



*Building  
Strong Bonds*



# LET'S BACK THE BLUE

## 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

# *Let's Back the Blue*

**LET'S BACK THE BLUE IS A GRASSROOTS ENDEAVOR TO ENCOURAGE SUPPORT AND APPRECIATION FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT AND THEIR EFFORTS, AND TO BRING LAW ENFORCEMENT AND THE COMMUNITIES THEY SERVE TOGETHER.**

“The efforts of *Let's Back the Blue* of Auglaize County have been instrumental in promoting community support for local law enforcement officers and departments. Through a grassroots effort, this organization has reached out to local citizens and businesses to foster support for the officers that serve in their local communities. This is very important since these same officers live in the communities they serve. Through *Let's Back the Blue's* efforts the support has been overwhelming and the citizens of Auglaize County have overwhelmingly supported local law enforcement. Fundraising efforts have directly impacted the local agencies by allowing them to purchase equipment needed to fulfill their daily duties in protecting the citizens of Auglaize County. *Let's Back the Blue* has unlimited potential as the organization tries to expand and garner more community involvement. This organization has been inspiring and continues to volunteer their talents, time, and resources to impact the Auglaize County Law Enforcement community.”

*Lieutenant John Westerfield, Wapakoneta Post of the Ohio State Highway Patrol*

## ADVISORY PANEL

### WAPAKONETA

*Interim Mayor  
Steve Henderson  
Chief Cal Schneider  
Supt. Of Schools  
Aaron Rex*

### ST. MARYS

*Mayor Patrick McGowan  
Chief Jake Sutton  
Supt. Of Schools  
Bill Ruane*

### WAYNESFIELD

*Mayor Rodney Luma  
Chief Nathan Motter  
Supt. Of Schools  
Chris Pfister*

### CRIDERSVILLE

*Mayor Rick Walls  
Chief Paul Robbins*

### NEW KNOXVILLE

*Mayor Keith Leffel  
Chief Chris McKinney  
Supt. Of Schools  
Kim Waterman*

### NEW BREMEN

*Mayor Robert Parker  
Chief Mike Skinner  
Supt. Of Schools  
Jason Schrader*

### MINSTER

*Mayor Dennis Kitzmiller  
Chief David Friend  
Supt. Of Schools  
Brenda Boeke*

### SHERIFF

*Mike Vorhees*

### OSHP, WAPAKONETA

*Lt. John Westerfield*

### COUNTY

#### COMMISSIONERS

*David Bambauer  
Doug Spencer  
John Bergman*

### CHAMBERS OF COM.

*Wapakoneta Area  
Jackie Martell  
Southwestern Auglaize  
Sara Topp  
St. Marys  
Angie Tangeman*

## Let's Back the Blue

*Bringing law enforcement and the communities they serve together by encouraging respect, support and appreciation of law enforcement and their efforts*



Dear Friend of Law Enforcement,

Thank you for your greatly appreciated support throughout 2021! This endorsement enabled us to achieve many goals established at the beginning of the year, while adding new ventures during the year. Those include:

- ★ Our second annual "**Got Their Six**" (Got Their Back) raffle, **every penny going to grants for local law enforcement use and our training academy scholarships;**
- ★ The approval of nearly **\$50,000** in local agency grant requests through our **Law Enforcement Grant Fund;**
- ★ Instituting **scholarships** for Auglaize County residents attending Peace Officer Training Academies at Wright State University - Lake Campus, Rhodes State University, and Apollo Career Center;
- ★ Purchasing a **DART Systems portable firearms training simulator** for the WSU-Lake Campus Academy that will also be utilized by the academy at Rhodes State and our local agencies for supplemental training and practice, made possible by generous donations from local corporations;
- ★ The continuation of our **Light Auglaize County Blue** campaign to show support for law enforcement;
- ★ The **Let's Back the Blue 5K and Little Cop 1-Miler**, run in person and virtually;
- ★ Participation in several public awareness events including **National Night Out** and the **Auglaize County Fair**.

Continuing the above activities in 2022, we will also strive to focus on strengthening our sister chapters in municipalities around the county, ensuring each law enforcement officer, correctional officer, dispatcher, and wildlife officer feels the full support, respect, and appreciation of residents in Auglaize County.

As always, we continue to encourage you to change out your exterior lights to blue in your home and/or business as a show of support to those committed to keeping our county a safe place to live and raise our families, and to honor those who have died in the line of duty.

Let's Back the Blue TOGETHER!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anne Niemeyer".

Anne Niemeyer  
Executive Director

**Let's Back the Blue - P.O. Box 1656 - Wapakoneta, OH 45895 - 419-234-6414**  
**[letsbacktheblue@bright.net](mailto:letsbacktheblue@bright.net) Visit us at: <http://letsbacktheblue.org>**



# Our Vision = Our Mission

Most law enforcement personnel love where they live, and like everyone, want their communities to be safe places to live, work, and raise families. Beneath that uniform is a man or woman who is just like us - a son or daughter, a parent, sibling, grandchild, a friend. Each day they put on their badge they are reminded of their oath to honestly and impartially carry out their duty to the best of their ability as law enforcement officers. Yet, the decline in respect and support for law enforcement is palpable, and it makes their job increasingly dangerous and demoralizing. We are encouraged by the recent call at the federal and state levels to increase much needed funds to our law enforcement. Still, funding is only one part of the equation. *Let's Back the Blue* believes the **efforts of law enforcement are most successful when there is support from the local community**. Our vision, therefore, is to promote a strong bond between law enforcement and their communities, to be open to serious conversation regarding that relationship, and to encourage communities to **lift up their law enforcement with visible signs of support**, respect, and appreciation, helping to create a more positive and safer environment for all.



