on common mistakes/collision causations. Here are some of the ads in case you missed it.

[View More TZ Ads](#)



#ImproperLaneChange



#DistractedDriving



#YoungDrivers



#TooFastforConditions





# KUDOS



*Kudos to the men and women bringing ideas to the table and enhancing efficiencies in the department. This goes for civilians and sworn personnel alike. Let's keep working together to find solutions that make our operations run a little smoother.*

## PROBLEM

SCDPS began exploring a more streamlined way for cell phones to be distributed. Another employee who had managed this process for the Highway Patrol took another position in April 2020. She had been responsible for placing orders for new cellphones and MiFi devices, issuing and replacing devices, enabling or disabling accounts with wireless providers and issuing summons books for outside agencies. For several months, an administrative assistant at Patrol Supply took on the responsibilities until a new employee could fill the position.

Michelle Watkins joined Patrol Supply through a staffing agency in October 2020. According to her supervisors, she jumped in with both feet and mastered how to order and issue new devices; migrated service to the devices from Verizon Wireless to FirstNet; and ordered summons books while keeping DMV notified of every ticket book number and its assigned agency.

In December 2020, the Office of Support Services began processing phones for all DPS divisions. That meant that every new phone at the agency — including those for State Transport Police and Bureau of Protective Services officers — would run through Watkins' office, making the process more efficient for the agency. This included the recent dissemination of phones to equip field officers and troopers in preparation for the DUO two-factor authentication system.

## SUGGESTION

## SOLUTION



*Trooper Jonathan Griffith*

A South Carolina Highway Patrol trooper used his instincts as a parent to help lead him to a missing 2-year-old who had wandered away from his home and into nearby woods.

Trooper First Class Jonathan Griffith, Troop 2, Post C, was on patrol on U.S. 25 around 1:15 p.m. April 12 when an Edgefield County Sheriff's deputy passed him going in the opposite direction with lights and siren activated. The deputy called Griffith and let him know what was going on: A 2-year-old boy was reported missing from his home nearby.

Deputies wrote in an incident report that the toddler's mother was in the bathroom when she heard the door to the home open and close. The ensuing search for the child included Edgefield County deputies, a S.C. Department of Natural Resources K-9 team, an aircraft and a drone, according to the report.

Griffith soon found the boy, sitting in a briar patch a few hundred yards into the woods from his house, about two hours after he was reported missing. Griffith said he was scared and a little scratched up but otherwise OK.

# KUDOS



Master Trooper David Jones credits recent department training in CPR and first aid with helping him save a 2-year-old boy who was found unresponsive and near death in a swimming pool.

A trooper since 2005, Jones works in the Community Relations and Recruiting Unit. He had just sat down at his home in Lexington County to finish some computer work on the afternoon of May 26 when he heard screams coming from next door. Jones ran to the back side of the home, where his neighbor was pulling her 2-year-old son from an above-ground swimming pool.

The trooper began giving the toddler back thrusts, then turned him over and gave him mouth-to-mouth breaths. He repeated this for several minutes until the boy began vomiting large amounts of water and, eventually, started breathing on his own. Jones stayed on the phone with 911 until paramedics and Lexington County deputies arrived. The boy was taken to Prisma Health Children's Hospital, where he was kept overnight and released the next day. He has since made a full recovery.



*Trooper David Jones*



## OFF-DUTY AND UNARMED, NOW-RETIRED STP OFFICER'S ERRAND TURNS INTO PURSUIT OF MURDER SUSPECTS

By Teddy Kulmala



An off-duty State Transport Police officer was reminded that an officer is never really off the clock, when a routine trip to the post office turned into a pursuit of suspects in a freshly committed homicide.

Sgt. Wayne Bryan was sitting outside the Saluda Post Office one

afternoon in the spring, waiting for the building to open at 2 p.m. Off to his left he saw two men run across the road and jump into a car that was waiting in the parking lot of a gas station. As the vehicle pulled on to U.S. 378, a line of patrol cars blew past with lights and siren activated.

"Something ain't right here," Bryan, a 21-year veteran of STP and Saluda resident, said to himself before leaving the post office and following the car toward town. After calling dispatch and identifying himself as an STP officer in Region 2, Bryan learned that city and county law enforcement were working a shooting that happened on Keisha Avenue, which is just behind the Saluda Post Office.

