Troop E History

Troop E was organized in 1931 and is one of the original troops. The troop is bordered on the east by the Mississippi River and by the state of Arkansas on the south. The first Troop E Headquarters was located in Sikeston, in two rooms of a building constructed for the Highway Department. On May 7, 1938, the headquarters was moved to Polar Bluff. The Workers Public Administration built the building, making it the first Patrol troop headquarters completed in the state. The building—standing located south of Poplar Bluff on business U.S Highway 67—is still standing. It was the home of Troop E until 1975, when the present headquarters building was completed and formally dedicated on May 1. The present location is U.S. Highway 67 north of Poplar Bluff.

The first Patrol Satellite Station was opened in Troop E at Sikeston on October 1, 1973. The purpose of the satellite station was to better serve the citizens of that area. In the late 1990s, these satellite stations became known as service centers (there are three service centers statewide). A lieutenant assigned to Troop E Headquarters oversees the Troop E Service Center.

Captain A.D. Sheppard was the first commander of Troop E. The commanders since Captain Sheppard are as follows: First Sergeant O.L. Wallis, Captain O.L. Wallis, Lieutenant J. A. Tandy, Capt. O.L. Wallis, Captain E.F. Dampf, Captain W.C. Brooks, Captain F.A Findley, Captain R.D. Radford, Captain D.R. Shelton, Captain M.E. Patrick, Captain P.C. Baird, Captain G.E. Ridens, Captain Jeffrey N. Vitale, Captain Philip E. Gregory, and the present commander is Captain Jason J. Cluver.

There were nine officers assigned to Troop E in 1931. The officers assigned were: Captain A.D. Sheppard, Sergeant Rufus R. Reed, Trooper H.J. Turnbull, Trooper Ben F. Graham, Trooper N.H. Massie, Trooper O.L. Wallis, Trooper Melvin Dace, Trooper Charles Pearson, and Trooper Hubert Brooks. The troop had seven cars and two motorcycles.

Troop E covered 24 counties in 1931, and today covers 13 counties: Bollinger, Butler, Cape Girardeau, Dunklin, Iron, Madison, Mississippi, New Madrid, Pemiscot, Ripley, Scott, Stoddard, and Wayne, with officers patrolling one or more counties.

1935

Perry County was taken from Troop E and added to Troop C, Kirkwood. Dent County was also taken from Troop E, and added to Troop F, Jefferson City.

1937

Colonel Casteel decided there was a need to establish a radio station (troop headquarters) and the location of a tower, so it could be heard all over the troop. Several towns wanted it located in their city, but Poplar Bluff was chosen.

Through the efforts of the publisher of the Daily American Republic, John H. Wolpers, and county judge Harry I. Ruth Sr., a 30-acre site was offered. Director of Radio Captain J.A Wherritt had several sites tested and the location south of Poplar Bluff was found most ideal for the radio station. It was also the most centrally located.

On November 12, 1937, the Highway Department authorized a 60’ x 25’ building, costing $9,000, and a $15,000 radio station (KPHE) which included a 325-foot tower. The building was built by the WPA and was added onto twice later. It was the first troop headquarters completed in the state, which made it the oldest.

1938

A new troop headquarters building was constructed. On May 1, 1938, the Troop E headquarters was moved three miles north on U.S. Highway 67.

Frank Payne, a bootlegger, shot Trooper Nathan Massie and a constable at a roadblock south of Poplar Bluff.

1939

On December 1, 1939, Colonel B. Marvin Casteel resigned and Captain A.D. Sheppard (Troop E) became acting superintendent. Sergeant O.L. Wallis oversaw the troop from 1939 until 1942, when he was promoted to captain. He served as troop commander until 1944, continuously except for a short time when he was acting superintendent. Lieutenant Tandy served as commander at that time. Capt. Wallis returned to this command and served until retirement in 1966.

1940

On December 23, 1940, acting superintendent Captain A.D. Sheppard was called to active duty with the U.S. Army National Guard. He eventually became the Adjutant General of Missouri.

1942

The first weight officer, Troy E. Gladish, was hired at Cape Girardeau. At one time, there were stations in Cape Girardeau, Matthews, Dexter, and Poplar Bluff.

1944

In August 1944, Governor Donnell appointed Captain O.L. Wallis as acting superintendent.

1945

On July 13, 1945, Trooper J.N Greim was killed in a plane crash. He was a passenger in private plane searching for a fugitive near Corning, AR. He was the first member of Troop E to be killed in the line of duty.

1946

Each troop was assigned a safety officer in 1946. George L. Montgomery was assigned as Troop E's Safety Officer. Safety officers gave traffic safety presentations to schools, service clubs, and any other organization that requested their service. Safety officers also were charged with the responsibility of coordinating the safety work in the troop.

Troop E lost several counties in the western part of the troop due to a new troop being established at Willow Springs.

1950

Three new weight stations went into service in Troop E located at Dexter, Matthews, and Poplar Bluff.

1954

Bob Davis and Robert Hente became the first driver examiner clerks in Troop E. Mr. Davis and Mr. Hente gave written tests, and Sergeant A. Herman Hocker and Herbert F. Wickham administered the road tests. Mr. Davis joined the Patrol as a member in September 1955 and was employed until 1959. Mr. Hente later went from being a clerk to being a driver examiner and retired as a supervisor on January 1, 1993.

1961

Trooper Glen Davis was shot on two different occasions in 1961. Douglas Wayne Thompson, who killed a Cape Girardeau policeman, shot Trooper Davis during a "routine" traffic stop. Later in the year, Trooper Davis was shot again—this time by a man named Brown, who had barricaded himself in his house.

1970

All Troop E officers completed a very good school on motor vehicle inspection. Troopers L.O. Enderle and B.J. Adams instructed the course at the Dexter Armory. Tprs. Enderle and Adams did an excellent job presenting the material in

an interesting and informative manner. The instructors encouraged discussion and most members participated. The Motor Vehicle Inspection program benefited greatly from this training.

At 1:35 a.m. of February 20, 1970, on Highway 61 south of Hayti, three out-of-state people were fatally injured when a car failed to stay on its side of the road in a curve and hit another car head-on. On February 23, 1970, at 12:45 a.m., at the same location, three more out-of-state people were fatally injured when another car failed to stay on its side and hit another car head-on. Sergeant R.G. Koontz who had worked the Hayti area for the past 10 years, said he could recall only one fatality at that location prior to these.

Trooper Carroll Plunkett apprehended one of the most wanted criminals sought in Missouri on Highway 61 south of Sikeston. The wanted subject was William Herron, whose last known address was the St. Charles County Jail. Tpr. Plunkett noticed a blue 1964 Ford bearing Illinois plates traveling on Highway 61, south of Sikeston. Knowing most transients use Interstate 55, the trooper decided to check him out. Tpr. Plunkett checked the license through NCIC and it was reported stolen. At first, Herron used a fictitious name but later revealed his true name during questioning. Tpr. Plunkett received letters of commendation from Colonel Hockaday and from the sheriff of St. Charles County.

Trooper R.W. Jones was called to investigate a house burglary in a rural area near Poplar Bluff with Deputy Sheriff Cecil Foutch. At the house, they conducted the initial investigation and obtained what had been taken in the burglary. They followed up by contacting neighbors in the area to see if they could gather any additional information. In doing so, they obtained information, which led them to residence where they saw a television described in the burglary in the back seat of the car. Suspect Robert Glen Fohrell was standing next to the car and was placed under arrest, and Nona M. Rytrski came out of the residence and was also arrested.

On July 25, 1970, Trooper N.R. Grissom paced a car at 90 mph, on Interstate 55 south of Sikeston. The car was stopped, and the lady driving was asked for her driver’s license. She produced a Tennessee license, and after looking at the name, Tpr. Grissom asked to look at her license, not her husband’s. She replied, “Man it’s for real, a boy named Sue ain’t got nothing on me. How would you like to be a girl named Clyde?” Her name was Clyde V. Staples, of Memphis, TN.

On October 9, Sergeant G.L. Montgomery, Corporal R.F. Miller, and Trooper B.J. Adams, were invited to KFVA Television “Breakfast Show” along with Illinois State Police officers Sergeant G. Rockwell and Trooper F. Stille. The men participated in a round table discussion on motor vehicle inspection. Sergeant G.L. Montgomery served as moderator. A comparison was made between the laws in both states.

1971

On February 23, 1971, at 2:50 p.m., the Bank of Marquand was robbed and over $15,000 was taken. Three suspects were in custody and $13,000 was found in their possession a short time later by alert officers. Trooper C.R. Sisk and Deputy Sheriff Floyd Urich stopped one car and Corporal R.F. Miller stopped another. The moneybags, clothing, and other articles in the possession of the suspects were taken back to the bank, and bank employees identified them.

1973

The first new satellite station was opened in Troop E at Sikeston on October 1, 1973. Lieutenant W.E Lemonds oversaw the station, and Weight Inspectors B.J. Givens and B.D. Landers worked in the office.

The groundbreaking ceremony for the new Troop E Headquarters, Poplar Bluff, took place on October 19. In attendance were Colonel Smith, Poplar Bluff Mayor Wheatley, and Senator Nelson Tinnin.