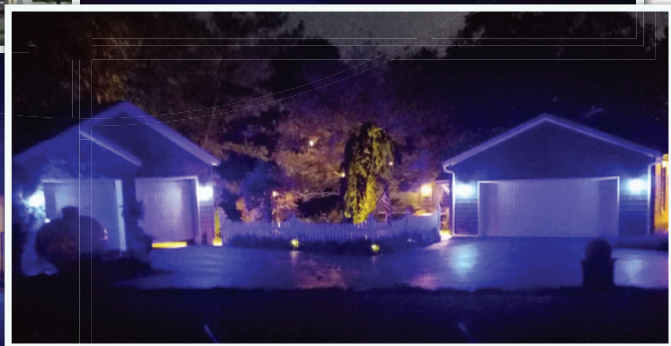
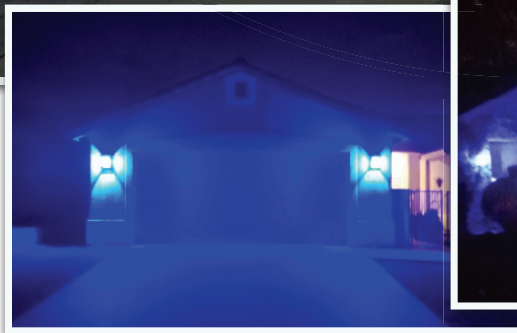
“The Auglaize County *Let's Back the Blue* organization has been tremendous to Auglaize County Law Enforcement. The support this group has shown to Law Enforcement Officers in this county has helped boost morale and show what our officers are doing is good and that they have support behind them. Driving through the county and cities at night to see blue porch lights glowing is heartwarming to any law enforcement officer. The blue bulb program pushed out by *Let's Back the Blue* shows how much this group really cares for all law enforcement.”

*Michael L. Vorhees, Auglaize County Sheriff*



# Light Auglaize County Blue

Encouraging our communities to display visible signs of support for law enforcement is a major priority, and one of the most noticeable and best recognized signs of support among law enforcement is the blue light. **Light Ohio Blue**, a central Ohio based organization dedicated to honoring Ohio's law enforcement personnel, works with Ohio businesses to light skylines blue across the state in support of law enforcement, as well as to encourage every citizen to change their home exterior lights to blue. Partnering with **Light Ohio Blue** in early 2020, *Let's Back the Blue* encouraged businesses and individuals to Light Auglaize County Blue by illuminating blue lights at their homes and businesses, especially during National Police Week in May. Our communities responded, and even more encouraging to us is the number of blue lights that still continue to shine, night and day throughout the year, in full support of our local law enforcement!



"The blue light campaign allowed our community to build a bond with the Officers of the Cridersville Police Department, a bond that reached all of Auglaize County judging by all of the blue lights displayed. As the Chief of Police I am truly humbled by the outpouring of support our department has received."

*Chief Paul Robbins, Cridersville Police Department*

# Raising The Funds

In such a time of economic uncertainty such as what we've been experiencing with COVID, the amount of funds raised is a testament to how much support people have for law enforcement. Businesses and corporations have responded with **donations and sponsorships for specific needs**, community foundations have awarded **grants**, residents have dropped money in our **donation boxes** around the county, people registered for the **5K and Little Cop**, and many purchased **chicken dinners and raffle tickets**.



AND JUST LIKE THAT THOSE CHICKEN DINNERS WERE ALL SOLD. THEY WERE GOOD, TOO.

A special thanks to Jim and crew of Sweet Caroline's Chicken Dinners for your hard work and tasty chicken several times in 2021!

THANK YOU TO OUR 5K AND LITTLE COP SPONSORS!

JIMMY SEGER STATE FARM INSURANCE

CHET HARROD HARROD INSURANCE AGENCY

SWEET KICKS CANDIES AND BAKERY

MOTTERIFFIC CREATIONS

LEE'S FAMOUS RECIPE

WAPAKONETA ATHLETIC CLUB

THE GARDENS OF WAPAKONETA

WAPAKONETA MANOR

G.A. WINTZER & SON CO.

AMY KENTNER AND JIM CRIST ROAD RUNNER ENTERPRISES











“Being a small community and village, we do not have a large yearly operating budget. With increased attacks on police in general and the push for every police department in the United States to go to body cameras, it is hard to budget for such an expensive item. Fortunately, we were able to apply for a successful grant through ‘Let’s Back the Blue,’ enabling us to purchase body cameras for each of our officers.”

*Chief Chris McKinney, New Knoxville Police Department*



# Got Their Six Raffle

The bulk of funds raised through our fundraisers comes from *Let's Back the Blue's* **GOT THEIR SIX** raffle. There are 2,000 tickets available with 50 prizes to be won. We are extremely grateful to our raffle prize partners who either donated prizes or sold us prizes at cost or reduced cost. We are also grateful to the growing cadre of ticket sellers and ticket purchasers without whom we would not have been able to proceed with this raffle. **Proceeds from each ticket sold went directly to our scholarships and Law Enforcement Grant Fund.**



## "GOT THEIR SIX" Raffle Is Back!!

(We've "Got Their Back!")

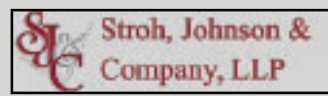
**Got Their Six!**  
Join Us on Facebook Live for  
**RAFFLE DRAWING ON**  
**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2021, 2 PM**  
**Over \$53,000 in Prizes**

1. \$1000 Cash  
2. \*\*Dash 19 Gen 5 (Shel. 1 Yr) Mercedes (2021)  
3. Sony PlayStation 5 (\$499)  
4. Samsung 75" QLED TV with Smart Sound Bar (\$3,999)  
5. Husqvarna Z242 ZTR Riding Mower (\$1,999)  
6. \$500 Cash (Luggage (Eminent) (\$1,000)  
7. \*\*North & Brewer 3 Year Free CO2 Cover (\$2,000)  
8. Peloton Bike with 3 Year Digital Membership (\$2,000)  
9. \$750 Mountain Bike (Canyon) (2021) (2021)  
10. \$100 Cash  
11. \$100 Cash  
12. \$100 Walmart Gift Card  
13. \*\*Pulse View Golf Course Membership, \$100 Pro Shop Card (\$100)  
14. \$500 Shell Gas Card  
15. Water Detergent in Blue Gull (\$100)  
16. \$500 Cash (Hess, Johnson & Company) (2021)  
17. \*\*17" 4K Samsung QLED TV with Alexa Smart Bar (\$1999)  
18. \*\*Hess Midweek Air (\$100)  
19. \*\*Hess 1000 Package with 20L Power Oil Card (\$750)  
20. \$1000 Cash (Hess, Johnson & Company) (2021)  
21. \$500 Cash (Hess, Johnson & Company) (2021)  
22. \$500 Cash (Hess, Johnson & Company) (2021)  
23. \*\*Hess 1000 Package with 20L Power Oil Card (\$750)  
24. \*\*Hess 1000 Package with 20L Power Oil Card (\$750)  
25. \*\*Hess 1000 Package with 20L Power Oil Card (\$750)  
26. \$1000 Cash (Hess, Johnson & Company) (2021)  
27. \$750 Amazon Gift Card  
28. \*\*Hess 1000 Package with 20L Power Oil Card (\$750)  
29. \$1000 Cash (Hess, Johnson & Company) (2021)  
30. \$1000 Cash (Hess, Johnson & Company) (2021)  
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50. \$1000 Cash (Hess, Johnson & Company) (2021)

