

**LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION  
CO BI-WEEKLY REPORT  
12/1/2019 – 12/14/2019**

**DISTRICT 1**

During the beginning of the December archery season, Conservation Officer (CO) Anna Viau received a complaint from an individual who noticed boot tracks crossing his driveway. The boot tracks appeared to be following deer tracks and a blood trail. CO Viau and Corporal (Cpl.) Dave Painter responded to the residence. Cpl. Painter followed the trail to its origin at a nearby residence where there was corn spread over the ground in the backyard. CO Viau followed the trail for approximately a half mile, until the trail dwindled out. Cpl. Painter and CO Viau then made contact with the residents of the house where the trail started. The man admitted to shooting a deer the day before with his bow and to tracking the deer, but he and his wife were unable to locate the deer. When asked to produce the bow he had used, the man had to move several items out of the way of a closet door, in which the bow was hanging. Due to its inconvenient location, Cpl. Painter questioned the man further about what he used to shoot the deer. Eventually, the man confessed that he had used a crossbow, which is not legal to use in the December archery season in the UP. He was able to grab the crossbow from a convenient location in the house. The COs seized the crossbow and bolt, which still had deer hair on it. Charges are pending with the Iron County prosecutor.

CO Anna Viau received a complaint of a group of individuals road hunting and trespassing near the complainant's residence. Upon arrival to the scene, the suspects had moved up the road and appeared to be looking for something. As CO Viau spoke with the complainant, the suspect vehicle drove around CO Viau and continued toward the end of the dead-end road. CO Viau followed the vehicle until it arrived at a camp. Upon contacting the occupants of the vehicle, CO Viau discovered an unloaded and uncased muzzleloader in the front seat, and a loaded rifle in the backseat. The operator received a citation for the loaded rifle and a warning for the uncased muzzleloader.

CO Anna Viau was the closest officer to a medical call of an older gentleman experiencing chest pain. CO Viau arrived on scene to find the man conscious and breathing, but in a lot of pain. EMS arrived shortly, and CO Viau assisted in clearing a path through the snow and getting the man safely into the ambulance.

When a call from Iron County Dispatch came over the radio about a rollover accident, CO Anna Viau was the closest unit. When she arrived, CO Viau, along with the assistance of an Iron County deputy and a passersby, ensured that the passengers of the vehicle were ok and were safely able to get out of the vehicle. Thankfully, no one was injured, including the two small children in the car.

COs John Kamps and Ariel Young received information about an individual believed to have taken a deer without purchasing a deer license. The COs went and interviewed the individual who confessed to taking the deer without a license and borrowing his

brother's tag. After furthering questioning, it was also determined that he had harvested a deer and then bought tags after the fact. The antlers and crossbow used were seized. Charges are pending prosecutor review.

CO Ariel Young was out patrolling the lakes within her county when she stopped and checked some ice anglers on Hamilton Lake. Upon pulling into the parking lot, it was noted that there was a large group of people talking and then quickly dispersing and heading back to their shanties. CO Young made contact with the individuals and found a short Northern pike hidden in a bag near a shanty. Through further questioning, one of the subjects admitted to the fish being his and that he did not have a fishing license. The subject was also on the ice with a snowmobile that had expired registration and no helmet. CO Young issued a citation for the undersized pike and seized the fish and issued warnings for the snowmobile registration and no helmet.

COs Josh Boudreaux and Cody Smith participated in the 11<sup>th</sup> annual Marquette County "Shop with A Cop" event. There was a larger number of children in comparison to the previous year and both COs and children had a great time running around the store shopping for the children's families.

CO Josh Boudreaux assisted Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) Detective (Det.) Trey Luce with a complaint regarding individuals throwing construction debris into Lake Superior prior to incoming storms so that it would be washed away. CO Boudreaux followed up with the property owner shortly after he and Det. Luce examined the remnants scattered along the beach and was able to get a confession from the property owners who didn't believe they were doing anything wrong. The owners were simply trying to save a trip to the local landfill. A citation was issued for litter and the property owners were ordered to clean up their mess or face additional charges.

CO John Kamps followed up on a possible illegal deer that was reported. During the investigation, it was determined that the individual would commonly hunt and purchase his licenses after harvesting an animal. The subject was interviewed and proudly showed off his trophies including a very large 7-point buck from this rifle season, a 6-point from last year and a large turkey. The subject confessed to shooting all three of the animals and then purchasing the licenses afterward. The deer antlers and skulls were seized along with the rifle used to take them. CO Kamps has forwarded the information to the Marquette County prosecutor on the two illegal deer and the illegal turkey is being forwarded to the county in lower Michigan where it was taken.

CO John Kamps made contact with a deer hunter as he was walking out of the woods. The hunter stated that there was someone sitting on his bait pile with no hunter orange clothing. CO Kamps walked to the bait pile and found a hunter wrapped in a white bed sheet for snow camouflage. When the individual saw the CO, he started looking frantically through his belongings for an orange hat. A citation was issued for hunting without hunter orange clothing. The hunter was questioned why he was hunting on somebody else's deer bait and reminded about hunter ethics.

CO Jenni Hanson was out of service when the Gogebic County Recreation deputy requested her assistance with the search and rescue of a lost snowmobiler in Wakefield Township. The lone male subject from Iowa had traveled down a closed trail and became stuck in the ungroomed snow. CO Hanson and Gogebic County Deputy Jesse Yesney were able to travel backcountry with their patrol sleds to locate the subject and bring him and his snowmobile back to the proper trail.

COs Jenni Hanson and Anna Viau followed up on a Report All Poaching (RAP) complaint regarding an individual hunting after dark in Iron County. The COs met with and interviewed the suspect at his place of residence. While there they observed his harvested deer as well as a doe supposedly shot by his friend. After a thorough interview, it was determined that the doe was shot by one individual but tagged with another individual's tag. COs Hanson and Viau seized the deer and interviewed the other suspects who both admitted that the deer was illegally shot. A warrant was requested through the Iron County Prosecutor's Office for the improper use of the tags.

CO Doug Hermanson conducted investigations on deer that appeared to have been tagged illegally during the firearm deer season. CO Hermanson interviewed multiple subjects and was able to obtain confessions for an antler point tagging violation along with two subjects who used tags purchased by another person. Charges have been requested with the Houghton County Prosecutor's Office for the three subjects.

## **DISTRICT 2**

Acting Sgt. Rob Freeborn, COs Mike Evink, and Chris Lynch attended the annual "Christmas with a Cop" program in Manistique. Local law enforcement officers from various agencies are paired with less fortunate children from the area. The day consists of going to breakfast, shopping at local businesses, followed by the kids watching a movie and the officers wrapping presents from the day's shopping. The children bring their wrapped presents home and wait for Christmas Day.

CO Steve Butzin received information from a Delta County Sheriff's deputy of an individual who may have shot a deer out of season. While the deputy was attempting to serve a warrant on the individual, he heard a shot behind the residence. The deputy notified CO Butzin of what happened, and that the individual claimed he shot at a coyote. CO Butzin arrived at the residence shortly after the deputy left. The individual was found to be tracking the alleged coyote. Upon further investigation, CO Butzin found a bedded down doe that was covered in blood. The doe got up and ran into the woods. CO Butzin interviewed the individual who later confessed to shooting at the doe with a .308-caliber firearm during muzzleloader season. After a few hours had passed, COs Butzin and Andrea Dani tracked the doe to a location where it was found dead on another individual's property. The location where the individual had shot the deer was only a few yards from the property line. The individual also did not have a license for an antlerless deer. The firearm and the doe were seized from the individual. The individual was able to post bond for his warrant. The doe was donated to a local family in need. A report has been filed with the Delta County Prosecutor's Office.

COs Andrea Dani and Mark Zitnik received a tip of an individual hunting after December 1 with a crossbow in Alger County. The COs patrolled on snowmobiles, located the hunter's snowmobile tracks, followed them to a snowmobile that was not registered and did not have a trail permit. After locating the snowmobile, the COs set off on foot to locate the hunter. Several minutes later they located a blind with the hunter in it who was letting his son use a crossbow to shoot a deer. Charges for hunting after December 1 with a crossbow, no snowmobile trail permit and registration are being submitted to the Alger County Prosecutor's Office.

CO Mike Olesen was first on scene of a two-car accident that occurred in Chippewa County. CO Olesen checked the condition of the occupants and then provided traffic control until the vehicles were removed from the roadway.

CO Mike Olesen conducted a taxidermy inspection and located a suspicious set of antlers from 2018. The deer license that was attached to the antlers was purchased after legal shooting hours had ended but was validated for the same day the license was purchased. After a short interview, the suspect confessed to CO Olesen that he had shot the 8-point buck and then purchased his deer license after the fact. The antlers and firearm used were seized as evidence and a report is being submitted to the Mackinac County Prosecutor for review for taking a deer without a license.

COs Colton Gelinas and Todd Sumbera conducted an illegal deer interview in Mackinac County. CO Gelinas received an anonymous tip reference a deer being killed without a valid license. COs Gelinas and Sumbera contacted the hunter who admitted to killing the deer and buying a license after the fact. Charges are being sought for taking a deer without a license through the Mackinac County Prosecutor.

CO Todd Sumbera conducted a deer processing facility inspection and located a suspiciously tagged 8-point buck. CO Sumbera contacted the shooter of the deer in question. When asked, the subject told the entire story of the hunt. The deer was harvested in early morning without a deer license and, after the hunt, the subject went to the store to purchase their deer license. The 8-point rack and firearm were seized, and a report will be submitted to the Chippewa County Prosecutor's Office for taking a deer without a license.

CO Cole VanOosten assisted the Luce County Sheriff's Department with a domestic assault in progress. CO VanOosten and the Luce County deputy arrived on scene at the same time and separated the individuals involved. The aggressor was lodged in the county jail by the deputy.

CO Cole VanOosten gave a presentation at a wild game dinner at a local church. CO VanOosten answered questions for the public as well as brought in a fur kit to show kids and adults the different species we have in Michigan.

### **DISTRICT 3**

An investigation by CO Andrea Albert of a hunter who was trespassing and fatally shot another hunter the opening day of last year's deer season has come to an end after a three-day jury trial. The defendant was found guilty of involuntary manslaughter (a 15-year felony), committing a felony while in possession of a firearm (a two-year felony), and of misdemeanor trespass. In the early afternoon of opening day of the 2018 deer season, the defendant trespassed onto the victim's family's land and took a reactionary shot at what he believed was a deer getting up from a bed. The defendant shot the victim while the victim was bent over and in the process of gutting a legally taken deer he had shot and tagged earlier that morning. Both hunters were wearing hunter orange. CO Albert was assisted by CO Andrea Erratt, the Antrim County Sheriff's Department and the Michigan State Police (MSP).

CO Tim Rosochacki followed up on a deer discovered at a local processor where it appeared that a subject purchased a license after harvesting an 8-point buck. CO Rosochacki contacted the hunter and quickly obtained a confession from the hunter. He stated that he did not expect to see any deer and did not have time to purchase a license before going hunting. The case has been sent to the Emmet County Prosecutor's Office for review.

CO Tom Oberg assisted the Gaylord Police Department along with MSP troopers and Otsego County Sheriff's Department in the search of a suspect who stole multiple items from Wal-Mart and left without paying. A Gaylord Police Department unit spotted the suspect vehicle and tried to initiate a traffic stop when the suspect fled. After a short pursuit, the suspect crashed his vehicle and fled off into the woods on foot. CO Oberg was just down the road when the call came over the radio. CO Oberg assisted the responding units in setting a perimeter on the section of woods in which the suspect fled. After approximately an hour, the suspect was located by an MSP K9 unit. The suspect was taken into custody and lodged at the Otsego County jail.

COs Tom Oberg, Kyle Cherry, and Sgt. Mark DePew participated in the annual "Shop with A Cop" event at Wal-Mart in Gaylord along with the Otsego County Sheriff's Department, MSP Gaylord Post, and Gaylord Police Department. Many children were in attendance who were individually paired up with an officer. The children were able to get their picture taken with Santa and then were able to shop throughout the store and pick out the gifts they wanted. Fun was had by all.

COs Sidney Collins and Jessie Curtis attended the "Shop with A Hero" event in Alpena. Kids from both Montmorency and Alpena Counties were in attendance. The COs as well as the other local law enforcement and first responders assisted the children from the community with shopping for themselves and family members for Christmas. The children were all provided gift cards donated by Meijer.

