

SAFER OHIO

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CLEVELAND, OHIO

A national community-police collaborative model during the Republican National Convention

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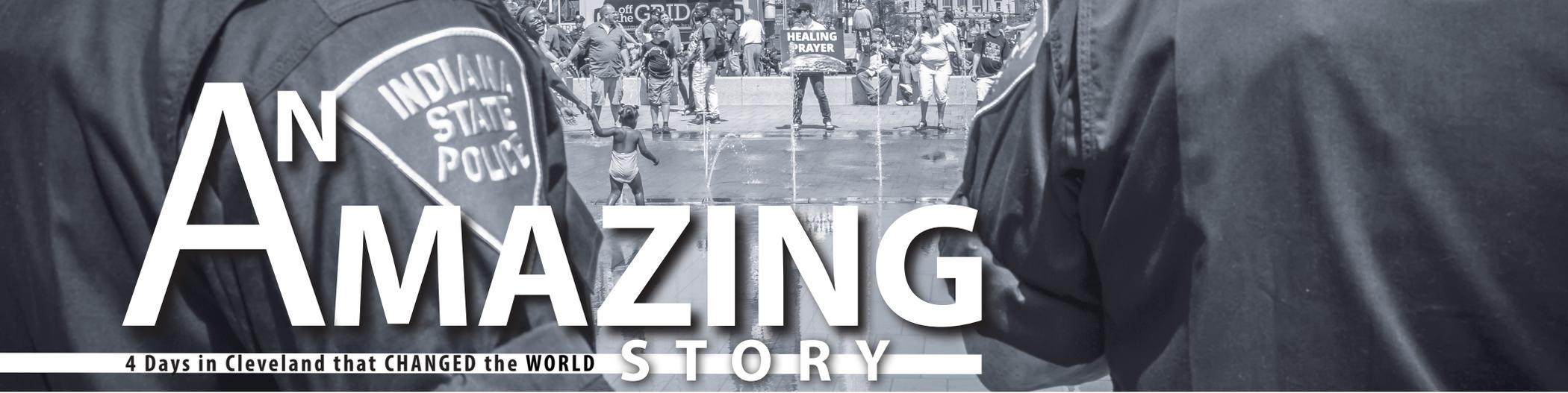
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John R. Kasich
Governor, State of Ohio

John Born
Director, Department of Public Safety



AN AMAZING STORY

4 Days in Cleveland that CHANGED the WORLD

On a warm summer morning on July 17, Ohio Governor John R. Kasich and Ohio Department of Public Safety (DPS) Director John Born stood together off stage in an auditorium on the campus of Cleveland State University.

Gov. Kasich was there to address nearly 500 Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSHP) troopers – the largest commitment of resources to a single event in the Patrol’s 82-year history.

Later that day, Gov. Kasich would speak with commanders from 18 additional state law enforcement agencies, who represented the largest assembling of out-of-state law enforcement officers in Ohio history – more than 1,000 officers.

The officers assembled to help the city of Cleveland host the Republican National Convention (RNC) that week, which would be the first National Special Security Event (NSSE) political convention in which the host city’s law enforcement agency was under a federal consent decree.¹

With large-event security having changed significantly since the 2013 Boston Marathon bombing, law enforcement faced an incredible set of challenges, ranging from world terrorism, mass shootings of law enforcement officers and strained community-police relations across the country.

On July 7, just days before the RNC, a lone gunman in Dallas killed five police officers, and in a separate incident, a gunman in Baton Rouge killed three law enforcement officers on July 17. Those events, plus an ISIS-inspired attack on July 14 at a Bastille Day celebration in Nice, France, that killed 85 people, and other recent terrorism in Belgium, Turkey and Paris led to palpable nervousness for security officials heading into the RNC, scheduled for July 18-21 in Cleveland.

There were predictions of chaos and violence in Cleveland amidst an already contentious political climate. Community-police relations nationally were strained as the nation had also just watched two officer-involved shootings play out on social media in Minneapolis and Baton Rouge.

Even with all that as the backdrop, leaders shared a quiet optimism. Ohio began a journey toward bridging the divide between communities and law enforcement back in January of 2014, in that same auditorium where Gov. Kasich would soon speak. That effort – the Ohio Collaborative Community Police Advisory Board – put Ohio on the map as a national model for community-police relations. (*See ocjs.ohio.gov/ohiocollaborative for more information*).

The litmus test would occur over the next four days. Leaders knew that a safe RNC for delegates, media, law enforcement and the public would change the nation’s view of Cleveland. It would also change the world’s view on how the community and law enforcement can interact peacefully and collaboratively. The goal was to change the narrative from one where the RNC became the tipping point for anger and violence, to one showing the success that’s possible when everyone in a city works together.

It would be an amazing story.

¹ When an event is designated by the Secretary of Homeland Security as a National Special Security Event (NSSE), the Secret Service assumes its mandated role as the lead agency for the design and implementation of the operational security plan. The Secret Service has developed a core strategy to carry out its security operations, which relies heavily on its established partnerships with law enforcement and public safety officials at the local, state, and federal levels. The goal of the cooperating agencies is to provide a safe and secure environment for Secret Service protectees, other dignitaries, the event participants, and the general public. There is a tremendous amount of advance planning and coordination in preparation for these events, particularly in the areas of venue and motorcade route security, communications, credentialing, and training. (<https://cdp.dhs.gov/training/nsse-nle-support/>)

Broken Arrow Day

For more than two years, federal, state and local security experts engaged in comprehensive planning and event preparations for the RNC.

A group of Ohio state agencies met 14 times beginning back in 2014. There was also a RNC executive steering committee on which Director Born served, and 27 subcommittees, many of which involved DPS representatives.

Major Michael Black of the OSHP was the detail commander for the OSHP and all state agencies that came to Cleveland as part of a unique federal assistance program. He worked side-by-side with Deputy Chief Edward Tomba of the Cleveland Division of Police (CDP), who was their overall detail commander.

Black had the massive responsibility of developing a plan for 2,100 law enforcement officers that included making assignments, drawing up schedules and obtaining resources. The officers were from the OSHP, 18 other state law enforcement agencies, CDP, and municipal officers from Columbus, Louisville, KY, and Austin, TX. Included within the OSHP cadre were also members of the Executive Protection Unit, investigators and the motorcycle unit which were involved with all the dignitary protection details, motorcades and escorts, all of which Black noted, “went off without a hitch.”

“Combining that many agencies together was unprecedented. I’ve never seen anything like it in 28 years,” said Black, who had previously worked on seven other large mass demonstration details including G-20 summits and presidential inaugurations.

The operations plans needed to put structure and organization in place for everything outside of the main venue. The U.S. Secret Service was in charge inside that venue.

“Cleveland was awarded the Convention in July 2014 and we knew our efforts were going to involve a lot of people and a lot of agencies,” Tomba said. “The world and law enforcement changed drastically since that time. Our planning process was fluid and changed a lot because of national and world events.”

For Black, it also meant being flexible and managing constant change over nearly two years of planning.

The most important asset during planning wasn’t put in place until the final weeks leading up to the RNC. It was the establishment of a six-member logistics team comprised of OSHP sworn officers and professional staff that came about only through crisis.

“In mid-April, we found out that about 600 officers who had previously committed to work the RNC were not coming,” Black recalled. “We called that ‘Broken Arrow Day,’ and we needed to do something fast because the RNC was going to happen in less than three months. And one way or another, we had to be ready.”

“Broken arrow” is a military euphemism that a unit is facing imminent destruction and all available forces within range are to provide immediate support.

With huge personnel and logistics gaps to fill, the logistics team worked out of an office in the Federal Courthouse Building in Cleveland every day for the next three months. From that office, they built the structure of the entire detail for the OSHP, the other 21 partnering state and local agencies, and

ensured it all synced with the CDP operations plan. They also worked on securing contracts for housing of more than 2,000 officers, as well as contracts for their food, water, laundry services and bus transportation to get the officers around Cleveland to their various assignments.

Each CDP commander met with the logistics team to ensure their plans were worked out to every detail. The team also met every Friday with Deputy Chief Tomba.

For the OSHP, one of the most important missions was security around the perimeter of the venue. Just days before the event, Black and his logistics team faced a new challenge when it was revealed the 12-hours per day responsibility for perimeter security at the venue was going to be a 24-hour commitment, which meant a new midnight shift had to be added to the operations plan.

“I am so proud of the logistics team,” Black said. “When they first met on April 22 you would have never believed it would all come together. They deserve the credit. They put the work in and you could see it in how the mission was accomplished.”

A First for Everyone

Holly Welch is the DPS attorney who managed the complex process that brought more than 1,000 state law enforcement officers from 18 states coming to Cleveland as part of the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC). Through EMAC, Welch said the multi-law enforcement coalition assembled for the RNC was unprecedented in Ohio, and something never before seen at any previous national convention.

“The thing I am most proud of is we were able to

meet the needs of Cleveland,” Welch said. “Everyone got a warm public reaction and everyone was able to stay safe.”

Coordinated through the National Emergency Management Association (NEMA), EMAC serves as the relational and legal glue between federal, state and local entities for moving people and resources. EMAC offers assistance during governor-declared states of emergency that allows states to send personnel, equipment and commodities to help disaster relief efforts in other states. Once conditions for providing assistance to a requesting state have been set, the terms constitute a legally binding contractual agreement that makes affected states responsible for reimbursement (*see www.emacweb.org/index.php/learnaboutemac/what-is-emac*).

Without EMAC, many of the states that sent in the 1,000 out-of-state officers to work in Cleveland may not have participated in the detail.

Ohio Emergency Management Agency Executive Director Sima Merick oversaw the entire EMAC process.

“The actions we took with respect to EMAC were unprecedented,” Merick said. “The coordination and collaboration with NEMA, state agencies and the City of Cleveland to get those resources in here filled the gaps law enforcement needed. We were able to bring in specialized units and officers who knew the mission and were able to execute the mission safely and successfully.”

Welch attributed the success through EMAC to three things – coordination, communication and flexibility. What made this usage of EMAC unique is that it usually does not involve planning, because agencies are typically responding to a disaster or

incident that has already occurred. She expects the way EMAC was used for the RNC to become a blueprint for other states in terms of resources and coordination on the front end of an event.

“This was a first for everyone that we were planning before the event, and even changing the plan during the event,” Welch said. “It was great to work with the other states. We were able to work with emergency managers behind the scenes to get law enforcement the liability protection, reimbursements and other requirements they needed. It was a team of people from NEMA, to the states, to our EMA, to people in Cleveland.”

For law enforcement, there was an opportunity to show who we really are.

For Merick, the realization of how important EMAC was happened as she watched live television coverage of a group of protesters gathered in the public square area on the RNC’s third day.

“They were showing this large group of people on television and it looked like there were more and more coming,” Merick recalled as she watched from a command center several miles away. “Then the camera panned over and I saw troopers with patches on their uniforms from Kansas and Missouri and Indiana. I was so proud to know that we had been able to do that for the city of Cleveland.”

Model for the Nation

The RNC blended with the underlying success of the Ohio Collaborative and conversations already taking place in Cleveland to mend community-

police relations. The RNC was Cleveland’s opportunity to shine in the national spotlight, and the community wasn’t going to be baited into violence by out-of-towners.

This sentiment was echoed in a July 22 op-ed on Time.com from Gov. Kasich as the RNC concluded: “When problems between the community and police arose in recent years, people came together to improve communication and begin rebuilding trust. The result is that people know they have a stake in making things work and have a reason for optimism. It’s a model for the nation.”

Gov. Kasich established the Ohio Collaborative in 2015 to oversee implementation of recommendations from the Ohio Task Force on Community-Police Relations. The state has partnered with the Buckeye State Sheriffs’ Association and the Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police to help certify Ohio’s nearly 1,000 law enforcement agencies to keep them in compliance with Ohio’s new standards.

As of this publication, more than 70 agencies had become certified by meeting standards for the use of force, including deadly force, and agency recruitment and hiring, and more than 180 agencies are in the process of becoming certified. Those standards are the first of their kind in Ohio and were developed by the Ohio Collaborative in August 2015.

In the week leading up to the RNC, Gov. Kasich went to Cleveland to meet with civic and clergy leaders to discuss the Collaborative and ask for their assistance in turning its accomplishments into a pathway for a peaceful RNC in the city.

Leaders during that meeting were reminded that Cleveland was one of 20 communities in Ohio selected to receive up to \$30,000 in community-police relations funding from the DPS Office of Criminal Justice Services to assist with initiatives to improve relationships between communities and law enforcement agencies serving them. This is further proof that Ohio, and Cleveland, is becoming a national leader in its efforts to build stronger relationships between police and communities, and the willingness of law enforcement to reach out to the communities they serve.

Double Opportunity

The main RNC venue in downtown Cleveland was the Quicken Loans Arena, where just weeks earlier the Cleveland Cavaliers had celebrated an NBA championship. The victory parade drew an estimated 1.3 million people to downtown Cleveland and served as an unexpected and beneficial test on security officials preparing for the RNC.

Supporting venues within walking distance included the Cleveland Convention Center and the Renaissance Cleveland Hotel. Events were invitation only and were not open to the public. Protesters and any other members of the public were forced to gather at an outside ring separated by seven miles of perimeter fencing and a one mile chute from the venue to the convention center.

Approximately 50,000 visitors and an international media contingent were expected in the Northeast

Ohio area. Planning for public safety and security was a large coordinated effort by law enforcement, emergency management, public safety organizations at all levels of government and the private sector.

As a NSSE event, the U.S. Secret Service was designated as the lead federal agency for security operational planning, with the Federal Bureau of Investigation being the lead federal agency for crisis management, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency the lead federal agency for emergency and consequence management.

There were three primary federal command centers in or near Cleveland that were limited to credentialed law enforcement, military and emergency management personnel.

The Multi Agency Coordination Center was established near Hopkins airport. This was the primary command, communication and control component. A number of sub-command and coordinating centers were co-located within this controlled access venue.

OSHP Colonel Paul Pride, who had authorized the largest commitment of personnel and resources ever from his organization, knew going into the RNC that it marked a significant opportunity for law enforcement to change the public narrative about police officers.

“The morning before the RNC there was chaos in the country and around the world,” Pride said. “But on the heels of that there was a double opportunity. First, there was an opportunity for the people of Cleveland to say something about their city. And for law enforcement, there was an opportunity to show who we really are.”

Hugs, High Fives & Handshakes

After more than 18 months of planning, and all the struggles along the way, the plans were in place. Everyone and everything was ready. The eyes of the world were going to be on Cleveland – and more than 2,000 law enforcement officers from agencies across the country were going to be in the spotlight of what members of the media were projecting to be an extremely volatile week in Cleveland.

Then the deadly shootings of law enforcement officers in Dallas and Baton Rouge just before the RNC caused trepidation for many officers working the RNC. News of the Baton Rouge shootings was still coming in as Gov. Kasich prepared to speak with OSHP troopers on the eve on the RNC.

Black noted the operations plans had to be readjusted after the Dallas shootings. He recounted numerous phone conversations with some of the EMAC agencies regarding the increasing safety concerns for their officers in the wake of Dallas. To the credit of every EMAC agency, nobody backed out of their commitment to be part of the RNC detail.

With the planning phase done, the responsibility shifted to OSHP Major Chad McGinty, who was the assistant detail commander and commander of the field force for crowd control and civil disturbance.

“Our strategy was to control the crowds and tempo in the city,” McGinty said. “There was no way it could have worked without the partnerships with those other state agencies. We had a commander from every agency with us in the command center. Anytime we needed something, we got it.”

As focus transitioned to the operations of the RNC, McGinty led the multi-state field force and

Black shifted to overseeing traffic responsibilities including motorcades and dignitary escorts. OSHP investigators and executive protection staff were responsible for dignitary protection and the venue security, which included the perimeter of the main venue. The Special Response Team served as a quick reactionary force inside the perimeter security between the fence and the venue. And on top of all that, Ohio Investigative Unit agents worked the bars and teamed up with CDP and U.S. Secret Service personnel on counter-surveillance teams.