100% of proceeds benefit our Auglaize County Law Enforcement Agencies through our Law Enforcement Grant Fund, scholarships to Auglaize County residents attending Ohio Peace Officer Training Academies at Wright State University Lake Campus, Rhodes State, or Apollo Career Center, training equipment purchases, and a Benevolent Fund.

**Get Your Tickets!**  
Check our FB page for businesses selling tickets in your area, email [letsbacktheblue@bright.net](mailto:letsbacktheblue@bright.net) Or text 419-231-6111.

**Thank You!!**



## THANK YOU to the following GOT THEIR SIX raffle prize partners:

ROCKY WATERS OUTFITTERS  
MORAN REFRIGERATION  
BUD'S CHEVROLET BUICK, INC.  
FOWLER'S TV  
TRACTOR SUPPLY COMPANY  
TRUE VALUE HARDWARE  
GILBURG FURNITURE  
WAGNER'S IGA  
PRAIRIE VIEW GOLF CLUB

STEVE MYERS SERVICE  
MIDWEST SHOOTING CENTER  
AUGLAIZE EMBROIDERY  
KAH MEATS  
WAPAK Y  
WAPAK MARATHON  
WAPAKONETA LOWE'S  
WAPAKONETA WALMART  
COMMUNITY MARKETS

J & L POWER EQUIPMENT  
AM VETS POST #333  
TELEPHONE SERVICE Co.  
ROCKING K ELECTRIC BIKES  
STROH, JOHNSON & Co., LLP  
BUCKLAND TELEPHONE Co.  
BAMBAUER FERTILIZER & SEED

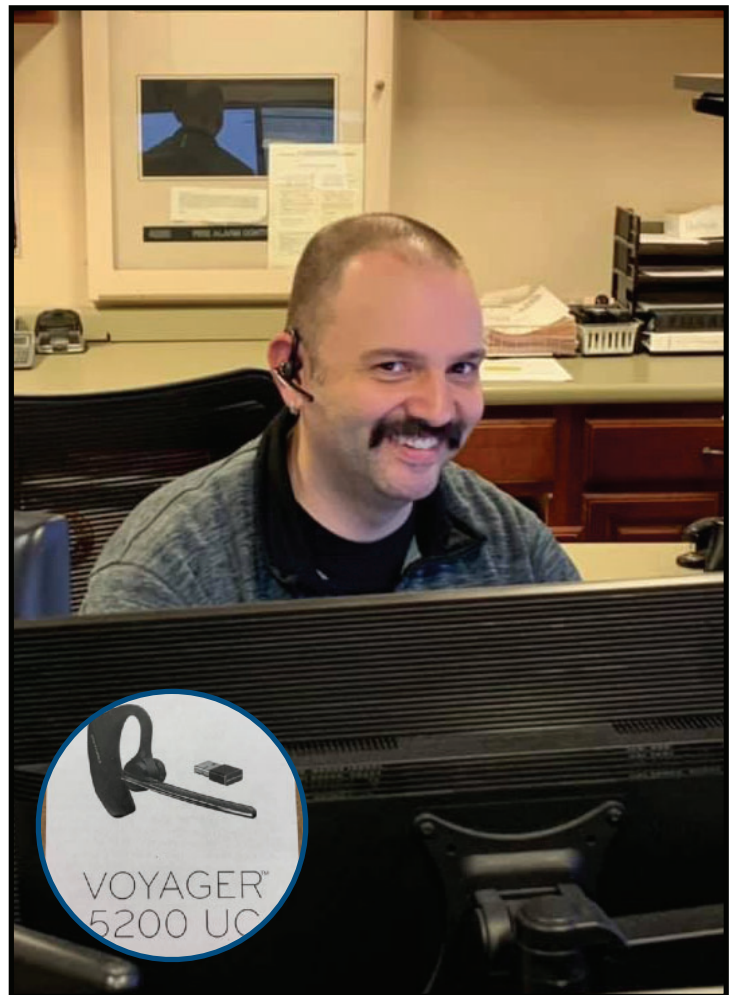
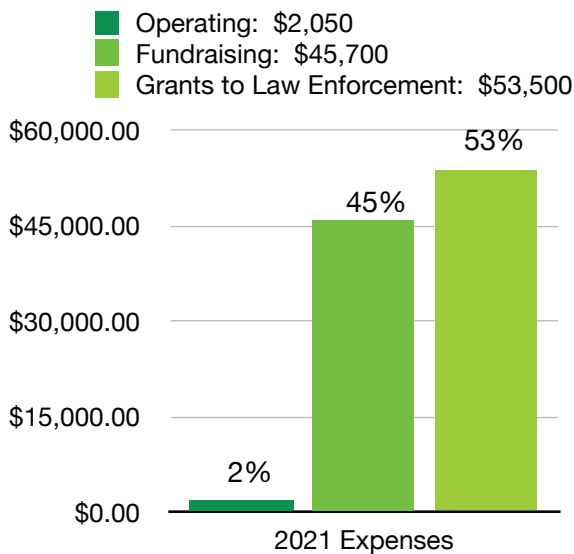
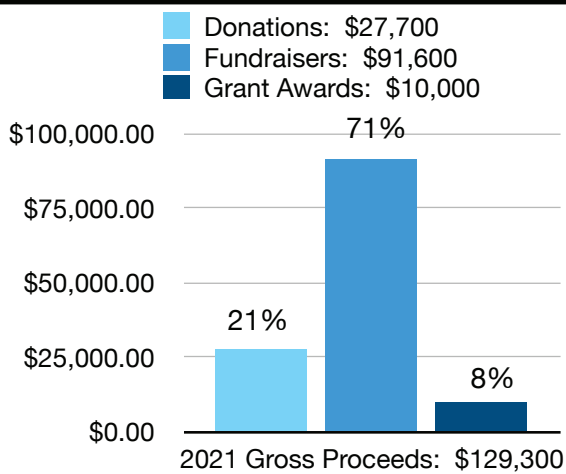
**PROCEEDS: \$37,000**



