

# ***STRONGSVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT***



## ***2023 YEAR-END REPORT***

## ***Contents***

Message from the Chief . . . . .	3
Organizational Structure . . . . .	4
Vision, Mission, and Values . . . . .	5
Compliance with Ohio Collaborative . . . . .	6
Organizational Integrity . . . . .	8
Patrol Division . . . . .	9
Traffic Unit . . . . .	10
K-9 Unit . . . . .	11
Drug Recognition Expert (D.R.E.) . . . . .	13
Southwest Emergency Dispatch Center . . . . .	14
Detective Bureau . . . . .	17
Records Room . . . . .	18
Victim/Witness Advocate . . . . .	19
Community Diversion . . . . .	19
Retirements, Recruitment, and Hiring and Promotions . . . . .	20
Volunteers in Police Service . . . . .	23
Quick Response Team . . . . .	25
D.A.R.E. and Safety Town . . . . .	26
Rx Drug Drop Box Program/ National Drug Take Back Day . . . . .	28
Southwest Enforcement Bureau . . . . .	29
Drone Program . . . . .	30
Mobile Field Force . . . . .	31
Shop with a Cop . . . . .	32
Agency Recognition and Departmental Awards . . . . .	33
In Memoriam . . . . .	41



## **Message from the Chief of Police**

### **Thomas J. O'Deens**

On behalf of the Strongsville Police Department, it is my privilege to present the 2023 Year-End Report. The Strongsville Police Department is dedicated to improving the quality of life in our community. This report provides a descriptive summary of what we do daily, as well as some of the community events we assisted with throughout the year.

As we move forward into 2024, the Strongsville Police Department will strive to improve our services. We are excited to implement some of the newest technology available to assist us in our investigations. The City of Strongsville has started the installation of Flock automated license plate recognition cameras throughout the city. These cameras will assist us to collect visual, audio, and situational evidence across the entire city to solve and prevent crime. The department also utilizes drones to assist with a multitude of missions including special event security, suspect searches, and crime scene/traffic crash investigations. The Department currently has five drone pilots.

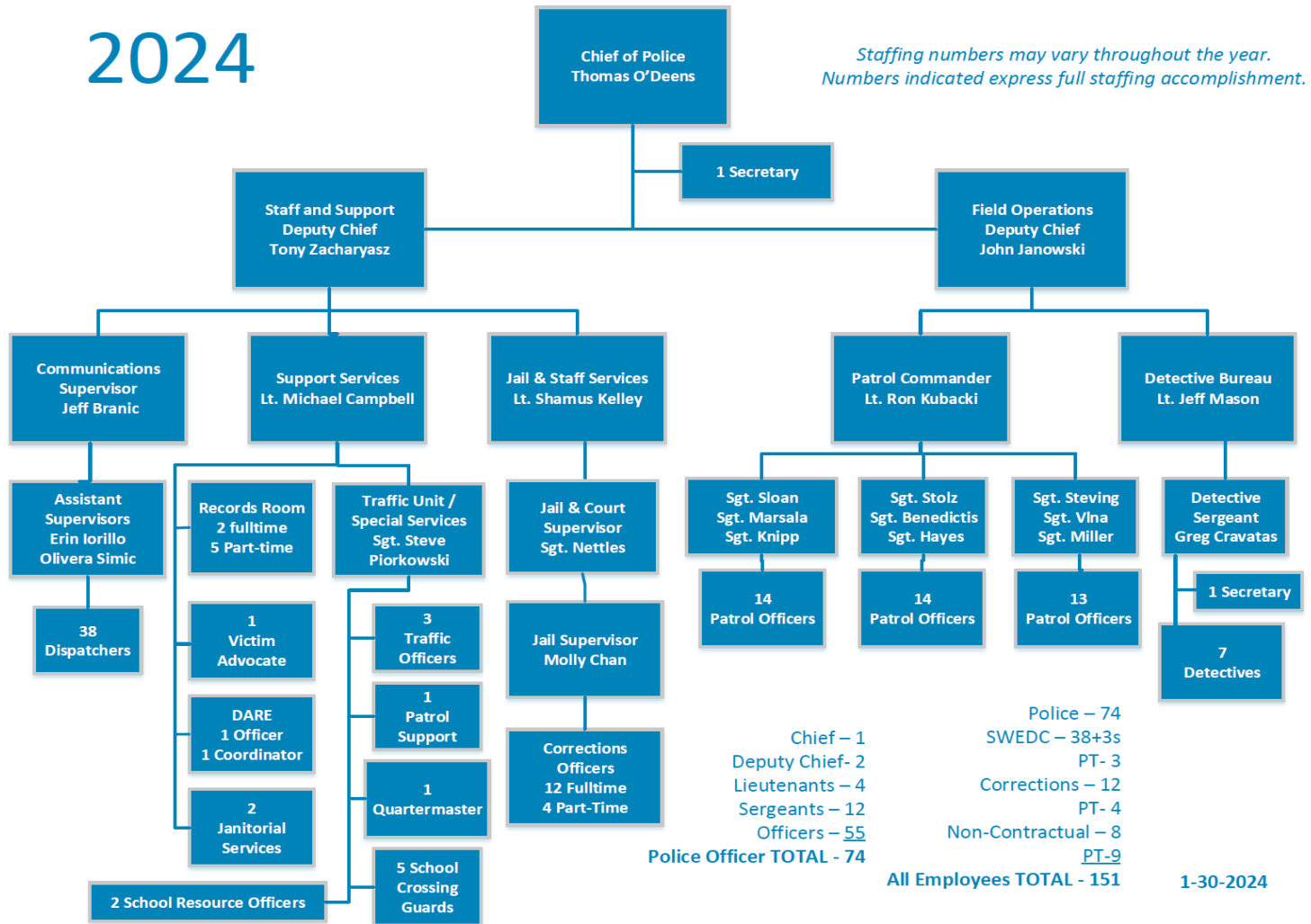
The Strongsville Police Department will continue to build relationships within the community. The Department looks forward to continuing the Citizen Police Academy, wherein officers educate our community members about the daily activities a police officer may encounter. New in 2024, we are in the process of creating a program in partnership with the Strongsville City Schools to create a version of the academy directed at the high school student interested in law enforcement.

I would like to thank our Mayor Tom Perciak, Safety Director Charlie Goss, and the members of City Council who have supported the Police Department. I would also like to thank the citizens of Strongsville for your support throughout the years. The men and women of the Police Department do not take this support for granted. We thank you for the opportunity to serve you. We will continue to strive to make Strongsville a great city to live, work, and raise a family.

Chief Tom O'Deens

# Organizational Structure

2024



# ***The Strongsville Police Department***

## **Our Vision:**

*To develop together as a team who enjoys our work, takes pride in our integrity, professional public image, and commitment to constant excellence in our service.*

## **Our Mission:**

In partnership with the community, we pledge to:

- Protect lives and property of our fellow citizens
- Persist in the pursuit of our violators of our laws, while protecting the constitutional rights and freedoms of all
- Enhance the quality of life by identifying and solving community problems, preventing crime and extinguishing fear
- Preserve the proud reputation of quality service, professionalism, integrity, and compassion

## **Our Values:**

We value our proud reputation of:

**Quality Service, Professionalism, Integrity, and Compassion**



# ***Compliance with Ohio Collaborative Standards***



The Ohio Collaborative and their established standards were implemented at the State level in 2015. The Ohio Collaborative is designed to hold law enforcement agencies accountable and instill a greater confidence with the public by establishing high certification standards that must be met. These standards include:

- Use of Force*
- Body Worn Cameras*
- Bias-Free Policing*
- Investigating Employee Misconduct*
- Response to Mass Demonstrations*
- Dealing with People in Crisis.*
- Recruiting and Hiring*
- Telecommunicator Training*
- Agency Wellness*
- Vehicle Pursuits*
- Positive Youth Interaction*
- Community Engagement*



# ***Compliance with Ohio Collaborative Standards***

The Ohio Collaborative works closely with communities and law enforcement agencies throughout Ohio with the goal of optimizing police services. Participating law enforcement agencies like the Strongsville Police Department are expected to meet or exceed these standards as they develop policies and procedures to meet new expectations.