#### **DISTRICT 4**

CO William Haskin received complaints of two individuals shooting a deer from a vehicle with a crossbow. CO Haskin contacted both individuals and found that one of

them had been purchasing resident tags as a nonresident and just a few years ago was getting free tags as a disabled veteran. Charges pending Wexford County Prosecutor.

CO Amanda McCurdy was on patrol when a Leelanau County Sheriff's Department complaint came of a woman who drove her vehicle into a pond and was trapped inside the partially submerged vehicle. CO McCurdy was the first law enforcement on scene and worked with the Elmwood Township Fire Department to stabilize the vehicle to prevent it from fully submerging in the pond. Once the vehicle was secured as best as possible, CO McCurdy prepared for the possibility of having to conduct an underwater vehicle extraction, while members of the fire department equipped themselves with insulated, waterproof suits. The fire department was able to successfully free the woman from her vehicle. CO McCurdy worked alongside the Leelanau County Sheriff's Department and Tribal Police Department to pull all subjects from the water. The woman was then transported to the hospital for medical treatment.

COs Patrick McManus and Amanda McCurdy attended the annual snowmobile safety class at Hilltoppers Snowmobile Club in Cedar. This class consisted of approximately 30 students who earned their snowmobile safety card at the conclusion of the class. COs gave a speech about the primary safety concerns and laws associated with snowmobiling and answered questions from the class. This event afforded COs the opportunity to educate youth and provide a positive impact on their learning experience.

COs Josiah Killingbeck and Ryan Andrews contacted a subject who had shot two 8-point bucks. CO Killingbeck had located the deer at a processor and identified a tagging violation. COs Killingbeck and Andrews interviewed the hunter and determined that the hunter had been hunting without a license and shot both deer without a license. The subject admitted to later purchasing tags and normally never purchases hunting licenses prior to hunting. The subject advised the COs that a family member had also shot several deer, which the COs determined there was questionable license purchases with these deer as well. The COs contacted the family member and determined that the subject had purchased a single deer license and legally shot a deer. The subject then purchased a combination deer license, which is illegal, and shot another deer. CO Killingbeck then learned of another subject hunting the property who had been hunting without a license. CO Killingbeck interviewed the subject on the phone and obtained a confession to hunting without a license. Numerous charges are being sought through the Mecosta County Prosecutor's Office.

CO Jeff Ginn was contacted by Newaygo County 911. They had lost a 911 call for assistance and were unable to ping the caller or recontact them due to poor cellular service. Based on the limited information provided before losing the call, CO Ginn went to where he believed the subjects were located. The information was limited but the caller indicated they were stuck up to the hood of their truck in water. CO Ginn responded to where he believed the men were located and had to walk beyond several nearly impassible mud holes. CO Ginn located the stuck vehicle and the two men. One man had to leave the vehicle to locate a cellular signal. This required him to walk through waist deep water in below freezing temperatures. The second man stayed in

the cab of the partially submerged vehicle. A wrecker removed the vehicle. The freezing cold man waited in CO Ginn's patrol vehicle to warm up. The vehicle was removed from being stuck and everyone made it home safely.

CO Jeff Ginn is attempting to locate the owner of an abandoned boat which was located on Croton Pond. If you are missing a boat or know of someone who is missing a boat and can identify it, please call the report all poaching hotline: 1-800-292-7800.

CO Mike Wells received information in late September regarding a property owner who discovered a trail camera picture of a subject trespassing on August 31 on his property. The subject was carrying a shotgun and not displaying the required hunter orange. After canvassing the area several times, CO Wells was not able to identify the subject. The photograph was displayed on social media and within a week, the subject in the photograph called in and admitted it was him. Contact was made with the subject and it was discovered that he was squirrel hunting, but did not have a base license, nor had he taken a hunter safety class. Due to the subject turning himself in, a warning was issued for the trespass at the request of the property owner. A report will be submitted to the prosecutor's office regarding the other violations present.

CO Josh Reed was conducting mobile patrol near the Little Muskegon River kayak launch. An older model Dodge Dakota passed the patrol truck with an unusually loud exhaust. The plate on the truck was run and came back to a passenger car. A traffic stop was conducted, and it was found that the plate was improper, and the truck had no insurance. The driver of the truck also had a felony warrant out of Mecosta County for controlled substance. The driver was arrested on the warrant and the truck impounded. During the inventory, a black makeup style bag was located with a small clear baggie inside containing an unknown substance. The items were collected and transported to the MSP laboratory for further analysis.

## **DISTRICT 5**

CO John Huspen checked on a private property baiting complaint on opening day of the muzzleloader season in Crawford County. CO Huspen located an elevated blind looking over a large pile of sugar beets, with a single set of fresh tracks leading to the ladder for the blind. There was an antlerless deer on the bait pile as CO Huspen approached. After several minutes, the deer ran off and CO Huspen knocked on the ladder and advised the hunter to come down. CO Huspen could hear the subject moving in the elevated blind when the subject yelled, "What did you say?" CO Huspen again announced, "Conservation officer, I need you to come down." The subject yelled "hold on" as a loud boom came from the blind. The hunter yelled, "my gun just went off!" CO Huspen began going up the ladder while asking the subject if he was okay. CO Huspen was about halfway up the ladder when the subject opened the door to exclaim he was sorry and was all right. CO Huspen asked the hunter what happened. The hunter stated I just bumped the gun to move it when it went off. The muzzleloader had no safety and the subject was sitting with the hammer cocked. The subject was not wearing any hunter orange and upon request could not produce a deer hunting license. Upon further

investigation it was determined the subject was hunting with no unused kill-tags because he had filled both tags earlier in the archery season. As CO Huspen and the subject walked to his residence, the subject stated not only did he screw up hunting, but he couldn't believe he shot a hole in his blind. The subject was not harmed when the gun fired. He was cited for hunting without a license and failure to wear hunter orange.

CO Charlie Jones was asked by MSP troopers to assist in locating an absconder suspect in Kalkaska County with multiple felony warrants. Multiple attempts were made throughout the county without success. The last attempt to locate the absconder was at a residence in Kalkaska County. With consent from the homeowner, the house was searched and produced the suspect hiding under a bed. The suspect was taken into custody. While on scene a second male subject gave a false name. It was determined the second male subject also had multiple felony warrants out of the Flint area. Both subjects were taken into custody.

COs Mike Hearn and Jeremy Cantrell instructed at a snowmobile safety course in Kalkaska County. The COs were assisted in instruction by the Kalkaska County Sheriff Department. Facilities and food were donated free of charge to the students by the Kalkaska County Snowmobile Association. All participants successfully completed the 8-hour course. Later in the week, CO Hearn presented the Snowmobile Association with a framed glass photo and thank you card as recognition during their December meeting.

COs Brad Bellville, James Garrett, Kyle Bader, Jeremy Cantrell, Craig Neal, Josh Russell, Charlie Jones, and Lt. Brandon Kieft participated in "Shop with a Hero" events across the Roscommon District. The events provided Christmas presents for hundreds of under-privileged kids.

## **DISTRICT 6**

CO Jill Miller attended the 18th annual Project Blue Light. Project Blue Light is a service to remember those police officers that have given the ultimate sacrifice and to honor those still serving to protect us every day.

CO Joe Myers received information regarding possible trespassers sneaking in from state forest lands. CO Myers traversed the private property looking for sign of trespassing activity and located several places where trespassing could occur from the adjacent public land. After over three hours of tracking, the CO was finally able to locate where three trespassers were crossing a large ditch and tracked the three hunters across 620 acres to the private property. The CO was able to sneak up on all three hunters individually without the others knowing. The hunters were found not wearing hunter orange and were trespassing on the private property. One hunter's shotgun shells matched the shotgun shells of the older shells the CO had located while tracking the suspects. After interviewing the suspects, it was determined that multiple deer were taken on the private land without permission. Charges are being sought via warrant request.

CO Adam Beuthin was working with a Federal Wildlife Officer on a trespassing complaint in Saginaw County. They received a complaint that someone had trespassed onto the Shiawassee River Wildlife Refuge after shooting a deer from the neighboring private property. The hunter failed to obtain a permit to retrieve the deer and entered the refuge. When the officers arrived at the private property where the deer was shot, they observed a bait pile near the hunter's blind. After finding where the deer was originally shot and tracking it onto the federal refuge, it was determined that the deer was taken illegally. Not only did the shooter trespass in the refuge, but he was also trespassing on the property where he shot the deer. A warrant has been requested for baiting and taking a deer over bait. The hunter is also facing federal charges for trespassing in the federal refuge.

CO Adam Beuthin was on patrol in Saginaw County when he observed the vehicle in front of him swerving and crossing the center line and fog line. The CO conducted a traffic stop. While asking the driver for his paperwork, the CO could immediately smell intoxicants. After failing the road-side sobriety tests, the driver was placed under arrest for operating while intoxicated and was lodged in the county jail.

CO Mike Haas came across a hunter that had harvested an antlerless deer in western Isabella County. When looking into the hunter's license purchases, it was discovered that the hunter did not have a valid tag for the deer. CO Haas interviewed the gentleman that shot the doe and he admitted to shooting the deer, calling a family member to purchase a license for him, and then tagging the deer with the family member's tag. Charges are pending with the Isabella County Prosecutor's Office to address taking the deer without a license, using a license of another, and loaning a license to another.

COs Mike Haas and Dan Robinson responded to a Report All Poaching (RAP) complaint in western Gratiot County. The complainant had claimed he heard a rifle shot after dark and then witnessed two individuals shining flashlights into a field near a freshly shot deer. When the complainant approached the gentlemen in the field, they retreated to their vehicle and sped away. The complainant was able to get a good description of the vehicle and provided the information to the RAP line. The following morning the complainant was driving to work, and he noticed the suspect vehicle in a driveway a couple of miles away from where the incident occurred the previous night. The complainant was able to provide an address and license plate number to the RAP line which gave the COs the likely suspect. The COs interviewed two individuals at the residence who admitted to driving the car the previous night, but they stated they were looking for their lost dog. After splitting up the individuals and interviewing them separately, there were some notable inconsistencies with their stories. Eventually one of the suspects admitted to driving around with his loaded muzzleloader while the other suspect drank alcohol and looked for deer. They located a herd of deer and the passenger in the vehicle admitted to shooting one of the antlerless deer that was standing closest to the road. The suspect was arrested for an outstanding warrant out of Ionia County and transported to jail. The man expressed his remorse while at the jail stating that he screwed up again and was supposed to be getting his hunting privileges

back in 2020 due to past, multiple Department of Natural Resources (DNR) violations. Various charges are pending for both suspects to address a loaded/uncased firearm in a motor vehicle, taking game from a motor vehicle, taking deer without a license, taking deer outside of legal hours, and recreational trespassing.

CO Dan Robinson received a complaint in Montcalm County of a subject who was flying his drone in a manner that interfered with two different hunters. Statements were taken from the complainants and the suspect was contacted. The suspect admitted to flying the drone but was in violation of several rules regarding the use and flight of the drone. Several warnings were given to the subject for his actions. The following week CO Robinson received another report of the subject flying the drone within 50-yards of the hunter again. The suspect was contacted and had again violated the Federal Aviation Administration rules regarding the flights as well as harassing individuals in the act of hunting. Charges will be sought through the county prosecutor's office.

## **DISTRICT 7**

CO Zach Bauer was on patrol when he located a hunter leaving his hunting location in his vehicle. CO Bauer contacted the hunter who was unable to produce any Michigan hunting license for 2019. Further investigation revealed that the hunter had a loaded muzzleloader with a cap on it in his vehicle. A citation was issued for the firearm violation.

CO Travis Dragomer responded to a complaint of a group of waterfowl hunters who were allegedly shooting ducks while motoring around a Van Buren County Lake. CO Dragomer observed the hunters motoring around the lake but did not witness them shooting. CO Dragomer contacted the hunters when they came into the boat launch. The hunters possessed eleven ducks and one of the hunters did not have a waterfowl license or a Federal Duck Stamp in his possession. CO Dragomer issued the hunter a citation for possessing waterfowl without having in his possession a Federal Duck Stamp.

CO Kyle McQueer received a complaint on opening day of firearm deer season of an individual who had shot three antlered deer in one season; a 10-point, an 8-point and a 7-point. After receiving the complaint, CO McQueer went to the individual's residence. After interviewing the subject and getting consent to search the property, CO McQueer found no evidence of an over-limit of antlered deer. A week passed by and CO McQueer gathered more information on the individual who had allegedly shot three antlered deer. COs McQueer and Nick Wellman went to re-interview the subject after CO McQueer had more information. After a lengthy interview, the subject confessed to shooting two antlered deer during bow season without first purchasing deer hunting licenses and then shot a third buck on opening day with his firearm. Charges are being sought through the St. Joseph County Prosecutor's Office.

