

GAMING DIVISION

1993-2021

The Missouri State Highway Patrol's Gaming Division, pursuant to a memorandum of understanding with the Missouri Gaming Commission, provides criminal and regulatory enforcement of gaming operations within the state. The division is currently divided into four sections: Administrative Services, Investigations, Eastern District Enforcement, and Western District Enforcement. The Gaming Division is staffed with 128 members and three civilians.

The Gaming Division was established on May 1, 1994, by order of Colonel F.M. Mills, and was the first new division established within the Patrol since the creation of the Division of Drug and Crime Control in 1983. The Gaming Division evolved from the Riverboat Gambling Unit, which was established to conduct background investigations of gaming applicants on behalf of the Missouri Gaming Commission. Those applicants were competing for state gaming licenses that would allow them to own or operate the first legalized riverboat gambling venues in Missouri.

Strict criminal and regulatory enforcement, as well as meticulous investigations are essential elements to the successful regulation of legalized gambling in Missouri. Because of its history of service with distinction and integrity, the Patrol was given the responsibility of providing investigative, regulatory, and criminal law enforcement services, which ultimately police the gaming industry. The Gaming Division is completely funded through gaming and regulatory proceeds; therefore, the division has the distinction of receiving all revenues from the very industry it is responsible for policing. As such, the gaming industry, and not Missouri taxpayers, fund necessary costs associated with regulating legalized gambling in Missouri.

A chronological history follows:

On October 1, 1993, nineteen members of the Patrol were assigned to the Division of Drug and Crime Control's Riverboat Gaming Unit. The following officers are the original members assigned to the Riverboat Gaming Unit:

Lt. Roy Herren		
Sgt. Gary Dusenberg	Sgt. John Mooneyhan	Cpl. Randy Hoeflicker
Cpl. Drexel McMahon	Tpr. Jeffrey Smith	Tpr. Kenneth Swon
Sgt. George Zorsch	Cpl. Steven Akridge	Cpl. Robert Mallery
Cpl. Christopher Saulet	Cpl. Willie Thomas	Tpr. Lenn Alexander
Tpr. Baron Lyons	Sgt. James Meissert	Cpl. Paul Cordia
Cpl. Terry Orr	Cpl. Eric Wilhoit	Sgt. George Scott
Sgt. Robert Gartner		

Shortly after being assigned to the unit, one group of officers attended a one-week basic gaming school at the Illinois State Police Academy in Springfield, IL. The school was created specifically to accommodate the Patrol's need for direction as a new regulator of riverboat gambling. The following week, another group of officers attended the training.

On May 1, 1994, Lieutenant Dwight Hartung was promoted to the rank of captain and was designated director of the newly created Gaming Division. Sergeant Matt Brown was promoted to the rank of lieutenant and was designated assistant director of the newly created Gaming Division. There were 46 officers assigned to the division.

The Charitable Games (Bingo) Unit was established at the same time and included two Patrol members. This responsibility transitioned from the Department of Revenue to the Missouri Gaming Commission (MGC) and both Patrol members worked with the MGC to regulate charitable gaming operations throughout the state. Those personnel were charged with enforcing compliance among nearly 1,000 licensed bingo establishments.

Background investigative units were formed to conduct thorough and complex investigations of the riverboat gambling company applicants that wished to be the first casino operators in Missouri. Initially, four background units were formed: Two in the St. Louis region, one in Kansas City, and one in Jefferson City. In April 1994, the Gaming Commission chose four out of 19 riverboat gambling applicants for suitability. The first two applicants were issued licenses one month after the background teams completed their investigations. The remaining two applicants were issued licenses the following month. All background teams were charged with a great deal of responsibility and ultimately paved the way for Missouri's first gaming operations.

On May 27, 1994, the first two riverboats received gaming licenses in Missouri. The President Riverboat Casino and St. Charles Riverfront Station were staffed with 13 Patrol personnel, assigned as enforcement officers charged with the responsibility of both criminal and regulatory enforcement. The President Casino transferred ownership to Pinnacle Entertainment during construction of Missouri's 12th casino. The St. Charles Riverfront Station ultimately transitioned to the current Ameristar Casino-St. Charles. On June 22, 1994, the third and fourth riverboats, Argosy-Riverside and St. Jo Frontier Casino, received gaming licenses. Nine Patrol personnel were assigned to those properties.

On September 22, 1994, the fifth gaming license was issued to Harrah's-North Kansas City and this facility was staffed with seven MSHP officers. On April 27, 1995, the sixth gaming license was issued to Casino Aztar, located in Caruthersville. Seven members were assigned to the casino and on September 13, 1995, the seventh gaming license was issued to Sam's Town Casino, located in Kansas City. Sam's Town was originally staffed with eight members, but ultimately withdrew the company's gaming license on September 13, 1998. This particular site no longer operates as a casino.

Kansas City was host to the eighth casino licensee, The Flamingo Hilton. This facility is now known as the Isle of Capri and features a compliment of seven MSHP officers. The Flamingo's license was granted on October 18, 1996, and on January 16, 1997, the ninth gaming license was issued to Kansas City Station Casino. Kansas City Stations originally was staffed with nine officers and ultimately fell under the ownership of Ameristar Casinos.