*The Strongsville Police Department is proud to report that we are completely certified in all of the Ohio Collaborative Compliance Standards for 2023 and into 2024!*

2023 OHIO COLLABORATIVE BIAS FREE POLICING DATA <sup>1</sup>		
RACIAL AND GENDER MAKEUP OF THE 6,913 DRIVERS STOPPED BY S.P.D. OFFICERS		
Race/Gender of Driver	# of Traffic Stops	% of Total Traffic Stops
White Males	3,311	47.9%
White Females	1,984	28.7%
Black Males	906	13.1%
Black Females	473	6.8%
Hispanic Males	106	1.5%
Hispanic Females	38	.54%
Asian Males	53	.27%
Asian Females	20	.29%
Native American Males	18	.26%
Native American Females	4	.057%

<sup>1</sup> Citations and warnings statistics are for the motoring public and not the residential race and gender demographics.



## ***Organizational Integrity***

The Strongsville Police Department works hard to maintain organizational integrity through an internal review process. It is an internal system where objectivity, fairness and justice are ensured by intensive and impartial investigation and review of the actions of departmental employees. Its purpose is to provide guidelines for the reporting, investigation, and dispositions of complaints regarding the conduct of members of the Strongsville Police Department

The Strongsville Police Department will investigate all complaints, alleged or suspected (signed or anonymous) made against the department or its employees. In addition, the following is a summary of the various internal quality control checks completed in 2023:

CITIZEN COMPLAINTS – 2023			
Total Complaints: 12			
Dispositions: 12	Unfounded: 4	Exonerated: 3	Sustained: 5

Use of Force <sup>1</sup>	Pursuit Policy <sup>2</sup>	Cruiser Accidents	City Property Damage
Justified: 36	Compliant: 29	Not Negligent: 2	Not Negligent: 4
Not Justified: 0	Not Compliant: 7	Negligent: 3	Negligent: 3

<sup>1</sup> Taser deployment on 5 of the 36

<sup>2</sup> Policy 306 - Motor Vehicle Pursuits





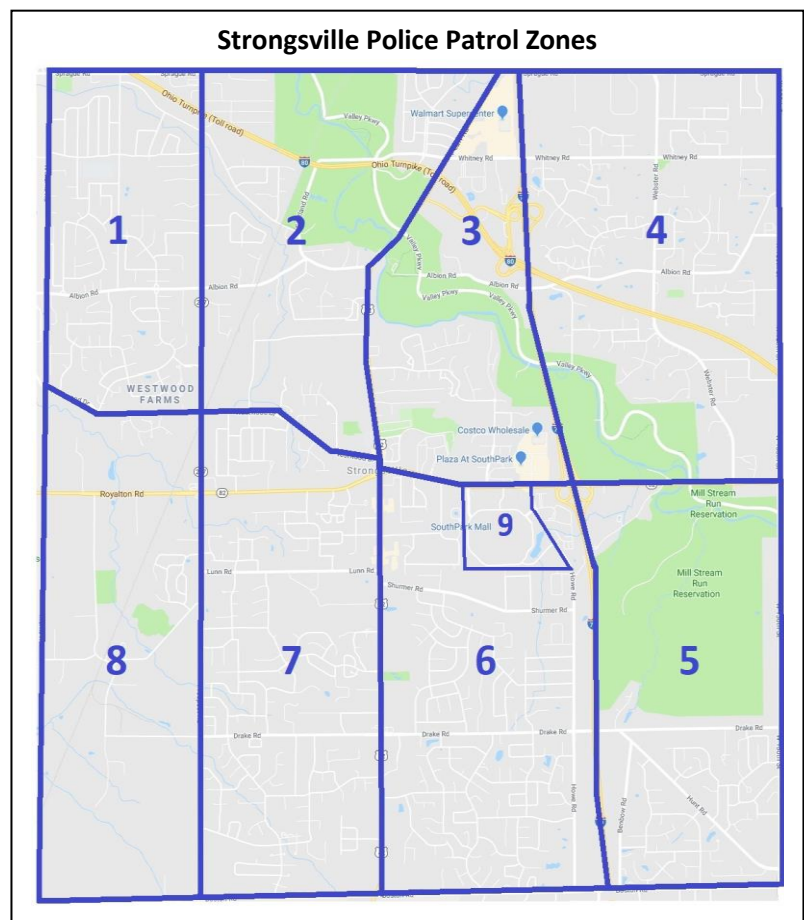
# Patrol Division

2024 PATROL DIVISION			
Supervisors			
DAY SHIFT			
Officer:	Title:	Assignment:	E-Mail:
Brian Sloan	Sergeant	Supervisor	<a href="mailto:Brian.Sloan@Strongsville.org">Brian.Sloan@Strongsville.org</a>
Marcello Marsala	Sergeant	Supervisor	<a href="mailto:Marcello.Marsala@Strongsville.org">Marcello.Marsala@Strongsville.org</a>
Jacob Knipp	Sergeant	Supervisor	<a href="mailto:Jacob.Knipp@Strongsville.org">Jacob.Knipp@Strongsville.org</a>
AFTERNOON SHIFT			
Officer:	Title:	Assignment:	E-Mail:
Ronald Stolz	Sergeant	Supervisor	<a href="mailto:Ronald.Stolz@Strongsville.org">Ronald.Stolz@Strongsville.org</a>
Jeffrey Benedictis	Sergeant	Supervisor	<a href="mailto:Jeffrey.Benedictis@Strongsville.org">Jeffrey.Benedictis@Strongsville.org</a>
Jonathan Hayes	Sergeant	Supervisor	<a href="mailto:Jonathan.Hayes@Strongsville.org">Jonathan.Hayes@Strongsville.org</a>
NIGHT SHIFT			
Officer:	Title:	Assignment:	E-Mail:
Jeffrey Steving	Sergeant	Supervisor	<a href="mailto:Jeffrey.Steving@Strongsville.org">Jeffrey.Steving@Strongsville.org</a>
Brian Vlna	Sergeant	Supervisor	<a href="mailto:Brian.Vlna@Strongsville.org">Brian.Vlna@Strongsville.org</a>
Jason Miller	Sergeant	Supervisor	<a href="mailto:Jason.Miller@Strongsville.org">Jason.Miller@Strongsville.org</a>

Uniformed patrol officers are the most visible component of a police department. The city is divided into 9 separate zone assignments for police coverage. Patrol officers on each shift are assigned a permanent zone at the beginning of each year to ensure they are not only familiar with the businesses, schools and traffic issues, but also are more likely to notice something out of the ordinary.

In addition, officers on permanent zone assignments get to know the business owners and residents, which enhances our relationship with the community.

SouthPark Mall, a regional shopping mall, has its own zone (9) due to the high volume of traffic and calls for service concentrated in a small area near the interstate. The mall has its own satellite police office which allows officers to facilitate arrests and complete reports.