CO Casey Varriale received a trespassing complaint in the city of Wyoming in Kent County. Upon arrival, CO Varriale found a tree stand and several traps belonging to the

suspect. CO Varriale inspected the traps and all six traps were untagged. CO Varriale noted that one of the traps was on a neighbor's property. Lastly, one of the conibear traps was measured to only be 30 inches off the ground. The law states a conibear trap on private land exceeding 7.5 inches must be four feet off the ground. The suspect was cited for untagged traps and not meeting requirements for the conibear trap. He was also told to remove all traps that were located on adjacent properties.

CO Justin Ulberg investigated a complaint of a horse barn being hit by a hunter's bullet during the firearm deer season. CO Ulberg responded to the complainant's barn and observed two holes going through hard wood boards. It then appeared that the bullet hit a 4-by-4 post in the barn. CO Ivan Perez was contacted and assisted in locating the spent bullet using a metal detector. During the investigation it was determined that a neighbor shot at deer as they ran past the horse barn, missed the deer, and the bullet hit the barn. A report will be submitted to the county prosecutor for the violation.

COs Anna Cullen, Jackie Miskovich, and other district COs assisted in the execution of a search warrant in Muskegon County. The search warrant was successful in recovering an 8-point whitetail buck, along with other evidence related to illegal hunting activity. Charges are currently being filed with the Muskegon County Prosecutor based on the evidence obtained.

CO Jackie Miskovich received notification about a dog tracker going to track for a hunter. When CO Miskovich was getting all the information, Station 20 informed her that the hunter had bought his deer tags mid-morning. Thinking this was suspicious, CO Miskovich headed to the location. The hunter and tracker came back after not being able to locate the deer that the hunter had attempted to take. During questioning of the hunter, they admitted to attempting to take the deer and that he did not have tags at the time of take. After informing the hunter what was going to happen next, a report was written, and charges were submitted to Ottawa County and are pending authorization.

While on patrol in Muskegon County, CO Jackie Miskovich had been seeing snowmobile tracks in the state game areas which are closed to snowmobiles. As CO Miskovich was heading home for the day, she noticed a snowmobile coming towards her that was riding on the side of the road. CO Miskovich followed the snowmobile and noticed that the running taillight was not working, and a stop was initiated. After stopping and talking with the individual, CO Miskovich noticed that there was not a trail sticker and the registration was expired on the snowmobile. A citation was issued.

CO Jackie Miskovich received a complaint for a hunter that had been baiting in Ottawa County. Upon surveying the area in question, CO Miskovich noticed a tree stand in a backyard and decided to contact the residents of the house. The resident gave permission for CO Miskovich to go out back and look around for any possible bait. While back by the tree stand, CO Miskovich observed a copious amount of sugar beets and carrots spread out on the ground in front of the tree stand. Walking back to the house, another resident came out who identified as the one who has been hunting. CO Miskovich questioned the individual and it was found that he had shot a deer over the

bait in October, he knew that baiting was illegal, and the individual still decided to bait. CO Miskovich confiscated the processed meat and submitted charges.

CO Carter Woodwyk received a complaint of subjects baiting deer in Allegan County early in the November firearm deer season and possibly trespassing. The location was checked multiple times throughout the season, but no hunters were located. After the season ended, CO Woodwyk stopped by the suspect's house to interview him. During the interview, CO Woodwyk discovered and received confessions to three separate illegally harvested deer. All three deer were illegally harvested in different fashions by three different hunters. All the deer meat was seized as evidence and charges are pending against all three suspects with the Allegan County Prosecutor's Office.

CO Carter Woodwyk was patrolling Allegan County when he observed two vehicles parked in a state game area parking lot getting ready to leave. The CO contacted the subjects in the vehicles to see if they had any luck with their evening muzzleloader hunt. One subject stated he harvested a doe. When the CO checked the doe for a tag, one could not be found. The subject who harvested the deer stated he did not have any way to attach the tag to the deer. After the CO wrote a citation for failing to immediately attach and/or validate a kill tag for the deer, the suspect was able to get the tag on the deer and legally transport it back to his residence.

CO Richard Cardenas was patrolling Barry County and observed waterfowl hunters hunting on Jordan Lake from a boat. CO Cardenas launched his patrol kayak and contacted the hunters on the lake. It was found that the hunters did not possess any personal floatation devices. Enforcement action was taken.

## **DISTRICT 8**

COs Jim Nason and Nick Wellman participated in "Shop with a Cop" in Branch County. The COs along with other local law enforcement were assigned and were responsible for a child that came from a household that had been through some recent hardships. The COs assisted the kids in shopping for not only themselves, but also their closest loved ones. The kids were given a \$100 gift card to shop for family and to also pick out one gift to donate to the "Toys for Tots" foundation. There were roughly 27 kids that were involved, and it was a great success.

CO Edward Rice assisted the Hillsdale County Sheriff's Office with a report of a suicidal person in the middle of an intersection with a handgun. CO Rice arrived on scene along with a sheriff's deputy and began talking to the man who found his wife cheating on him. CO Rice and the deputy began establishing a rapport with the man before safely approaching the man eventually getting the man on the ground and into custody without incident. A knife was located on the man, but no gun. The man was transported to a local hospital for further observation.

CO Larn R. Strawn investigated a complaint of a safety zone violation that occurred on the opening day of deer season. While responding to the initial complaint, CO Strawn

discovered the suspect trespassed and shot a trophy class 8-point buck. CO Strawn ultimately identified a suspect after a lengthy follow-up investigation that included research and data searches by Station 20 dispatchers and a follow-up interview in the city of Jackson by CO Shane Webster. CO Strawn ultimately tracked the suspect to an apartment in St. Johns. CO Strawn arrested the suspect for an outstanding warrant from a previous deer tagging violation and Driving While License Suspended offense. CO Strawn transported the arrestee to the Gratiot County Jail for fingerprinting and booking on the warrant. CO Strawn is seeking charges through the Clinton County Prosecutor.

CO Todd Thorn was on patrol and checking a dead-end road in a portion of the Dansville State Game Area. CO Thorn found two bags of garbage and went through them, finding a name and address. CO Thorn went to that address and saw an untagged deer with a bullet hole in its neck hanging beside the house. CO Thorn was not able to locate the person responsible for the garbage but got a confession from a resident that he shot the deer without having a license. A warrant request will be submitted to the local prosecutor's office.