1974

Construction of the new headquarters building at Troop E, Poplar Bluff, began in January 1974.

1975

On January 1, 1975, Perry County became a part of Troop C. Previously, this county had been under the administrative jurisdiction of Troop E.

The personnel of Troop E moved into their new headquarters building on April 14,1975. Governor Christopher Bond formerly dedicated the new building on May 1, 1975.

Troop E received its first aircraft, a Cessna Skylane 182. Trooper A.J. Sticker was assigned as the primary pilot. Tpr. Stricker had previously been the pilot in Troop A before transferring to Troop E. Corporal L.O. Enderle was assigned as the back-up pilot.

1977

An open house was held at the new satellite station in Sikeston on May 15, 1977.

1980

At 4 a.m. on February 14, 1980, simultaneous drug raids were conducted in various locations in Troop E. Officers participating in the raids included 26 officers from Troop E, deputies from Dunklin, New Madrid, Pemiscot, Scott, and

Stoddard counties, and members of Caruthersville, Kennett, Lilbourn, Portageville, and Sikeston Police Departments, along with officers of the Intelligence and Investigation Section of General Headquarters. This was the culmination of several months of investigation by several undercover agents of the Patrol. There was a total of 50 warrants served, including 32 adults and 1 juvenile being picked up, along with a large quantity of drugs and stolen property seized incidental to these arrests.

On April 9, 1980, delivery of a new 1980 Cessna Skylane was accepted from Industrial Aviation, Jefferson City, MO, and replaced a 1975 model at Troop E. The new aircraft was equipped with the latest navigation and communication equipment available. Sergeant L.O Enderle and Trooper K.R. Ledbetter were the pilots assigned to fly the aircraft and provide aerial surveillance for Troops E and G.

1984

Officers in Troop E helped provide security for Olympic Torch runners as they traveled the highways in the troop.

1988

The Patrol's first K-9 Unit completed training in early November. The unit was made up of four troopers and their German Shepherd partners. They had trained for six weeks under the direction of Mr. Georg Mueller of Kassel, West Germany. The first officer assigned to a K-9 in Troop E was Trooper Greg Kenley. His K-9 partner was named Ben.

1991

Corporal David C. May was honored with the 1991 "Top Gun" award presented by the Crowley Ridge Flyers at their annual Christmas Awards Banquet on December 17. Corporal May's award was for "exemplifying professionalism in flying, striving for increased proficiency, and projecting a positive image for general aviation". Below is his recounting of the story that won him the award.

"At 10:45 a.m., December 19, 1991, Troop E Radio came alive. The voice of Chief Operator Richard King was clear and firm, "Bank robbery at Essex!", there was no doubt this was the real thing. I [Cpl. David C. May] was flying traffic in airplane 93MP near Kennett, with Sergeant J.E. Bacon as an observer. I proceeded immediately to the area as officers began setting up roadblocks. The Patrol's professionalism could be felt in the air and set the stage for what was to occur.

The senior bank teller on duty was a professional. She activated the silent alarm and turned on the cameras. $40,405 was placed in a brown Piggly Wiggly grocery bag along with a tear gas dye bomb. The tellers on duty described the suspect as a white male in his 20s, wearing a blue ski mask, blue Wrangler

jeans, pink shirt, blue vest, and white tennis shoes, armed with a sawed-off shotgun. This description later proved to be correct, including the brand name of jeans.

Sergeant T.M. Almond located two witnesses who reported seeing a man leaving the bank carrying a paper bag. There was nothing too unusual about the guy, until the bag he was carrying popped loudly and began to smoke. At this point the man ran behind a church and got into a blue Pontiac Grand Am. The vehicle left eastbound on Route 114.

At 1:08 p.m., three hours and 37 minutes after the robbery, Sergeant R.L. Jones observed a blue Pontiac on Route ZZ, southwest of Dexter. Sgt. Jones admitted he was “about half lost at the time” and was only driving 30 mph as he met this vehicle. Being highly trained, Sgt. Jones took notice that the vehicle was a Grand Am driven by a white male who would not make eye contact. As Sgt. Jones began to stop and turn around, the Pontiac fled at a high rate of speed. It suddenly occurred to Sgt. Jones that this was, in fact, the bank robber and the chase was on. Sgt. Jones was Troop E’s public information and education officer and is assigned a white 1991 Chevrolet station wagon with Patrol emblems and stripes (it kind of looked like the vehicle from the movie Ghost Busters).

The pursuit crossed U.S. Highway 60 north of Dudley where the fleeing bank robber forced several other vehicles off the road. Corporal D.H. Moreland joined the chase at this point, as they headed north on Route WW from Dudley. When the chase took to the gravel road several wooden bridges were encountered.

At this point, Sergeant Bacon and I [Cpl. May] became involved in the chase. The bank robber was given a couple of good views of 93MP but insisted on not giving up. Sgt. Bacon could have taken care of him with his Glock, but he would not let go of the sides of his seat long enough to open the window or draw his weapon. From our viewpoint, we assisted the ground officers as best we could and attempted to keep headquarters advised. At this time, the cars were on Highway 51 heading toward Puxico.

Trooper F.J. Stoffregen set up a roadblock at Highway 51 and Route T just ahead of the pursuit. As the pursuit approached the roadblock, the fleeing robber hesitated about passing a van and slowed down. Suddenly he found himself almost stopped with a van in front of him. To his left was Tpr. Stoffregen showing him the business end of a 12-gauge shotgun. To his rear and right were Sgt. Jones and Cpl. Moreland. Above him was 93MP. What did he do? What could he do? Like any good crook that finds himself surrounded by Missouri’s finest, he raised his hands and surrendered. The bank robber was given a set of shiny stainless-steel bracelets to wear”.

1992

Inspector Keith Woodruff and his keen eye was sparkling on November 12, 1992. A subject brought in a 1989 Chevrolet van to Troop E for verification of a salvage vehicle identification number.

Insp. Woodruff examined the vehicle and noticed the VIN plate had been painted silver, and the rivets had been disfigured. A check of the confidential VIN revealed the van was a re-tagged stolen vehicle. The vehicle had been stolen in West Memphis, AR, the prior month. Corporal S.L. Pirtle seized the vehicle and Insp. Woodruff contacted West Memphis Police.

Trooper M.R. Renshaw completed the Interviewing Techniques/Statement Analysis School that was held October 26-30, 1992. About a week later, he stopped a vehicle with two subjects in a vehicle with no front license on U.S. Highway 67 south of Fredericktown. Tpr. Renshaw used different interview techniques he had just learned and received conflicting stories. He asked for permission to search, but they refused and he eventually let the vehicle go. Tpr. Renshaw notified Troop E Headquarters of his suspicions and Trooper Larry W. Plunkett Jr. stopped the vehicle for speeding near Troop E Headquarters. Tpr. Plunkett asked to search and was refused. The K-9 team was called, and the dog made a “hit” on the trunk. The vehicle was towed to Troop E Headquarters for inventory and processing. The driver and passenger gave written consent for search, and officers found nearly $31,000 in cash in the trunk.

1993

On November 11, 1993, a filed sobriety test administered by a Commercial Vehicle Enforcement (CVE) Supervisor at E-2 South indicated a driver was impaired. This led to subsequent finding of about 15 grams of cocaine on the subject, and 10 cans of beer in the vehicle.

1994

During the first 12 days of January 1994, inspectors at E-2 (Steele) initiated contacts resulting in four possession of drug charges, four charges of possession of drug paraphernalia, three cases of driving under the influence or refusal, one instance of possession of alcohol, and five drivers, who were in such a condition to be a hazard to everyone, were taken off the highway.

On February 19, the Sikeston Elk’s Lodge recognized Trooper Jeff L. Heath as the Outstanding Law Enforcement Officer of the Year. Tpr. Heath distinguished himself as one of the hardest working officers in Troop E. He was continually among troop leaders in DWI, criminal, and drug interdiction arrest. In previous years, he netted: 462 pounds of marijuana, 10 kilos of cocaine, three pounds of crack cocaine, and $51,976.

On September 2, Trooper Perry C. Hazelwood fatally shot a suspect who was brandishing an automatic weapon in a busy intersection near Cape Girardeau. Two other suspects were taken into custody.

On October 20, at 1:49 a.m., a black Kenworth tractor pulling a refrigerated box trailer was stopped at E-2 North by CVE Inspectors L.E. Masterson and R.G. Cobb. A thorough inspection of the truck revealed several discrepancies. The driver of the truck appeared to be very nervous and had to repeatedly wipe sweat from his head. The driver said he was loaded with watermelons, had loaded them himself and was going to try to sell them.

The bill of lading showed the melons were being shipped to a produce company in Michigan. The driver had difficulty backing his truck and juice was running from the truck. It smelled like fabric softener. The inspectors requested assistance from a trooper and Trooper J.A. Sampietro responded. After Tpr. Sampietro arrived, he obtained consent to search, and it did not take long for inspectors to find nine old army bags of marijuana hidden in the bins of rotting watermelons. Approximately 500 pounds of marijuana was confiscated. The marijuana was in blocks weighing about three pounds each, wrapped in fabric softener with an outer layer of duct tape.