## ***Traffic Unit***

***The primary function of traffic violation enforcement is to address traffic concerns before they become dangerous problems.***

### **Major responsibilities of the Traffic Unit include:**

- Meeting with community business owners, residents and others to identify and address community traffic issues.
- Providing technical assistance relating to traffic crash investigations or reconstruction
- Coordinating, deploying and maintaining traffic enforcement trailers and speed survey devices; gathering data and providing reports.
- Providing escorts and directing traffic at special events, parades, funerals, football games, etc.
- Working with the Engineering Departments in an effort to minimize traffic congestion and correct hazardous situations, such as those that occur during road construction.
- Assist our D.A.R.E. program with Safety Town graduations, OVI Task Force / Safe Kid's meetings and traffic control for D.A.R.E. dances and other events.

### **In 2023, the Traffic Unit:**

- ✓ Affected 1,375 traffic enforcement stops
- ✓ Installed or checked 40 child safety seats and educated participants on correct installation
- ✓ Deployed speed display trailers at 33 locations
- ✓ Utilized traffic counters 5 times to identify key time-of-day focused enforcement



## ***K-9 Teams***

The Strongsville Police Department's K-9 Unit began in 1995. Our canine teams are valuable law enforcement tools that improve the operating efficiency and effectiveness of the patrol division. These canines are registered with the Cuyahoga County Auditor's Office, and are certified by the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy as both Police Service Canines and Narcotics Detection Canines.



Ptl. O'Sullivan and K-9 Tito

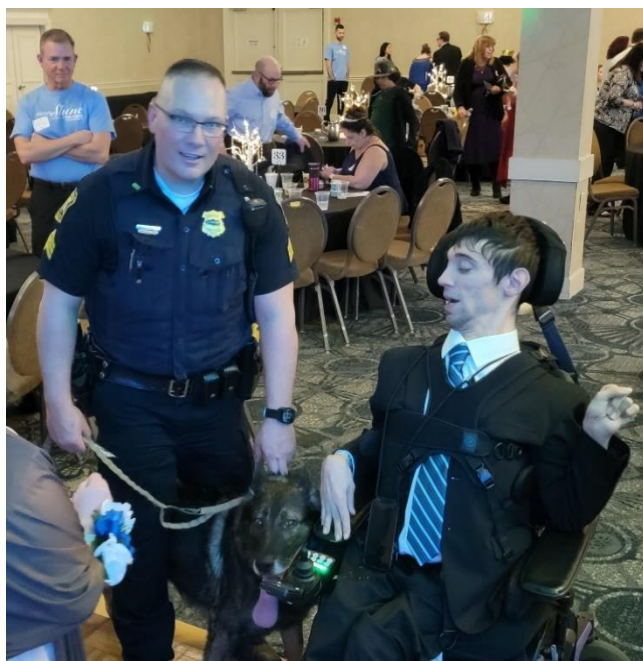
### **K-9 Team Stats:**

- 103 Narcotics Searches
- 42 Public Relations Events
- 2 Article Searches
- 7 Fleeing Suspects  
Apprehended with the use of  
canines
- 2 Tracks
- 3 Guns Recovered



### **K-9 Team Duties**

- Narcotics Detections***
- Building Searches***
- Tracking Wanted or Lost People***
- Criminal Apprehension***
- Community Relations and Demonstrations***



Sgt. Miller and K-9 Storm with a new friend at the Tim Tebow Foundation's 'Night to Shine' Event at the Strongsville Best Western Hotel Ballroom, hosted by Royal Redeemer Church.



## ***K-9 Teams***



***K-9 Storm***



***K-9 Tito and DARE Coordinator  
Cheryl Komora***



***Ptl. Kadlec & K-9 Chase***



## ***Drug Recognition Expert***

A Drug Recognition Expert (D.R.E.) is a law enforcement officer highly trained to recognize impairment in drivers under the influence of drugs other than, or in addition to, alcohol. The D.R.E. focuses on the detection, apprehension and adjudication of drug-impaired drivers. These officers are trained to know if a person is driving while under the influence of narcotics.



### ***Strongsville P.D. has two Drug Recognition Experts (D.R.E.s):***

- **Sgt. Steving** performed 4 D.R.E. Evaluations in 2023 and 70 total evaluations since becoming certified in 2015.
- **Ptl. Kurowski** performed 3 D.R.E. Evaluations after receiving his certification in 2023.
- Sgt. Steving and Ptl. Kurowski are 2 of 186 active D.R.E.s in the State of Ohio. Steving and Kurowski make up 10.5% of the D.R.E.s in Cuyahoga County (19 Total).

### **O.V.I. Arrests in 2023**

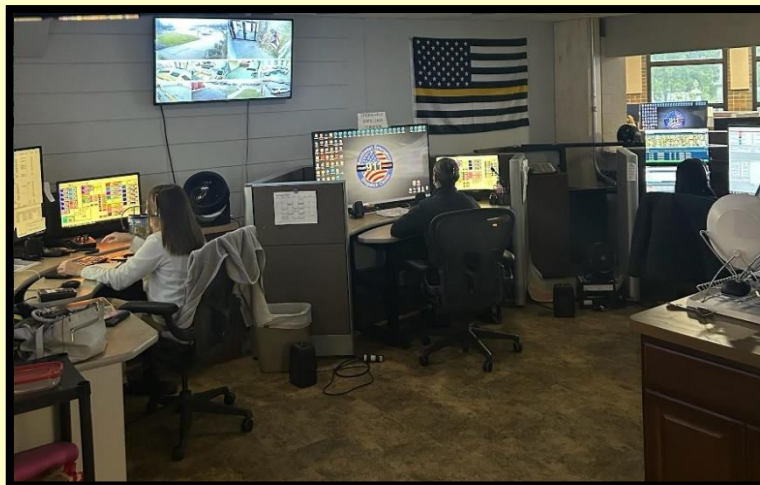
- The Strongsville Police Department had a total of 125 O.V.I. arrests in 2023.
- Of the 125 O.V.I. arrests, 9 were suspected drugged driving arrests, which is about 7.2% of the total.
- Of the 125 O.V.I. arrests, Sgt. Jeff Steving had 32 O.V.I. Arrests (25.6% of Total), Ptl. Tylor Tohati had 11 O.V.I Arrests (8.8% of Total), and Ptl. Alex Kurowski had 10 O.V.I. Arrests (8% of Total).

# ***Southwest Emergency Dispatch Center (S.W.E.D.C.)***



The Southwest Emergency Dispatch Center (S.W.E.D.C.) is the second largest regional emergency dispatch center in Cuyahoga County. S.W.E.D.C. serves the following seven communities as a Primary Public Safety Answering Point (P.S.A.P.):

***-Berea    -Brook Park    -North Royalton    -Middleburg Hts  
-Olmsted Falls    -Olmsted Township    -Strongsville***



S.W.E.D.C. answers 9-1-1 calls and administrative phone calls for member communities in addition to providing emergency dispatching services for each member community's E.M.S., Fire, and Police agencies.

Currently S.W.E.D.C. has 38 full time telecommunicators and 3 supervisors on staff. In addition to our main Dispatch Campus at the Comms Center, S.W.E.D.C. maintains a 4 position back up location at Fire Station #4. This allowed us to spread our workforce out, if necessary due to contagious diseases, as well as provide a location for continuation of operations should events trigger a need.

# ***Southwest Emergency Dispatch Center (S.W.E.D.C.)***



## **SOUTHWEST EMERGENCY DISPATCH CENTER STATISTICS**

### **Total of All Phone Calls Processed by S.W.E.D.C.: 224,543**

Total of 9-1-1 Calls Answered: 30,963

Abandoned 9-1-1 Hang-up Calls: 255

Total of Administrative Calls Answered: 148,913

Abandoned Administrative Calls: 1,200

Outbound Phone Calls: 44,412

.