Still traveling behind the suspect vehicle on Newberry Highway, Bryan saw a Saluda County Sheriff's Office cruiser approaching from the opposite direction. He got the deputy's attention, and the deputy pulled over to turn around and follow Bryan. While still on the phone with dispatch, Bryan asked what the deputy wanted him to do and was told to maintain his position behind the suspects.

"I know what he's doing," Bryan said of the deputy. "He's trying to get other units into position to back him up."

A few miles down the road, the suspect's vehicle turned

in to a mobile home park and, after driving through the park, returned to Newberry Highway. A short time later, the vehicle pulled into a gas station and stopped at a pump. The sheriff's deputy pulled in behind the car and Bryan, who was unarmed and driving his personal pickup, parked at an angle in front of the vehicle to block them in.

As the sheriff's deputy exited his patrol vehicle and approached the suspects, Bryan exited his truck and ran behind the gas pumps for cover.

"I see the guy in the back seat, leaning over like he's grabbing at something," Bryan said. "And I holler, 'Get your hands up!'"

At that moment all three people in the vehicle — the two men Bryan saw running across the street and the woman who was driving the car — threw their hands up. Bryan, who was close enough to the car to see that the two male suspects had blood on them, stepped back as backup arrived.

**"I see the guy in the back seat, leaning over like he's grabbing at something.... And I holler, 'Get your hands up!'" - Wayne Bryan**

Saluda County Sheriff's deputies charged Aaron Hood with murder and assault and battery of a high and aggravated nature in the shooting death of Xavier Cancer, according to the sheriff's office. Shawn Pridgen is charged with accessory to murder.

"I thanked God for putting me in that position and allowing me to respond and do what I needed to do," Bryan said. "That saying, 'One team, one

mission,' that's for everybody in law enforcement. We're all out here to accomplish the same mission."

When the dust settled and investigators began piecing together the events of that day, Bryan gave his name and information to responding deputies before leaving the gas station — and he still made it back to the post office before they closed.

*Note: Sgt. Bryan has recently retired and we wish him the best.*

## USC STUDENTS HELP SCDPS FLEET SHOP STREAMLINE PROCESSES

By Teddy Kulmala

Several USC students are taking their learning from the classroom to the SCDPS Fleet Shop while they assist the Fleet Shop team with identifying opportunities to increase efficiency.

"Essentially, in a nutshell, we'd like to know if what we're doing is efficient," said Sgt. Gabriel Colbert, of the Office of Support Services. "If it's time-consuming, where can we make it less time-consuming? The whole goal is to increase our capability with the manpower we have to get more cars in and more cars out in a shorter timeframe."

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 paused much of the world, including the automotive industry, Colbert said. As a result, the Fleet Shop did not receive shipments of vehicles on time, leading to a large backlog when they finally started receiving shipments.

In the meantime, the shop looked at its own processes, and ways to improve them for when new patrol vehicles started arriving, Colbert said. They decided to enlist a third party to take "a more industrious" approach, and contacted the University of South Carolina College of Engineering and Computing. Several students from the Senior Design class spent two semesters observing processes at the shop, spotting opportunities to increase efficiency and presenting their findings in a report.

"We're currently working on a time study, getting as much data as we can from the different builds," said USC senior Peter El-Khabbaz, one of the students working in the Fleet Shop. Colbert expects to receive the flow chart by the fall, and said that will be the students' focus during the fall semester.

Since Colbert was promoted to oversee Fleet Shop operations in March 2020, they have implemented changes from which others in the department already are seeing results. This included drastically reducing the time it takes to build a Dodge Charger patrol car, from a day and a half to just over six hours.

"That standardization is hugely important because we

can do the same thing every time," Colbert said. "That has allowed us to essentially cut our production time in half in terms of Dodge Chargers. It doesn't matter what type — whether it be an unmarked vehicle, a marked vehicle, a supervisor's vehicle — that standard equipment allows us to move quickly because it's the same repetitive process (that) allows us to be very efficient."

While building a Ford Explorer is different and more time-consuming compared to the Dodge Charger, Colbert said moving forward the functionality would be very similar.

"What that means to the officer on the road is, it doesn't matter what patrol car they get in," he said. "All the new patrol cars we're creating and building are uniform. If they hit the same button, every car will do the same thing regardless of what the user of the car requests. It will all be a standard, which obviously increases efficiency."