Ohio law permits the open carry of firearms, which is not the case for a number of states who sent officers to the RNC detail. In the wake of the Dallas and Baton Rouge shootings, officers of many of these agencies felt uncertain about how to deal with the open carry element – plus added concerns about snipers. There were even calls for Gov. Kasich to temporarily suspend Ohio's open carry law, which constitutionally he is not authorized to do.

McGinty worked to ease those concerns by sharing intelligence ahead of time when they knew open carry citizens were coming. He provided reassurance that those people were just doing it for effect, would be adequately “trailed” and did not pose a problem.

“It was a huge challenge for them,” McGinty said about discussions he had with commanders from other states without open carry laws. “Someone carrying an AK-47 in a crowd with all those people around was tough. We just continued reassuring the other states that it would be okay and to just let it play out.”

For protesters and anarchists, downtown Cleveland with its numerous glass storefronts was a target-rich

environment. Thrown objects to break windows was a concern for many business owners and security officials alike. The best way to counter that threat was to saturate the city with law enforcement officers walking and moving in small groups.

McGinty used a “golf shotgun start” analogy to describe how and where officers were deployed. Every officer had a map that showed staging areas throughout the city and line assignments from each staging area.

Like a charity golf outing, small groups of officers would start at a designated time from each staging location. A short time later, another group would go out, and that would continue throughout the day.

“We just constantly saturated key areas of the city. Even if you wanted to start something you couldn’t – there were just too many officers,” McGinty said.

The first groups out each day were charged with looking for protest materials that had been hidden overnight by anarchists. So when the anarchists came back out later, the bolts, bricks and other items hidden to cause damage to property and people were nowhere to be found.

McGinty also knew if law enforcement could gain public support early in the operation then the community would be a terrific asset in helping maintain order throughout the week. He wanted the officers to be seen everywhere and for the community to view them as a nice addition to the city. Even in Cleveland's Public Square, where the largest groups of protesters assembled each day, officers went out without riot gear.

“The challenge after Dallas was to get everyone to buy in to what we were doing. Many of the other states thought they were going to be in riot suits and shooting tear gas all week,” McGinty said. “What actually happened was ping pong, dance contests, hugs, high fives and handshakes.”

Tomba noted his biggest surprise was the level of law enforcement and public anxiety before the event compared with what actually happened once it started.



By days three and four, it picked up and became a community celebration.

“The first two days were quiet and our local community was just watching and hoping that would continue. By days three and four, it picked up and became a community celebration,” Tomba said. “As a lifelong city resident and police officer in this city for 32 years, I knew the city was dedicated and committed. You know the Cavs won six weeks earlier, and the fact we had no significant incidents says a lot for our city and leadership.”

While there was a strong law enforcement presence in Cleveland, behind the scenes Richard Zwayer, Executive Director of Ohio Homeland Security (OHS), was overseeing a key component in support of those officers on the streets.

“None of our work was outwardly visible to law enforcement,” Zwayer said. “But behind the scenes we were there for commanders and leadership to give them the timely information they needed to make crucial and successful decisions.”

Collaboration was occurring on the intelligence side as well. OHS worked with partners such as the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the OSHP Intelligence Unit, the Ohio Fusion Center Network, FBI and U.S. Secret Service to share pertinent intelligence that had an impact on the operations of law enforcement and security leading up to, and during, the RNC. They were also assisting in identifying critical infrastructure that could be impacted by the event.

“The development and identification of intelligence was an important part of the planning and operations of the RNC,” Zwayer said. “The sharing and collaboration helped identify potential threats and issues that were likely to arise during the event, and when we shared that with law enforcement it

was used to develop tactical objectives in order to protect attendees and the public.”

OHS was directly involved in searching for terroristic threats related or directed toward the RNC or its attendees. Zwayer said OHS staff focused on ensuring the information gathered was vetted and then provided as intelligence with value for law enforcement and first responders to act upon.

“Our goal was to prevent something from happening rather than responding to something that had already happened,” Zwayer said. “We believe strongly that our interactions with state, federal and local partners, and the value of the information we shared with each agency’s leadership was unseen but a valuable part of the RNC.”

Collaboration was also integral to the work EMA was doing, both before the RNC, and during the event itself. Merick, who also served as one of four unified group commanders during the RNC, was able to closely coordinate state resources with all involved entities, levels of government and the private sector. Additionally, through a 24-hour activation of the state Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in Columbus that involved at varying times 15-20 different state and federal agencies, she oversaw the linking of support to county and city EOCs so accurate information was available around the clock for decision makers.

“Because we were in the pre-event planning meetings, we were able to learn and glean what our federal partners were doing and what resources they were pre-positioning,” Merick said. “Knowing what our state resources were, it gave me a sense of comfort on what resources we might need, and from where, if something big happened.”

We Overwhelmed Them

Cleveland’s Public Square became a gathering place for large groups of protesters.

At its peak, approximately 1,000 people gathered in the downtown open area. McGinty estimated that crowd size included about 400 protesters, but also included approximately 200 law enforcement officers and hundreds of credentialed and independent media members looking for a story that never materialized.

“Getting all those states to come was huge,” McGinty said. “For instance, we had 300 troopers from California who I knew were all trained the same way. I could tell one California trooper, ‘This is what I need,’ and 300 would react all in the same way.”