1995

On May 5, at 6:25 p.m., CVE Inspectors Masterson and B D. Hay stopped a purple Kenworth tractor pulling a refrigerated box trailer driven by Guadalupe Romero at E-2 North on Interstate 55 near Steele.

The driver said he had loaded the trailer in Texas, but his logbook showed he had not been in Texas. Romero had his girlfriend and children in the truck without consent. Sgt. R. Guilliams arrived at the scale house and questioning continued. Romero became very nervous and wringing his hands, then began to sweat and pace back and forth. Permission to search was obtained and located inside was 73 bundles of marijuana containing 1,639.75 pounds of marijuana.

1996

Sergeant Randy V. Sullivan was killed in a traffic crash February 17, 1996, on Missouri Highway 72 in Madison County, eight miles west of Fredericktown. The crash occurred when Sgt. Sullivan, 40, checked a speeding vehicle by radar and turned around to overtake the violator. As he came over a hill, his vehicle ran off the roadway and struck several trees. Troopers responding to the scene found Sgt. Sullivan’s car engulfed in flames with his body inside it. Patrol Recruit Christopher R. Thomas, who was riding with Sgt. Sullivan, was found outside the vehicle. He had sustained moderate injuries. Sgt. Sullivan was a 17-year veteran of the Patrol. His wife, Brenda, and their three sons: Justin, Brandon, and Caleb, survived Sgt. Sullivan.

In the fall 1996, communications services were relocated from the satellite facility to Troop E Headquarters in Poplar Bluff. With the installation of a new multi-position communications console at Troop E, the troop was divided in half, north and south, utilizing two communication channels.

In June 1996, six members of the Missouri State Highway Patrol were assigned to work with Sikeston Missouri Department of Public Safety. Through a federal grant from the Department of Justice named “Weed and Seed”, bicycles were purchased and the officers patrolled with the Sikeston Department of Public Safety on the streets of Sikeston from 1-9 p.m. on June 25-August 31. The Patrol officers assigned were Sergeant Robert A. Guilliams, Corporal Greg D. Kenley, Corporal Jeff S. Waggoner, Trooper Christopher G. Graves, Trooper Stephen D. Jarrell, and Trooper David F. Sweeney.

1997

On February 7, 1997, the Sikeston Elks honored the members of Troop E, Zones 8 and 9, at their Annual Law Enforcement Appreciation Dinner. Zones 8 and 9 were honored for their fight against the war on drugs along Interstate 55 in Pemiscot County. In 1996, these zones seized more than 2,800 pounds of marijuana, 22 pounds of cocaine, and more than $58,000, involving 79 defendants during its interdiction efforts. Zone 8 members were: Sergeant William C. Clayton, Corporal Jeff L. Heath, Trooper Christopher G. Graves, Trooper Jody T. Laramore, and Trooper David K. Striegel. Zone 9 members were: Sergeant Robert A. Guilliams, Corporal Larry W. Plunkett Jr., Trooper Freddie L. Butler, Trooper Terry W. Lee, and Trooper Jeffrey F. Nance.

1998

On December 2, 1998, at approximately 10:30 a.m., Troop E desk received an emergency telephone call from Jeff Parker, a young man from Sikeston. Parker stated he was eastbound on U.S. Highway 60 in Butler County in a 1998 Ford Escort, and the accelerator was stuck. He was told by Sergeant Jon S. Daniel to turn off the engine, he did so, but the vehicle continued at 90 mph. Sgt. Daniel inquired about the fuel in the vehicle and Parker said three quarters of a tank. Parker tried to apply the brakes, but they quickly became too hot. Troop E desk called Ford Motor Company; however, they did not have a solution and Parker was now approaching Illinois on Interstate 57. Patrol cars had been notified to try to run interference. The vehicle continued at speeds of 110 mph. Troop E was losing cellular contact and advised Parker to call *77 for Illinois State Police. Ford Motor Company had already called Illinois and instructed them to tell Parker to hit the gear shift as hard as he could, causing the engine to blow up. Thus, ending the chase that wasn’t.

1999

Sergeant David C. May, 41, was killed in the line of duty on May 17, 1999. Sgt. May, a pilot for Troop E, died as result of injuries sustained in a helicopter crash. The fatal accident occurred in downtown Poplar Bluff, just west of Business U.S. Highway 67. He and a professional photographer, Ricky Wayne Gunnels Jr., 22, had been photographing and videotaping the “Law Enforcement Torch Run” for Special Olympics. Gunnels also died in the crash. Sgt. May was an 18-year veteran of the Patrol. Sgt. May was survived by his wife, Lynda; their two daughters: Krista, 11, and Taralyn, 9; and his father, Cargene.

In February 1999, a fourth Major Crash Investigation Team was formed and assigned to Troop E. The officers assigned to the unit were Corporal Cameron M. Heath, Trooper Kevin W. Malugen, and Trooper Timothy G. Pulley. The Troop E team had a wide variety of duties. They assisted in crime scene investigations, assisted the FAA with downed aircrafts, and assisted the FBI with archeological unit photographing scenes and training at their St. Charles, MO, facility. The unit also assisted the Missouri Attorney General’s Office with homicides and bullet trajectory.

In August, Troop E officers and aircraft assisted Troops G and I in locating a Missouri Air National Guard pilot after his F-15 fighter plane collided with another F-15 during maneuvers in Shannon County.

On October 21, 1999, at approximately 3:15 a.m., an earthquake occurred in southeast Missouri and northeast Arkansas. The earthquake was confirmed as a 3.9 on the Richter scale with the epicenter approximately 35 miles west of Poplar Bluff. Tremors were reported in southern Butler, southern Howell, Oregon, and Ripley counties.

2000

Trooper Aaron M. Harrison was named the February Missouri Department of Public Safety Employee of the Month. The recognition came after Tpr. Harrison took the initiative to investigate reports of anhydrous ammonia theft in his area. Anhydrous ammonia is an ingredient used in the production of methamphetamine. Tpr. Harrison contacted the Co-op managers in his area to confirm the theft was occurring and was a problem. As a result of this investigation, and in conjunction with the Cape Girardeau County Sheriff’s Department and the Southeast Missouri Drug Task Force, more than 30 arrests were made. Governor Mel Carnahan also named Tpr. Harrison the May State Employee of the Month.

As a memorial to Sgt. David C. May, the 19th member of the Missouri State Highway Patrol to die in the line of duty, the registration numbers of N93MP were changed to reflect Sgt. May’s badge number. The 1986 Cessna 182 airplane, assigned to Troop E, was renumbered to N873MP. This became possible

through the research and patience of Sergeant J.A. Sampietro, the pilot replacing Sgt. May.

The Memorial Award was presented to Sgt. May's family. Sgt. May died in a helicopter after, according to witnesses, he guided the helicopter away from businesses, homes, and pedestrians as it fell. This heroic action showed his devotion to serving and protecting the people of Missouri. The name of Sgt. David C. May was added to the Missouri Law Enforcement Memorial in Jefferson City. Lt. Dave Hart escorted the May family to Washington, D.C, to attend the national memorial service honoring law enforcement killed in the line of duty.

2001

On February 16, 2001, Sergeant Robert A. Guilliams lost his life in the line of duty as a result of a traffic crash on Interstate 55 in Pemiscot County. He was responding to a call that a tractor-trailer was in the median at the two-mile marker. Sgt. Guilliams began his shift on February 15 at 8 p.m., and after incarcerating a drunk at the New Madrid County Jail at 3:30 a.m., he received a radio call regarding a tractor-trailer in the median, which was about 42 miles away from his location. It was raining and the wind was blowing, making driving conditions poor.

At about 4 a.m., Troop E started receiving calls about an accident near the 14-mile marker (later confirmed at the 16-mile marker). Radio and Telecommunications Technician John B. Beaton began to call Sgt. Guilliams—with no response. At 4:29 a.m., it was confirmed a patrol car was involved in the reported wreck. Sgt. Guilliams had apparently hydroplaned on wet pavement, causing his car to spin out of control, striking a concrete bridge abutment. Rescue personnel quickly responded, but his body was located below the water level.

Sgt. Guilliams was a 17-year veteran of the Highway Patrol and spent his entire career in Troop E. He was the zone commander of Troop E, Zone 8. His wife, Paula, and two children: Ashton and Justin, survived him.

On September 28, 2001, the United States Attorney’s Office, Eastern District of Missouri, held its annual awards ceremony at the Thomas F. Eagleton Federal Courthouse in St. Louis, MO. Among those honored were Troop E employees CVO Bill G. Britton, CVO Larry E. Masterson, Sergeant Rick J. Sanders, and Trooper Jason N. Crites. Each officer was presented with a Distinguished Service Award for their efforts in seizing more than 6,500 pounds of processed marijuana during two separate commercial vehicle inspections at scale house E-2 North near Steele, MO.

2002

Troop E’s first Community Alliance Program was held at Troop E Headquarters. The program was huge success. After seven weeks of learning about drugs,

drunks, and firearms, it culminated with stop and approach scenarios behind troop headquarters. Almost all the “citizens turned troopers” got shot by the bad guys.