[Watch the Interview](#)



# SOUTH CAROLINA HIGHWAY PATROL PROMOTIONS

## EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 17TH

**Lieutenant:**

First Sergeant R. F. Thompson  
Troop 3/HQ

**Sergeant:**

Cpl. R. H. Rowe, Jr.  
Troop 1/Post C

Cpl. J. E. Greene  
Troop 4/Post A

Cpl. C. D. Morgan  
Troop 4/Post C

Cpl. T. D. Cannon  
Troop 5/Post D

Cpl. M. K. Frost  
Troop 5/Post D

Cpl. J. N. Michlovitz  
Troop 7/Post C

Cpl. E. W. Collins, III  
Troop 11/CRO

Cpl. R. G. Conyers  
Troop 11/Special Ops Unit

Cpl. K. W. Collins  
Troop 11/Training

**Corporal:**

L/Cpl. S. J. Lutes  
Troop 6/Post A

L/Cpl. J. T. Atwood  
Troop 1/Post D

Master Trooper C. S. Koon  
Troop 2/Post A

L/Cpl. A. T. Ashley  
Troop 3/Post A

L/Cpl. Rodney Beach  
Troop 5/Post C

L/Cpl. K. C. Davis  
Troop 6/Post B

## EFFECTIVE MAY 2, 2021

**Lieutenant:**

Sgt. D. C. Martin  
Troop 11/Training

**First Sergeant:**

Sgt. B. C. Smith  
Troop 3/Post C

**Sergeant:**

Cpl. C. B. Ford  
Troop 4/Post B

**Corporal:**

L/Cpl. S. G. Sawyer  
Troop 1/Post C

L/Cpl. C. D. Terry  
Troop 3/Post C

L/Cpl. M. E. Hughes  
Troop 4/Post C

L/Cpl. H. B. Causey  
Troop 5/Post C

L/Cpl. B. J. Sawyer  
Troop 5/Post D

L/Cpl. B. D. Hannigan  
Troop 6/Post B



L/Cpl. J. E. Deas  
Troop 7/Post C

L/Cpl. F. D. Rice, Jr.  
Troop 7/Post B

Master Trooper J. F. Conley  
Troop 9/Post C MAIT Coastal

L/Cpl. J. D. Gilbert  
Troop 9/Post 8 MAIT Midlands

L/Cpl. J. S. Hovis  
Troop 11/CRO Region 1





## SCHP PROMOTIONS - INSURANCE ENFORCEMENT UNIT



Captain C. B. Hughes, Corporal A. H. Link and Colonel C. N. Williamson



Capt. C. B. Hughes, Corporal R. W. Stewart and Col. C. N. Williamson



Capt. C. B. Hughes, Lt. S. M. Craven and Col. C. N. Williamson

## 12TH CIRCUIT SCLN WINNER

Lance Cpl. H.P. Lewis of the Highway Patrol was selected as the Officer of the Year for the South Carolina Law Enforcement Network 12th Judicial Circuit. The South Carolina Law Enforcement Network (SCLN) is comprised of 16 individual circuit law enforcement networks encompassing all 46 counties in the state. Each network is made up of local and state traffic enforcement officers, members of federal law enforcement agencies and prosecutors from each region of the state. The 12th Circuit includes Florence and Marion counties.



## WEAPONS RECOVERY PARTNERSHIP WITH RICHLAND COUNTY COULD HELP LINK WEAPONS IN SCDPS CUSTODY TO OTHER CRIMES

By Teddy Kulmala

A new partnership between the S.C. Department of Public Safety and the Richland County Sheriff's Department will, hopefully, help investigators link firearms and ballistic evidence to other criminal cases.

SCDPS joined the sheriff's department in its National Integrated Ballistics Information Network — or, NIBIN. The federal program, offered through the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, automates ballistics evaluations and provides investigative leads in a timely manner, according to the ATF website. It allows law enforcement to track guns that have been used in crimes and make connections between other crimes or cases in different jurisdictions.

"What they're looking for is, they're getting shell casings after they've been shot and fired through a particular weapon," said Capt. Mendel Rivers, commander of the Central Evidence Facility. "They have certain characteristics for each particular weapon that are going to leave certain marks and so forth on the shell casing."

Under the program, investigators scan and upload images of cartridge casing evidence into an integrated ballistic identification system, according to the ATF. In the database, these images can be compared against images of other evidence, allowing law enforcement to search against evidence from within their jurisdiction or even across the country.

Richland County has both a facility and a mobile unit to test fire weapons. The mobile unit spent several hours at the Central Evidence Facility, while Richland County technicians test-fired about 30 of the more-than 6,000

guns currently housed at the facility. The plan for now is to only test-fire weapons recovered by SCDPS officers in Richland County, a number that currently stands at just over 400, according to Rivers. He added that the partnership could be win-win for both the sheriff's department and SCDPS.