# Financial Summary

The financial support given by our communities and beyond to further the mission of *Let's Back the Blue* has been tremendous. Businesses, community foundations, and individuals bought chicken dinners, bought and sold raffle tickets, took part in the 5K, and/or donated time and money. Encouraged by this wonderful response by so many we remain committed to being good fiscal stewards to assure sustainability, enabling us to continue to grow our funds and initiate programs designed to benefit law enforcement and increase community participation.

*98% of proceeds went directly to furthering our mission*



“This purchase gave the ability for our department to upgrade our aging firearms, which were originally cut from the budget due to the economic impact from the COVID-19 pandemic. *Let's Back the Blue* allowed our department to stay up with our needs instead of falling behind...”  
*Chief Jake Sutton, St. Marys Police Department*

# Law Enforcement Grant Fund

Because COVID-19 initially dealt a financial blow to our law enforcement agencies with many of them experiencing budget cuts of at least 10%, *Let's Back the Blue* established a Law Enforcement Grant Fund to which our local law enforcement agencies could apply for wants and needs not covered by their budgets. Applications are submitted by agencies for purchase of equipment, and once approved *Let's Back the Blue* pays the invoice. During 2021, **\$53,544 was awarded for law enforcement needs through the grant**, including rebuilding one agency's training budget which had been deleted.

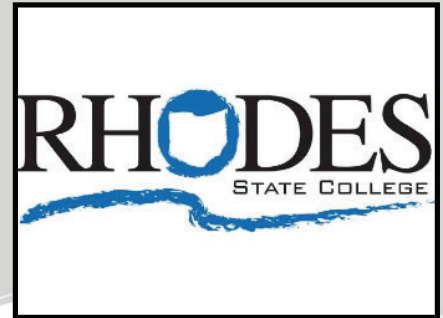
Grants funded such equipment as body cameras, moveable speed detection signs, tasers, shotguns, a radar unit, active shooter protection kits with special vests designed to withstand high velocity rifle fire, outer vest covers, night vision goggles, cameras, and more. There are other grant sources available to our agencies which may or may not approve requests, but what makes this grant unique is the fact it is funded **by Auglaize County residents for use by Auglaize County law enforcement**. Each item purchased through our grant fulfilled a distinct need, **resulting in safer conditions for officers and their communities**.



"The *Let's Back the Blue* organization is an integral resource for a small department like the Waynesfield Police Department. Since we are a very small agency with extremely low resources, *Let's Back the Blue* has played an enormous role in helping us acquire much needed equipment we would not otherwise be able to afford. This equipment, from a speed detection device to a taser to a sign that displays vehicle speeds, helps keep the community and our police officers safe. Without the support of *Let's Back the Blue*, the Waynesfield Police Department and the community we serve would not be able to provide the types of services we can now provide.

*Chief Nathan Motter, Waynesfield Police Department*

# Police Academy Scholarships



A well documented **recruiting crisis** exists across the nation at every level of law enforcement, and many of our local agencies are feeling its negative effects. Unfortunately, it's not just the department that is affected - it is also the community. When too few take a civil service exam as the first step toward law enforcement employment, an agency is forced to accept those who may not be a good fit.

Offering scholarships could help attract men and women who are excited by and committed to a career in law enforcement. Because cadets living in Auglaize County and attending the three area training academies are frequently hired by Auglaize County law enforcement agencies, it benefits not only the cadet, but also the local communities in which they will serve.

In 2021, multiple scholarships were established for Auglaize County residents attending the three area Peace Officer Training Academies. *Let's Back the Blue* financed two \$1,000 scholarships at Wright State University-Lake Campus, one \$1,000 scholarship at Rhodes State University, and one \$500 scholarship at Apollo Career Center. Looking ahead to 2022, our intention is to finance two \$1,000 scholarships at each institution, helping to pave the way for better recruits for our communities.

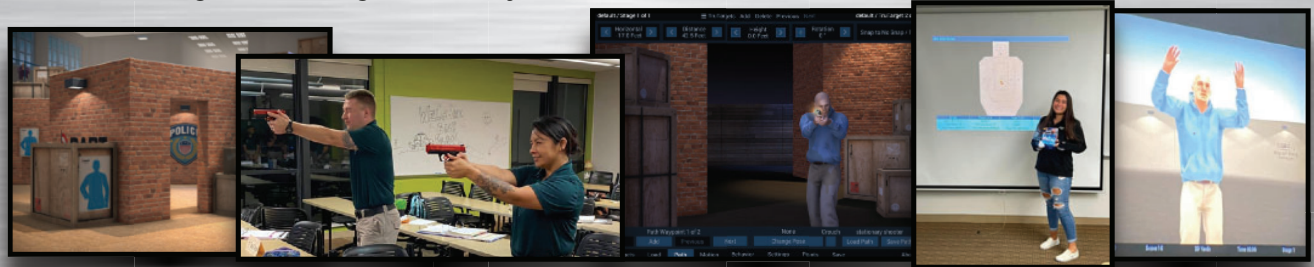
"I am extremely honored that the organization provided this generous scholarship. It was a tremendous benefit in this new journey and helped lessen the burden. I am grateful for the support of the organization and look forward to contributing to this organization in the future to help someone else like me have the opportunity to chase their dreams,  
Thanks - Shawn"



# Special Community Partnerships

Because of our belief in proper, consistent, and repetitive law enforcement training, *Let's Back the Blue* approved a request by the Wright State University-Lake Campus Peace Officer Training Academy to purchase a DART firearms simulator. Our Law Enforcement agencies in Auglaize County hire many recruits from the training academies at WSU-Lake Campus, Rhodes State, and Apollo Career Center, and it is in the best interest of residents of Auglaize County to ensure new recruits are well trained. Because Commander Mark Ernst is commander of both WSU and Rhodes State academies, the simulator will be used by both academies.