On Friday, February 8, 2002, the ribbon cutting ceremony and grand opening took place for the new scale house located on Interstate 55 near Steele. The previous scale house was built in 1975 and was approximately the size of the trucker’s slang term for the scales (chicken coop). The new scale house had 1,300 square feet with two bathrooms and a shower. A small room for the drivers to enter and a dividing wall between them and the CVOs was included, a safety measure that has been much needed for a long time.

On August 31, 2002, an informal ceremony dedicating a portion of Route 72 in Madison County as Sergeant Randy Sullivan Memorial Highway was held at the Madison County Courthouse in Fredericktown, MO. A presentation of smaller versions of the sign was made by Sergeant Shelby Pirtle and Matthew Renshaw to Randy’s widow, Brenda, and his children.

2003

On July 9, 2003, the Law Enforcement Traffic Safety Advisory Council honored Trooper Michael G. Slaughter as “Traffic Officer of the Year”. The council had their banquet at the Sun Spree Holiday Inn in Lake Ozark, MO. During 2002, Tpr. Slaughter totaled 1,386 arrests and issued 1,603 warnings. These totals included: 50 DWI arrests, 425 speeding violations, 608 seat belt violations, 46 hazardous moving violations, 135 non-hazardous moving violations, 17 felony arrests, 60 criminal misdemeanor arrests, 60 controlled substance arrests, and 21 warrant arrests.

On December 27, 2003, Corporal Terry W. Lee was recognized with a “Lifesaving Citation” for his unselfish display of bravery during a fire at the Doniphan City Jail. Cpl. Lee was at the facility and assisted local authorities in the evacuation of the building. As a result of the decisive actions of all involved, the inmates were safely removed from the building, and no serious injuries were reported.

2004

On January 21, 2004, CVO II Raymond Oldsen was working what seemed to be a typical day in his assigned portable scale van, when suddenly it became anything but typical. At 2 p.m., CVO Oldsen observed a silver Mercury Sable at a residence on Route C in Pemiscot County. The vehicle was occupied by a white male, and he could see another white male running from the rear of the residence. The vehicle left the area going toward Kennett. CVO Oldsen checked the residence and his suspicions were correct; the back door of the residence had been forced open. CVO Oldsen notified Troop E, Kennett Police, and the

Pemiscot County Sheriff's Department. The vehicle was quickly stopped and both subjects apprehended.

At approximately 10:07 a.m. on June 14, 2004, the Patrol was notified of an accident on Interstate 55, in Cape Girardeau County, involving a trooper, who had been struck by a car. It was later determined the trooper was Sergeant Bradley S. Lively, a zone supervisor in Cape Girardeau, Scott, and Bollinger counties. The accident occurred as Sgt. Lively attempted to conduct a traffic stop on northbound lanes of Interstate 55, near the 102-mile marker. Sgt. Lively was outside his patrol vehicle when a northbound vehicle struck him. After spending several weeks at St. Francis Medical Center in Cape Girardeau, Sgt. Lively recuperated at home. In the fall of 2005, Sgt. Lively returned to full duty.

On March 24, 2004, Missouri State Representative Otto Bean presented a worthy group of Troop E CVOs and Troopers a special House of Representatives Resolution for their work in the war against drugs. Recognized at the presentation were: CVO Sprv. Ronald O. "Ron" Abmeyer, CVO Sprv. Randy G. Cobb, CVO II Larry E. Masterson, Trooper Jason N. Crites, Sergeant Reginald M. "Reggie" Walker and Sergeant Sanders.

On April 16, 2004, the Poplar Bluff Elks chapter of the Fraternal Order of Elks held its annual Law Enforcement Appreciation Banquet for 2004. Honored for 2004 from the Patrol was Sergeant Lonnie L. Hickman. Sgt. Hickman is a 28-year veteran of the Patrol and serves as evidence and supply officer for Troop E.

In July 2004, Troop E received a new canine. K-9 Taz was born February 10, 2002, and was partnered with Sergeant Sanders.

On September 9, 2004, Captain George E. Ridens announced, "President George W. Bush is coming to Poplar Bluff on Labor Day." That left only three short days to make overwhelming plans involving several departments and much manpower. However, plans were put in place and, as usual, Troop E employees did an excellent job. The president's visit to Poplar Bluff was successful and all went as planned.

On December 1, 2004, Trooper Nicholas T. Bratton was forced to swerve and avoid an inattentive driver who had failed to yield to his emergency vehicle. His patrol car struck the concrete base of an electric light standard, nearly shearing the vehicle in two. Tpr. Bratton was airlifted to Elvis Presley Trauma Center in Memphis, TN, where he underwent several surgical procedures and rehabilitation.

2005

Troop E had two officers return to work after both had fully recovered from serious injuries sustained while on duty. In June 2005, Tpr. Bratton returned to road duty after being involved in a traffic crash in December 2004. In September

2005, Sgt. Lively returned to work after numerous surgical procedures, and nearly a year of intense rehabilitation.

In August 2005, Troop E established a two-man zone primarily to work drug interdiction on Interstate 55. Assigned to the interdiction zone are Sgt. Sanders with K-9 Taz, and Trooper John S. Steward. The zone seized 58 pounds of marijuana, one-half pound of methamphetamine and nearly one pound of heroin.

On November 14, 2005, Bollinger County received seven and a half inches of rain over a very short period of time. The intense rainfall caused a flash flood of the Castor River. The nearby Castor River Campground was rapidly overcome by floodwaters stranding numerous campers in the frigid floodwaters. The Bollinger County Sheriff's Department and Fire Department responded to the campgrounds but encountered difficulty in navigating the strong flood currents. At the request of the Bollinger County Sheriff, off-duty Trooper Matthew L. Kenney responded with his personal boat. Tpr. Kenney, with his river boating experience and knowledge, was able to respond and save the lives of six adults and three children. The Chief Deputy of Bollinger County Sheriff's Department said he believed the Sheriff would have drowned if Tpr. Keeney had not arrived to help. Tpr. Keeney received a Patrol Lifesaving Award for his heroism.

2006

On April 2, 2006, at approximately 6:30 p.m., a very strong line of thunderstorms and tornadoes moved through Dunklin and Pemiscot counties. Initial reports indicated extensive property damage, especially within the communities of Kennett, Deering, Braggadocio, and Caruthersville. Surrounding agencies and Troop E officers responded to the affected areas. Many electrical power lines were down, and a natural gas line rupture occurred with the Texas Eastern Gas Line in Deering.

As a result of these storms, 60 people suffered injuries, one being fatal. The Patrol originally sent 21 officers. Before the detailed ended, the component consisted of 50 officers working 12-hour shifts. Many other departments assisted in the devastated area: Missouri State Water Patrol, Missouri Department of Conservation, Missouri Park Rangers, Missouri Fire Marshal's Office, Missouri Army National Guard, and many southeast Missouri county and municipal police and fire departments.

DPS Director Mark S. James named Tpr. Keeney April 2006 DPS Employee of the Month. Tpr. Keeney was also named the May 2006 State Employee of the Month.

On Tuesday June 6, 2006, Governor Matt Blunt was in Cape Girardeau for a press conference and bill signing. The bill signed into law was House Bill 1698, known as Jessica's Law (relating to sexual offenders). Accompanying the

governor was Representative Scott Lipke of Jackson, MO. Captain Ridens and Sergeant Dale H. Moreland represented Troop E.

Troop E opened its doors from 1-4 p.m. on September 30, 2006, to celebrate 75 years of serving the public. The '59 Dodge patrol car, a marked, semi-marked, and an unmarked patrol car were all displayed. Members of Troop E demonstrated the rollover, the seat belt convincer, the golf car, and the fatal vision goggles. Sgt. Sanders and K-9 Taz were the biggest hit of the day! On hand were also two Patrol helicopters, the Bell Jet Ranger from General Headquarters, and the marijuana military OH 58 from Troop G. The range was open for those interested. The Major Crash Investigation Team and the CVOs had excellent displays. About 350 to 400 guests toured the building and grounds.

2007

On April 10, 2007, 14 Troop E area residents completed a Community Alliance Program offered by Troop E. Twelve Troop E employees served as instructors. This was the seventh program of this type conducted at Troop E Headquarters since 2001. The eight-week program was culminated with an awards presentation, which was sponsored by Dexter Barbecue and Dexter Pizza Hut.

On April 21, 2007, two Troop E officers were honored at the Patrol Annual Awards Banquet held at the Executive Center in Columbia, MO. Honored from Troop E was Lieutenant James E. McNeill, who received The MASTERS Public Service Award, and Sergeant Cody H. Fulkerson who received a Lifesaving Award.

On October 5, 2007, Troop E held a press conference to announce the participation in the statewide campaign, "I'm Saving Lives. Help Wanted.", at Troop E Headquarters with Colonel James F. Keathley as the keynote speaker.

On November 5, 2007, four Troop E officers began training at the Patrol's Training Academy as commercial vehicle enforcement troopers. They graduated on December 21, 2007. The officers attending the training were Sergeant Larry R. Clark, Corporal Douglas M. McDaniel, Trooper Lonnie R. Lejeune, and Trooper Benjamin C. Jones.