On March 11, 1997, Harrah's and Players-Maryland Heights were each issued a gaming license. This unique situation occurred because both properties existed as essentially two separate casino facilities co-located at a single docking site. Each casino featured separate gaming barges and floors with different themes and shared a common lobby. The Gaming Commission decided that each gaming floor required a license; however, the two licenses ultimately were combined and the facility now operates as a single casino entity known as Harrah's-Maryland Heights. Originally, 19 MSHP members staffed Harrah's.

Several officers assigned to the Gaming Division have been recognized at the Patrol's annual awards ceremony. Trooper Bruce E. Kerr accepted a Lifesaving Award at the 9th Annual Patrol Awards Ceremony and The MASTERS Banquet on May 8, 1999. The recognition came as a result of an incident in 1998 where Tpr. Kerr responded to a casino security dispatch for an emergency medical technician. He assisted EMT Robert L. Looper in assessing a gentleman who lost consciousness, then performed CPR until Kansas City Fire and Rescue arrived. Although the man later died, the actions of Tpr. Kerr and the EMT contributed to the individual's best chance of survival.

In March 2001, Sergeant Elvin A. Seals was assigned to lead an investigation at, what was then, Stations Casino in St. Charles. An employee found a counterfeit jackpot slip in a co-worker's "bank" and turned it in to one of the gaming officers. Sgt. Seals' investigation ultimately lead to the discovery of approximately \$2.1 million in stolen casino assets, in what turned out to be an elaborate two-year employee scheme. The Internal Revenue Service, Federal Bureau of Investigation and U.S. Attorney's Office assisted the Patrol with the investigation. Ultimately, six defendants pled guilty in federal court, and all the money owed to the state (\$400,000) was recovered. Because of his efforts, Sgt. Seals was named Department of Public Safety Employee of the Month for January 2002.

At the 11th Annual Patrol Awards Ceremony and The MASTERS Banquet on May 5, 2001, Captain Robert E. Bloomberg accepted a Lifesaving Award in recognition of his actions during a trip to Shreveport, Louisiana. Capt. Bloomberg had attended a meeting with the Louisiana State Police and was dining in a local hotel restaurant when a patron suffered a heart attack. Capt. Bloomberg and the hotel's general manager performed CPR on the victim, who regained consciousness and ultimately recovered from the incident.

On July 25, 2001, Mark Twain Casino was granted a gaming license to operate in the City of LaGrange, Missouri, and featured seven MSHP enforcement personnel. Casino owners ultimately sold both the LaGrange and St. Joseph

casino facilities to Herbst Gaming of Las Vegas, Nevada. On December 6, 2001, the Isle of Capri-Boonville was issued a gaming license and was staffed with five officers. Finally, on December 19, 2007, Missouri's 12th casino, Lumiere Place opened in downtown St. Louis, Missouri.

Since its creation, this division has enforced Missouri gaming laws through meticulous investigations and strict adherence to policies. On numerous occasions, arrests have been made as a result of this enforcement and regulatory investigations often lead to criminal investigations or apprehensions. Officers provide an exemplary level of service and protection to casino patrons and have also been recognized for various lifesaving efforts.

In 2003, a joint investigation with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the United States Attorney's Office and Gaming Division members led to the arrest of a President Casino employee and an outside vendor who were involved with fraud, bid rigging, and stealing. The investigation revealed the casino employee was paid in excess of \$230,000 for her part in a scam, which defrauded both the casino and the state out of thousands of dollars.

At the annual awards ceremony conducted on April 29, 2006, Lifesaving Awards were presented to Sergeant Donald D. Eads (now retired) and Corporal Jeffery T. Fitzgerald. On July 29, 2005, security officers at the Isle of Capri Casino in Kansas City, MO, learned a body was discovered floating in the moat of the casino. Both Sgt. Eads and Cpl. Fitzgerald immediately ran to the location. They found a woman floating facedown in the moat. Without hesitation, Sgt. Eads jumped into the moat and pulled the woman to where others could assist with her retrieval. Cpl. Fitzgerald began CPR until the arrival of the Kansas City Fire Department. Although initially her vital signs were reestablished, she later succumbed to her injuries.

Trooper Keith A. Kinsey, assigned to Harrah's Maryland Heights Casino, was honored as the Department of Public Safety's employee of the month for November 2006. Tpr. Kinsey was selected for his exceptional levels of police initiative and investigative skills. In August 2006, he demonstrated these skills when he detected and solved three serious crimes, including a clandestine drug lab at the casino hotel; a fraud check cashing scheme; and stolen money being laundered at the casino by a bank robber. Tpr. Kinsey was also named State Employee of the Month for December 2006.

Nine officers retired in 2008. Four officers attended the 287(g) Delegation of Authority Training hosted by United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

Over 23 million gaming patrons produced \$1.6 billion in revenues during the period FY2008.