### **Total of 9-1-1 Calls Processed by SWEDC: 31,238**

Total of 9-1-1 Calls: 31,238

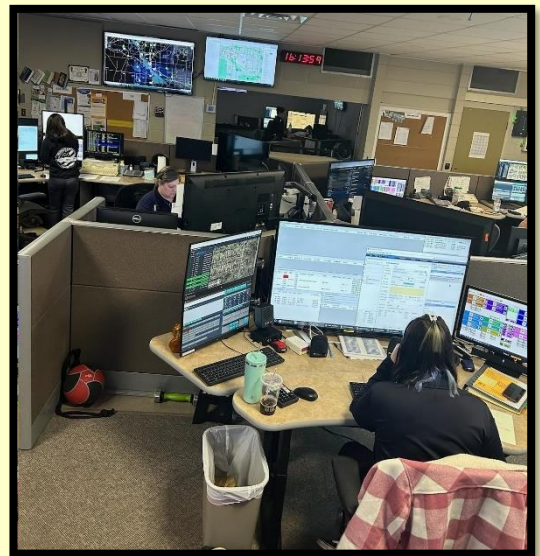
Abandoned 9-1-1 Hang-up Calls – 255

*96.40% of all 9-1-1 Calls were answered in 10 seconds or less. (Goal is 95%)*

*99.86% of all 9-1-1 Calls were answered in 20 seconds or less.*

9 Text to 9-1-1 Calls received – 20

*88.65% of all inbound 9-1-1 calls were wireless.*



### **Total Entries as provided by Computer Aided Dispatch**

All Police C.A.D.: 114,036

All Fire / EMS C.A.D.: 24,851

Total Fire & Police C.A.D.: 138,887

Strongsville Police C.A.D.: 32,230 (23% of Total Computer Aided Dispatch)





## ***SOUTHWEST EMERGENCY DISPATCH CENTER (S.W.E.D.C.)***



Our Southwest Emergency Dispatch Center Dispatchers posing for a Christmas picture. Our dispatchers work 24/7/365 ready to help you when you need us!



Dispatcher Sinclair answered a special 9-1-1 call in 2023 where she helped deliver a healthy baby girl!



Dispatchers Slavin, Sinclair, and Gould helped save a critical suicidal person with calm phone conversations to the person in crisis and coordinating search teams to locate the individual!



## ***Detective Bureau***

Uniformed patrol officers investigate reported incidents to the fullest extent practical. However, detectives will conduct secondary investigations when additional time or expertise is required. Each day, the detective supervisor conducts daily electronic reviews of all CAD activities and case reports. Based on case screening and solvability factors (that indicate the offense may be solved with a reasonable amount of investigative effort), the detective supervisor determines which will be assigned for additional follow-up.

- All case reports are reviewed by the detective bureau for completeness and for assignment.
- It is the goal of the detective bureau to review all cases reported to the department and use available resources in the most efficient manner.
- In 2023, 555 cases were assigned to detectives based on seriousness of the offense, solvability factors, need for further investigation and/or court preparation.



### **How are cases assigned to a Detective?**

**Cases that may be assigned to a Detective**  
*(based on case screening and solvability factors)*

- Additional follow-up needed that would indicate significant reason to believe that the offense may be solved with a reasonable amount of investigative effort.

**Cases that will be assigned to a Detective**  
*(regardless of solvability factors)*

- Homicides
- Rape and associated sexual crimes
- Kidnapping/abduction
- Felonious/aggravated assault
- Extortion
- Arson
- Any other complaints the Chief of Police assigns

## ***Records Room***



*Strongsville Police Department Records Clerks are on duty during business hours and are dedicated to providing administrative services and honoring public records requests.*

Primary Duties	Additional Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Data Entry and Data Validation</li><li>• Parking citation processing</li><li>• Criminal charges/paperwork for local courts</li><li>• Handling bond paperwork and monies</li><li>• Tow releases</li><li>• Civilian background checks</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fulfilling public records requests</li><li>• Answering phone calls</li><li>• Solicitor and deer hunting permits</li><li>• Expungement requests from courts</li><li>• Processing officer court subpoenas</li><li>• Providing patrol car and body cam videos</li></ul>

Records Clerks fulfilled 2,580 records requests in 2023. 712 of these requests were for body camera and/or dash camera video.



## ***Victim Advocate- Cindy Vanderwyst***

For 23+ years now, the residents of Strongsville have had the availability of utilizing the services of Cindy Vanderwyst, the Victim/Witness Advocate. Ms. Vanderwyst works very closely with victims and witnesses of crime, offering information, guidance, referrals and other assistance to get those persons through their often-traumatic experiences.

***In 2023, Ms. Vanderwyst assisted more than 150 victims of crime.***

These victims were involved in crimes of domestic violence, assault, menacing, menacing by stalking, criminal damaging, etc.

### **A victim advocate:**

- ✓ Provides information on victimization
- ✓ Provides information on victims' legal rights and protections
- ✓ Provides information on the criminal justice process
- ✓ Provides emotional support to victims
- ✓ Helps victims with safety planning
- ✓ Helps victims with victim compensation applications
- ✓ Helps victims submit comments to courts and parole boards
- ✓ Helps victims find shelter and transportation
- ✓ Provides referrals for other services for victims
- ✓ Notifies victims of inmates' release or escape

## ***Community Diversion***

The Strongsville Community Diversion Program is designed to provide juveniles an opportunity to successfully complete a program, specifically tailored to each individual's crime, that may allow the juveniles to maintain a clear record with the Strongsville Police Department. Failure to complete the program results in the juvenile's crime being prosecuted formally in the Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court.

- Cases are heard by one (1) of seven (7) volunteer Diversion Conference Facilitators who act on behalf of the Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court.
- These facilitators impose sanctions on the juveniles which must be fulfilled in an appropriate and timely manner.
- In 2023, 27 cases were heard and all juveniles successfully completed the program.
- The Strongsville Police Department receives \$200 from the Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court per juvenile who successfully completes the program.

## ***RETIREMENT, RECRUITING, AND HIRING***

When officers retire, are promoted, or other vacancies occur, candidates are selected from a civil service eligibility list or as a lateral transfer from another agency.

### *Recruitment activities include:*

- Visits to local police academy classes
- Distribution of recruitment materials throughout Cuyahoga and surrounding counties at local recreation centers, community colleges, fitness centers and other locations

### **S.P.D Welcomed Three New Hires in 2023 to Replace Departmental Vacancies**



**Ptl. Lajeski – Sworn in 1/16/23**



**Ptl. Kaetzel- Sworn in 9-11-23**



**Ptl. Deuley- Sworn in 11-20-23**



*The Strongsville Police Department is an Equal Opportunity Employer.*

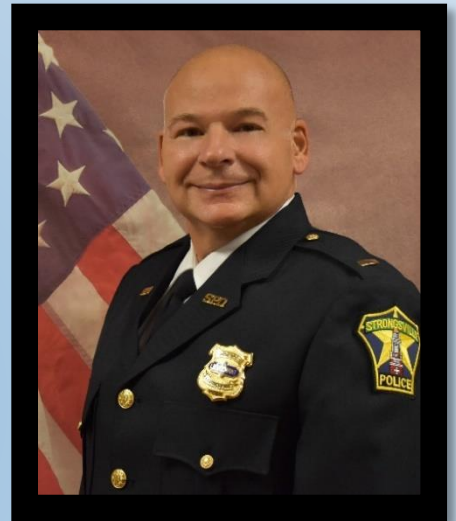


## ***RETIREMENT, RECRUITING, AND HIRING***



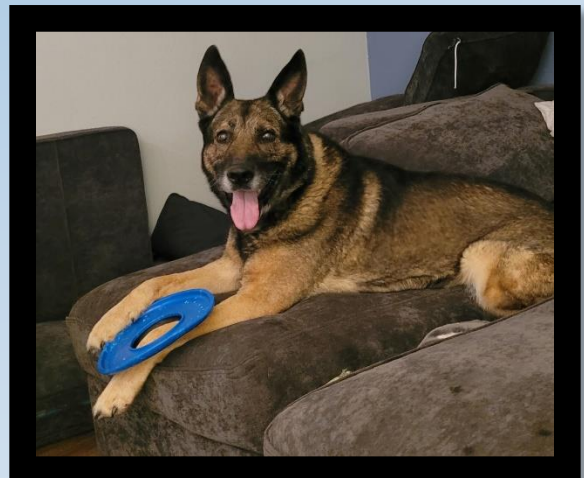
Chief Mark Fender retired on 8/31/2023 after over 35 years of service with the Strongsville Police Department. Chief Fender served as a Patrol Officer, Field Training Officer, S.W.A.T. Officer, Motor Officer, Sergeant, Lieutenant, Deputy Chief, and eventually was selected as our Chief of Police in 2017.