2008

In 2008, the 13 counties in Southeast Missouri that comprise Troop E experienced a reduction of six fatalities.

On January 7, 2008, Trooper Andrew B. "Andy" Ward investigated a traffic accident near Poplar Bluff. Tpr. Ward observed smoke coming from the vehicle upon his arrival. Tpr. Ward was informed an elderly female occupied the vehicle and her foot was stuck. Tpr. Ward was able to dislodge her foot by gaining entry through the driver's side window. Trooper Corey W. Tucker attempted to extinguish the fire as Tpr. Ward removed the woman from the car with the

assistance of civilians on the scene. The car immediately burst into flames and was consumed. Both officers were recognized; Tpr. Ward with a Citation of Valor and Tpr. Tucker with a Lifesaving Award.

On February 8, the Sergeant Carl Dewayne Graham Jr. Memorial Highway was dedicated at the Missouri National Guard Armory in Dexter. Speakers at the dedication included Hayden Graham, Sgt. Graham's son.

On March 18, heavy rains caused flooding in the Piedmont area of Wayne County. Troop E officers assisted the Wayne County Sheriff's Department and the Piedmont Police Department with evacuations, curfew enforcement, and securing local businesses. Troop E officers also assisted the Butler County Sheriff's Department with evacuations on March 21, 2008.

On April 19, a Troop E officer was honored at the Patrol Annual Awards Banquet at the Executive Center in Columbia. Corporal Terry W. Lee received a Lifesaving Award, for providing CPR to an unconscious subject.

On June 21, 2008, Sergeant Blaine L. Adams was honored at the MADD Missouri State Luncheon/Awards ceremony at the Capitol Plaza Hotel, Jefferson City. Sgt. Adams was one of the top Patrol sergeants in DWI enforcement for 2007, and the career active leader in DWI arrests for the Patrol.

On June 26, Troop E CVOs seized 1,538 pounds of marijuana located in a trailer load of produce. Initially, the vehicle was stopped for an equipment violation on Interstate 55 in New Madrid County.

On September 24, Troop E officers stopped a 2000 Chrysler traveling north on Interstate 55 in New Madrid County for an equipment violation and littering. After the vehicle was towed, a subsequent search revealed a vacuum-sealed bag of ecstasy.

On September 27, 2008, a Troop E officer stopped a 2007 Hyundai on Interstate 55 in New Madrid County for a traffic violation. After permission to search was denied, a K-9 unit responded, and the sniff revealed 130 pounds of processed marijuana.

On November 25, 2008, a member of Troop E investigated a traffic crash in Mississippi County involving a 2004 Mazda van. The officer located and seized 15 kilos of cocaine after it was seen in plain view.

2009

In 2009, the 13 counties in Southeast Missouri that comprise Troop E experienced an increase of three fatalities.

On January 26, a paralyzing ice storm swept the Troop E area. In Butler County, 80 percent of the population was without power. In Dunklin County, 450 people

were served at five shelters, which were open overnight. Although Kennett reported some limited power, the rest of Dunklin County reported a 100 percent power outage. Mississippi and New Madrid counties reported power outages of 85 percent and 95 percent, respectively. The Missouri Department of Transportation reported 92 road closures.

On January 29, Trooper Lonnie R. Lejeune was patrolling and heard a female screaming. He then observed a man hanging from a branch in a tree. The man had climbed the tree to cut a tree limb that was hanging over his home as a result of the ice storm. The limb that was cut had fallen on him pinning him against another branch and causing him to hang from the tree. Tpr. Lejeune attempted to free the man by lifting the end of the branch he'd cut with no success. Tpr. Lejeune then climbed the ladder and lifted the unconscious man enough to restore his breathing. The trooper instructed the female how to call for assistance using the Patrol radio. Tpr. Lejeune held the victim to keep his airway open until assistance arrived from the Sikeston Department of Public Safety and the Scott County Ambulance Service. They were then able to free him from the tree. The injured man was flown to St. Francis Hospital in Cape Girardeau. He was treated for multiple injuries and recovered. For his heroic actions, Tpr. Lejeune was given the April 2009 DPS Employee of the Month Award and May 2009 State Employee of the Month. Also, the Missouri Police Chief's Association named Tpr. Lejeune as its 2009 Medal of Honor Award recipient.

On October 31, 2009, Trooper Dewey K. Heppe was off duty and working in his yard when he saw a two-seat Piper single engine airplane crash during takeoff on a private air strip behind his property. Tpr. Heppe had his personal cellular telephone on his person and immediately called Troop E Headquarters for assistance as he ran toward the crash. As he ran to the scene, the airplane exploded, which engulfed the cockpit in flames. Without regard to his own safety, Tpr. Heppe reached into the burning wreckage and pulled the passenger from the aircraft. He then began to extinguish the flames and removed the burning clothing from the man. Tpr. Heppe reported that the man's breathing was shallow as he was extinguishing the flames, but then the gentleman, who was severely burned, stopped breathing. He was unable to get to the pilot of the aircraft due to the flames. Tpr. Heppe sustained minor burns on his hands from the fire.

2010

Tpr. Lejeune accepted a Patrol Lifesaving Award on April 17, 2010, for his actions on January 29, 2009. Trooper Heppe received the Valor Award for his actions on October 31, 2009.

On April 17, 2010, Corporal Douglas M. McDaniel accepted the Benjamin Oliver Booth Officer of the Year Award. Cpl. McDaniel was assigned to Troop E, Zone 14, as a commercial vehicle enforcement trooper. In his assigned duties, he inspected hundreds of commercial motor vehicles for safety violations. In 2009, he placed 11 percent of the drivers and 14 percent of the vehicles out-of-service.

Cpl. McDaniel attended specialized interdiction training, which greatly benefited the Patrol. In January 2009, he shared information with another trooper resulting in a traffic stop and seizure of $1.5 million on Interstate 55 in New Madrid County. In March 2009, Cpl. McDaniel seized 20 kilos of cocaine from a commercial motor vehicle in Cape Girardeau County. He developed a network of trusted federal, state, and local officers to share intelligence, trends, and criminal interdiction techniques. In September 2009, federal agents in Texas contacted him with information that Cpl. McDaniel relayed to Troop D, Springfield. As a result, 20 kilos of cocaine were seized. In another case, intelligence shared by Cpl. McDaniel led to the seizure of $300,000 in Illinois. He assisted the DEA out-of-state on two separate occasions due to his expertise in locating hidden compartments.

Sergeant Sanders and Troop E welcomed a new K-9, Argo, to the interdiction zone.

2011

In 2011, the 13 counties in southeast Missouri that comprise Troop E experienced a decrease of nine fatalities.

On March 4, 2011, 10 Poplar Bluff High School students completed a Student Alliance Program offered by Troop E. Eleven Troop E employees served as instructors during the program. This was the first program of this type in Troop E. The five-week program culminated with an awards ceremony at troop headquarters.

On April 16, 2011, three Troop E officers were honored at the Patrol Annual Awards Banquet held at the Capitol Plaza Hotel in Jefferson City. Corporal Greg D. Kenley, Trooper Kindel C. Hampton, and Trooper Russell R. Gibson all received a Lifesaving Award.

On April 19, the first of many severe thunderstorms rolled through the area. When the rain stopped in the early morning hours of May 2, many areas within Troop E had received over 20 inches of rain. The devastation caused by the flooding changed lives forever. Levees collapsed either on their own or were breached by the Army Corps of Engineers to allow the "mighty Mississippi" to drain into 132,000 acres of farmland that served as a floodway basin. The number of officers assigned to the Mobile Field Force grew to a total of 42 troopers and 18 boats. Troopers from the Water Patrol Division (WPD) performed over 60 water rescues and answered over 200 calls for service.

During the summer of 2011, the radio room at Troop Headquarters underwent its own version of extreme makeover. New radio consoles and communication equipment were installed inside the building, while outside, a new aerial tower was erected. This is the first phase of the state of Missouri’s radio upgrade.

On October 1, 2011, Troop E welcomed three WPD troopers to its ranks, when they were reassigned to the troop.

2012

In 2012, Troop E experienced a zero percent increase in fatalities compared to 2011. The troop has an authorization of 92 members and 72 civilian employees.

On February 29, 2012, in the early morning hours, an EF-3 tornado struck rural Stoddard County. This line of storms had spawned numerous tornadoes earlier in southwest Missouri. Wind speed was in excess of 140 miles per hour, with a width of 550 yards and was 21 miles long. One fatality was reported in Troop E as a result of the tornado.

On March 10, 2012, at approximately 10 p.m., Corporal Jeremy S. Stewart was shot while assisting Trooper David W. Crank at a traffic stop. While speaking with one of the four occupants outside of the vehicle, another passenger still in the vehicle began firing a handgun, striking Cpl. Stewart in the neck. Cpl. Stewart and the other trooper returned fire. One of the occupants was struck and killed and a second passenger in the vehicle was shot and wounded in the exchange of gunfire. Sergeant Sanders, who was also at the scene, provided lifesaving first aid to Cpl. Stewart. On May 25, 2012, Cpl. Stewart, Tpr. Crank, and Sgt. Sanders were recognized by the Missouri House of Representatives as Outstanding Missourians. Cpl. Stewart recuperated and returned to active duty.