In December 2010, the Missouri Gaming Commission passed Resolution 10-123, selecting Isle of Capri Casinos Incorporated as the priority applicant to build the 13th and last available Class B licensed gaming facility in Missouri. On October 30, 2012, Isle of Capri-Cape Girardeau was issued their license.

The Gaming Division command staff has grown from a director (captain) and one assistant director (lieutenant) to a director and four assistant directors. The division's current organizational structure features administrative services, an investigative unit and two enforcement districts (westside & eastside).

Administrative Services

The Administrative Services Section oversees division motor equipment/fleet management, training, property control (evidence), criminal records/case management, overtime, recruiting, personnel actions and special projects. The section is also responsible for ensuring all evidence facilities located at the 13 casinos are maintained within applicable Patrol standards. In addition, all documentation generated by enforcement members is processed and disseminated through the section.

Investigative Unit

The Investigative Unit conducts comprehensive background investigations of individuals, companies and suppliers applying for licensure with the Missouri Gaming Commission. The Investigative Unit is responsible for providing oversight and conducting investigations related to Missouri's licensed charitable gaming operations and is also charged with conducting background investigations on both charitable gaming and riverboat supplier companies.

Background investigations are often quite complex and include issues related to suitability of both individuals and companies that have applied for licensure with the Missouri Gaming Commission. Casino companies are closely regulated and this unit is responsible for conducting regularly scheduled re-licensing investigations, which are designed to thwart unethical or illegal activity within the 13 licensed casino jurisdictions. The investigators are routinely charged with conducting special investigations of casino companies, suppliers and employees. All investigations serve to maintain the integrity of gaming in Missouri.

The unit is comprised of officers assigned to offices in Jefferson City, Kansas City, and St. Louis. Officers within the Investigative Unit frequently travel and log many miles to both U.S. and foreign destinations, including Canada and multiple locations in Europe. Due to the global expansion of gaming, many individuals, gaming companies and gaming supplier companies are located within every quadrant of the globe. Investigators routinely coordinate their efforts with police, court and regulatory agencies in the various jurisdictions where travel occurs. Each investigation is unique and requires hundreds of man-hours, which ultimately culminate into voluminous amounts of paperwork, written reports, and presentations made to criminal justice agencies, regulatory agencies, and commissions.

Charitable Games Section

The Charitable Games Section oversees licensed bingo operators and is also charged with conducting background investigations on both charitable gaming and riverboat supplier companies. The officers assigned to this unit conduct regulatory and criminal investigations related to impropriety and complaints regarding the conduct and management of charitable games. The unit conducts background investigations on licensed bingo suppliers/manufacturers and is also called upon to assist with certain riverboat supplier company investigations.

Another area of expertise within the Charitable Games Section relates to illegal gambling devices. The Charitable Games Section continues to work closely with other sections of the Patrol, law enforcement agencies, and regulatory units in the detection and removal of illegal gambling devices found throughout the state. Officers from this unit have unique expertise qualifying them as experts in providing testimony for what constitutes an illegal gambling device. In addition, they have worked with numerous prosecuting attorneys around the state, as well as with the Missouri Attorney General and federal prosecutors on a variety of cases involving these illegal devices.

Enforcement Unit

Officers assigned to the enforcement unit are responsible for enforcing both Missouri criminal statutes and Missouri Gaming Commission regulations on the 13 licensed casino properties. Officers assigned to the division's two enforcement units comprise the majority of all officers assigned to the division and are responsible for a large and diverse amount of activity. Enforcement officers are charged with conducting both criminal and regulatory investigations, which evolve from Missouri's 13 casinos, and are required to maintain diverse knowledge of both administrative regulations and criminal statutes. These officers routinely are involved with providing reports to the Missouri Gaming Commission and local prosecutors, and log many hours preparing and testifying for both administrative hearings and criminal court proceedings.

Officers assigned to the Enforcement Units also provide an important link with other Patrol divisions and outside criminal justice agencies. Information, intelligence, and evidence located during day-to-day enforcement operations is often utilized by other agencies for assisting with criminal cases, which occur outside the casino environment. The Enforcement Unit is divided into two sections:

Eastern District Enforcement

The Eastern District is composed of officers assigned to police riverboat gaming operations at the following locations:

Casino Name	Location
President Riverboat Casino	St. Louis, Missouri
Lumiere Place Casino	St. Louis, Missouri
Ameristar Casino	St. Charles, Missouri
Harrah's Casino	Maryland Heights, Missouri
Terrible's Mark Twain Casino	LaGrange, Missouri
Isle of Capri (Casino Aztar)	Caruthersville, Missouri

Western District Enforcement

The Western District is composed of officers assigned to police riverboat gaming operations at the following locations:

Casino Name	Location
Isle of Capri Casino	Kansas City, Missouri
Ameristar Casino	Kansas City, Missouri
Harrah's Casino	North Kansas City, Missouri
Argosy Riverside Casino	Riverside, Missouri
Terrible's St. Joseph Casino	St. Joseph, Missouri
Isle of Capri Casino	Boonville, Missouri

The passage of Proposition A by voters during the November 2008 election changed the face of gaming in Missouri by eliminating the \$500 loss limit along with the ID requirement to gamble and raised the tax on casino adjusted gross revenue by 1%, and capped the number of casinos in the state at 13. The impact of passage was felt in 2009, by the troopers assigned to the division due to an actual increase in criminal activity, especially trespassing by those who have voluntarily disassociated themselves from gaming, underage patrons, and barred persons, and the potential for an increase in criminal activity, such as money laundering and fraud.

