



The **SHIELD**

A quarterly bulletin from the Summit County Sheriff's Office

2025, Volume 3

**DEPUTIES
TAKE TO THE
RINK FOR A
GOOD CAUSE**

**Summit County's
long history with
the National
Sheriff's Assoc.**

**A tribute to
Helen Pekar,
one of our first
woman deputies**

Front cover: K-9 Hero sniffs inmates during the booking process as part of our new initiative of having narcotics-detecting K-9s working around the clock within the Summit County Jail.

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MOBILE APP:**



Or search **Summit County Sheriff, OH**
in the app store

In August, we had the pleasure of hosting law school students and faculty from Cambodia who were in town visiting the University of Akron Law School and studying the American criminal justice system.





From the desk of

Sheriff Kandy Fatheree

Greetings,

I just wanted to take a moment to thank you for your continued readership of *The SHIELD* and support for the men and women of the Summit County Sheriff's Office.

We've had quite a busy summer this year, with parades, festivals, concerts, touch-a-truck events, and much more seemingly every single week! We love seeing you all at these events, and we always appreciate the kind words of support and appreciation – they go such a long way.

In this edition of *The SHIELD* we pay tribute to one of our first female deputies, Helen Pekar. You will get to read about some of her accomplishments and how she helped pave the way for many female deputies that came after her, myself included.

You'll also learn about yet *another* of the many new initiatives we have introduced at the jail: a program designed to help inmates complete their education and hopefully get their lives back on track. This, and many other programs we have rolled out, are all designed to reduce the rate of recidivism in our county.

Lastly, I hope you will join us for our sixth annual *Summit Faith & Blue* taking place on Saturday, October 4th from 11:00am-2:00pm at Hardesty Park in Akron. This national program is designed to bring law enforcement and the community together through the extensive outreach of the faith community. You can learn more about this FREE event at summitfaithandblue.com.

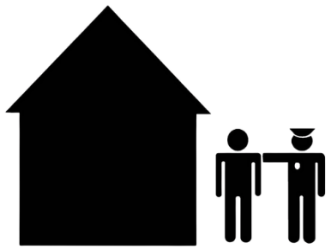
Kandy Fatheree

Kandy Fatheree
Summit County Sheriff



**IF YOU MEET A MEMBER OF OUR K-9 UNIT
BE SURE TO GET A COLLECTOR CARD
FEATURING OUR FOUR-LEGGED DEPUTIES!**





TAKE ME HOME

The *Take Me Home* Program is a partnership between the Summit County Sheriff's Office and Summit County Prosecutor's Office. It is designed to support those with disabilities who may need extra help communicating in an emergency situation.

The program allows for the rapid identification and safe return of citizens who are unable to adequately communicate vital information to law enforcement, such as their name and address.

Should an individual become lost or separated from their family or caregiver, law enforcement personnel can search the database by inputting the individual's name, phone number, or even physical characteristics in the hopes of learning their identity and reuniting them with their loved ones.

Currently, more than thirty law enforcement agencies across Summit County are participating in our *Take Me Home* program.

To learn more about the program or to enroll your loved one, you can visit sheriff.summitoh.net and click on "Community Programs" or visit prosecutor.summitoh.net and click on "Innovative Programs."



“That’s just my job!”

The groundbreaking career of Deputy Helen Pekar

Last autumn we introduced readers to Emma Banks, the first Black woman to be deputized as a civilian employee of the Summit County Sheriff’s Office. In this edition of *The SHIELD* we continue to shine a spotlight on the pioneering women who have made history in our office.

This summer, we learned of the incredible career of former deputy Helen Pekar, who passed away in July at the age of 98.

Helen started with the Sheriff’s Office on January 2, 1962. Throughout much of her early career, she would be one of only two or three women deputies.



Helen Pekar

Deputy Pekar first worked in the Civil Division, then the Patrol Division as a school patrol deputy, then transferred to corrections.



Deputy Pekar, 1960s

During her time at the county jail, she was tasked with transporting juveniles, women, and mentally ill inmates.

“One of my most difficult duties is visiting women who are going to be committed,” she told the Beacon Journal in the 1960s, adding that she sometimes had to talk with them for long stretches of time to convince them to go peacefully to the hospital. “It’s so important to use tact and patience.”

In 1966, Deputy Pekar earned accommodations and media coverage for her pivotal involvement in the capture of a serial rapist dubbed the “fuzzy-gloved rapist.” Pekar served as a decoy in an undercover sting, posing as a

16-year-old high school girl to lure the suspect, who was subsequently taken into custody.

Pekar received scores of letters from area parents expressing their relief and thanking her for her efforts, as well as commendations and even recognition from the National Police Hall of Fame.

Deputy Pekar went on to work in the Detective Bureau, Narcotics Unit, Intelligence Division, and Court Services. Ultimately, she rose to the position of Assistant Jail Commander!

Throughout her career, she received numerous commendations and letters of praise and gratitude from citizens and other law enforcement agencies, and she was frequently tasked with escorting celebrities who came to Akron for the annual Soap Box Derby.



Deputy Pekar awarded for her service

THE AUBURN HAired, brown-eyed deputy sheriff who wears badge number 60 takes a lot of teasing from the men on the force.

"Here comes Deputy Pekar!" say the members of the squad and they stand at attention when Helen Pekar appears.