Besides helping to **improve confidence** and offering **frequent repetitive training**, the system comes with a series of de-escalation techniques that provide additional training. Time spent with the **simulator de-escalation techniques will help both academies to achieve STAR certification**, a certification offered by the state for academies that meet additional hours, certifications, and other requirements. STAR Certification also requires exposure to advanced police technology, and the DART system will help both academies meet this requirement as well. An added bonus is the unit's portability, and when not in use by the academies, **may be shared with law enforcement agencies in Auglaize County.**



Purchase of the DART Simulator was made possible by generous donations from:



During 2021, St. Marys Chrysler Dodge Jeep made a commitment to help their local police agency, the St. Marys Police Department. Working with *Let's Back the Blue* to determine the best way to donate support, St. Marys Chrysler Dodge Jeep decided to purchase **four police bikes with all accessories**, an item that was on the SMPD wish list. Knowing officers on bikes would be less intimidating than an officer in a patrol car, St. Marys Chrysler Dodge Jeep's hope was bike patrol officers would be much more approachable to the general public, helping to strengthen that positive relationship between community and law enforcement. The purchase was put in motion, and after extensive training for officers the bikes became useful tools to benefit the St. Marys community during the spring of 2022. Thank you, St. Marys Chrysler Dodge Jeep for your strong support of law enforcement!



# Our Donors

Second to fundraisers, donations are the lifeblood of *Let's Back the Blue*. From donation boxes around the county, to grants, to donations earmarked for specific purposes from businesses or individuals, we are ever grateful for donations no matter the form they take.

## PLATINUM

**\$2,000**

- ST. MARYS CHRYSLER
- AMVETS WAPAK POST #333
- WAPAKONETA AREA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
- RME CHARITABLE FUND
- ST. MARYS COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
- CROWN EQUIPMENT

## SILVER

**\$500**

- BAMBAUER FERTILIZER & SEED
- STROH, JOHNSON AND Co., LLP
- TELEPHONE SERVICE Co.

## GOLD

**\$1,000**

- CRIDERSVILLE COMMUNITY
- RAINES MANAGEMENT GROUP
- MIDWEST SPECIALTIES/FLEX ARM
- NEW BREMEN COMMUNITY FUND
- AIP LOGISTICS
- WAPAKONETA WALMART

## BLUE

**\$100**

- COMMUNITY MARKETS
- JOYCE ANN'S CONSIGNMENT BOUTIQUE

## BRONZE

**\$250**

- JIMMY SEGER STATE FARM INSURANCE
- HARROD INSURANCE AGENCY
- SWEET KICKS CANDIES
- NETWORK FOR GOOD
- TOM AHL FAMILY OF DEALERSHIPS



# Satellite Chapters

One goal for 2021 was to be able to develop satellite chapters in each municipality in Auglaize County. Building core support in each area ensures growth in support and appreciation for local law enforcement agencies, as well as sustainability for *Let's Back the Blue*. Each satellite chapter can operate in a manner that uniquely serves their own agency the best while operating under the *Let's Back the Blue* umbrella. **Currently, we have coordinators in Waynesfield, Cridersville, Minster, St. Marys, and Wapakoneta.** We are still working to obtain coordinators for New Knoxville and New Bremen, as well as for the Wapakoneta Post of the Ohio State Highway Patrol and the Sheriff's Office. We will continue our focus of securing a coordinator for each agency by the end of 2022.

## Pathways for Involvement

There are numerous **no cost or low-cost ways** to show your support and appreciation to those who keep us safe. Some ideas include:

- ☆ Wrapping a **blue ribbon** on your doorknob, car antenna, or mailbox;
- ☆ Writing a **simple note of thanks** and sending it to the law enforcement agency that serves you;
- ☆ **Sharing a story** about a positive law enforcement experience on your social media accounts;
- ☆ Liking, commenting on, and **sharing posts** from our Let's Back the Blue Facebook page;
- ☆ Writing a **Letter to the Editor** of your local newspapers in support of law enforcement;
- ☆ Taking part in the Citizens Police Academy run by the Auglaize County Sheriff's Office;
- ☆ **Helping out with Let's Back the Blue fundraisers;** especially the raffle and dinners;
- ☆ Lighting a **blue light** at your home/business and **encouraging neighbors to do the same;**
- ☆ **Teaching your kids** respect for LE, and that law enforcement is there to help them;
- ☆ **Wearing blue or pro-law enforcement clothing** during National Police Week in May.

Other ways to be involved and support our law enforcement initiatives require financial backing. These include:

- ★ Taking part in *Let's Back the Blue* fundraisers such as our chicken dinners, 5K, and **GOT THEIR SIX** raffle;
- ★ Sponsoring a raffle prize in part or in full;
- ★ Becoming a *Let's Back the Blue* patron;
- ★ Helping to sponsor law enforcement community outreach endeavors such as National Night Out, No-Shave November (for cancer), and Shop With a Cop;
- ★ Supporting the Auglaize County DARE program with a donation or by participating in their fundraising projects;
- ★ Donating to our Law Enforcement Grant Fund, our Scholarship Fund, our Benevolent Fund for officers suffering critical injuries or line of duty deaths, or to *Let's Back the Blue* in general so we can continue our mission;
- ★ Dropping your loose change in one of our donation boxes around the county;

Do you have a skill that could help *Let's Back the Blue* achieve its mission? If you are an **artist** you could donate a piece of art for an auction. If you are a **great salesperson**, we could use you to help generate business/corporate backing. Are you a **photographer**? We always have a use for great pictures! If you are a **public speaker**, we could use you when speaking to various organizations. We also would welcome a **CPA** and an **attorney** on our board to serve in advisory capacities. These are but a few ways one's skill can help. Give us a call at 419-234-6414 to see if your skill can be put to use!

"I want to commend *Let's Back the Blue* for providing a positive impact on the Minster Community. The police officers observed more blue lights than ever before which created a boost in their morale knowing that the community is behind them."