Gaming officers were issued Tasers which have proven to be an effective alternative to other control methods due to the crowded, public environment in which they are deployed.

Pinnacle River City Casino, the state's 13th casino, was constructed in south St. Louis County, and opened March 4, 2010. The first two troopers were assigned to the new casino on October 1, 2009. They are the Officer-in-Charge Sergeant Mark A. Bielawski and the Assistant Officer-in-Charge Corporal John J. Koch.

With the anticipated opening of a new casino and an increase in the number of background investigations the Missouri Gaming Commission (MGC) sought and received legislative approval to increase the number of FTEs in the Gaming Division by 10 officers. Eight officers are to be deployed at the River City casino and one each in the St. Louis and Kansas City background units. At the end of 2009, the authorized strength of the Gaming Division stands at 120 FTEs (118 troopers and two civilians). That is quite an increase from the original compliment of 46 officers.

A new training course was introduced for the benefit of troopers newly assigned to the division, as well as Missouri Gaming Commission (MGC) employees. An "MGC Overview Course" is a six-hour program that provides a summary of the business of the Missouri Gaming Commission and the Highway Patrol's Gaming Division. The objective is for the employees of each agency to understand how all the pieces of fit into the big picture of state regulated gaming. The Basic Gaming Agent Course was increased to 40 hours to include a POST-certified, 12-hour electronic gaming device training program developed by MGC in-house experts.

The Charitable Games Unit developed a three-day training program that explains the policing and regulatory enforcement of charitable games (bingo) as well as illegal gambling enterprises, to include illegal slot machines. This training is offered to Patrol officers and outside agencies.

Sergeant's Charles E. Jones, Russell R. Kennison II, Charles J. Kramer and Corporal Randall W. Nielsen retired in 2009. We thank these officers for their years of dedicated service and wish them well in retirement.

Sgt. Kramer's retirement on May 1, 2009, marked the end of an era. Since 1956 three generations of the Kramer family have worked for the Patrol. Sgt. Kramer's father, Clete, retired from the Patrol Garage in April 1985, and Sarah, his daughter, was employed as a 1,000-hour employee for the Division of Drug and Crime Control until she graduated from college. The Kramer family has a combined total of over 60 years of dedicated service to the citizens of Missouri.

The investigation skills of Corporals Russell A. "Sammy" Seaton, Scotty L. Sizer, and Tyler R. Jenkins, Eastside Enforcement revealed a multi-state, credit card fraud scheme. The investigation started in March 2008 and continued through December 2009. Their work resulted in the indictment, arrest, and prosecution of eight suspects in eight states in federal and state courts. The known fraud was more than a quarter of \$1 million.

Corporal Todd M. Barthelmass, Lumiere Place Casino, acted bravely at the scene of a house fire in Kirkwood, MO. He noticed smoke and determined its origin, notified the local fire department, then awakened the residents and assisted them in evacuating.

2010

In March 2010, the River City Casino, located in south St. Louis County, opened and briefly served as the state's 13th licensed casino. The President Casino, located on the historic ship the "Admiral", closed in July. In December, the Missouri Gaming Commission approved Cape Girardeau as the site for the thirteenth and final casino. Seven casinos implemented 24-hour gaming after its authorization by the Commission.

Retiring this year were Sergeants David A. Leitman, L. Wayne Ream, Glenn J. Rousset, Donald L. Thompson, Corporal John J. Koch, and Trooper Rickey D. Neely.

Sergeants Russell A. "Sammy" Seaton and Dale E. Knox were nominated for Life Saving Awards for providing emergency first aid. They were commended for their initiative and quick actions in aiding another in need.

2011

Special Agent-In-Charge Leslie W. Hollie, KC Regional Office of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Inspector General, presented certificates of appreciation to Sergeant Jeffery T. Fitzgerald, and Corporal Brian W. Vernon on March 16, 2011. SAC Hollie was recognizing the two officers for their role in uncovering an illegal prescription ring and the subsequent arrests. They began investigating in 2007, after security personnel at the Isle of Capri Casino Kansas City turned over a prescription pad that had been found on the casino floor to the troopers. Upon examination, the troopers discovered 26 prescriptions in the pad issued to 11 individuals. Some of the individuals received two or three prescriptions in a single day and 25 of the 26 prescriptions were issued for controlled substances. The Drug Enforcement Agency and Missouri Board of Healing Arts joined their investigation. In 2011, four individuals pled guilty to various charges in cases stemming from this investigation.