Mrs. Robert (Helen) Pekar is one of two women Summit County sheriff's deputies and, although her career is not one which many women choose, she sees a definite need for women in jobs like hers.

A snippet from a 1960s Beacon Journal article on Deputy Pekar

Helen Pekar retired at the rank of Lieutenant in 1982. She and her husband relocated to Florida until his death in 2002, whereupon she moved back to Ohio to live with family.

"Deputy Pekar helped pave the way for generations of women deputies that succeeded her," said Sheriff Fatheree. "Without her, we wouldn't be where we are today."

When asked about the accolades that she received throughout her career, Deputy Pekar humbly responded as countless deputies before and after her would respond: "That's just my job"



On August 5th, our deputies participated in National Night Out events across Summit County. The National Night Out initiative is designed to bring residents and law enforcement closer together to help build trust and safer communities.



The National Sheriff's Association & The Summit County Sheriff's Office

A Proudly Interwoven History

In June, our own Sheriff Fatheree was re-elected to the Board of Directors of the National Sheriff's Association. She was chosen by her peers from across the United States to serve as the NSA's Treasurer. Her tenure on the NSA Board is part of a longtime shared history between the National Sheriff's Association and the Summit County Sheriff's Office that goes back over eight decades.

The National Sheriff's Association today represents and advocates for over 3,000 sheriffs across the nation, providing resources, assistance, development and training, political advocacy, networking opportunities, and more. The organization, which is headquartered in Alexandria, Virginia, has over 22,000 members nationwide.



O'NEIL HEADS NEW SHERIFFS' SOCIETY

Sheriff Walter P. O'Neil is the president of the newly organized National Sheriffs' association. He was elected at a meeting in Columbus following the incorporation of the association.

The organization, which already has a membership of 500 sheriffs from every state, is designed to work with various state sheriffs' associations in the prevention and suppression of crime, O'Neil said.

Attempts at forming a cohesive association of sheriffs came and went during the late 19th and early 20th century, but finally in 1940 at the urging of the Buckeye State Sheriff's Association, the National Sheriff's Association was officially incorporated.

The founding paperwork was filed with the Ohio Secretary of State on September 26, 1940, and Summit County Sheriff Walter O'Neill was chosen as the first president of the National Sheriff's Association!

GUNS & HOSES



IN AUGUST, OUR DEPUTIES FACED OFF AGAINST FIREFIGHTERS FROM THE GREEN FIRE DEPARTMENT FOR OUR ANNUAL GUNS & HOSES CHARITY HOCKEY GAME AT CENTER ICE ARENA IN JACKSON TOWNSHIP.

NOW IN ITS SEVENTH YEAR RUNNING, THIS UNIQUE EVENT SEES DEPUTIES AND FIREFIGHTERS SQUARING OFF ON THE ICE TO RAISE MONEY FOR LOCAL CHARITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS.

THIS YEAR'S RECIPIENTS WERE 'ALUMINUM CANS FOR BURNED CHILDREN' AND OUR OWN SHERIFF'S OFFICE K-9 UNIT. AND JUST IN CASE YOU WERE WONDERING... OUR DEPUTIES SQUEAKED OUT A ONE-POINT WIN OVER THE FD!





In August, inmates at the Summit County Jail began participating in a new initiative designed to help them obtain their high school diplomas. The free program is offered by *Career Prep 22+*, a nationally recognized and accredited program that seeks to help incarcerated individuals complete their education, with the goal of helping them obtain employment, get their lives back on track, and reduce recidivism. The coursework is tailored for each inmate, with an individualized curriculum designed to help them graduate. Sessions are held weekly, and at the end of the course inmates will be required to take a state test and score above a certain threshold in order to receive their diplomas.

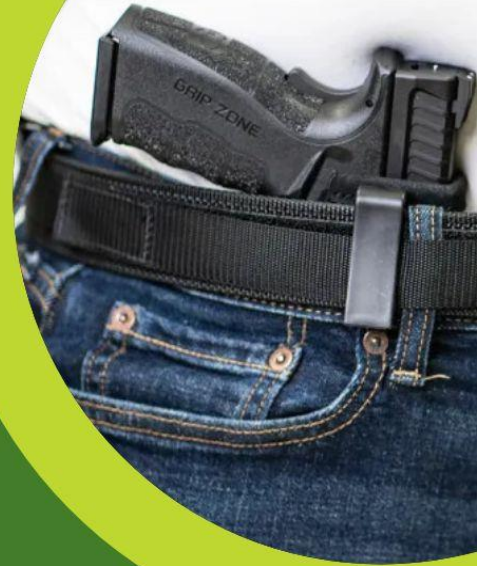


CONCEALED CARRY WORKSHOP

Presented by

Sheriff Kandy Fatheree &

County Prosecutor Elliot Kolkovich



Learn about...

- Recent changes to Concealed Carry laws and how they may effect you.
- What gunowners can expect from law enforcement.
- Self-defense, defense of property, castle doctrine, and more.
- Best practices to safely carry and secure your weapon.

Wednesday, October 15th
6:30pm-8:30pm

Central Park Community Hall
1795 Steese Road
Green, OH 44720

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC!

REGISTRATION REQUIRED



Sign-up by visiting the CCW section on the Sheriff's Office mobile app or at sheriff.summitoh.net, or by scanning:

