



The SHIELD

A quarterly bulletin from the Summit County Sheriff's Office

2023, Volume 4

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History of our
Mounted
Patrol



SHERIFF

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Office goes pink
for Breast Cancer
Awareness

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jail's very first
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FROM THE AKRON-CANTON AIRPORT TO STEWART & CALHOUN FUNERAL HOME IN AKRON, FROM THE FAIRGROUNDS TO THE COVENTRY TOWNSHIP SAFETY BUILDING, THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE WAS OUT AND ABOUT THIS HALLOWEEN!





From the desk of

Sheriff Kandy Fatheree

It has been a busy autumn here at the Summit County Sheriff's Office. We welcomed two new K-9s to our team, wrapped up our *Donut With a Deputy* and *CCW Workshop* programs for the year, hosted our third annual *Summit Faith & Blue*, and held our annual Awards Dinner in which awards and commendations were bestowed upon deputies and staff.

First the awards. In truth, there's not a day that goes by that the men and women of this Office don't amaze me with their dedication and professionalism, which is why I so look forward to recognizing their efforts at our Awards Dinner each November. In this issue of *The SHIELD*, you'll read a small sampling of some of the actions and deeds that earned them their awards and commendations. Obviously, we can't fit every award bio onto a couple pages, but you can read all of them in the "About Us" section of our website at sheriff.summitoh.net.

In October we hosted the third annual *Summit Faith & Blue*. This wonderful event is designed to bring law enforcement and the community together through the common bonds of faith and fellowship. This year's Faith & Blue was an overwhelming success, with over 80 houses of worship, law enforcement agencies, and community organizations participating, and hundreds in attendance. You can see pictures in this issue of *The SHIELD*, or on our website in the "Community Programs" section. And please save the date for next year's *Summit Faith & Blue* on Saturday, October 5th.

Our *Donut With a Deputy* and *CCW Workshop* programs are done for the year, but due to their popularity and demand for more of both, we plan to reintroduce them in 2024. We'd like to thank the various Dunkin' Donut locations that hosted *Donut With a Deputy*, as well as the local mayors and police who came out to support them. We'd also like to thank the Summit County Prosecutor's Office for partnering with us on the *CCW Workshop* program, which has been a huge success and very well received everywhere we've hosted one.

Last, but certainly not least, we welcomed two new K-9s to our team this autumn: Freddy and Marlo! You will meet them in this issue of *The SHIELD*. With their addition to the team, our K-9 Unit is built back to the numbers it once had over a decade ago.

Finally, as the year comes to a close I want to wish you our readers and all the residents of Summit County a very Safe and Happy Holiday Season and a Fantastic New Year!

Kandy Fatheree
Sheriff, Summit County, Ohio

A Point of Pride: The Summit County Sheriff's Office Mounted Unit

- Authored by Stephen Dyer

Lieutenant James Rimedio enjoyed his time at Ohio State. But not for the usual reasons. Yes, he liked football games and classes. But his real joy? Rodeo.

That's right. While his friends went out and partied, Rimedio would go to a barn not far from the Horseshoe stadium and rope mechanical calves. Because at that time Ohio State had a Rodeo Club (they still do, actually), and Rimedio loved it.

Little did he know that his college hobby would turn into what it is today: Leading Ohio's top Mounted Unit.

Formed in 1953, The Summit County Sheriff's Office Mounted Unit consists of both full-time deputies and auxiliary members, and is the largest and most sought-after mounted unit in the state.



Deputies Caster and Warner look out over a sea of cars at Blossom Music Center concert.

“We do it because we love horses and we're horse people.”

But they are making their communities safer and looking really awesome doing it! Yes, the Mounted Unit is most visible during parades. In fact, Sheriff Kandy Fatheree brought back the tradition of the Sheriff riding horses in parades – something legendary Summit County Sheriff David Troutman was famous for doing.

But Summit County's Mounted Unit is used in all kinds of situations, from crowd control to actual community policing efforts. They've become fixtures at the famous Ohio University Halloween party in Athens.

“The kids love it,” Rimedio explained. “They're used to having them down there.”

But don't for a minute think that the special Mounted Patrol is some cupcake job. It's dangerous. In fact, according to one study, mounted officers suffered 2-3 times higher injury rates than non-mounted officers. The number one reason why they suffer those injuries? Improper horse handling.

That's why it's so important for horse and owner to bond quickly and effectively, Rimedio said.

“These are our horses, we take care of them 24/7, so it's actually safer,” he explained. “It is important you bond with your horse.” For example, Rimedio is riding the same horse he's had since 2009.

In other words, you can't just take a fresh-faced kid out of the Academy, throw them in a saddle, and expect them to control a crowd at Blossom Music Center.



*Sheriff Fatheree in the Stow 4th of July Parade
[Phil Masturzo/Akron Beacon Journal]*

“I’ve chased cars down,” Rimedio said, adding that they’ve also chased down suspects trying to escape by foot and broken up fights at OU Halloween and Blossom, among other places.

“They think we’re just there just to wave or something,” Rimedio said. “But we’re still law enforcement.”

Recent research has shown that Mounted Units actually help build community-police relationships. A study from Oxford found that “the highest demonstrable value of mounted police is found in neighborhood settings,” adding that they help restore “positive police visibility.”

The Oxford study criticized British austerity measures that drastically reduced Mounted Units in the years after the Great Recession – a trend that occurred on this side of the Atlantic as well.

“I remember when we could get 50 to 75 horses down there (in Athens),” Rimedio said. “Now we’re lucky to get 25.”

That’s what has made Summit County’s Mounted Unit so special – and such an attraction for law enforcement officers looking for new and exciting career challenges at the Summit County Sheriff’s Office. They’ve continued making the Office and community proud, receiving requests from all over the country, and winning numerous awards.

But ultimately, it’s all about the horses and the opportunity Rimedio’s rodeo days granted him – a 21-year-long law enforcement adventure on horseback.

Ask him and he’ll immediately show you his favorite picture on his phone. It’s not him riding his horse at the Jamboree in the Hills, or in Athens, or in Houston, or even the Cavs 2016 Championship parade where his unit literally cut the route through the crowd.

It’s a picture of him on his horse. At the White House.

“I’ve been to the White House,” he said, pride beaming through his broadening smile.

Yes sir. It’s been quite a ride.



Lt. Rimedio in front of the White House

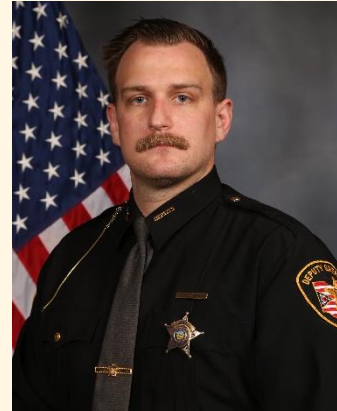


On Friday, November 17th the Sheriff's Office held its annual Awards Dinner. Below is just a sampling of some of the awards and commendations given that evening. To read more of them, visit the "About Us" section of our website.



Deputies Lucas Dies & John Lombardi

On August 3, 2023 at approximately 5:30pm, Deputies Dies and Lombardi became involved in the pursuit of a suspect who had carjacked several vehicles. The suspect began his crime spree in Akron where he stole a vehicle, drove it to Green and ran out of gas on Arlington Rd. He assaulted several customers at a gas station while attempting to carjack another vehicle, then ran to the Taco Bell next door where he carjacked a vehicle from a woman who had her three children inside. The woman fought with the suspect, even being dragged while holding onto her car, but he managed to speed off. The mother was able to remove two of her children, but a 2-year-old remained in the car as it sped onto I-77 South. The suspect stopped at a gas station one exit down and handed off the child to an unknown person, then fled again. Deputies Lombardi and Dies pursued the suspect into Stark County, through a number of side roads, then back onto I-77 North into Akron. The stolen vehicle eventually became disabled and the suspect exited and fled on foot, but was quickly apprehended by the Deputies. During the pursuit, Deputies Lombardi and Dies slid down a ridge to keep up with the suspect, which resulted in Lombardi sustaining a concussion and several minor injuries. For their quick response and brave actions, Sheriff Fatheree honored them both with an Office Citation.