Lt. Patrick Russo retired on 10/20/2023 after over 32 years with the Strongsville Police Department. Lt. Russo served as Patrol Officer, Field Training Officer, Range Officer/Master, Sergeant, and Lieutenant- where in his last assignment oversaw the recruitment, hiring, and training of all personnel hired by S.P.D.



Ptl. Howard Strong retired on 11/6/2023 with 22 years of service with the Strongsville Police Department. Ptl. Strong served as a Patrol Officer, and as a Detective.

K-9 Chase retired on 6/22/2023 with 8 years of service with the Strongsville Police Department. Chase now lives at home and is enjoying retirement with his handler, Ptl. Bryan Kadlec, and family!



## ***PROMOTIONS***

### **Chief Thomas O'Deens**

**Thomas O'Deens was sworn in as Chief of Police on 9/1/2023.**



**Ronald Kubacki was sworn in as Lieutenant on 9/14/23 and assigned to the position of Patrol Division Commander.**



**Shamus Kelley was sworn in as Lieutenant on 10/21/2023 and assigned to the position of Staff Services Lieutenant.**





## ***PROMOTIONS***



**Jason Miller and K-9 Storm were promoted to Sergeant on 9/20/2023 and assigned to the position of Night Shift Patrol Sergeant**



**Jonathan Hayes was promoted to Sergeant on 10/26/2023 and assigned to the position of Afternoon Shift Patrol Sergeant**

## ***Volunteers in Police Service (V.I.P.S.)***

The Volunteers in Police Service Program, designed to address the increasing demands on state and local law enforcement agencies in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11, is a locally-driven program that enables community members to offer their time and talents to their local law enforcement agency. The Strongsville PD initiated its VIPS program in 2005, and currently has 10 members.

During 2023 the V.I.P.S. donated over 300 hours of their time at events in the city including:

- Homecoming
- Rib Burn Off
- Winter Wonderland
- Full Scale training drill at high school
- City Council Meetings
- Mayor's Court
- 5k runs
- South Park Mall vehicle escorts



**Volunteers provide valuable assistance during the July 4<sup>th</sup> festivities.**



**Strongsville Police Department V.I.P.S. Duke Evans (left) and Jeff Rowe (right) are two of our volunteers that donate their time, including here where they are patrolling SouthPark Mall on foot assisting citizens.**



## ***Quick Response Team (Q.R.T.)***



**Strongsville Police Lieutenant Michael Campbell, Ohio Guidestone Addiction Counselor Erin Gillett, and Strongsville Fire Captain David Haffner provide services to people in need of drug addiction help via the Quick Response Team (Q.R.T.)**

The City of Strongsville was awarded a one-year grant from the Ohio Attorney General in the amount of \$60,000 for the 2023 fiscal year to combat the opioid epidemic. The grant funds a quick response team made up of a police officer, a firemedic, and a counselor to follow-up after an opioid overdose.

### **Quick Response Team**

- Visits the survivor of an overdose at their residence within 72 hours of the overdose
- Offers counseling and referrals to treatment centers for overdose survivors
- Follows up with the survivor through the recovery process and provides support and advice
- Provides support and resources to family members of those suffering from an addiction

#### **2022 Overdoses Involving Opioids**

- 18 total reported drug overdoses
- 0 overdose deaths
- 9 were Strongsville residents
- 9 were not residents
- 8 individuals received treatment for their addiction

**In 2023, the team made 215 follow-up calls and visits with individuals who had overdosed.**

# **DRUG ABUSE RESISTANCE EDUCATION (D.A.R.E.)**

# **D.A.R.E.**



D.A.R.E. CURRICULUM	Total Students
5 <sup>th</sup> Grade D.A.R.E. Students	469
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade D.A.R.E. Students	464

D.A.R.E. EVENTS	
Celebration Dance 5 <sup>th</sup> and 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	450
Celebration Dance 7 <sup>th</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	400
Halloween Dance 5 <sup>th</sup> and 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	680
Halloween Dance 7 <sup>th</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	400
Ice Skating – February (max. 400)	400
Ice Skating – November (max. 400)	400

D.A.R.E. ROLE MODELS	
Strongsville High School Role Models	83



- ***D.A.R.E. collected over 650 boxes of cereal for the Strongsville Food Bank at the Halloween dances***
- ***D.A.R.E. Collected over 500 boxes of mac & cheese for the Strongsville Food Bank at the Celebration dances***





# ***DRUG ABUSE RESISTANCE EDUCATION (D.A.R.E.)***



In 2023, there were a total of 9 separate Safety Town classes taught Monday thru Friday.

- Pre-Kindergarten Kids: 288
- 6th-8th grade student Volunteers: 200



## **GRANT MONEY FOR D.A.R.E.**

The Strongsville D.A.R.E. Program received a Drug Use Presentation Grant for \$29,063.61 from the Ohio Attorney General.



D.A.R.E. Coordinator Marie McManus and D.A.R.E. Officer Aaron Plut at the N.E. Ohio Safe Kids “Mocktail” Event, where they took 1<sup>st</sup> Place with their Jimmy Buffet themed ‘Mockaritaville, Bubbles Up!’ non-alcoholic drink!

## ***Rx Drug Drop Box Program***

The Strongsville Police Department, in partnership with the Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Department, is continuing to fight the ongoing battle against the heroin and opiate epidemic.



<b>Strongsville Police Drug Box Collection Totals - 2023</b>	
January	42 lbs
February	79.4 lbs
March	72 lbs
April	45.4 lbs
May	57.6 lbs
June	108.2 lbs
July	47.6 lbs
August	100 lbs
September	41.2 lbs
October	51.4 lbs
November	62.6 lbs
December	52.6 lbs
<b>Total :</b>	<b>760.4 lbs</b>

Drug Drop Boxes, including the one in the lobby of the Strongsville Police Station, provide a safe, environmentally friendly way for citizens to dispose of their unwanted or unused prescription drugs. Unused prescription drugs are typically the gateway to heroin abuse, as over 70% of Americans misusing painkillers obtain them from friends or relatives.

## ***National Prescription Drug Take Back Day***

The Strongsville Police Department provided a drive-thru collection site on the National Prescription Drug Take Back Day. This program aims to provide a safe, convenient, and responsible means of disposing of unneeded medications from residents' homes, while also educating the general public about the potential for abuse of medications.

The Strongsville Police Department is committed to our community's health and safety, and encourages the public to remove unneeded medications from their homes as a measure of preventing medication misuse and opioid addiction from ever starting.

In 2023, the Strongsville Police Department collected 100 lbs. of unneeded medications.



## ***Southwest Enforcement Bureau (S.E.B.)***

The Southwest Enforcement Bureau (S.E.B.) is a council of governments made up of eighteen cities that share resources and staffing, enabling its members to field S.W.A.T, Bomb Squad, Crisis Negotiations and Tactical E.M..S for situations beyond the capabilities of individual police agencies.



In total, the Southwest Enforcement Bureau S.W.A.T. Team responded to 15 calls for service throughout 2023. The Southwest Enforcement Bureau S.W.A.T. Team responded to 7 of the 11 cities/townships within the region this year. They had (2) Mutual Aid calls in 2023. The first was to assist C.P.D. with a Search Warrant in Brook Park, and the second was to assist the Westshore Enforcement Bureau (W.E.B. S.W.A.T.) with a barricaded subject.

### **S.E.B. S.W.A.T. Activations/Calls for Service – 2023\***

March 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 2023	Middleburg Hts.- Barricaded Subject- Subject taken into custody
March 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	Brunswick – Search Warrant- Knock and Talk utilized
March 24 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	Cleveland- Search Warrant executed for N.R.P.D. – Subject taken into custody
April 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	Brooklyn- Barricaded Subject- Subject taken into custody
May 4 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	Parma Heights- Search Warrant executed
July 11 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	Cleveland- Search Warrant for Brook Park P.D.- Subject taken into custody
August 29 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	Strongsville- Arrest Warrant- Subject taken into custody
September 18 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	Cleveland- Assisted with Dignitary Protection
October 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 2023	Brook Park- Barricaded Subject- Call canceled; Subject taken into custody
October 21 <sup>st</sup> , 2023	Parma Heights- Protection provided at a religious gathering
October 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 2023	Parma Heights- Barricaded Subject- Subject taken into custody
November 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2023	Westshore Enforcement Bureau Assist- Assist provided

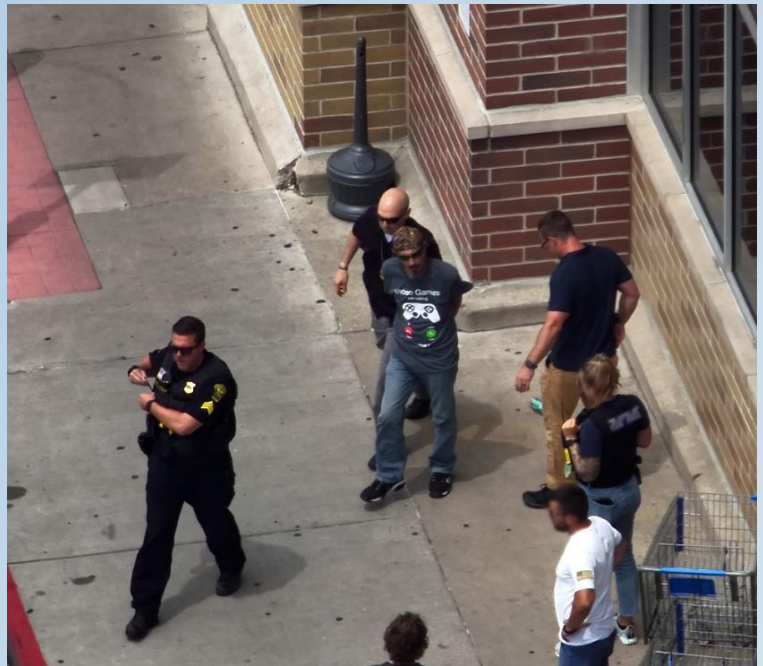
*\*A call for service only includes activations where S.E.B S.W.A.T. Members were deployed on scene*

# Drones

Today's unmanned aircraft systems (U.A.S.), more commonly referred to as "drones," have evolved considerably in just the last few years and are becoming more common in our airspace. U.A.S. now have longer flight durations, larger payloads, and more sophisticated maneuverability. Law enforcement agencies across the country have recognized that U.A.S. can be an important tool in advancing their public safety missions while reducing risk to personnel and the public.

The Strongsville Police Department currently has six FAA Part 107 licensed pilots. Strongsville Police utilized their U.A.S. program in 2023 for a multitude of missions, which included

- ✓ **Special Event Overwatch and Security**
- ✓ **First-Responder Crisis Preparation**
- ✓ **Vehicular Traffic Surveys**
- ✓ **Suspect Searches**
- ✓ **Community Outreach**
- ✓ **Crime Scene Search/Processing**
- ✓ **Active Incident Intelligence Gathering**



We have also identified the best practices for the law enforcement use of U.A.S., and have implemented appropriate policies and safeguards to protect privacy and civil liberties.





## ***Mobile Field Force***

The Strongsville Police Department participates in a Mobile Field Force (MFF) - a group of law enforcement officers with specialized training who can be rapidly mobilized in anticipation of an exigent event. Its primary responsibility is to operate in support of an agency's regular police during periods of civil unrest by disrupting and dispersing crowds that are in the process of forming, or identifying and arresting leaders of crowds that have already formed.

The Mobile Field Force was activated on two occasions in 2023; both callouts ended without incident:

### **Mobile Field Force Activations/Calls for Service – 2023**

10/21/2023	Parma Heights- Assisted with security for a peaceful protest without incident
10/24/2023	Middleburg Hts.- Assisted with security for a peaceful protest with incident

## ***Chaplain Program - Fr. Joe Mamich***

In 2014, the Strongsville Police Department welcomed Fr. Joe Mamich, who has volunteered to be our Safety Forces Chaplain. Father Joe is a native of Strongsville.

### **Safety Forces Chaplain Duties**

- May serve a significant role in line-of-duty deaths
- Assists with survivor notifications
- Assists the survivors and departmental members
- Assists department members with counseling or emotional support, as requested and appropriate
- Recognized by the International Conference of Police Chaplains



*Father Joe Mamich*



*2023 Police/Fire/Dispatch Safety Forces Family Summer Cookout with Fr. Joe*



## ***Shop with a Cop***

The annual Shop with a Cop® event was held on December 2, 2023. Ptl. Nicole Kellar (pictured on the far right of photo below), along with fellow committee members from the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 15 and Fraternal Order of Police Auxiliary Lodge 14, organized the event; this included twelve local Police Departments. Eighty-nine children determined to benefit the most from this event were selected by police officers and school staff within the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 15 operating area.

The children were picked up in marked patrol vehicles from their homes and driven to the F.O.P. Lodge for breakfast and optional face painting. From there the children were escorted in patrol vehicles with lights and sirens to the Brunswick Meijer department store on S.R. 303 in Brunswick. Each child was given \$150.00 to spend on Christmas presents while shopping with a police officer.

After shopping, the children were driven back to the Lodge to enjoy lunch and a visit from Santa to further make this experience memorable. The money for the program is raised by private and business donations, and local fundraising events. Meijer, Inc. generously donated over \$4,000.00 to help make this incredible day possible. Ptl. Kellar is the Strongsville Police Officer that leads the Shop with a Cop® Committee, and the Committee also organized a reverse raffle fundraiser on April 28, 2023 where the majority of the funds for the program were raised.



***Strongsville Police Department &  
Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 15***

***Shop with a Cop***



# ***Agency Awards***

## **Strongsville Police Awards Committee**

In January of each year, an awards committee reviews all citizen and departmental commendations received during the previous calendar year in order to identify actions or performance commensurate with a departmental award.

Departmental awards may be presented for outstanding performance in the following areas:

- **Professionalism**; awarded for outstanding effort or performance resulting in the advancement of our agency's professional image
- **Problem Solving**; awarded for recognizing and establishing a long-term solution for a particular or collective community problem or complaint
- **Compassion**; awarded for an employee's outstanding and special display of empathy
- **Quality Service**; awarded for an employee's dedication, thoroughness and persistence (going the extra mile) in furthering the department's mission and values
- **Blue Collar**; awarded for a police officer's outstanding efforts in making, or assisting in, a criminal apprehension. Police officers are recognized for their perseverance and ingenuity in arrest situations.
- **Citizen Award**; will be presented to a citizen who provides the Strongsville Police Department with valuable assistance in fulfilling our mission.



## Dispatcher of the Year: Lindsey Hamilton, presented by Knights of Columbus

Lindsey has been an Emergency Dispatcher with Southwest Emergency Dispatch since 2018. Lindsey has consistently demonstrated professionalism, overall efficiency in job performance, knowledge, and the ability to work with all types of people both inside the Dispatch Center as well as our outside customers. Lindsey takes pride in her work product as well as her profession as an Emergency Dispatcher. Lindsey's skills do not

end with her dispatching duties. She also projects strong leadership skills. Lindsey has demonstrated the skill to resolve conflicts and handle other difficult situations with remarkable patience and admirable tact. Lindsey is a valuable asset to her team and the Southwest Emergency Dispatch Center as a whole. She is a team player and



isn't hesitant to assist others in times of need. As SWEDC incorporated new technology and began migrating to a new computer aided dispatch system, Lindsey stepped forward to lead, and assist her colleagues in becoming trained and confident with the transition. Lindsey has been commended numerous times by police and fire officers in the field for a job well done. These characteristics represent all that is good at the Southwest Emergency Dispatch Center, and we were pleased to recommend her for the honor of the 2023 Southwest Emergency Dispatcher of the Year.



## Officer of the Year: Michael Galassi, presented by Knights of Columbus

Patrolman Galassi is a very well-rounded officer and he demonstrated that repeatedly throughout the year. Patrolman Galassi is a leader on the shift and is someone that younger officers look up to. He is also an officer that is asked to take on extra duties and in 2022 he trained two new police officers as a night shift Field Training Officer.

Two of Patrolman Galassi's most noteworthy calls were life-saving events. In January, officers were dispatched to a porch fire at an apartment complex and he was the first on scene. Upon arrival he realized that the fire had spread and immediately he notified responding officers, then proceeded to enter the building to start evacuating residents. Patrolman Galassi's quick response and communication were instrumental in updating responding units and in saving the lives of the residents in that apartment complex.

The second call involved a male that was having a heart attack and Patrolman Galassi responded and performed CPR until medics could arrive on scene. The male was transported to the hospital, but we were happy to hear back later from his wife who said that thanks to the life-saving efforts by Patrolman Galassi, her husband is alive.

Patrolman Galassi is known for his compassion and is a gifted communicator. While



training a new officer, he responded to the scene of a fatal motor vehicle accident. Not only did he have to report what happened at the scene, he also had to go to the hospital and speak to the family of the driver. The family was thankful that their daughter survived but Patrolman Galassi had to inform them that the passengers had succumbed to their injuries. Patrolman Galassi calmly and professionally explained what he could and answered any questions they had.

Patrolman Galassi does whatever is asked of him and passionately serves the citizens of Strongsville each and every shift. He is an example, not only to the new officers that he trains, but to all officers with whom he serves.

### **Blue Collar Award: Ptl. Luke Berry**

Patrolman Luke Berry is a very proactive patrol officer and seeks to identify criminal activity that he can investigate. Patrolman Berry frequently reaches out to retail establishments in order to identify any theft occurrences.

In 2022, he responded to approximately 30 retail thefts, all of which did not have suspects at the time of the initial call. Patrolman Berry worked with other agencies and utilized resources available throughout his investigations, to solve and issue charges to suspects in 27 of those cases.



Patrolman Berry is also active in traffic / drug enforcement. During his traffic stops, he always remains alert and looks for clues of drug activity. As a result, he was very successful in making numerous drug seizures and drug arrests in 2022.

Patrolman Berry also serves on the Honor Guard, Mobile Field Force, Criminal Interdiction Team, Deer Harvesting Program and Peer Support Program. Patrolman Berry is willing to help out in any capacity and is a true asset to the City of Strongsville.

### **Quality Service Award: Det. Steven Vanek**

Detective Steven Vanek has been assigned to the Detective Bureau since May 2022. In this time, he has demonstrated his superb technical skills and expertise in evidence collection / scene processing. Detective Vanek single-handedly processed an entire scene for a homicide case and also an aggravated robbery scene which involved a shooting. In this case he was able to extract a bullet that was lodged in a wall between apartments.



Additionally, Detective Vanek trains new officers in evidence collection, processing and crime scene photography. Detective Vanek also helped build the Strongsville drone program and became one of its first pilots. Detective Vanek regularly exhibits dedication, thoroughness and persistence in furthering the department's mission and values.



### Citizen Award: Julie M. Jarrell and 'Hershel'



On July 28, 2022 at approximately 1756 hrs., Strongsville police officers were dispatched to a report of a one-year old child who was choking. Dispatch advised that they were having trouble trying to explain rescue efforts to the caller. A witness explained that they observed the child's guardian running frantically down the driveway carrying the child.

A neighbor and Registered Nurse, Julie Jarrell, followed her dog's lead around the street corner, where gathering neighbors called for her help. On her arrival, the child was unresponsive and his lips were turning blue. Mrs. Jarrell

immediately performed life support measures until the airway was cleared and breathing was stabilized. Mrs. Jarrell's quick decision to help was instrumental in saving the life of this child.

Mrs. Jarrell also gives credit to other neighbors who arrived to help and called 911. She also wants to recognize her dog, Hershel, who she describes as a modern-day Lassie. Mrs. Jarrell stated that it was Hershel who got her attention and led her to the right place at the right time.

### Appreciation: Crossroads Animal Hospital

It is with great appreciation that we recognize the staff at Crossroads Animal Hospital. Crossroads has supplied complimentary veterinary care for the Strongsville Police K9 Unit since its inception in 1995. During this time Crossroads has been the sole veterinarian service for all 9 of Strongsville's K9 teams.

We truly thank each member of Crossroads Animal Hospital for their service and the love they have provided for the past 28 years. Your service and generosity to the City of Strongsville is greatly appreciated.





## Agency Awards



*(L-R) PTL. DRLIK, LT. CAMPBELL, CHIEF O'DEENS, SGT. PIORKOWSKI & PTL. DAMORE ACCEPT A 2023 COMMUNITY TRAFFIC SAFETY PLATINUM AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING EDUCATION, ENFORCEMENT, AND ENGINEERING TO IMPROVE PUBLIC SAFETY!*

**Southwest Emergency Dispatch Center Dispatchers Julie Salnajs, Ashley Flynn, and Rebecca Darby were 2023 Double Gold Team Award Finalists for the Ohio Public Safety Telecommunications Awards Ohio Gold Star Award Program!**