June 5, 2012, was described as an unforgettable day. At approximately 9 p.m., a line of severe thunderstorms moved through southeast Missouri, packing 70-80 mph straight line wind. There were three fatalities reported from this storm. Later in the night, at approximately 11 p.m., an Amtrak passenger train collided with a Jeep Cherokee that was parked on the train tracks, killing two of the occupants. The occupants of the Jeep were playing a game known locally as "Ghost Train”.

In September and October, Troop E hosted a Community Alliance Program. Participants were provided the opportunity to learn about Patrol history, drug interdiction, stop and approach techniques, and were provided with firearms safety techniques and allowed to participate in simulated scenarios before actually firing Patrol duty weapons. They also attended a crime scene and a crash scene investigation presentation. Eleven people participated in the program.

On October 11, 2012, Governor Jay Nixon presented the Medal of Valor to Trooper James C. Cooksey for his valiant service on June 21, 2011. On June 21, 2011, Tpr. Cooksey responded when a sport utility vehicle ran off Missouri Route P into a flooded drainage ditch in New Madrid County. The SUV, submerged up to the luggage rack, was rapidly being swept downstream in St. John's Bayou. Tpr. Cooksey joined two civilians attempting to reach the driver and free her from the vehicle. The swift-moving water was murky, and submerged and floating

debris posed additional hazards. Tpr. Cooksey assisted the civilians in getting the victim out of the vehicle and then swam, pulling her toward the bank. Tpr. Cooksey and Trooper Christopher D. Hamlett performed CPR until an ambulance arrived. Unfortunately, despite the heroic efforts of Troopers Cooksey and Hamlett and the other men, the victim did not survive.

On October 28, 2012, Commercial Vehicle Inspector III Matthew R. Freeman was promoted to Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Inspector Supervisor I. He was the first Troop E commercial vehicle inspector promoted to a supervisory position.

2014

Lieutenant Steven B. Niederkorn retired on February 1, 2014, after more than 35 years of dedicated service with the Patrol and more than 38 total years of law enforcement in southeast Missouri. He was replaced by Lieutenant Jon C. Pruiett who transferred from Troop C.

Trooper Cameron M. Heath was recognized as the 2014 LETSAC officer of the year for the Patrol.

In March 2014, Trooper J. Shane Palmer and Trooper Brooks A. Pratt were named DPS Employees of the Month. The award recognized Tprs. Palmer and Pratt for their responsiveness to a situation involving a single vehicle crash. The vehicle had traveled off the roadway and overturned in a water-filled drainage ditch. With the ambient air temperature of 25 degrees, Tprs. Palmer and Pratt made numerous attempts to save the life of the vehicle’s driver by entering the freezing cold water. They performed an extraordinary act of heroism by extending far and beyond the call of duty in a situation demanding immediate action that involved considerable personal danger to themselves. Tprs. Pratt and Palmer were recognized as the State of Missouri Employees of the Month for their actions.

In June 2014, Trooper Richard L. Ayers was named DPS Employee of the Month. Tpr. Ayers was selected for this award as a result of his extraordinary act of heroism in a dangerous situation. A flash flood trapped a citizen in southeast Missouri on April 27, 2014. Tpr. Tpr. Ayers acted unselfishly in a situation demanding immediate action and involving considerable personal risk. During the initial rescue attempt, the patrol boat capsized. Tpr. Ayers and a local officer swam to safety. Tpr. Ayers then swam to the stranded citizen, who was injured. Tpr. Ayers moved the citizen to a safer location and gave him his life jacket before making sure a rescue boat could gain access to them.

As most troops did during the latter part of 2014, Troop E sent several platoons of officers to the historic civil disobedience in Ferguson. Fortunately for all, there were no injuries attributed to this assignment.

2015

Trooper Ronald W. Eakins accepted a Career Milestone award at the Patrol's Annual ceremony and The MASTERS Banquet on April 30, 2016. The Career Milestone award is presented to recognize a member who has made over 1,000 driving while intoxicated arrests.

Troop E's Honor Guard represented the agency as one of 18 teams competing during National Police Week in Washington, D.C. The competition included a Team Inspection Drill, Color Guard Phase, and an Exhibition Phase. Judges included members of the Army's "The Old Guard" and Marine Corps "Silent Drill Team". Troop E took 10th place in the competition. This was the first time the Patrol had sent a team to compete in the National Honor Guard Competition, and Troop E was honored to represent the organization and the great state of Missouri. While they were in Washington, D.C., the Troop E Honor Guard represented the Patrol at the 27th Annual Candlelight Vigil, which was held at the National Law Enforcement Memorial on May 13, 2015.

Tpr. Ayers was honored with a Patrol Meritorious Service Award at the annual awards banquet. Gov. Jay Nixon presented a 2015 Missouri Medal of Honor to Tpr. Ayers.

In August, Troop E sent a contingent of officers to Ferguson, MO, for the anniversary of the civil unrest there. All officers returned home safely.

In 2015, the indoor range at Troop E was renovated and equipped with a new ventilation system.

2016

Troop E's 93 members made a total of 27,270 arrests, which included 714 arrests for driving while intoxicated and 2,007 drug-related arrests, in 2016. Troopers also investigated 3,617 traffic crashes. Troop E experienced an 11 percent increase in fatalities from the previous year.

On February 10, 2016, Titus G. Tacket, 3, was reported missing from his residence in the Lake Killarney community of Iron County. Members assigned to Zones 12 and 13, the Division of Drug and Crime Control, WPD, and the Aircraft Division responded to the scene to assist the Iron County Sheriff's Department and the FBI with the search and investigation. Tragically, Titus was found deceased approximately 14 hours later in a parked vehicle. The death was determined to be accidental.

On April 1, Captain Ridens retired after 35 years of service to the Patrol. Lieutenant Jeffrey N. Vitale was promoted to the rank of captain and assumed the position of Troop E's commanding officer.

On April 29, 2016, Trooper Donald J. McBride was involved in a shooting during a traffic stop in Cape Girardeau County. The Cape Girardeau County Prosecuting Attorney reviewed the investigative reports and determined Tpr. McBride's actions were lawful and justified.

On April 30, Trooper Ronald W. Eakins was recognized for his commitment to highway safety by making 1,000 arrests for driving while intoxicated. Tpr. Eakins accepted a "Career Milestone" award for his accomplishment.

On May 14, 2016, the Troop E Honor Guard represented the Patrol during National Police Week in Washington, D.C. Members assigned to this detail served as escorts for the families of fallen officers and competed in the Police Week Honor Guard Competition.

On July 29, 10 high school-aged cadets attended the first "Patrol Youth Academy" at Three Rivers College in Poplar Bluff. The event was organized by the Career Recruitment Division. Numerous Troop E officers and civilian personnel assisted.

Trooper Adam N. Miller was recognized as the October 2016 DPS Employee of the Month. The recognition came because of his actions when responding to a house fire. Tpr. Miller entered the smoke-filled home and saved the life of a disabled person. He also was named November 2016 State Employee of the Month.

In November 2016, Troopers Logan B. Monahan and Shayne K. Talburt were named November 2016 DPS Employees of the Month. The two troopers were recognized for their actions at the scene of a vehicle crash, where the vehicle was partially submerged in the flooded Cypress Creek in Ripley County. The two marine enforcement troopers were instrumental in rescuing the trapped driver, who was seriously injured. The driver has since recovered. Troopers Monahan and Talburt also were named December 2016 State Employees of the Month.

Troop E hosted a Community Alliance Program. Participants were provided the opportunity to learn about Patrol history, and other areas of interest.

Troop E personnel, the Career Recruitment Divison, and the Boy Scouts of America partnered to start the first Missouri State Highway Patrol Law Enforcement Explorer Post. The program allows participants between the ages of 14 and 20 to learn about the Patrol and careers in law enforcement.

Twenty-two officers from Troop E were assigned to assist with security at the presidential debate between Ms. Hillary Clinton and Mr. Donald Trump at Washington University in St. Louis.

Thirteen Troop E officers attended Field Force Operations training at the Center for Domestic Prepardeness in Anniston, AL.

On November 28, 2016, Captain Jeffrey N. Vitale presented two individuals with "Honorary Trooper" certificates. The award was bestowed on Mr. Heath A. Moon and Mr. Jeffrey D. Thomas after they risked their personal safety and well-being by extricating a seriously injured driver and a toddler from a burning vehicle in Ripley County.

Troop E Communications Technician Thomas R. Keene hosted a ham radio class for eight of Troop E communications personnel. After six weeks of studying and preparation, everyone successfully completed the exam and were granted a ham operator technician's license.

Troop E holds the honor of establishing the Patrol's first Canine Apprehension Team. The team is comprised of two teams of six officers and two Patrol canines. The team trains every other month and is deployed for the tracking and apprehension of armed and dangerous suspects.

Troop E officers also participated in several Street Crime Task Force operations during 2016. Officers assigned to the operation worked closely with other law enforcement agencies to provide aggressive enforcement in areas with high crime rates.