"They may be able to clear up some investigations of their own, if some of these weapons actually match up to a crime that's already been committed," he said.

[Watch the Interview](#)



## STP PROMOTIONS

Sgt. Joshua Brock was promoted in January to Commander of STP Region 3. Brock, who was promoted from the rank of Corporal, has been with STP since 2007 and served his entire career in Region 3 as a field training officer and background investigator.



*Major Wilson, Sergeant Brock and Colonel Dill*



*Major Wilson, Sergeant Heitzenrater and Colonel Dill*

Lt. Ronald Heitzenrater was promoted in December from the rank of Sergeant, and is now Lieutenant over the Upstate, which includes Regions 2, 3 and 4. Heitzenrater has served STP since 2006 and has more than 19 years of service in public safety.



*Major Wilson, Corporal J. Haigler and Colonel Dill*

Cpl. Jeffrey Haigler was promoted in July from Master Officer. Haigler, who also serves in the U.S. Army, has been with SCDPS since 2016, beginning his career with the Bureau of Protective Services before joining the State Transport Police.



Cpl. Bradley Weathers was promoted in February from Master Officer. Weathers has served STP in Region 2 since 2000, including as a field training officer, and will now serve in Region 3.



*Capt. McLean, Major Wilson, Corporal Weathers, Colonel Dill and Captain Catoe*

Sgt. Christopher Wagner was promoted in June from Corporal. Wagner has served STP since 2010, first in Region 4, then in Regions 1 and 2 as he climbed the ranks. He was reassigned to Region 2 in 2019.