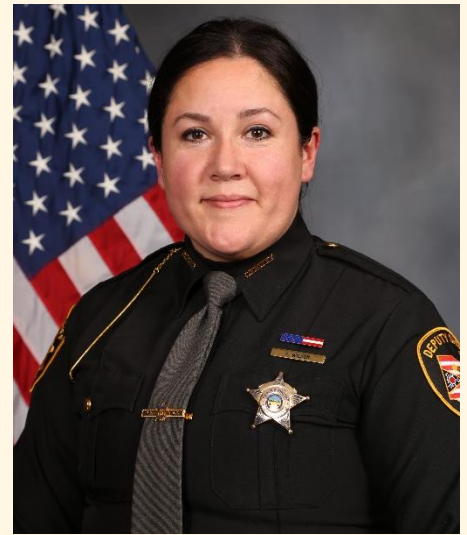


Deputy Mark Adams

On January 23, 2023, a male defendant was at the end of his trial in Summit County Common Pleas Court for rape. Throughout the trial, emotions were understandably running high with the family, and multiple deputies were working to make sure there were no incidents. The jury ultimately found the defendant guilty. When he was asked to rise for the reading of his verdict, Deputy Adams observed that the defendant had an object in his hand and was starting to unbutton his shirt. The defendant immediately began to stab himself in the stomach with the object, but Deputy Adams was able to rush over and gain control of the individual's arm and remove what turned out to be a sharpened toothbrush from his grasp. Thanks to his close observance and quick reaction, a suicide attempt was diverted. The individual was transported to the Jail and placed on suicide precautions. For his actions, Sheriff Fatheree honored Deputy Adams with a Commendation.

Deputy Abby Wilson

On May 12, 2022, Deputies responded to 77 Northbound near Massillon Rd. for an ODOT vehicle struck by a dump truck. Both vehicles burst into flames upon colliding, and the occupant of the ODOT vehicle suffered serious injuries. Deputy Abby Wilson was assigned to complete the incident investigation, after which an arrest was made and the defendant pleaded guilty to Aggravated Vehicular Assault and Operating a Vehicle Intoxicated, resulting in a prison sentence of 5-7 years. Deputy Wilson completed this extensive investigation while working her regularly scheduled shift in between responding to calls. Due to her investigation, the injured ODOT worker was able to have justice for his pain and suffering. For her dedication and thorough investigation, Sheriff Fatheree honored Deputy Wilson with a Commendation.



Deputy Jordan Larson

On January 22, 2023 at approximately 1:00pm, Deputy Larson was working at the Jail. During his shift, he responded to an emergency call for a male inmate bleeding excessively from his arm. The inmate had been cleaning his cell and cut his arm on the upper storage compartment corner attached to the bunk. Larson quickly assessed the inmate's bleeding and realized that nobody else who responded had a tourniquet. He creatively made a make-shift tourniquet from a bed sheet to stop the bleeding. Due to his quick thinking, the bleeding was stopped and jail medical staff provided care prior to the inmate being transported to the hospital. The inmate was treated and later returned to the Jail. For Deputy Larson's quick response and innovative actions, Sheriff Fatheree honored him with a commendation award.

Deputies Lucas Dies & Nick DiSabato

On December 20, 2022 at approximately 4:00am, Deputies Dies and DiSabato responded to a residence in Green after receiving a call that an individual was being attacked by a dog. Upon arriving, they observed a pitbull attacking a male. They attempted to scare the dog off, but it continued to attack the victim. Deputy DiSabato was forced to draw his service weapon and put the dog down. DiSabato and Dies then began life-saving measures on the individual and called EMS. Deputy Dies applied a tourniquet to slow the bleeding as the male had suffered significant blood loss as well as the loss of an eye, nose, and several fingers. Both Deputies talked to the victim trying to keep him calm until EMS arrived. They then assisted Fire Department personnel with their equipment and in the continued care of the victim. According to the Green Fire Chief in a letter he wrote to Sheriff Fatheree, Deputies Dies and DiSabato prevented the victim and others from being further injured or possibly killed, and that their actions resulted in the victim surviving this incident. For their swift and decisive action, Sheriff Fatheree honored Deputies DiSabato and Dies with a Life Saving Award.