2017

At 3:50 a.m. on February 12, 2017, a shooting occurred at Club Envy in Caruthersville. Several victims were transported to local hospitals for treatment of their injuries. After investigation, it was determined that a total of six people had been shot and one injured in an altercation. One of the victims succumbed to his injuries and was pronounced deceased at a local hospital. A suspect was arrested and charged with first degree murder and armed criminal action on February 13.

At approximately midnight on March 2, a 60-year-old Wayne County resident became lost in a densely wooded and rugged area near her residence while she attempted to locate her dog. Members of the Patrol and the Wayne County Sheriff’s Department responded to the area to locate the victim. A Patrol helicopter responded to the scene from Jefferson City to assist with the search. At approximately 9:52 a.m., the Patrol pilot and an observer located the missing woman, who was approximately two miles from her residence. The Patrol pilot directed officers on the ground to her location, and they escorted her to safety where emergency personnel were waiting. The victim was evaluated by emergency medical services, refused medical treatment, and was returned home safely.

On March 6, Trooper Ryan J. Windham was on routine patrol, southbound on Interstate 57 in Mississippi County, when he observed a motor vehicle that was missing a front license plate. Tpr. Windham followed the vehicle and activated his lights and siren. The driver refused to stop. A pursuit ensued and ended when

the driver slid off a roadway. As Tpr. Windham approached the stopped car, the front seat passenger fled on foot. The backseat passenger exited and began firing a handgun at Tpr. Windham. Tpr. Windham returned fire and moved toward the rear of his patrol car for cover. The suspect fired at least six rounds, three of which struck Tpr. Windham's vehicle. A manhunt resulted in all three occupants being taken into custody without incident. All three were convicted felons and members of a violent gang with outstanding warrants for their arrests. Tpr. Windham accepted a DPS Medal of Merit based on this incident in 2018.

In March, Troop E members assisted the Ripley County and Carter County Sheriff's Departments with a manhunt. The suspect had warrants for his arrest from both counties charging him with 1st degree Rape, 1st degree Kidnapping, and 1st degree Assault. The suspect was considered armed and dangerous. Troopers took the man into custody without incident on March 18.

In April, heavy rains fell across Troop E, with Butler, Ripley, and Wayne counties receiving the brunt of the rainfall. For the second time in six years, water overtopped the emergency spillway at Wappapello Dam. For the first time in history, water breached the Clearwater Dam emergency spillway.

At the annual Patrol Awards Ceremony and The MASTERS Banquet, the following Troop E employees were recognized: Corporal Perry C. Hazelwood accepted the Benjamin Oliver Booth Officer of the Year Award, Troopers Shayne K. Talburt, Logan B. Monahan, and Adam N. Miller received the Lifesaving Award, Trooper D. Jason McBride accepted the Valor Award, and Clerk III C. Michele Parrott was recognized as the Civilian of the Year.

The Career Recruiting Division and Troop E employees hosted a Patrol Youth Academy at Eagle Sky of the Ozarks. The Youth Academy Program was designed to help young people explore career opportunities in law enforcement while fostering teamwork and personal leadership skills. Career Recruitment Division personnel designed the Youth Academy Program that allows it to be held in any troop area, thus bringing the experience to youth across the state who may not be able to attend a single location academy.

In August, members of the Troop E Mobile Field Force were assigned to the presidential detail in Springfield.

In September, members of the Troop E Mobile Field Force were assigned to the civil disturbance in St. Louis.

On November 1, 2017, a member of Troop E stopped a 2017 Dodge Grand Caravan for a traffic violation. Consent to search the vehicle was requested and granted. During the search, 4.8 pounds of pure Fentanyl was sized. The street value was estimated to be more than $3 million.

Lieutenant Amy E. Reynolds transferred to Troop E on August 1, 2017, thus becoming the first female staff officer in Troop E history.

2018

On January 1, 2018, after being promoted, Lieutenant Michele L. Coon became the second female lieutenant joined Troop E.

On February 8, 2018, Corporal John J. West overheard the Poplar Bluff Police Department dispatch a call regarding an armed, male subject inside a residence. He then heard two Poplar Bluff city officers report shots being fired, a suspect being taken into custody, and their request for multiple ambulances. Cpl. West responded to the scene and entered the residence carrying his first aid kit. He discovered a deceased female, a wounded male, and a seriously wounded female inside the residence. The seriously wounded female suffered from gunshot wounds to her upper leg, left arm, and neck. Cpl. West and a Poplar Bluff police officer applied direct pressure on the wounds to stop the bleeding and continuously talked to her to keep her awake. Cpl. West provided trauma shears to the city officer so the woman's clothing could be cut away and a tourniquet applied. When the tourniquet was not large enough, the officers substituted a towel, all while continuing to apply pressure to the wound. Cpl. West also packaged the gunshot wound to the woman's neck to stop the bleeding. These two officers then assisted paramedics in loading the woman into the ambulance. Cpl. West accepted a Lifesaving Award at the Patrol's annual banquet in April 2019, based on his actions during the incident.

On May 26, 2018, Corporal Jonathan T. Wilson and Corporal Shayne K. Talburt were patrolling the Current River in Ripley County. Cpl. Wilson observed a family in distress in the water after their inner tubes, which had been linked together, came loose and flipped over. All seven people, two adults and five children, were thrown into the water. A five-year-old girl was tangled in a rope and appeared lifeless. The man was in distress after extricating a second child from a tangled root ball, which then broke loose, separating him from the children. The current had pulled the woman downstream, away from the group and in distress. Cpl. Wilson began rescuing the children and called Cpl. Talburt for assistance. When Cpl. Wilson retrieved the five-year-old, she immediately coughed up water and began breathing on her own. Meanwhile, because of the weight and current, his boat was taking on water. Upon his arrival, Cpl. Talburt took the five children into his boat, allowing Cpl. Wilson to travel downstream to rescue the two adults. Cpl. Wilson and Cpl. Talburt accepted the October DPS Employee of the Month Award, named November State Employees of the Month, and accepted the Patrol's Lifesaving Award at the annual awards banquet in April 2019.

In June 2018, the Patrol hosted a five-day Patrol Youth Academy at Eagle Sky of The Ozarks for the second year. The 20 cadets were exposed to various career paths and challenged to work as a team. Several Troop E employees assisted the Recruiting and Community Outreach Division in hosting the academy.

2019

Corporal John J. West was named the May 2019 DPS Employee of the Month for his actions assisting the Poplar Bluff Police Department in lifesaving efforts of a woman.

From June 2-7, 28 high school aged cadets attended the Patrol Youth Academy at Eagle Sky of The Ozarks, in Patterson, MO. The Recruiting and Community Outreach Division (RCOD) organized the event. Troop E officers and civilian personnel assisted with the academy.

On July 1, 2019, Captain Jeffrey N. Vitale retired after serving the citizens of Missouri for over 34 years. Captain Philip E. Gregory was named the new captain of Troop E. Prior to his promotion, Capt. Gregory served as a district lieutenant with DDCC.

Corporal Blake D. Wunderlich was DPS Employee of the Month for August 2019, for his actions following a traffic stop. On October 20, 2018, while patrolling in an area of Charleston, MO, with high violent crime rates, Cpl. Wunderlich stopped a vehicle with four men inside. His suspicion of criminal activity led Cpl. Wunderlich to search the vehicle and to the discovery of a stolen handgun. All four occupants of the vehicle, who were suspected gang members, were arrested for various offenses. One of them was indicted federally for a weapons offense and is still at large.

2020

As with many agencies this year who were impacted by the pandemic, Troop E employees had to learn to work with a new normal. The members and employees rose to the challenge and continued to serve the citizens of southeast Missouri by adapting to a modified/hybrid work schedule when necessary.

In April, the troop broke ground and installed a memorial to the troopers who paid the ultimate sacrifice while assigned to Troop E.

Commercial Vehicle Supervisor Mark D. Counts and Commercial Vehicle Officer Chris C. Close were named the April 2020 DPS Employee of the Month for their lifesaving actions at the E3 scale house. CVO Sprv. Counts stopped a truck for a random inspection. While the driver was in the scale house, he collapsed. Without the proper use of an AED, CPR, and the quick actions of CVO Sprv. Counts and CVO Close, the driver would have lost his life. As a result of this incident, AEDs were placed in all Troop E weigh stations. CVO Sprv. Counts and CVO Close accepted 2019 Patrol Lifesaving Awards.

Troop E officers assigned to Mobile Field Force teams responded to Iron, Madison, and St. Charles counties, and to the city of St. Louis for civil protests. Officers assisted local authorities maintain peace between protesters and several

groups of counter protesters on three separate occasions. Officers maintained a safe and secure environment while protecting the public's Constitutional rights of free speech and peaceable assembly. No injuries, property damage, or arrests were reported during the protests.

In the fall 2020, the troop broke ground on a new office/storage building to house DDCC's Troop E Unit. The new building will have room for four investigators, an interview room, and a polygraph room.

Trooper Taremba Karizamimba was selected as the Sikeston Regional Chamber of Commerce Officer of the Year. Tpr. Karizamimba was recognized for displaying the Patrol's core values in every facet of his work.

On December 31, 2020, Lieutenant Cameron M. Heath retired after serving the citizens of Missouri for over 34 years. Lt. Heath retired as a member of the Troop E command staff.