2012

the Isle of Capri Casino unveiled its new casino in Cape Girardeau, MO. This is the 13th and final casino to be constructed in the state. Nine members of the Gaming Division were assigned to the new casino.

2013

The Patrol presented a Lifesaving Award to Trooper Christopher D. Hamlett at the annual awards banquet on April 13, 2013. The recognition came because of Tpr. Hamlett's actions on May 26, 2012, while working at the Lady Luck Casino in Caruthersville, Missouri. Tpr. Hamlett responded to a call for assistance. When he arrived at the location, he found that an elderly patron had collapsed. Tpr. Hamlett recognized the urgency of the situation and began cardiopulmonary resuscitation with the help of a casino employee. He also assisted a second casino employee in operating a defibrillator. After approximately five minutes, the patron began to respond. Tpr. Hamlett remained with the patron until emergency medical services arrived and transported him to the hospital. The gentleman survived the incident.

2015

On June 23, 2015, Sergeant Phil Hoffman arrested a man for possession of approximately 120 grams of marijuana with intent to distribute, possession of drug paraphernalia, and possession of a controlled substance (Promethazine). Sgt. Hoffman also seized \$9,650 and a Colt .380-caliber pistol. The suspect was contacted after he exchanged \$2,000 in \$20 bills for \$100 bills then immediately attempted to exchange \$3,000 in \$20 bills for \$100 bills. A computer check revealed the man had four outstanding warrants. Sgt. Hoffman learned that the man's brother was in the parking lot sitting in his car. When Sgt. Hoffman approached the vehicle, a man exited. At that time, Sgt. Hoffman smelled a strong odor of marijuana coming from inside the vehicle. A search of the vehicle revealed a bag with approximately 120 grams of marijuana, rolling papers, and an additional \$2,000. A loaded Colt .380-caliber pistol was located near the bag of marijuana. A computer check revealed the second man had four warrants for his arrest.

Trooper Louis Lairmore arrested a subject for possession of a controlled substance—intent to distribute and multiple arrest warrants. Tpr. Lairmore was conducting a drug distribution investigation that occurred in the Isle of Capri-KC north parking lot. During the investigation, Tpr. Lairmore became aware the suspect had three active warrants for his arrest. Surveillance notified Tpr. Lairmore the suspect was on the gaming floor. The suspect gave consent to search his vehicle, and Tpr. Lairmore located two black boxes in its trunk. The boxes contained 41 grams of crystal methamphetamine, two hydrocodone, hundreds of small clear plastic baggies, a glass smoking pipe, a digital scale, \$600, and a notebook containing client information.

A Kansas City man was sentenced to 16 years, seven months for robbing a bank and attempting to rob the IOC-KC during a crime spree in 2013. Sergeant Brian W. Vernon made the arrest while he was the unit supervisor.

Trooper Dennis W. McCormick completed an investigation involving cheating. Three dealers deliberately exposed or "flashed" cards to specific patrons who would then utilize the advanced knowledge of the outcome to enhance their odds of winning at a gambling game, which resulted in the significant loss of casino assets. The dealers' licenses were revoked and criminal charges are pending. This investigation was truly a team effort by the Lady Luck enforcement team.

2016

The Gaming Division created the Ace award to recognize the outstanding criminal investigations conducted by its officers and to identify an "Officer of the Year." The 2015 Gaming Officer of the Year and inaugural winner of the Ace award was Trooper A. Keith Howery. Tpr. Howery's selection was based not only on the totality of his overall performance, but was highlighted by two examples of his living by the Patrol's core values.

At approximately 6:45 a.m. on December 12, 2014, Tpr. Howery was on his way to work, when he noticed flames coming from a duplex on Highway 52 in Barnett, MO. Tpr. Howery immediately contacted Troop F and requested they notify the Morgan County Fire Department and EMS. He then responded to the burning building and removed two occupants and get them to safety before fire consumed the building. Unfortunately, a mother and a small child perished in the fire.

On August 25, 2015, the Isle of Capri Casino-Boonville security manager contacted Tpr. Howery to report that 11 Hydrocodone pills that had been placed in the lost and found locker the previous June were missing. Tpr. Howery initiated an investigation. He diligently reviewed key logs, medication logs, and surveillance video until he discovered that a security supervisor and officer conspired to steal pills. Tpr. Howery's investigation and subsequent interviews with both suspects led to charges felony theft/stealing of a controlled substance and felony possession of a controlled substance being filed against the security supervisor. The security officer was arrested and charged with felony distribution of a controlled substance. In addition, Tpr. Howery opened a regulatory investigation on both subjects, which resulted in their licenses being revoked.

The inaugural Ace award was presented during the annual Missouri State Highway Patrol and Missouri Gaming Commission luncheon on November 5, 2015, at the Missouri Gaming Commission's Central Office in Jefferson City. Senior staff from both agencies attended. Captain Christopher S. Jolly presented all the nominees with a newly minted Gaming Division challenge poker chip. Tpr. Howery accepted an acrylic trophy and his name was engraved upon a plaque displayed outside the captain's office. Ace award recipients will be added to the plaque each year.