Chief David Friend, Minster Police Department



# With Appreciation

Many began 2021 with great hope, but it didn't take long to realize the new year would continue to be one of COVID and unrest. Completing efforts of 2020 in good standing, *Let's Back the Blue* decided to forge ahead with our mission in 2021 - to promote respect, appreciation, and support for law enforcement, and build bridges rather than mistrust to strengthen positive bonds for a safer community.

Advance apologies to anyone we inadvertently leave out, as there are so many who have helped to boost support for law enforcement. We are extremely fortunate to have great school superintendents who welcome the presence of law enforcement in their buildings to create positive bonds, not negative mistrust. **Aaron Rex, Bill Ruane, Kim Waterman, Jason Schrader, Chris Pfister, and Brenda Boeke** are testaments to the success of dialogue under friendly conditions to build friendship and trust.

Thank you to **Charles Packard**, founder and CEO of The Packard Group, who has continued to offer his expertise when needed. Our **Chambers of Commerce Directors Katie Elson, Sara Topp, Jackie Martell, and Admin Extraordinaire Jillian Wallace** were steadfast sources of support and knowledge in our efforts to share our message. We were thrilled to have been named "**Non-Profit of the Year**" by the Wapakoneta Chamber of Commerce! We are also grateful for personnel at the **Wapakoneta Daily News, The St. Marys Evening Leader, and the Sidney Daily News** for their frequent and professional coverage of our activities. A special thank you to **Leah Baker** who worked especially hard to make sure our thank-you ad in the Wapakoneta Daily News and St. Marys Evening Leader was just right. **Kerri Motter/Motteriffic Creations, Mary Beech/Image Masters, and Teri and Glen Barhorst/ Barhorst Printing** are experts, making our publications stand out.



Many community individuals have done much to promote support for law enforcement. We are indebted to **Bill Swank** for designing our very own Challenge Coin, as well as **ALL he does to encourage support for law enforcement**. **Jacob Howell** was persistent in getting Officer Clyde Cook's 1963 Line of Duty Death recognized. **Treg Raines set up a fundraiser** at a festival and donated \$1,100. These are wonderful examples of individuals stepping up to show law enforcement they are appreciated.

We are truly grateful for **Amy Kentner** who persevered to allow our 5K and Little Cop 1-Miler to move ahead in person, to all the **law enforcement** who ensured a safe evening, and to our **5K Sponsors** whose support enabled us to hold the event. We were also very excited to have been invited to take part in **National Night Out, the Auglaize County Fair, as well as ride along guests in Light Ohio Blue's Annual Cruiser Caravan**. Each was a great experience and an example of community building.

**Finally, our deepest appreciation and thanks goes to our law enforcement officers, corrections officers, dispatchers, and wildlife officer who jobs are critical to the lives we are accustomed to living. You give so much. From the bottom of our hearts, we honor, support, respect, and appreciate you all! We've GOT YOUR SIX!**

"It has always been my hope and belief that our community has always supported us, but it has a deeper meaning when we can see it on a daily basis. From seeing the number of people that have come out to the events to support us to the number of houses that have blue lights shining has really improved the morale of our officers and our sense of pride in our community."

*Chief Calvin Schneider, Wapakoneta Police Department*

# Our Auglaize County Law Enforcement Agencies

## AUGLAIZE COUNTY SHERIFF



Since the establishment of Auglaize County in 1848, Sheriff Michael Vorhees is our county's 30th Sheriff. Possessing jurisdiction throughout the county, including all municipalities, the department manages the county jail, runs the DARE program, issues CCW licenses, conducts National WebChecks, and processes court paperwork. The 78 employees who are a vital part of the Sheriff's Office include administrative employees, full and part-time Corrections Officers, food service employees, a jail nurse, and a mental health and substance abuse counselor. Eleven Dispatchers are on the line with you in an emergency, while 24 Deputies and 10 Auxiliary Deputies attend court proceedings, serve subpoenas, manage eSORN, and preserve the peace we all enjoy. The Sheriff's Office is active in schools and community, watches over our homes when we are away, and is a true partner in assuring our safety.



## CRIDERSVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT



The Cridersville Police Department provides 24 hour a day, 7 days a week police protection and services to the Village Of Cridersville. Staffing includes Chief Paul A. Robbins, four additional full-time officers, three part-time officers, and one part-time clerk.

The CPD pledge to enhance the quality of life throughout the village is that of excellence, initiative, and integrity. It is their goal to continue being a responsive, proactive and caring department making Cridersville a safe place to live, work, and visit.



## WAPAKONETA POST - OHIO STATE HIGHWAY PATROL



The mission of the Wapakoneta Post of the Ohio State Highway Patrol is to protect life and property, promote traffic safety, and provide professional public services with respect, compassion, and professionalism. The Wapakoneta Post helps with driver's education classes, conducts vehicle inspections, and takes part in the Auglaize County *Shop With A Cop* program. Under the leadership of Lt. John Westerfield, the post includes four sergeants, 13 troopers, and one administrative assistant.

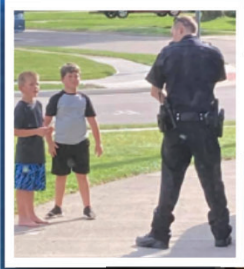






# MINSTER POLICE DEPARTMENT

With seven well trained professionals providing full-time protection, the Minster Police Department, under the leadership of Chief David Friend, focuses on preventing crime before it happens. Partnering with the Minster Local Schools, MPD officers can be found in school classrooms educating students on topics ranging from bicycle safety, drug awareness, and more. In keeping with their focus on crime prevention, the MPD utilizes a new communications service that allows important, valuable community information sent directly to residents, helping to keep crime low and relationships strong.



## NEW BREMEN POLICE DEPARTMENT

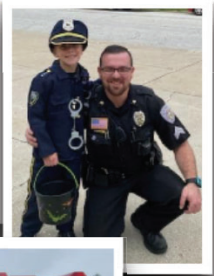
The New Bremen Police Department provides law enforcement in the village with seven full-time officers and up to five part-time officers, overseen by Chief Michael Skinner. All officers have completed mandatory training at the Ohio Peace Officers Training Academy. The department has three fully equipped cruisers and a sports utility vehicle utilized by the K-9 unit.