**Our dispatchers display calmness in the face of emergencies!**



## ***Strongsville Police Duty Index***

<b><u>Agency Function</u></b>	<b><u>Contact</u></b>	<b><u>Phone Number</u></b>
Accreditation	Lt. Kelley	440-580-3240
Administrative Secretary	Amanda Hollingshead	440-580-3231
Budgeting/Fiscal Mgt.	Deputy Chief Zacharyasz	440-580-3234
Ceremonial Unit	Sgt. Piorkowski	440-580-3253
Chaplain Program	Deputy Chief Zacharyasz	440-580-3234
Citizen Police Academy	Lt. Kubacki	440-580-3223
College Intern Program	Sgt. Piorkowski	440-580-3253
Communications Supervisor	Jeff Branich	440-580-3291
Complaints / Commendations	Deputy Chief Janowski	440-580-3239
Court Liaison	Sgt. Nettles	440-580-3242
Crime Analysis	Lt. Mason	440-580-3233
Crime Prevention	Sgt. Piorkowski	440-580-3253
Criminal Investigations	Lt. Mason	440-580-3233
D.A.R.E.	Cheryl Komora	440-580-3255
Deer Control Permits	Sgt. Nettles	440-580-3230 x5249
Drone Program	Det. Steve Vanek	440-580-3235
Emergency Preparedness	Deputy Chief Janowski	440-580-3239
Employee Assistance Program	Deputy Chief Zacharyasz	440-580-3234
Wellness Program	Lt. Kelley	440-580-3240
Facility & Equipment Mgt.	Sgt. Piorkowski	440-580-3253
Firearms/Qualifications	Lt. Kubacki	440-580-3223
Grant Application & Mgt.	Deputy Chief Zacharyasz	440-580-3234
Jail Operations	Molly Chan	440-580-3230 x5255
Juvenile Operations	Detective Bureau	440-580-3265
K-9 Teams	Sgt. Piorkowski	440-580-3253
LEADS Terminal Agency Coordinator	Erin Iorillo	440-580-3292
Liquor Permits	Sgt. Piorkowski	440-580-3253
Narcotics	Lt. Mason	440-580-3233
Parking Violations Bureau	Amanda Hollingshead	440-580-3231
Patrol Division Commander	Lt. Kubacki	440-580-3223
Professional Standards	Deputy Chief Janowski	440-580-3239
Property and Evidence Control	Lt. Mason	440-580-3233
Public Information/News Releases	Chief O'Deens	440-580-3232
Quick Response Team/Safe Passages	Lt. Campbell	440-580-3224
Record Requests	Clerical Staff	440-580-3230

Recruiting & Selection	Lt. Kelley	440-580-3240
Research & Development	Deputy Chief Zacharyasz	440-580-3234
Safety Town	Cheryl Komora	440-580-3255
School Crossing Guards	Sgt. Piorkowski	440-580-3253
Secondary Employment	Sgt. Piorkowski	440-580-3253
Seizures/Forfeitures Acquisition	Lt. Mason	440-580-3233
Solicitor's Permits	Sgt. Piorkowski	440-580-3253
Special Events	Sgt. Piorkowski	440-580-3253
Tactical Operations	Sgt. Marsala	440-580-3240
Traffic Unit	Sgt. Piorkowski	440-580-3253
Training/Career Development	Lt. Kelley	440-580-3240
Vice Control	Lt. Mason	440-580-3233
Victim/Witness Assistance	Cindy Vanderwyst	440-580-3237
Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS)	Sgt. Piorkowski	440-580-3253
Warrant Service	Deputy Chief Janowski	440-580-3239
<b>For Employees or Departments not listed above</b>		<b>440-580-3230</b>





## ***IN MEMORIAM***

In 2023, we said goodbye to two past members of the Strongsville Police Department and one current civilian member: Retired Lt. Mark Stepanovich, Retired Ptl. James Kraemer, and civilian Quartermaster Michael Graziani- all three to illness. In an appropriate tribute to their service to the Strongsville community and to their families, Strongsville Police Department Officers participated in proper ceremonial burials for our former Strongsville servants.



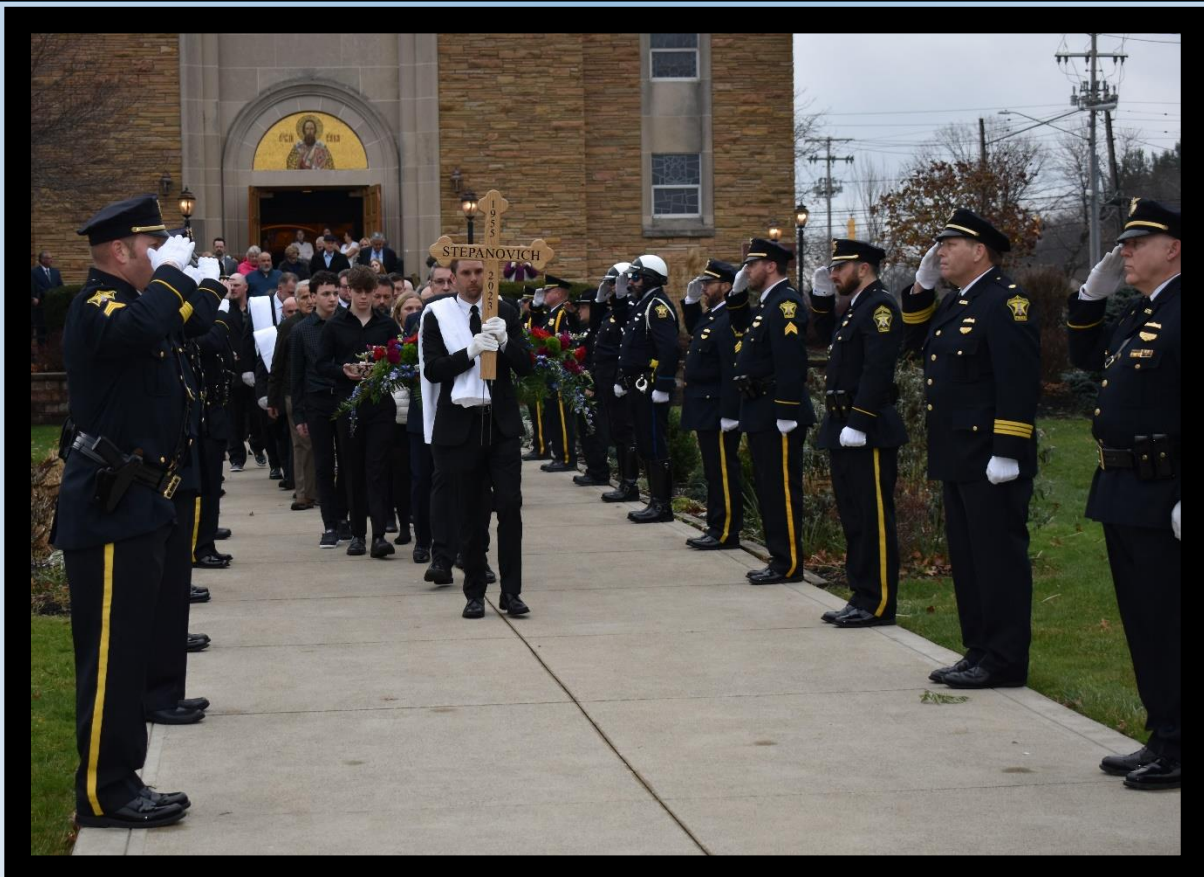
Lt. Mark Stepanovich (ret.)



Ptl. James Kraemer (ret.)



Qtrmster. Michael Graziani



# ***STRONGSVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT***

## **Resources on the Web**

The Strongsville Police Department has resources available on our website and our Facebook page. Visitors to these online resources can access motor vehicle accident reports, learn about the organization and operation of the police department, access news, view crime prevention tips and access drug addiction resources. There is also information about our popular D.A.R.E. and Safety Town programs, child safety seat inspections, and an option to send an anonymous tip about criminal activity.

Follow or visit us on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook:



@StrongsvillePD



<https://www.facebook.com/StrongsvillePD/>

<https://www.strongsville.org/departments/police>



**STRONGSVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT**

**18688 ROYALTON RD.**

**STRONGSVILLE, OH 44136**

**Non-Emergency (440) 238-7373**

**Records Department (440) 580-3230**

**Fax (440) 238-1642**

*Mayor Thomas P. Perciak*

*Director of Public Safety Charles W. Goss*

*Chief of Police Thomas O'Deens*