On October 18, 2016, Sergeant Dave Bierer, who is assigned to the Isle Casino, Cape Girardeau, MO, received recognition from the Missouri Department of Conservation and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service for actions he took on December 16, 2014. Sgt. Bierer was off duty that December day in 2014, and was duck hunting at the Duck Creek Conservation area. He'd been drawn to hunt in Pool 8, known as the wade-n-shoot area, which is on the Mingo National Wildlife Refuge. The Missouri Department of Conservation manages hunting on the Mingo Refuge.

Sgt. Bierer and his party proceeded to their spot in the flooded timber when another hunter, unknown to them, walked in almost on top of them. The unknown hunter advised Bierer's party that he was going to hunt right there, and proceeded to start shooting ducks before legal shooting hours. Sgt. Bierer stopped hunting, and with the assistance of Trooper Matthew Foster, Troop E, who was also off duty and duck hunting with Sgt. Bierer, contacted the offending hunter, identified themselves, and obtained the other hunter's identification.

Sgt. Bierer contacted Conservation Agent Jeff Scott by cellphone (also off duty and hunting nearby), and explained the situation to him. Conservation Agent Scott was waiting for the offending hunter when he left Duck Creek. Further investigation by Conservation Agent Scott revealed that the stamp on the green [hunting] card didn't look quite right, and that the suspect had not taken part in the morning draw at Duck Creek.

Since the violation occurred on a federal refuge, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was contacted about the investigation. Members of the Missouri Department of Conservation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service contacted the suspect at his residence in St. Louis, MO. The agents recovered a stack of stolen green cards and an official-looking Missouri Department of Conservation stamp at the suspect's residence. Turns out the suspect had a local print shop in St. Louis make the stamp for him. This way, the suspect could drive straight to Pool 8, stamp his own card, circumvent the entire drawing procedure, and guarantee himself a hunting spot every time he showed up. The agents recovered the stamp and green cards, and obtained a confession from the suspect. Their investigation revealed that the suspect had placed orders for more stamps.

The suspect was charged with a federal fraud crime, paid an enormous monetary fine, and lost all his hunting privileges on both public and private lands in the entire United States of America for three years. Additionally, Conservation Department duck hunting areas across the state have modified their green card stamping procedures to avoid this type of fraud in the future. What initially appeared to be a relatively minor game violation literally turned into a federal case. All because of the off-duty actions of a couple of dedicated Missouri state troopers.

The Patrol presented a Lifesaving Award to Sergeant Frederick D. Bierer on April 20, 2016. The recognition came because of Sgt. Bierer's actions on November 17, 2015, when an elderly patron at the Isle of Capri Casino in Cape Girardeau, MO, collapsed while seated at a table game after an apparent heart

attack. Sgt. Bierer, Corporal William C. Fox, and casino employees immediately responded to the scene. The patron was found unresponsive and had no pulse, so Sgt. Bierer, casino emergency medical technicians, and an off-duty nurse (patron) began administering cardio-pulmonary resuscitation. After several rounds of cardiopulmonary resuscitation and two separate shocks from an automated external defibrillator, the patient regained a pulse and began breathing on his own. An ambulance arrived and transported the patient to a local hospital. The man has since recuperated.

2017

The Patrol presented a Lifesaving Award to Trooper James R. Sauer on April 29, 2017, at the annual awards banquet. The recognition was the result of Tpr. Sauer's actions on May 7, 2016. A patron of the Lumière Place Casino collapsed from cardiac arrest. An employee of the casino and the man's group of family and friends began trying to resuscitate him using both an AED and cardiopulmonary resuscitation. When Tpr. Sauer arrived on scene, he assessed the situation and took over conducting chest compressions while the casino employee continued giving rescue breaths. Tpr. Sauer continued to provide chest compressions until emergency services arrived on scene. As soon as Tpr. Sauer was relieved of his responsibilities, the man's pulse and breathing returned, and he regained consciousness. The man was placed on a stretcher and transported to the hospital for treatment.

The Patrol presented a Valor Award to Trooper Rebecca L. Eagan, and a Purple Heart to Corporal Jay A. Shirley on April 29, 2017, at the annual awards banquet. The recognition was the result of Tpr. Eagan's actions on May 20, 2016. That day, Tpr. Eagan and Cpl. Jay A. Shirley responded to a request for assistance from Harrah's North Kansas City Casino security with a suspicious person in the parking garage. A computer inquiry on the subject yielded an outstanding warrant. The troopers contacted the man near the open rear door of a Toyota Corolla, which was parked in a small, confined area. Thus, only one trooper could contact the man directly. Cpl. Shirley identified himself and informed the man he was under arrest. When Cpl. Shirley placed a handcuff on the man's right wrist, the man began to resist and produced a gun in his other hand. Cpl. Shirley yelled, "Gun!" alerting Tpr. Eagan, who had also engaged with the subject. In the struggle, the man fired and struck Cpl. Shirley in the thigh. A second shot was contained within the interior of the vehicle. Tpr. Eagan continued to struggle with the subject, sustaining two very hard elbow strikes to her face before firing her weapon and ending the confrontation. Tpr. Eagan and Harrah's Casino EMTs rendered first aid until ambulances arrived. Both the subject and Cpl. Shirley were transported to an area hospital. The Patrol presented a Purple Heart to Corporal Jay A. Shirley on April 29, 2017, at the annual awards banquet.