FAITH & BLUE

This year's *Summit Faith & Blue* was the biggest and best yet! We had over 80 law enforcement agencies, houses of worship, and community organizations participating and hundreds in attendance at this wonderful event designed to bring law enforcement and the community closer together.



For more photos check out the Community Programs section of our website at sheriff.summitoh.net



In Issue I of The SHIELD earlier this year we introduced you to K-9s Taro and Nero who had recently joined our K-9 Unit. Now, we'd like to introduce you to Freddy and Marlo!

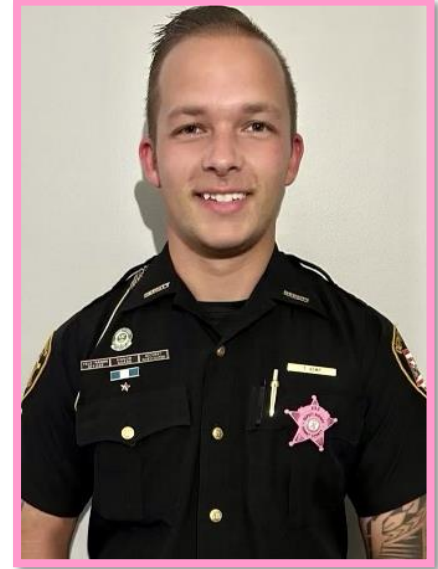
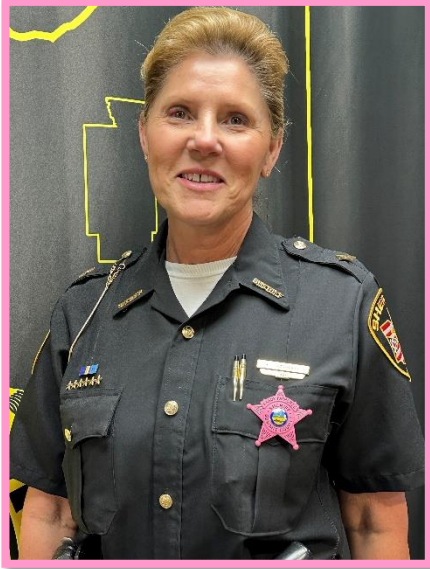


Freddy is a 2-year-old German Shepherd from Slovakia. He is trained in gun-detection, tracking, article search, apprehension, and more. Freddy is assigned to Deputy Woodyard in our Patrol Division. Together they will patrol and respond to calls throughout Summit County.



Marlo is an 20-month-old German Shepherd/Belgian Malinois mix from Slovakia. He is trained in tracking, article search, building search, narcotics detection, apprehension, and more. Marlo is assigned to Deputy Kemp in our Patrol Division and will patrol and respond to calls countywide.





**In October, the Summit County Sheriff's Office
participated in
Breast Cancer Awareness Month!**



Easy Come, Easy Go!

Did you know the first group of inmates held at the very first Summit County Jail that opened in 1843 all escaped during their first night behind bars?!

The Jail's construction was completed in autumn 1843, three years after Summit County was established. It was located at the northeast corner of Broadway and Center Street (now called University Ave.), where the National Inventors Hall of Fame STEM School currently stands.

The Jail was a two-story rectangular building constructed of sandstone, with wooden beds anchored to the cell walls. It could house 40 inmates, but the second story largely served as a debtor's prison and contained a "crazy room."



The first Summit County Jail, opened in 1843

Summit County's first Sheriff, Thomas Wilson, took up occupancy in the Jail on October 3, 1843, at which time its first inmates – a grand total of four – were relocated from a temporary facility that served as the Sheriff's Office into the new building.

Unfortunately, one of those inmates, a man charged with counterfeiting, was a machinist by trade and understood well the mechanics of building construction and the principles of leverage and force. That night, he and his three fellow inmates used their strength to loosen and dislodge several sandstone blocks from their cell walls using rails from their beds, and all four men escaped into the night!

The first renovations ever made to the Jail occurred immediately thereafter to fix this weakness. Lesson learned!



Christmas With a Cop

Christmas With a Cop 2023 was a huge success as law enforcement agencies from across the county joined the Sheriff's Office to help brighten the holidays of over 100 area children facing economic difficulties or who have had a recent hardship.