2021

Communications Operator III Darin A. Stevens was named the Troop E wellness coordinator and does a great job of imparting his knowledge of proper exercise, diet, and a healthier lifestyle with anyone who seeks his advice. He also encourages coworkers to be active and exercise more. Several years ago, Comm. Oper. III Stevens received some news following a visit with his doctor, "Get in better shape". He left the doctor's office and went to a local sporting goods store and purchased some running shoes. Comm. Oper. III Stevens had just lost his mother to congestive heart failure, and the doctor's visit was a life-changing event for him. He began exercising, running, and found himself competing in the 2021 New York City Marathon. He had not always been a runner. Several times he has watched his weight range from 250 pounds to nearly 370 pounds. Since that fateful visit with his doctor, Comm. Oper. III Stevens learned what to do and what not to do when training for a marathon. "I was training for a marathon for two years and I kept hitting the wall at 16 to 18 miles," he said. "I was training on my own and I had no source of encouragement expertise".

He became part of a running club and sought advice on training and maintaining a positive attitude while training. Although he had never run more than a half marathon, he was confident he could finish a full marathon. On Sunday, November 7, 2021, more than 34,000 athletes wove their way through 26.2 miles of the city's five boroughs. Among those was Troop Wellness Coordinator/Comm. Oper. III Stevens. "I had never run 20-miles before, but I trusted the training and my coaches," he said. "Worst case scenario is I get to go for a 6-7 hour walk in New York City".

On July 31, 2021, Trooper James A. Rowe was traveling in a business area of Sikeston when he noticed an SUV moving in a parking lot with no one behind the

wheel. However, a senior citizen appeared to be running alongside the vehicle. Tpr. Rowe diverted into the parking lot, and almost immediately had to maneuver his patrol car so it would not be hit by the approaching SUV. Due to his actions and quick response, he was recognized as the April 2022 DPS Sworn Team Member of the Month.

On October 24, a reported EF-3 tornado touched down in Madison County, destroying numerous homes and businesses in the area. Troop E employees worked tirelessly for several days with the utility companies assisting them with traffic control while they restored power. On December 3, a reported EF-4 tornado made its way across southern Troop E, striking Dunklin and Pemiscot counties, where a nine-year old was killed and multiple injuries were reported. Troopers worked multiple crashes across the area, and there were two weather-related fatalities.

On December 3, 2021, Corporal Lonnie R. Lejeune died after a short illness. Cpl. Lejeune is greatly missed by many across southeast Missouri.

2022

On the afternoon of January 23, a traffic stop was initiated on Interstate 55 for a lane violation. Due to several indicators of criminal activity, a probable cause search occurred and revealed three large bundles, between $130,000 and $140,000, of United States currency.

On January 25, Trooper Adam R. Shipley overheard radio traffic of an aggravated rape in progress at the Amidon Conservation Area in Madison County. While responding to the area, he encountered the female victim and a male who was forcing her to his vehicle. The female ran toward Tpr. Shipley's patrol vehicle and identified herself as the victim. Tpr. Shipley exited his patrol vehicle to detain the man, who then ran into a wooded area. He caught the suspect and while attempting to take him into custody, he observed him reaching for a knife in his waistband. After a physical altercation, Tpr. Shipley and the man separated and began standing. Again, Tpr. Shipley observed the man reaching for the knife in his waistband. In response, Tpr. Shipley drew his Patrol issued firearm and discharged one round, striking the man in the chest. Despite Tpr. Shipley's attempt to administer medical aid, the man died at the scene.

On the morning of March 17, 2022, a dense fog fell over the area around the 12-mile marker of Interstate 57 in Charleston. As a result, over 40 traffic crashes occurred. Trooper Josh J. Schuenemeyer was the first to arrive on scene and immediately began requesting the interstate be shut down due to the 20 tractor-trailers blocking the roadway. Approximately 15 of his coworkers, from troopers to lieutenants, would come to assist. Nineteen fire departments, seven police/sheriff's departments, nine EMS departments, and one Air Evac assisted. The crash involved over 40 vehicles, 10 of which caught fire and 26 were commercial vehicles. Unfortunately, five people died and 18 were injured. Three

people were air evacuated from the scene and the interstate was shut down for 20 hours. It would take 21 separate traffic crash reports to document the event. As a result of his actions during this event, Tpr. Schuenemeyer was recognized as the June 2022 DPS Sworn Team Member the month.

On October 25, four fallen Patrol members from Troop E were honored at a ceremony in Poplar Bluff. The service was held at the Fellowship General Baptist Church. The memorial is a tribute to the Troopers from Troop E who have paid the ultimate price. The monument became a reality through donations and community support.

2023

Troop E had an authorized strength of 94 members and 70 civilian employees.

On the afternoon of January 23, 2023, a traffic stop was initiated on Interstate 55 for a lane violation. Due to several indicators of criminal activity, a probable cause search took place. The search revealed three large bundles of United States currency, with a total amount between $130,000 and $140,000.

Five people were killed and many injured after an early morning tornado in Bollinger County on Wednesday, April 5. Troop E received a notification around 3:22 a.m. of a tornado in the Glenallen area. Troopers arrived on scene by around 3:50 a.m. to begin searching for people and assessing damage. The search and rescue portion of the operation lasted approximately 12 hours. After all citizens were accounted for, the attention turned to scene security and helping to restore power in the area.

Capt. Gregory retired August 1, 2023, after 30 years of dedicated service. Lieutenant Jason J. Cluver, Troop F, was promoted to captain and designated commanding officer of Troop E.

On the morning of October 17, 2023, Corporal Chris E. Leach was on patrol on Missouri Route B in Butler County when he noticed a pickup truck stopped on the shoulder of the road. He activated his emergency lights, approached the vehicle, and found the 82-year-old driver slumped over the steering wheel. The man was not able to move his right arm or leg and was drooling. Cpl. Leach put the vehicle into park. He then requested an ambulance and contacted the driver’s wife to explain what had occurred. Butler County EMS transported the driver to Poplar Bluff Regional Medical Center. The medical center later advised that because Cpl. Leach had acted quickly, medical personnel had been able to administer lifesaving treatment and increase the chances of recovery. Four days later, the driver came to Troop E Headquarters and reported to Cpl. Leach's supervisor that he had pulled his vehicle over when he began experiencing stroke-like symptoms with the hope that a trooper would find him. “Cpl. Leach is a credit to your organization and the reason I’m alive,” he said. Cpl. Leach was recognized

as the March 2024 DPS Sworn Team Member of the Month for his swift actions and for saving the life of this motorist.

On November 16, 2023, while working in Wayne County, Sergeant Phillip G. Sarakas heard radio traffic concerning a vehicle southbound on U.S. Highway 67 associated with the Iowa bank robbery and whose driver was suspected in a drive-by shooting. He closely monitored southbound traffic and soon recognized a vehicle matching the broadcast description. After verifying the vehicle and registration with Troop E Radio, he followed the vehicle while waiting for other officers to respond before making a traffic stop. When enough officers were in place, Sgt. Sarakas activated his emergency equipment and made a traffic stop. The driver and front seat passenger were taken into custody, but the two other men fled in the vehicle, leading to a lengthy vehicle pursuit that ended in Piedmont when the vehicle crashed into a utility pole. The men were taken into custody after a foot pursuit. A large amount of stolen cash was recovered and there were no injuries, in part because of the organized response begun by Sgt. Sarakas. Sgt. Sarakas was recognized as the DPS Sworn Team Member of the Month for May 2024 for his excellent handling of this critical incident.

2024

2024 brought a major infrastructure remodel to Troop E Headquarters. A new heating and air conditioning system was installed, along with new duct work, ceiling tiles, and paint. This displaced everyone who maintained an office at Troop Headquarters; they had to either move their office to the basement, or in some cases, completely lose their office.

On April 8, 2024, a portion of Troop E was in the path of the total solar eclipse. Troop E and the surrounding area saw a substantial increase in visitors to the area on April 7-8. This resulted in a significant increase in traffic throughout the area. Members of Troop E and the surrounding traffic safety partners worked together during the event to ensure a steady flow of traffic to protect public safety and ensure a memorable event for visitors and residents alike.

In June, Rock the Country, a large, two-day concert, was held in Butler County. The estimated crowds were between 19,000 and 21,000 attendees each day. Thirty officers were assigned to traffic posts around the event to assist attendees with directions and how to navigate the traffic.

2025

Troop E, which includes the 13 counties of southeast Missouri, has an authorized strength of 93 members and 72 civilian employees.

2025 continued the major infrastructure remodel to the troop headquarters and Sikeston Service Center. The remodel included a new front entrance, resurfaced parking lot, and exterior painting. These much-needed changes and

improvements have been met with a positive attitude and willingness to change. Troop E could not have completed the task without the teamwork and dedication of our building and grounds maintenance crew.

In March, April, and May, Troop E experienced what seemed to be an endless streak of deadly tornadoes and thunderstorms. The resilience and resourcefulness shown by Troop E employees was front and center as they helped to clear roads, maintained a visible presence in the affected areas, and continued to serve the citizens in the areas they live in. Troop E's thoughts, actions and resources are still with those affected by these events.