The first large group of demonstrators had within it known anarchists that had blended into the crowd of lawful protesters. As the group marched down Cleveland’s East 48th Street, they were trailed by officers on bicycles. Then as the crowd turned a corner, they saw Michigan State Police troopers lining both sides of the street. McGinty noted the line of troopers in their blue uniforms was an instant deterrent to anyone who may have had other plans. It set the theme for the entire week.

A focus for the week was to change the perception of law enforcement so the story was about positive interactions between the public and officers. Through gathered intelligence, it was well known the intent of many protesters and anarchists was to draw out officers and get a reaction. McGinty stressed throughout the week that restraint and self-discipline in that environment would be critical toward changing the law enforcement-community relations perception.

A prime illustration involved the OSHP mobile field force and a person protesting the incident in which 12-year-old Tamir Rice was fatally shot by Cleveland police in 2014.

A man, with his 4-year-old daughter, was screaming obscenities at each trooper and periodically fake shooting his daughter, who would fall to the ground as part of the protest. As the man went down one line of troopers and then the next, he dropped his chap-stick on the ground. A trooper, who had just been yelled at by this man, picked up the chap-stick and courteously returned it to the man.

A group of onlookers saw this gesture and began applauding. They moved in around the protester to support the troopers, which caused him to leave the area. He tried a similar protest on another day directed toward California troopers, who conducted themselves in the same manner as the Ohio troopers. The protester walked away, again frustrated by the professionalism and restraint.

It was critical for law enforcement to always stay ahead of the large crowds of protesters and anarchists. For this, the strategy was to be proactive the whole week, starting on Sunday with what McGinty called “be approachable.”

“We overwhelmed them with polite, professional police services. They just couldn’t ever get anything going,” McGinty said.

Tomba noted law enforcement’s use of bicycles also became a central part of the strategy for crowd control. Officers were able to quickly establish barricades with their bicycles between protesters with opposing views. It served as a safe way for law enforcement to keep things calm but still allow everyone to maintain their first amendment right to free speech.

“The bicycles had a big impact for us that week and going forward,” Tomba said. “We have better training, better equipment and are an overall better police department because of this event. What we learned you don’t get in school or in books.”



An Amazing Story

On July 16, McGinty spoke with the OSHP troopers working the detail about his expectations and how the upcoming days were a chance for the world to see what he already knew – that the OSHP is a shining example of professional law enforcement. Sitting in his office two weeks after the detail, he was still emotional about what they did.

“Everyone did exactly what I wanted them to do,” he said. “No gas was used. No broken glass. They shined, and we got to share that with the rest of the world.”

McGinty also speaks glowingly of the other agencies who came to Cleveland. Instead of helmets and shields, he likes to recount stories of the Louisville officer who stopped to break dance with some teens, the Indiana State Police trooper who got in on a ping pong game and a California state trooper who joined a peace activist who was giving away free hugs.

In reflecting on the RNC a month afterward, Pride also acknowledged a key to the overall success came from those outside of law enforcement.

**We saw great collaboration
with the people and leadership
in the city. We got a block party
instead of a riot.**

“You have to tip your hat to the people in the city of Cleveland and the leadership in the community,” Pride said. “The clergy, elected officials and influential people in the city helped make the week what it was. We saw great collaboration with the people and leadership in the city. We got a block party instead of a riot.”

Pride also expressed appreciation to Cleveland’s business community for their welcoming spirit throughout the event. As an example, PNC Bank in Cleveland opened its cafeteria and office space to officers from all over the country, allowing a much-needed place for everyone working the RNC to rest and re-energize before heading back out to respective assignments. A sentiment echoed by so many, but not surprising to those who call Cleveland home.

“As proud as I am of being in law enforcement, I’m more proud of being a Clevelander,” Tomba said.

In summing up the overall RNC operation and looking ahead to future events, everyone interviewed for this article acknowledged the planning, organization, collaboration and community engagement will pay dividends for a long time.

“When we pull this off, it’s going to be an amazing story,” Black told Director Born as they drove back from Cleveland about two weeks before the event.

And what an amazing story it turned out to be.

An Open Letter to First Responders

NALOXONE AN OPPORTUNITY TO LIVE

Drug abuse in Ohio has become an epidemic, with unintentional drug overdoses being the leading cause of accidental death in Ohio since 2007, according to the Ohio Department of Health.

Overdose of prescription medications, specifically opiates, are leaving communities across Ohio devastated and placing a strain on law enforcement, criminal justice and Ohio's healthcare resources.

Naloxone is a medication that rapidly reverses the adverse effects of narcotics that contain opioids. In the last three years, Naloxone has been administered more than 40,000 times according to data from the Emergency Medical Incidence Reporting System.

*By John Born
Director, Ohio Department of Public Safety*

What if I told you that you could give someone the opportunity to live?

That's a pretty powerful thing to consider. Not to just save a life, but to actually give someone the opportunity to live.

And that's precisely what you, as a first responder, can do by utilizing Naloxone (sold under the brand name Narcan).

Facing a patient who has overdosed on heroin, your ability to offer rapid treatment for that patient is truly a matter of life and death; and the recent Ohio Revised Code changes allowing Naloxone administration has proved beneficial in the fight against Ohio's drug overdose issues. Although temporary, the rapid and effective treatment given by police officers, firefighters, EMTs and other first responders opens the door to a much needed opportunity for long-term care and rehabilitation for the patient.

While the resurgence of heroin abuse has created a challenge for all of our EMS, law enforcement, and healthcare professionals, when you respond to a person struggling with the demon of addiction, a valuable life hangs in a delicate balance. In that moment you can become a first preventer.