Going out of town? If you notify the department that you will be on vacation and your home will be unoccupied, the department will keep an eye on your house for you. The department also offers safety talks to schools and organizations about traffic and pedestrian safety and related topics.



# NEW KNOXVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Recently named Chief of the New Knoxville Police Department, Chief Chris McKinney's primary focus is to maintain bonds with residents the department serves while ensuring the locally low crime rate continues to drop. A priority of Chief McKinney's is providing beneficial in-service to his team as well as others utilizing appropriate tactics when encountering special needs individuals. Serving a community of 870 residents who strongly value education, the New Knoxville Police Department is active in the local school. Serving a community which has a deep appreciation of fiscal responsibility, the NKPD aims to be fiscally responsible while obtaining the necessary equipment to keep the department and the community safe.







# WAPAKONETA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Under the leadership of Chief Calvin Schneider, the Wapakoneta Police Department strives to ensure their community is provided with the best law enforcement and public safety possible. Serving a community of just under 10,000 people, the department has 14 full-time officers, 5 dispatchers, one K-9 officer, and 7 auxiliary officers. The men and women of the Wapakoneta Police Department are dedicated to enhancing the quality of life in the City of Wapakoneta by working in partnership with the community to provide quality law enforcement service while being responsive and caring to the needs of residents, using practices and tactics that compliment the needs of the City of Wapakoneta. They strive to complete their mission with honesty and integrity while having the courage to do what is right. They truly understand the importance of strong bonds between law enforcement and community.



# WAYNESFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT

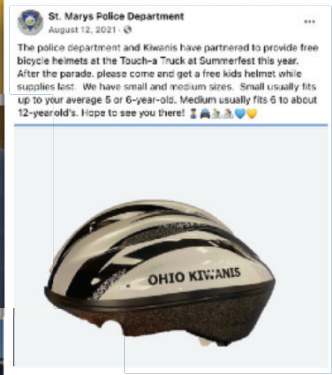


Founded in 1848, the Waynesfield Police Department has a long history of keeping residents safe. Under the leadership of Chief Nathan Motter since 2009, the WPD has updated equipment, obtained grant monies, entered into the social media realm, and added a K9 unit. This progression has made the department more efficient, safer, and better stewards of taxpayer money. Committed to excellence and community, the department has worked tirelessly to eradicate illegal drugs while regularly being a visible, positive part of the Waynesfield community.



# ST. MARYS POLICE DEPARTMENT

The mission of the St. Marys Police Department is to protect life, preserve property, and provide a safe environment for residents and visitors to live, work, and visit. Adhering to the core values of honesty, integrity, professionalism, fairness and accountability, the SMPD, under the leadership of Chief Jacob Sutton, provides 24-hour protection with 16 officers, one full time detective, 4 dispatchers, one K-9 officer, and a Code Enforcement Officer. Believing their word is their bond, the SMPD strives to do the right thing, even when no one is watching.



K-9 Scout  
End of  
Watch  
5/1/21



# Looking Ahead to 2022

Let's Back the Blue's 2022 objectives will be fairly straightforward: to **continue our mission of support and building bridges** between community and law enforcement. Our specific intentions are:

- ★ **Strengthen satellite chapters** where they exist and **build satellite chapters** in municipalities in which they are absent;
- ★ **Become more supportive and involved** in law enforcement's community outreach endeavors including **DARE, Shop With a Cop, National Night Out, No Shave November, and the Auglaize County Fair;**
- ★ **Build our Benevolent Fund** for Ohio line of duty deaths and Auglaize County critical injuries;
- ★ Engage in much needed **conversations** with those who question support for law enforcement.

**Together with you,** we can help Auglaize County continue to be a supportive and appreciative area for law enforcement personnel to work, helping to build safe communities for all. **Let's Back the Blue TOGETHER!**



*"Let's Back the Blue has been instrumental in supporting the law enforcement agencies of Auglaize County. Over the past year, they have donated the cost to upgrade equipment or to add new equipment to our local agencies. That equipment is used by the officers that patrol the cities, villages and rural areas of our county and contributes to making their jobs safer and easier. We appreciate their efforts and support they provide to our officers who are serving our communities."*

*Chief Mike Skinner - New Bremen Police Department*



# Board of Directors

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## **Anne Niemeyer**

### **Executive Director**

One of the founders of Let's Back the Blue and the proud mother of Sgt. Christian Niemeyer of the Ohio State Highway Patrol, Anne is dedicated to honoring, supporting, and appreciating our law enforcement.

## **Greg Bukowski**

### **Treasurer**

One of the founders of Let's Back the Blue, Greg is the former Chief Financial Officer of Apollo Career Center and a strong believer in devoting oneself to building bridges rather than mistrust between law enforcement and their communities. Greg is also a Jefferson Award winner with a true volunteer spirit.

## **Carolyn Schneider**

### **Secretary**

Active in several local nonprofit organizations and an avid supporter of our local law enforcement, Carolyn is a founder of Let's Back the Blue and proud aunt to Wapakoneta Police Chief Calvin Schneider.

## **Chad Dunlap**

A proud father of Trooper Dylan Dunlap of the Ohio State Highway Patrol, Chad is a Wapakoneta City Council member, a gifted speaker, and founder of "Upshift With Chad", a motivational and suicide awareness and prevention platform.

## **Julie Smith**

Earnestly supporting the needs of law enforcement personnel, Julie is a proud mother to Trooper Jared Smith with the Ohio State Highway Patrol who was inspired to join the Patrol by the service of Julie's father, retired Auglaize County Deputy Paul Eisert, and Julie's brother, Jeff Eisert, who recently retired from the Wapakoneta Police force.

## **Jack Preston**

Jack is a retired Lieutenant Colonel of the U.S. Army with four children, of whom he is very proud, who are currently serving or have served in the U.S. military. Believing in the positive effects of responsible volunteerism, Jack is active in multiple service organizations near and far.

## **Kathy Gearing**

Kathy - Kate - is the proud mother of Officer Miles Gearing of the Piqua Police Department and a firm believer in the necessity of honoring, supporting, and appreciating our law enforcement personnel.