COs Katie Stawara, Larn Strawn, and Sgt. Richard Nickols investigated a RAP complaint regarding four untagged deer hanging in a suspect's barn. Immediately upon her arrival to the residence, CO Stawara could see a deer hanging in the barn through an open service door. Unable to contact the suspect, a search warrant was drafted and served. The investigation resulted in three antlerless deer, an 8-point buck, and an unregistered handgun. All deer were untagged, and the meat had spoiled. A follow up interview resulted in the deer having been shot by two friends of the suspect, neither had licenses for the deer. A complaint warrant is being submitted for the deer, handgun, and animal cruelty conditions observed during their search.

CO Katie Stawara assisted Shiawassee Animal Control in the seizure of 22 chickens and three rabbits discovered to be living in uninhabitable conditions during a search warrant execution. The chickens were relocated to a local farmstead and the rabbits were taken to the Shiawassee Humane Society for adoption. Charges are being sought in addition to an unlawfully taken deer.

## **DISTRICT 9**

CO Nicholas Ingersoll responded to a call from Monroe County Central Dispatch of two parole officers being shot at through a door during a parole check. Both parole officers were able to retreat and contact dispatch without injuries. The suspect in the residence shot at the parole officer because they received threats from an individual on Facebook. CO Ingersoll, the Monroe County Sheriff's Department, and Michigan State Police (MSP) responded to the residence. CO Ingersoll along with the MSP and Monroe County Sheriff's Department set up a perimeter around the residence. The suspect that shot through the door and one female were taken into custody without incident by the Monroe County Sheriff's Department. Units on scene were advised that there was one more male in the residence with two children. It was advised that the individual still in the residence had mental health issues and was going to be cooperative when called

out of the residence. CO Ingersoll and a Monroe County Sheriff's deputy observed one male behind the residence, preparing to cut wood. CO Ingersoll and the deputy were able to remove the individual from the potentially unsafe situation and escort him outside the perimeter that was being set up. CO Ingersoll and an MSP sergeant set up, overlooking the rear of the residence securing the back door along with several other officers securing the perimeter. The officer on scene waited for the Monroe County Sheriff's Department Special Response Unit to arrive. Monroe County Sheriff's Department Special Response Team was able to call the suspect in the residence out using their bear cat without incident. The suspect was taken into custody by the Monroe County Sheriff's Department. Currently this is an ongoing investigation.

CO Nicholas Ingersoll received a complaint of an individual shooting a doe and a buck on December 14 with a muzzleloader. CO Ingersoll ran the individual's license history and it was determined that the hunter did not have an antlerless deer tag. CO Ingersoll responded to the residence where he spoke with the hunter who stated that he shot a doe and an 8-point earlier that morning on December 14. CO Ingersoll asked if he had properly tagged both deer taken, and the hunter stated he tagged the 8-point with his restricted tag and used his regular tag on the doe. CO Ingersoll asked to see the doe, and the hunter was able to produce two hind quarters and both back straps that were in his freezer. The hunter pulled out his regular tag, which was not validated and was sitting on the bag holding the deer meat. CO Ingersoll advised the hunter he was not supposed to shoot a doe with a muzzleloader in Monroe County without an antlerless permit. CO Ingersoll confiscated the deer meat and will be seeking charges through the Monroe County Prosecutor for taking an antlerless deer without a hunting license.

CO David Schaumburger received an anonymous complaint of a pair of anglers taking an over-limit of walleye that had just left a boat launch. The complainant was able to describe the type of vehicle being driven as well as the vessel being pulled. The CO was only a couple miles away and made haste to the launch. CO Schaumburger contacted Sgt. Owens who was also a few miles away from the complainant from the opposite direction of CO Schaumburger. The CO did not intercept the anglers, so he drove the route back to one of the angler's houses as the complainant provided a license plate. CO Schaumburger and Sgt. Owens found the vehicle traveling down the highway and found probable cause to stop the vehicle. After talking to the occupant, CO Schaumburger received consent to search the boat and found 12 walleyes in the live well. The next compartment CO Schaumburger opened contained 26 additional walleyes. The angler admitted he had a problem taking too many walleyes and that he was indeed selling fish to his friends.

CO Keven Luther participated in an invasive species hearing at the 42-2 District Court New Baltimore within Macomb County. The accused individual pled not guilty. The accused individual and CO Luther both testified to the possession of Gobies, a prohibited live invasive species. The 42-2 District Court Magistrate found the accused responsible.

CO Brandon Vacek received a RAP complaint for a subject in Monroe County who was live trapping squirrels and not checking the traps every 24 hours, as required by law. CO Vacek went to the suspect's home for an interview. The suspect told CO Vacek the squirrels were destroying a garden and bird feeders behind the residence. The suspect assured CO Vacek all the squirrels caught were released healthy in nearby woods. Before CO Vacek left the residence, he was given consent to search the suspect's garage. Inside the garage was a recently deceased squirrel in the suspect's live trap cage. CO Vacek issued the subject a citation for use and possession of an untagged trap and gave a verbal warning for failure to check a live trap every 24 hours. CO Vacek also educated the subject about trapping laws and suggested some ways to prevent squirrels from damaging property in the future.

CO Bobby Watson responded to a complaint of waterfowl hunters shooting under power near the Blue Water Bridge. CO Watson was able to arrive just as the suspects were packing up their gear to head back in. CO Watson watched the hunters finish packing up, then slowly start motoring north, appearing to be looking around for birds. Eventually the two hunters were seen shouldering their shotguns and firing multiple times at birds that they had scared up, while still motoring forward. The hunters were contacted by CO Watson once they returned to the boat launch and a citation was issued for shooting while under power.

CO Bobby Watson was patrolling down a back road when he observed a hunter walking through a field with camouflage clothing, an orange cap on, and what appeared to be a rifle. Firearm deer season had recently ended, and muzzleloader season had not yet begun. CO Watson continued watching as the hunter then climbed into a tree stand. CO Watson approached the hunter in the tree stand, who when asked what he was doing, stated, "deer hunting." CO Watson then discovered the man had not taken hunter safety. A citation was issued for hunting with a firearm outside of firearm season.