A positive outcome versus a heartbreaking tragedy might be determined by the availability of rapid administered Naloxone.

Naloxone in your hands has proven to be a critical life-sparing factor that is applicable to every sector of our society and contributes to the safety of every community.

Your training has prepared you to render assistance to those most in need during emergency situations. I know across Ohio, from the police officer in Lima, to the EMT in Jackson, to the firefighter in Akron, all first responders take their role seriously and strive to not just help raise the quality of care that Ohioans receive, but to also raise the quality of life in the communities in which you serve and live. You are greatly appreciated.

It's an amazing thing when you change the paradigm from seeing yourself as a first responder to seeing yourself as a first preventer — that you see the opportunity to positively change the course of events for a person, a family, and a circle of friends in such a meaningful way.

You already provide critical, lifesaving care to those in need 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Despite the risks that you may face while responding, you remain dedicated to helping the patient.

I know every day you and your colleagues fearlessly enter emergency situations, quickly assess and decide what needs to be done to save a mother, a father, or a child. Through your actions, each of these people is given the opportunity to live. And now just think about the possibilities each of these people has to contribute to a better Ohio, and a better nation.

To the thousands of first preventers in Ohio, who provide an essential community service every day, I encourage you to expeditiously utilize Naloxone when appropriate to those who can be given an opportunity to live.

Ohio Department of Public Safety Unveils New Forensic Video Analysis Unit

The Ohio Department of Public Safety (ODPS) is expanding its services to include forensic video analysis free of charge to law enforcement agencies across the state.

“Not only will this unit serve as a critical tool for ODPS, but it will help forward justice, safety and homeland security throughout Ohio and across the country,” said ODPS Director John Born.

Currently the unit has the ability to: correctly extract video files from computer, laptops, DVR systems, dash-cam systems and websites; analyze video for a variety of uses, including single-frame grab; write official, technician-level reports; provide testimony on video analyzed by the unit; and retrieve DVR footage on site.

When an agency requests ODPS forensic video analysis, the unit will:

1. Document item(s) received and details about their condition/contents and securely store them.
2. Assign the case for analysis, performing necessary steps as requested.

3. Issue a final product (video, still images, etc.) with an official report of findings, including work performed, notes, images, and, if necessary, any additional evidence created.

All original media will be returned with the final product. For all cases analyzed, the unit will retain case notes and the final report indefinitely. For all homicides, active missing persons or unfound escapees, working copies of the evidence will also be kept indefinitely. For all other cases, working copies of the evidence will be retained for five years.

Forensic video analysis is the examination, comparison and evaluation of video. ODPS repurposed positions to perform the new services. The ODPS Forensic Video Analysis Unit employs specially-trained staff certified through the Law Enforcement and Emergency Services Video Association International, Inc. and uses legal-reviewed standard operating procedures.

For more information or to request services, please email FVAU@dps.ohio.gov.

Public Schools Outreach and Enforcement Initiative

Private Investigator Security Guard Services (PISGS) embarked on an initiative to promote safety and security at public schools, using a combination of outreach and enforcement. PISGS highlighted for school administrators the importance of contracting with only licensed security guard providers and how PISGS can serve as a resource for schools. The initiative also raised awareness among security providers about the importance of strictly adhering to our laws and rules, particularly when working on school campuses.

PISGS contacted all 613 public school districts in Ohio, sent information and asked whether they contract with a private security guard company.

In all, 21 districts reported that they had contracted with a security guard provider. Those districts span 13 counties, encompass more than 200 school buildings and house more than 135,000 students. They include large urban districts, such as Cincinnati and Akron city schools, and smaller rural and suburban districts. PISGS visited the districts with security guards to answer questions and conduct compliance checks.

After being contacted by PISGS, one district has ceased contracting with unlicensed security guards. Other districts, upon learning that companies can work guards whose applications have not yet been approved by PISGS, but only if the school district signs a waiver permitting it, have notified their security guard providers that they want only registered guards who have passed a criminal background check.

The school districts were overwhelmingly appreciative and thanked PISGS for the information and insight.

If you would like more information on this outreach program, please contact PISGS at: (614) 466-4130.





Ohio Homeland Security Videos Raise Awareness

Safer Ohio: Recognizing 8 Signs of Terrorism

Terror attacks and terror related activity have been on the rise for the past decade. These actions are intended not only to kill or injure as many individuals as possible, but also to impart fear, heighten anxiety or nervousness and to negatively impact the psyche of the general public. Now more than ever, law enforcement officials need the eyes and ears of the general public as they strive to ensure the safety of those they serve.

In an effort to raise the awareness and reporting of terror related activity, Ohio Homeland Security (OHS) recently partnered with Capital University to develop a video series identifying the eight signs of terrorism: eliciting information, testing security, recruiting and financing, photography, surveillance, materials acquisition, acquisition of expertise and weapons collection. Each of the videos provide specific examples of activities that the public should be on the look-out for and information on how to report suspicious activity.

With the oversight of OHS staff, Capital University film students wrote, directed and produced each of the eight videos as well as an extended training video during the spring semester of 2016. The Recognizing the 8 Signs of Terrorism video series has been released weekly on the OHS Facebook and Twitter pages and is posted on the OHS website at homelandsecurity.ohio.gov/signs-terrorism.

School Bomb Threats: There Are Consequences

In the past few years, bomb threats made to schools have been on the rise in Ohio, with each threat endangering the students and faculty, disrupting learning, and stretching the resources of police and rescue forces.