## **Dan Burke**

Dan heads our St. Marys satellite chapter. Visit his office and you will see his great pride in his son, Sergeant Doug Burke of the Auglaize County Sheriff's Office. Dan co-owns R. J. Burke Insurance Agency in St. Marys, Ohio, with siblings Robbie and Joe.

# THIS REPORT IS DEDICATED TO LAW ENFORCEMENT PERSONNEL WHO MADE THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE IN THE LINE OF DUTY DURING 2021:

Gordon W. Best  
 Daniel M. Mobley  
 Jonathan D. Price  
 Jay Hughes  
 Brian D. Sicknick  
 Reginald Cooley  
 Brian R. LaVigne  
 Luis Marrero-Diaz  
 Luis Salamán-Conde  
 Eliezer Hernández-Cartagena  
 Melton "Fox" Gore  
 Joseph Montgomery  
 Christine Peters  
 Adam Gibson  
 Brandon M. Stalker  
 William Brautigam  
 Jimmie John Daniels  
 Michael Boutte  
 Laura A. Schwartzenger  
 Daniel Alfin  
 Darian Jarrott  
 Terence P Connelly  
 Monty R. Mitchell  
 Timothy J. Sheehan  
 Mitchell A. Penton  
 Michael Magli  
 Horacio Dominguez  
 Eugene Lasco  
 Jason Lagore  
 Thomas Albanese  
 Martinus Mitchum  
 Dominic J. Winum  
 Justin W. Bedwell  
 Jose L. Anzora  
 Jesse P. Madsen  
 Staley "Allen" Burdic  
 Gary Hibbs  
 Alejandro Flores-Bañuelos  
 Kevin Valencia  
 Matthew R. North  
 Eric Huston Talley

Robert McFarland  
 Lorena Y. Schulte  
 Todd A. Hanneken  
 Jeffrey Davis  
 Joseph Gallagher  
 Chad M. Walker  
 James Driver  
 William F. Evans  
 Hassan Hassan  
 James Kouski  
 Brent N. Hall  
 Christopher W. Knight  
 James K. Smith  
 Thomas P. Barnes  
 Harry O. D'Onofrio  
 Mark E. Anderson  
 Jimmy Garcia  
 David Parde  
 Armando Mendoza  
 Terry Dyer  
 Daniel Creighbaum  
 Anastasios Tsakos  
 Keith Heacock  
 Christopher D. Ward  
 Logan S. Fox  
 Christopher Farrar  
 Michael Wall  
 John Burreight  
 Luca Benedetti  
 Samuel A. Leonard  
 Stephen Jones  
 Jimmy Inn  
 Adam Gustafson  
 Chris Oberheim  
 Jeremy Brinton  
 Thomas W Frazier  
 Scott "Scotty" Triplett  
 Stephen C. Arnold  
 Sarah A. Grell  
 John Harris  
 Juan M. Urrutia  
 Ginarro A. Ew  
 Dominic Vaca  
 Nathalie Brill

Ryan Park  
 Jamie Huntley-Park  
 Emmanuel Familia  
 William H. Smith  
 Steven L. Rodriguez  
 Erasmo Garcia-Torres  
 Alexandra B. Harris  
 Joseph W. Burson  
 Gordon Beesley  
 Kevin Apple  
 Anthony Redondo  
 Greg Ferency  
 Darryl D Cross, Jr.  
 William E. Collins, Jr.  
 Joshua B. Bartlett  
 Tom L. Hoobler  
 Michael A. Sillman  
 Jeremy Brown  
 Phillipp J. Campas  
 Marquis D. Moorner  
 Ryan A. Bialke  
 Micah D. May  
 Jonathan M. Gumm  
 Daniel P. Cox  
 Lewis "Andy" Traylor  
 Scott R. Dawley  
 George Gonzalez  
 Brian R. Pierce, Jr.  
 Brandon A Shirley  
 Ella Grace French  
 Ryan J. Proxmire  
 Robert C. Cloninger  
 Jason Raynor  
 James J. Monda  
 Kenneth Kirkland  
 Brandon Are  
 Harminder Grewal  
 Whitney Cloud  
 Trey Copeland  
 Brian Mohl  
 Dusty Waincott  
 Blaize Madrid-Evans  
 Austin S Bush  
 John Stewart

William Jeffrey  
 Luke R. Gross  
 Matthew Locke  
 Joshua Moyers  
 Jared Keyworth  
 Nick Risner  
 Darrell D Adams  
 Michael G. Garbo  
 Dale L. Wyman  
 Dylan M. Harrison  
 Adam Gaubert  
 Michael D. Rudd  
 Juan M. Ruiz  
 Toamalama Scanlan  
 Richard A. McMahan  
 Kareen Atkins  
 Yandy Chirino  
 Ryan A. Hayworth  
 Ted L. Benda  
 Stephen Evans  
 Tyler Timmins  
 Jesse Serrill  
 Sherman O Benys, Jr.  
 Lena N. Marshall  
 Paramhans D. Desai  
 Dominic Guida  
 Chad O. Brackman  
 Michael J. Dion  
 Michael D. Chandler  
 Rhonda J. Russell  
 Frank Ramirez, Jr.  
 Henry Laxson  
 Madison Nicholson  
 Antonio A. Valentine  
 Richard Houston, II  
 Robert Daniel  
 Zachary D. Cottongim  
 Mia Figueroa-Goodwin  
 Keona Holley  
 José Ferrer-Pabón  
 Sean Riley  
 Marlene R. Rittmanix  
 Shane Bartek

In 2021, there were **170 line of duty deaths, nearly 50 more than in 2020.** The list above does not include the thousands injured in the line of duty, nor the 395 law enforcement personnel who lost their battle with COVID-19. The 170 line of duty deaths were due to the following causes:

9/11 related:	6	Fall	1	Struck by Vehicle	14
Assault:	6	Gunfire	64	Training Accident	1
Automobile Crash:	24	Heart Attack	19	Vehicle Pursuit	3
Drowned:	3	Motorcycle Crash	3	Vehicular Assault	17
Duty-Related Illness	4	Stabbed	3	Natural Disaster	2

There were also 21 K-9 Line of Duty deaths in 2021.

**WE HONOR AND THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE AND SACRIFICE.  
 MAY YOU EACH REST IN PEACE.**