Six Gaming Division members retired in 2017.

2018

The Patrol presented Corporal Samuel V. Buchheit with a Lifesaving Award due to his actions on January 28, 2018. Cpl. Buchheit utilized his training and knowledge to assist in saving a Lumière Place Casino and Hotels patron from cardiac arrest.

The Gaming Division awarded Sergeant William E. Oliver the 2018 Ace "Officer of the Year" award.

Sergeants Todd M. Barthelmass and Amy K. Johnson were presented with Lifesaving awards for their actions on August 12, 2018, when a child began drowning at the Hotel Lumiere swimming pool. Sgts. Barthelmass and Johnson assisted with CPR until an ambulance arrived to transport the child to a nearby hospital.

Sergeants Barthelmass and Johnson, Corporal Christensen, and Troopers Hilliard, Lutz, Sauer, and Wohler were presented with Lifesaving awards at the 2018 MASTERS Awards Banquet for their efforts saving drug overdose victims.

During the 2018 calendar year, 10 members of the Gaming Division retired from the Missouri State Highway Patrol.

2019

In 2019, eight Gaming Division members retired from the Patrol.

On February 28, 2019, Corporal Craig N. Ponder responded to a call for assistance after a male subject overdosed on opioids in a room at the Lumiere Place Casino and Hotels in St. Louis, Missouri. When he arrived, he found two casino employees had begun cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Cpl. Ponder administered NARCAN and then took over chest compressions when one of the employees tired. Eventually, a pulse was detected and the man began to breathe on his own. Saint Louis Fire Department Emergency Medical Services "Medic 9" arrived on scene and assumed care of the man, who survived the incident and was admitted to the hospital for further treatment. Cpl. Ponder accepted a 2019 Lifesaving award recognizing his actions.

On March 18, 2019, Trooper Jordan A. Hilliard was on duty at Lumiere Place Casino and Hotels. She received a call regarding a subject in the parking garage who appeared to be attempting to burglarize multiple vehicles. Tpr. Hilliard and a casino security shift supervisor responded on foot, while a casino security officer responded in a security vehicle. Casino surveillance agents guided them to a vehicle where a 17-year-old male was sitting in the driver's seat. Tpr. Hilliard gained the man's attention, but he ignored her requests to roll down the excessively tinted windows. Tpr. Hilliard then instructed the man to exit the vehicle. As he was doing so, he dropped his cell phone onto the floorboard. The man retrieved his cell phone and then fled. Tpr. Hilliard and the two casino employees gave chase via three different routes to block as many avenues of

escape as possible. While being chased, the suspect lost control of a pistol from the front of his sweatpants. He retrieved the pistol as the security shift supervisor reached his location, and a struggle over control of the weapon ensued. The suspect broke free and began to flee again. Tpr. Hilliard overtook the suspect and tackled him to the ground, sustaining an injury to her elbow. As she began to take control of the suspect, Tpr. Hilliard saw the pistol in his grasp. She then moved to take control of the weapon to avoid injury to herself or the security personnel. During the struggle, the suspect pointed the gun at Tpr. Hilliard and the security shift supervisor who came to assist. Tpr. Hilliard and the security shift supervisor were able to take the pistol away from the suspect and maintain control of him until the security officer arrived and placed him in handcuffs. The suspect had a full face covering mask around his neck, which is commonly used in the commission of robberies and other crimes. Tpr. Hilliard accepted a 2019 Meritorious Service Award in recognition of her actions.

On May 25, 2019, a patron at the Ameristar Casino collapsed. When Sergeant Todd M. Barthelmass arrived on the scene, a casino employee and another patron were attempting cardiopulmonary resuscitation ineffectively. Sgt. Barthelmass stepped in and administered cardiopulmonary resuscitation, while the casino employee applied the automatic external defibrillator. Following the AED's instructions, Sgt. Barthelmass continued chest compressions while the casino employee provided rescue breaths. Emergency medical services arrived and transported the man to the hospital, where he received further treatment. The man survived the incident. Sgt. Barthelmass accepted a 2019 Lifesaving award for his actions.

On July 27, 2019, Sergeant Bruce A. Becker and Trooper Chase A. Pulley were working at Lumiere Place Casino and Hotels, when they heard radio traffic regarding an unconscious patron. They responded to the men's restroom and located an unresponsive man. They also found a syringe near his location. A security supervisor and emergency responder were on scene and deployed an automated external defibrillator. Sgt. Becker and Tpr. Pulley's experience and training led them to believe the man was suffering from an opioid overdose. Sgt. Becker maintained the man's airway and Tpr. Pulley administered NARCAN. The troopers then began chest compressions and rescue breaths using a portable oxygen bag. An additional dose of NARCAN was administered prior to the arrival of emergency medical services personnel, who then took over the man's care. The man survived the incident. Sgt. Becker and Tpr. Pulley accepted 2019 Lifesaving awards in recognition of their actions.