CO Bobby Watson followed up on an old complaint and interviewed a subject who had allegedly purchased his deer combination tag after shooting his buck first. CO Watson obtained a confession from the hunter and the hunter stated he had screwed up and admitted responsibility. A report will be submitted to the prosecutor for further review.

CO Breanna Reed was checking hunters off St. Johns Marsh when a duck hunter came into the boat launch. When the hunter parked his boat, CO Reed witnessed him unload his firearm. CO Reed asked the hunter if he had any luck, he stated that he did not see a single duck. The CO asked the hunter how many years he had been hunting. The hunter stated that he had been hunting for around five years. At this time CO Reed asked the hunter why his gun was loaded while he was under power. The hunter stated that he did not know that he could not have it loaded at that time. CO Reed also noticed that the hunter did not have a life jacket on board and had no registration on the boat. The hunter explained to the CO that he knew he had to have a Personal Flotation Device (PFD) but had forgotten it and he also stated that he had gotten the boat not too long ago and had not gotten around to getting it registered. A citation was issued for failure to provide a PFD.

COs Breanna Reed and Brad Silorey were on patrol in St. Clair County. While doing surveillance, the COs witnessed two hunters walk into the wildlife refuge and shoot at a pheasant. The COs contacted the hunters who stated that they did not know that they could not hunt in the refuge. CO Silorey asked the hunters if they saw all the signs around them stating "Do Not Enter" and "No Hunting until the end of Waterfowl Season." The hunters admitting to seeing the signs and choosing to hunt anyway. Warnings were given for having a loaded firearm on the dikes and for not having their hunting license in their possession. A citation was issued for Hunting in a Wildlife Refuge.

Sgt. Chris Maher and CO Raymond Gardner were following up on a baiting complaint when they witnessed two suspects climb into an elevated hunting blind. CO Gardner checked the property the day prior and knew the area was heavily baited. Sgt. Maher and CO Gardner then proceeded to contact the suspects, who ended up being a father and son. The father admitted to using corn and sugar beets as bait so his son could get a deer. Both suspects had deer licenses, but the son had a mentored youth deer license but was past the age limit for that license. CO Gardner issued the father a citation for using bait while hunting deer, gave him a warning for not purchasing the proper licenses for his son, and confiscated the son's mentored youth deer and turkey kill tags.

Sgt. Chris Maher and COs Kris Kiel, Brad Silorey, and Breanna Reed participated in the annual "Shop with A Cop," sponsored by the Richmond Police Officer's Association. The COs helped children from families in need shop for Christmas gifts with generous donations from various individuals, businesses, and organizations within the Richmond community.

CO Joseph Deppen was on wildlife patrol when he noticed a vehicle ahead of him driving erratically and unable to maintain their lane and speeding. After the vehicle ran two vehicles off the road, CO Deppen pulled next to the vehicle and noticed the driver was on their cellular phone and not paying attention to the road. A traffic stop was conducted. The horrendous driving was outlined to the driver and the driver was apologetic. A check revealed the driver had multiple careless driving convictions from at least three states other than Michigan. The driver was issued a citation for distracted driving and was giving a warning for no proof of insurance in his vehicle.

CO Joseph Deppen had an open investigation regarding a vehicle that had a large pool of blood behind their tire tracks the day before the start of the firearm deer season. CO Deppen documented the blood but was unable to contact the driver. CO Deppen also noticed large bags of carrots and beets stashed at the base of a nearby tree. CO Deppen checked the area this past week and located the vehicle. CO Deppen followed the hunters tracks as they crossed over a fenced property into someone else's private property. CO Deppen contacted the hunter in his blind and noticed large piles of bait and minerals in front of the hunting blind. The hunter exited and was questioned about the bait. The hunter said, "I didn't know I had to clean up the bait before hunting over it." CO Deppen was confused by the statement, told the hunter "that makes no sense" and had the hunter exit the private property. CO Deppen spoke with the landowner and

found out the hunter did not have permission to hunt the area and he would like prosecution for crossing the fence, setting up a blind, and hunting. CO Deppen brought the hunter to his vehicle and questioned him about the blood at the back of his vehicle prior to firearm deer season. The hunter said his son shot a buck and that was the source of the blood. CO Deppen asked the hunter to show him photos on his phone to back up his story. There were no photos of any buck. The hunter scrolled quickly over a doe that was shot November 14. CO Deppen asked the hunter to click on the photo. The hunter said that was shot with an antlerless tag up in another county. CO Deppen reminded the hunter he did not have an antlerless tag in his purchase history. The metadata revealed the deer was shot 50 feet from where they were standing. The hunter broke down and reluctantly confessed to shooting a doe and that was the source of the blood. CO Deppen pointed out he still had both of his kill tags. The hunter admitted to shooting the doe, taking it to his house, processing it, and never tagged it. The hunter started apologizing for continually lying. The hunter's crossbow and phone were seized as evidence. The hunter was cited for hunting deer over bait while prohibited and recreational trespass. CO Deppen opened another case regarding the antlerless deer. That case will be turned over to the prosecutor's office and reimbursement will be sought for the deer.

CO Joseph Deppen was coming back from fisheries patrol traveling north on Lakeshore Drive. CO Deppen noticed a vehicle speeding up from the rear in the right lane and CO Deppen used his radar to clock him slowing down at 65mph in a 35mph zone. A traffic stop was conducted. The driver said the reason for the speed was that it was a new car and he got his feet confused with the gas and brake pedals. CO Deppen issued the driver a citation for speeding and driving without any proof of valid insurance. The driver was advised to get his feet under control before driving any further and CO Deppen cleared the scene.

CO Joseph Deppen interviewed a hunter about purchasing a single deer license, dropping off his deer at the processor, and then purchasing another single deer license. The hunter claimed he did not know he could not purchase another single deer tag until after he purchased it. When asked about voiding it out, the hunter said he didn't want to trouble the cashier handling the licensing system. CO Deppen will seek a complaint warrant for purchasing more than one single deer license in a season.

CO Jaime Salisbury was checking walleye anglers on the Flint River when a call came across the radio of a car accident close to his location. CO Salisbury ran back to his truck and responded to the scene of the accident. When CO Salisbury arrived, he found two children laying on the ground near the vehicle and a woman trapped in the driver's seat who was being assessed by another first responder. CO Salisbury assessed the children laying on the ground and discovered that both were complaining of pain where the seatbelt was across their chest and lap but neither of them had severe injuries. CO Salisbury placed coats from onlookers on each side of the kids heads to stabilize them until they could be further assessed when EMS arrived.