Ohio Homeland Security (OHS) and the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) have partnered to develop a short, informational video for students to help raise awareness of the consequences of making such threats and to encourage reporting of suspicious activity.

The video features students speaking with, and reminding the audience to report, any person or group of people making jokes or overhear someone suggesting the idea of making a bomb threat to proper authorities. In addition, it shares real life examples of students making threats, and the consequences that they faced.

The video has been released to all schools around the state.

Watch the video at saferschools.ohio.gov/content/k_12_schools.

Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles Expands Services, Provides More Options to Customers

This summer, the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) made additional strides to meet customers' needs by expanding services and providing more options to customers.

In May, BMV implemented a pilot program to extend service for driver license knowledge testing at nine deputy registrar offices.

“Our goal is to meet our customers’ needs where they are and not where we are,” said Don Petit, BMV Registrar. “By expanding services, we will allow for greater customer access to driver examination stations.”

The program allows customers to take the knowledge tests for driver license and motorcycle temporary permits in nine counties that don't have a driver exam station.

In June, the BMV began accepting credit cards as a payment option, after years of people requesting that as an option. Previously, only checks and cash had been accepted.

To learn more, visit bmv.ohio.gov.

PILOT LOCATIONS

Circleville - Pickaway County
Georgetown - Brown County
Kenton - Hardin County
McConnelsville - Morgan County
Millersburg - Holmes County
Pomeroy - Meigs County
Ottawa - Putnam County
Sandusky - Erie County
Steubenville - Jefferson County

Nathan Richeson, 29, was struck and killed by a distracted driver in 2014. His parents are fighting for change. The Ohio Department of Public Safety is partnering to spread their message.



In his memory, in his name, THINGS HAVE TO CHANGE.

Nathan Richeson of Granville, Ohio, was dedicated, hardworking and humble. He earned his pilot's license when he was 16 years old after a lifelong interest in flying. Years later, he graduated from Ohio University with a Bachelor of Arts in aviation and went on to serve in the Ohio Air National Guard. He was always at the top of his class.

His parents, Cathy and Doug, will tell you anything you'd like to know about their son. Nathan loved his family.

Nathan was struck and killed by a distracted driver on August 29, 2014. He was 29 years old.

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At any given moment during daylight hours, more than 600,000 drivers are using hand-held cell phones while driving, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Association (NHTSA). NHTSA also reports that nationwide in 2014, more than 3,000 people were killed in crashes involving distracted drivers.

The crash that killed Nathan Richeson happened just south of Interstate 70 east on the ramp to Interstate 77 south. He and his wife Alyssa had pulled off to the far right side of the highway to fix a flat tire while on a trip to West Virginia to celebrate their second wedding anniversary.

It was Labor Day weekend around 3:40 p.m., and traffic was bottlenecked. Cars slowed to about 45 mph while passing the couple's camper. Alyssa watched the traffic at Nathan's request while he changed the tire.

Meanwhile, a distracted driver was also headed south on Interstate 77. She wove in and out of the bottlenecked traffic at a speed around 80 mph. She was texting two people at the time.

She tried to pass a car, but she lost control and swerved right. Witnesses at the scene remember hearing a screech of tires and the sound of her car impacting Nathan's vehicle as she broadsided him, as he tried to leap out of the way. He was killed on impact.

The distracted driver accepted a plea for a vehicular homicide felony in the third degree.

A white cross on the side of the road on Interstate 77, at the site of the accident, bears this inscription:

Nathan Douglas Richeson
Captain
USAF Pilot
KC 135 Stratotanker
Birth – Sept. 20, 1984
Taken from us – Aug. 29, 2014
Loving Husband, Son, Brother, Uncle and Friend

Nathan received full military honors at his funeral, in a church filled with friends, family and members of the Ohio Air National Guard. A KC 135 – the plane he started out flying – now reads Capt. Nate Richeson below the pilot's window in his memory. The cross on the side of Interstate 77 serves as a reminder of his life and the dangers of distracted driving.

It's not enough.

"In his memory, in his name, things have to change," Cathy said.