On August 9, 2019, a patron at Mark Twain Casino fell to the tile floor and struck his head. Sergeant Christopher M. Turner and Corporal Christine M. Brenton immediately responded to the request for assistance. The officers assessed the man's condition and found he did not have a pulse. Sgt. Turner went to locate an automated external defibrillator, while Cpl. Brenton began cardiopulmonary resuscitation. A patron identified herself as a nurse and assisted her. Sgt. Turner found the AED was not where it was normally kept, but a casino

security officer arrived with one at the scene. When the AED advised a shock was necessary, Sgt. Turner administered it. They resumed CPR until LaGrange Fire Department arrived with an adult resuscitation bag. After Sgt. Turner administered a second shock, the patron began to breathe and had a faint pulse. The Lewis County paramedics arrived and assumed care. En route to the hospital, the man regained consciousness and had strong vitals. The man survived the incident. Sgt. Turner and Cpl. Brenton accepted 2019 Lifesaving awards for their actions.

On August 23, 2019, Corporal Rhonda M. Shanika-Croy responded to a call for assistance at the Hollywood Casino in St. Louis, Missouri. The casino employees were on scene and providing cardiopulmonary resuscitation to a patron who had collapsed while gambling. When one of the employees tired, Cpl. Shanika-Croy assumed responsibility for chest compressions. She continued working with the casino employees until the patron regained a pulse and began to breathe on her own. At that time, emergency medical services arrived on scene. The Pattonville Fire Department Ambulance conveyed the woman to the hospital where she was admitted for further treatment. The woman survived the incident. Cpl. Shanika-Croy accepted a 2019 Lifesaving award for her actions.

Corporal Zachary A. Harrison accepted the Benjamin Oliver Booth Officer Of The Year Award for 2019. The nomination included the following:

Cpl. Zachary A. Harrison is an exemplary criminal investigator as evidenced by his success. In January 2019, one of his previous cases was adjudicated in the Eastern District of Missouri, resulting in a federal "structuring" prosecution. It was the first of its kind and will provide federal prosecutors with positive case law in future cases. In April 2019, Cpl. Harrison uncovered a drug distribution ring operating in Mark Twain Casino and the surrounding community. His investigation revealed the specifics of the operation, and security footage he obtained verified eight transactions. A supervisor and bartender were arrested and convicted of drug distribution. Four additional suspects have been identified. In July 2019, Cpl. Harrison initiated another drug distribution criminal investigation based on a source with in-depth knowledge of a drug operation occurring in the Louisiana area with ties in LaGrange. This multi-agency investigation has identified 29 suspects and is ongoing. His exemplary networking during other investigative work led to Cpl. Harrison working with the Missouri Children's Division on an investigation into the sexual abuse of a child by an older sibling. Additionally, Cpl. Harrison is investigating two large scale money laundering operations. The first involves a target residing in the Kirksville, Missouri, area, who is utilizing Mark Twain Casino to launder and structure large amounts of currency. The second financial case is a large-scale money-laundering operation in Northeast Missouri and beyond involving numerous financial institutions.

Cpl. Harrison's unwavering dedication to duty, criminal work, and his community is outstanding. He volunteers in the local school district, reading to multiple classes and students within the elementary and preschool. He routinely

provides presentations during the school's Career Day and Emergency Services Appreciation Day, and at his local VFW. Each year, his community requests his assistance with local Fourth of July parades and the Canton Homecoming parade. During spring and summer 2019, many Missouri communities were affected by flooding. For the duration of the flood, after working his shift at Mark Twain Casino, Cpl. Harrison volunteered long hours filling and placing sandbags. The work completed by the volunteers saved the Canton levee.

Tpr. Harrison was also named Gaming Division's Ace "Officer of the Year" award.

2020

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, all casinos in the state of Missouri were closed for business from March 16, 2020, through the end of May 2020, with the properties in St. Louis County opening in mid-June.

Four Gaming Division members retired in 2020.

The Gaming Division awarded Corporal David R. Nelson the 2020 Ace "Officer of the Year" award.

2021

Seven Gaming Division members retired in 2021.

The Gaming Division awarded Corporal David R. Nelson the 2021 Ace "Officer of the Year" award.

The coronavirus pandemic resulted in the 2020 annual awards banquet being postponed. Thus, the 2019 and 2020 awards were presented in April 2021. The Patrol presented Lifesavings Awards to the following Gaming Division members: Trooper Jordan A. Hilliard, Trooper Chase A. Pulley, Corporal Christine M. Brenton, Corporal Zachary A. Harrison, Corporal Craig N. Ponder, Corporal Rhonda M. Shanika-Croy, Sergeant Todd M. Barthelmiss, Sergeant Bruce A. Becker, and Sergeant Christopher M. Turner. (Their actions are described previously, under the year when the incident occurred.)