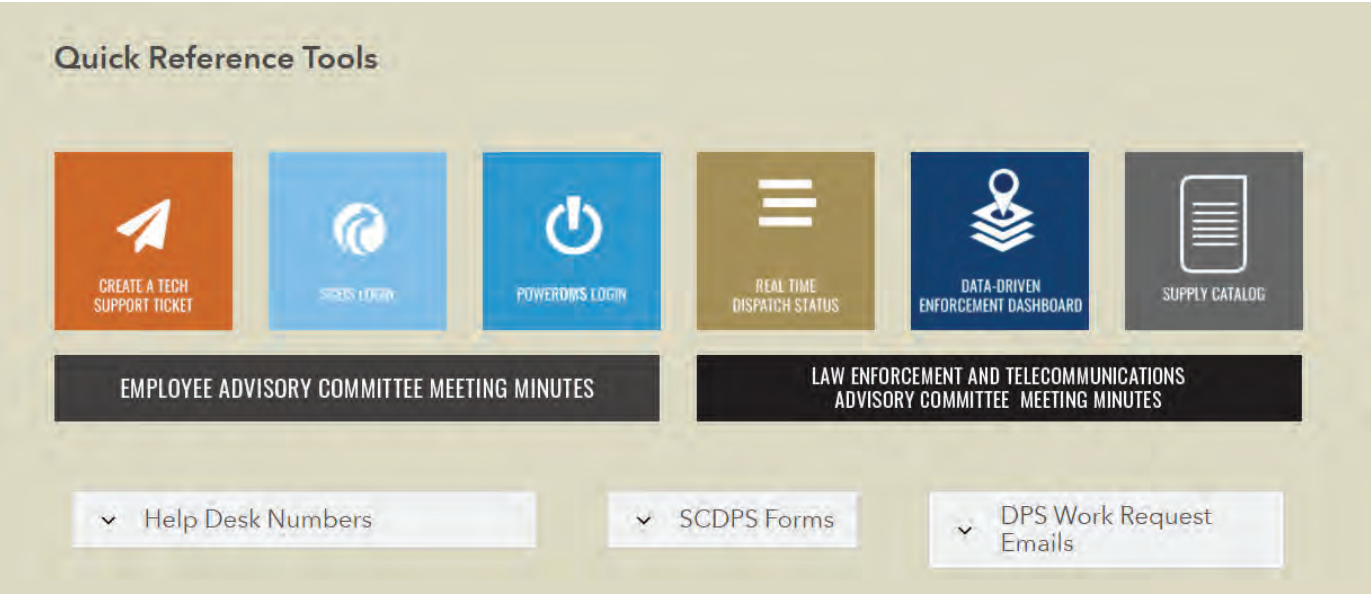
*Sergeant Wagner and Colonel Dill*

## STATE TRANSPORT POLICE UPDATED REGIONAL COVERAGE, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2021





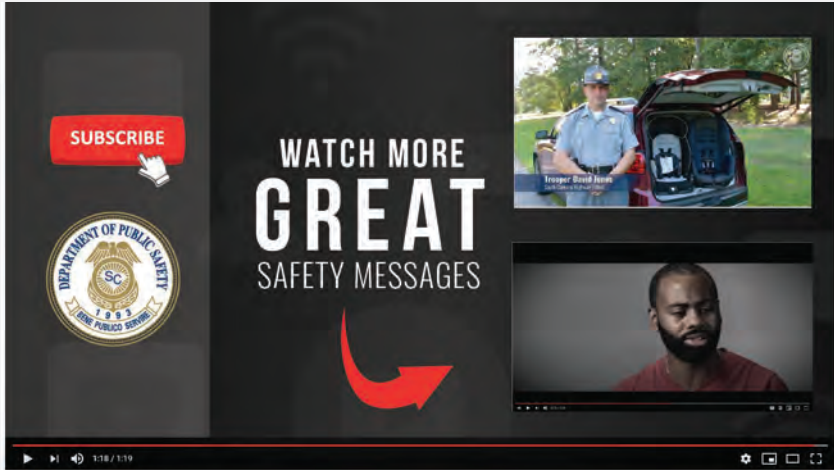
ADVISORY MINUTES AVAILABLE ON NEWS BREAK



EMPLOYEE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

LAW ENFORCEMENT AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

The Law Enforcement, Telecommunications and Employee Advisory Committee Minutes for the first quarter of 2021 are now on PowerDMS and can be accessed via buttons on News Break.



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youtube.com/user/TheSCDPs



‘WELLNESS WEDNESDAY’ SHOWS HOW SCDPS EMPLOYEES STAY HEALTHY — PHYSICALLY, MENTALLY AND SPIRITUALLY

From the COVID-19 pandemic to social unrest, 2020 was hard on many people — and that includes their health and wellness habits.

In a bi-weekly column published to the SCDPS News Break, Capt. JoNathan Nell, who oversees the department’s health-and-wellness initiative, highlights different SCDPS employees from around the state and the ways that they stay healthy. From the STP officer who found camaraderie on the bike trail to the trooper who wanted to look better in uniform and lost 50 pounds, Nell explores the different things they do to stay healthy and the advice they have for those who are looking to get started with a fitness regimen.



WELLNESS WEDNESDAY

Captain Jo Nell, SCDPS Health and Wellness Coordinator

Would you like to share your path to staying spiritually, physically or mentally healthy, or do you need help with challenges you might be facing in your personal or professional life? Contact Nell at Jo-NathanNell@SCDPS.GOV.

Need Help?

SC Law Enforcement Assistance Program (SCLEAP) is here for you

SCLEAP is a partnership among SLED, South Carolina Department of Public Safety, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, the South Carolina Department of Probation, Parole, and Pardon Services and the South Carolina Military Department. The staff and volunteers are on call 24-hours a day, seven days a week in order to better serve the needs of all South Carolina law enforcement employees. SCLEAP chaplains (see below for contact information) offer SCDPS and other law enforcement and military members access and referrals to mental health counseling and wellness resources for such issues as:

- Stress management
- Grief
- Suicide intervention/prevention
- Anger management
- Addiction
- Marriage and family issues
- Post-deployment issues for those who have served in the military

Emergency contact numbers

24 Hour Emergency 803-896-7000 (O.D. Qtrs.)

J. Eric Skidmore

Work: 803-252-2664 or 803-252-2752

Cell: 803-206-8961

eskidmore@sled.sc.gov

David A. Tafaoa

Cell: 803-609-2986

dtafaoa@sled.sc.gov

Kevin R. Thompson

Cell: 803-521-9099

rthompson@sled.sc.gov

Captain Jo-Nathan Nell

Cell: 843-992-8309

Jo-nathanNell@scdps.gov

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# Career Opportunities at DPS

## JOIN OUR TEAM

- Auditor IV
- BPS Certified Law Enforcement Officer I & II
- Communications Operator I - Part Time
- Communications Specialist III
- Program Assistant (Call Taker)
- State Transport Police Certified Officer
- State Trooper - Certified and Non-Certified Officer

APPLY TODAY @ [CAREERS.SC.GOV](https://careers.sc.gov)



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