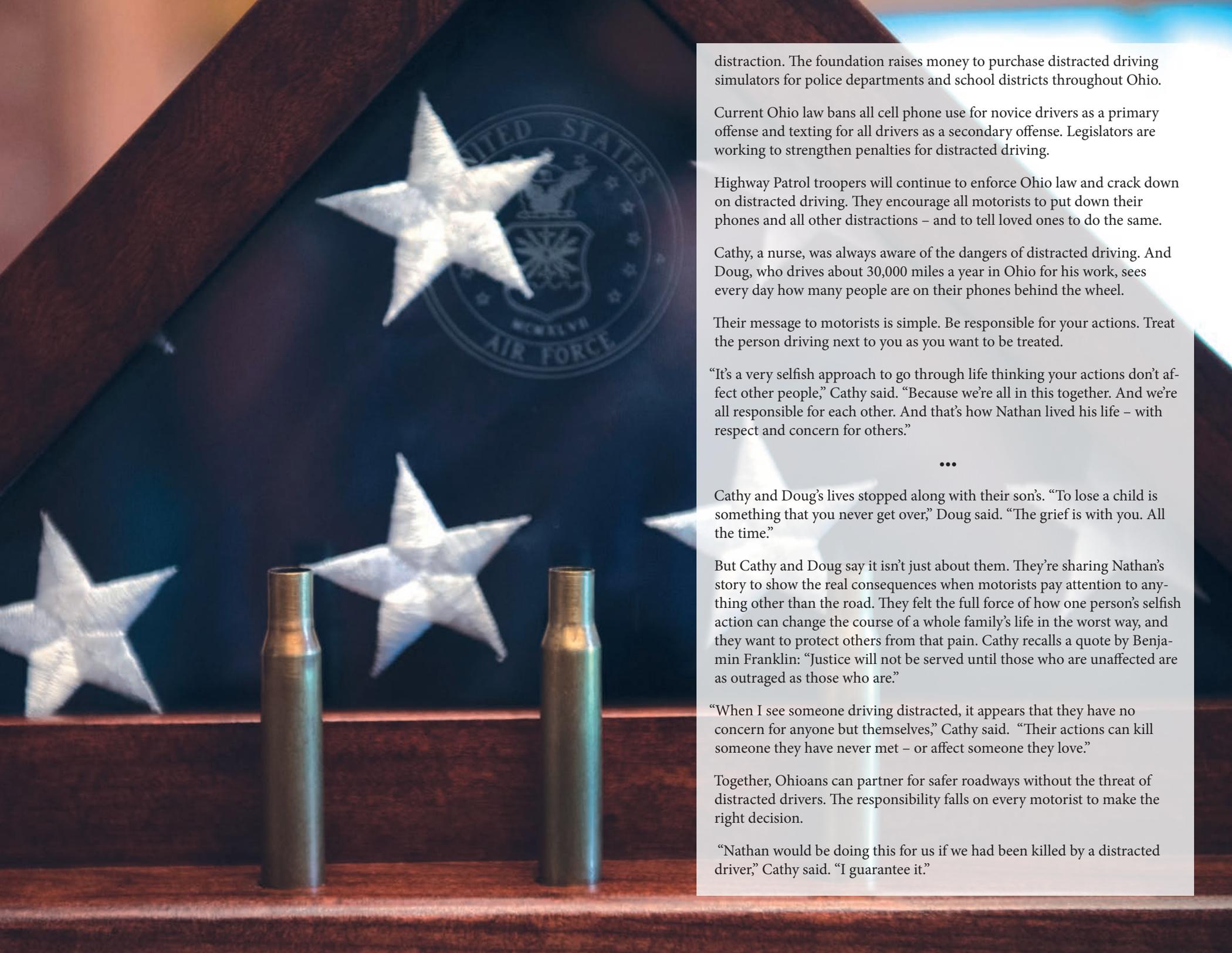
His parents thought about how much life Nathan had to live – that he wanted to serve his country, be a father and a Delta pilot. They thought about how outraged he would be – as we all should be – and would push for change.

This fall, the Ohio Department of Public Safety (ODPS) is partnering with the Ohio State Highway Patrol on an education campaign about distracted driving that involves Nathan's story. The message is shared by ODPS, troopers, and the Richesons: the decision to drive distracted cannot be tolerated.

The Richesons are standing with the Maria Tiberi Foundation, a campaign to end distracted driving started by Columbus news anchor Dom Tiberi and his wife Terri. Dom and Terri lost their daughter Maria to a car crash in 2013 caused by an unknown

A video of Nathan's story is available on the Ohio Department of Public Safety's YouTube ([youtube.com/OhioPublicSafety](https://www.youtube.com/OhioPublicSafety)) and on the Patrol's Facebook ([facebook.com/ohiostatehighwaypatrol](https://www.facebook.com/ohiostatehighwaypatrol)).

Facebook users can change their profile header to a photo supporting the cause by visiting publicsafety.ohio.gov/distracteddriving.



distraction. The foundation raises money to purchase distracted driving simulators for police departments and school districts throughout Ohio.

Current Ohio law bans all cell phone use for novice drivers as a primary offense and texting for all drivers as a secondary offense. Legislators are working to strengthen penalties for distracted driving.

Highway Patrol troopers will continue to enforce Ohio law and crack down on distracted driving. They encourage all motorists to put down their phones and all other distractions – and to tell loved ones to do the same.

Cathy, a nurse, was always aware of the dangers of distracted driving. And Doug, who drives about 30,000 miles a year in Ohio for his work, sees every day how many people are on their phones behind the wheel.

Their message to motorists is simple. Be responsible for your actions. Treat the person driving next to you as you want to be treated.

“It’s a very selfish approach to go through life thinking your actions don’t affect other people,” Cathy said. “Because we’re all in this together. And we’re all responsible for each other. And that’s how Nathan lived his life – with respect and concern for others.”

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Cathy and Doug’s lives stopped along with their son’s. “To lose a child is something that you never get over,” Doug said. “The grief is with you. All the time.”

But Cathy and Doug say it isn’t just about them. They’re sharing Nathan’s story to show the real consequences when motorists pay attention to anything other than the road. They felt the full force of how one person’s selfish action can change the course of a whole family’s life in the worst way, and they want to protect others from that pain. Cathy recalls a quote by Benjamin Franklin: “Justice will not be served until those who are unaffected are as outraged as those who are.”

“When I see someone driving distracted, it appears that they have no concern for anyone but themselves,” Cathy said. “Their actions can kill someone they have never met – or affect someone they love.”

Together, Ohioans can partner for safer roadways without the threat of distracted drivers. The responsibility falls on every motorist to make the right decision.

“Nathan would be doing this for us if we had been killed by a distracted driver,” Cathy said. “I guarantee it.”

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