CO Tom Peterson received an in-progress complaint of two individuals hunting on state land over bait, possibly intoxicated. CO Peterson arrived on scene locating the suspect vehicle parked off a dead-end street. Upon further investigation, the CO was able to visually locate empty beer cans within the subjects' vehicle. CO Jaime Salisbury and Sgt. Jason Becker arrived on scene and began to search the area for the two subjects. The COs were able to find the first subject actively bow hunting over bait and located multiple beer cans at the hunting site. After a short search of the area, the COs located the second subject deeper into state land, actively bow hunting over a second bait pile. The COs escorted the individuals out of the woods to their vehicle. Both subjects were issued citations for attempt to take deer over bait and unlabeled tree stands on public land.

CO Luke Robare conducted an interview for CO Mike Haas. CO Haas found a suspicious deer tag during a processor inspection in Isabella County, but the suspect lived in Genesee County. CO Robare conducted the interview and gained a confession stating that the suspect who shot the deer did not have a valid deer license when the deer was killed. The information was gathered by CO Robare and passed along to CO Haas.

## **DISTRICT 25**

Lts. Shaw, Feagan, and Short along with Cpls. Busken, Torsky, and Hartsig attended the Great Lakes Fishery commission law enforcement meeting in Windsor, Ontario. A collaboration of law enforcement efforts in and around the great lakes were discussed.

Several members of Great Lakes Enforcement Unit (GLEU) attended the monthly 2020 Consent Decree Core Team meeting either in-person or via conference call. Ongoing strategic discussions and the initial stages of negotiations were discussed.

Cpl. Brett DeLonge assisted District 1 by doing an interview with the TV-3 Marquette News Channel for hunting safety tips and harvesting antlerless deer in proper Deer Management Units during the 2019 archery season.

Cpl. Mike Hammill spoke with several local college students on career opportunities within the DNR Law Enforcement Division (LED). The students also had questions reference this deer and waterfowl season.

Cpl. Nick Torsky attended the annual Northern Great Lakes Fur Harvesters Convention in Kinross. This organization is a strong supporter of DNR-LED, including an annual financial contribution that allows an officer to attend the Fur Takers of America Trapper's College in Indiana. Cpl. Torsky gave a general presentation and a Q&A period for youth at the event and assisted in building pine marten nesting boxes with interested youth. He also answered miscellaneous questions throughout the day and gave a demonstration on coyote trapping techniques.

Cpl. VanGeldereren was driving past a trout stream that is closed and saw two individuals taking off their waders. Cpl. VanGeldereren stopped and discovered that the subjects had five large salmon between them. The suspects were unaware of the closure and the salmon were released.

Cpl. VanGeldereren was walking a closed stream where it flows into the White River. Cpl. VanGeldereren saw a subject run down the stream with a large net and scoop a salmon out of the creek. The subject was identified, and the salmon was released.

Cpl. Pat Hartsig attended the Lake Erie Citizens Fishery Advisory Council meeting on Belle Isle. A PowerPoint presentation was given on GLEU and division updates. Numerous questions were fielded regarding commercial and sport fishing in the area.

Cpl. Pat Hartsig attended the Great Lakes Fishery commission law enforcement meeting in Windsor, Ontario. A collaboration of law enforcement efforts in and around the great lakes were discussed.

Cpl. Pat Hartsig and Nick Atkin attended the Lake Erie/Lake St. Clair Citizen Fishery Advisory Committee meeting. The annual report was presented with great feedback from the attendees.

Lt. Dave Shaw, Cpl. Sean Kehoe, and Cpl. Nick Torsky were instructors at the 2019 Trapping Enforcement School where new COs were taught how to effectively work trapping enforcement.

Cpl. Kevin Postma partnered with Grand Traverse Bay Band of Odawa and Chippewa Indians to observe a net lift of an abandoned trap net behind Mackinac Island. This is the fifth net removed in the area in the last 18 months. No identifiers were located on the net, but it is believed to have been left by a fisherman that suddenly quit fishing and left the area five to six years ago. The net was located when a fisherman became entangled in it.

During the return trip from the Keweenaw Peninsula, Cpls. DeLonge, VanGeldereren, and Atkin were flagged down by a subject with a flashlight at approximately 7:30 PM several miles offshore near the Huron Islands. The officers investigated and found that it was a disabled vessel. The officers were able to contact the drifting vessel in the three foot to five-foot wave conditions to ensure both parties on the boat were safe. After gathering the individual's information, the officers found that the owner of the boat did not have the boat registered and had an active warrant for him out of Baraga County. The boat owner was able to get his boat operational again and was advised of his warrant. The owner was also cited for operating an unregistered vessel.

Cpl. Brett DeLonge was invited by the Northern Michigan University Fisheries & Wildlife Student Group to present on the role conservation officers play in natural resource protection. The presentation was well attended and several of the attendees were starting the application process for the upcoming recruit school selection process.

Cpl. Nick Torsky attended a meeting of the Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) leads from the various DNR departments, led by Water Policy Advisor Tammy Newcomb. Cooperation with outside partners, funding, and department priorities in AIS were discussed.

Lt. Terry Short, Cpl. Marvin Gerlach, and Cpl. Jon Busken attended the Chippewa Ottawa Resource Authority Law Enforcement Committee meeting. Current issues as well as some fall enforcement plans were discussed.

Lt. Shaw attended the second 2020 Consent Decree negotiation meeting. The two-day meeting was held in Lansing and hosted by the state.

Det. Dan Lee reports that on October 29, 2019, in the 82nd District Court of West Branch, Ogemaw County, a Hale man plead guilty to one misdemeanor count of illegally burning solid waste under the Solid Waste rules. The man was charged on September 18, 2019, with four counts: Air Quality – open burning, Solid Waste – open burning, Solid Waste – open dump, Solid Waste – using an unlicensed facility. On December 17, 2019, the court sentenced the man to a fine of \$625. The case began with a complaint to DNR Law Enforcement on July 8, 2019, of someone tearing down portions of a house and burning the demolition debris in a hole in the front yard. Det. Lee observed the aftermath of the fires, which took place on July 4, 6, and 7, 2019. Several area residences confirmed the complaint and the suspect admitted to the actions.