



2021

# Annual Report

Sheriff Frank Baker

Allegan County

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# Message from the Sheriff

Dear Chairman Storey:

On behalf of the Deputies and the Staff of the Allegan County Sheriff's Office, I respectfully present the 2021 Sheriff's Office Annual Report to the Commissioners and citizens of Allegan County.

2021 seemed a little closer to "normal" in that many of our operations began to resemble what they were like prior to the pandemic. We still had to operate the Corrections Center utilizing protective measures and PPE due to requirements from the state and as a result of surges in Covid-19 numbers periodically during 2021.

You will see from the data included in this report that some of our statistical information is likely still being impacted by the pandemic and those surges. For example, booking numbers are down and have not yet begun to start trending up like they were prior to the pandemic. While it is easy to assume that this is due to the pandemic, there are several other factors influencing the lower number of bookings, such as legislative changes.

While we did have several staff members and inmates contract the virus, I feel we can say our efforts have been successful. Periodic lock downs had to occur in the Corrections Center to isolate and quarantine groups so that it would not spread throughout the facility. The staff also did a great job of utilizing PPE to reduce the chance of spreading the virus. The Law Enforcement Division continued to limit exposure and interactions within the Corrections Center in an effort to reduce the spread. I cannot imagine having to go through the last 2 years in the "old jail". The space and design of the Corrections Center is what allowed us to implement the mitigation strategies that we took.

The dedication of the staff was highlighted by their willingness to accept and respond to the challenges 2021 presented. They understood the need to adapt to the evolving situation with constant changes in procedures and practices that had to be made. Nothing was ever routine when your daily procedures are constantly having to be reevaluated and modified.

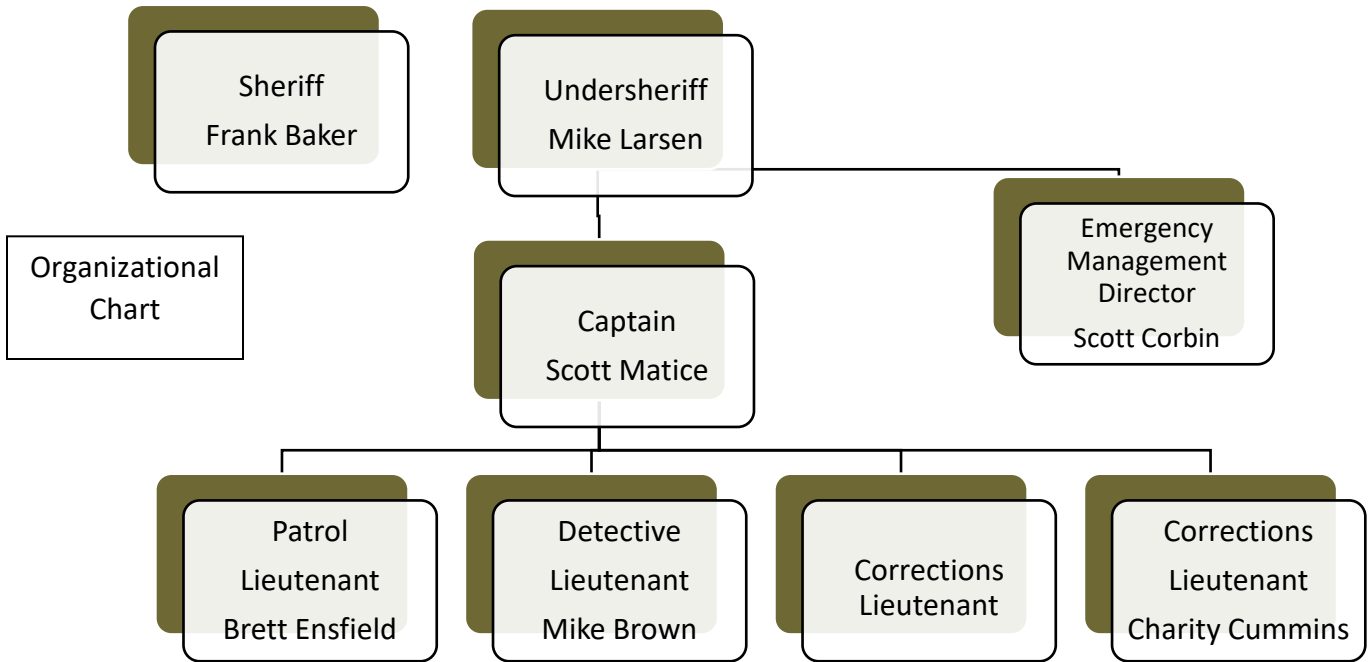
I could not be prouder of the staff and what they have accomplished this past year.

Sincerely,

*Frank Baker*

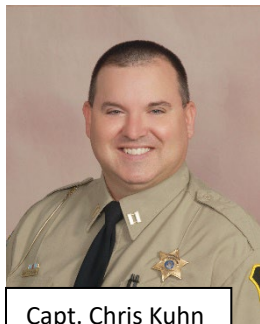
Sheriff Frank Baker





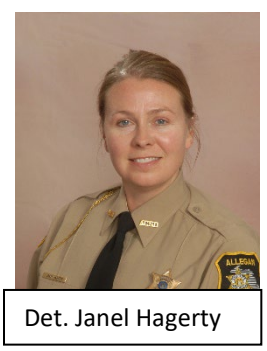
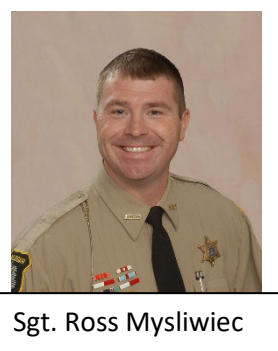
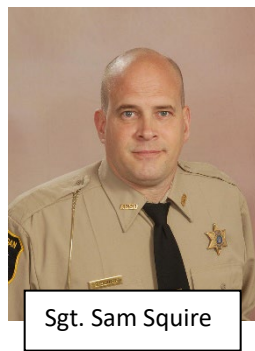
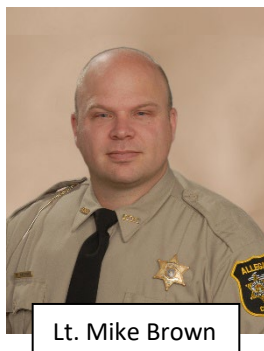
We completed a restructure of the Command staff at the conclusion of 2021. We eliminated one of the Captain positions upon the retirement of Capt. Chris Kuhn. That Captain position was converted to a Lieutenant position which was filled by Sgt. Mike Brown, who was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant in the Detective Bureau. This establishes a balanced chain of command in law enforcement and corrections. We will be making a promotion to the vacant Corrections Lieutenant position upon the completion of a promotional process in 2022.

## Retirements and Promotions

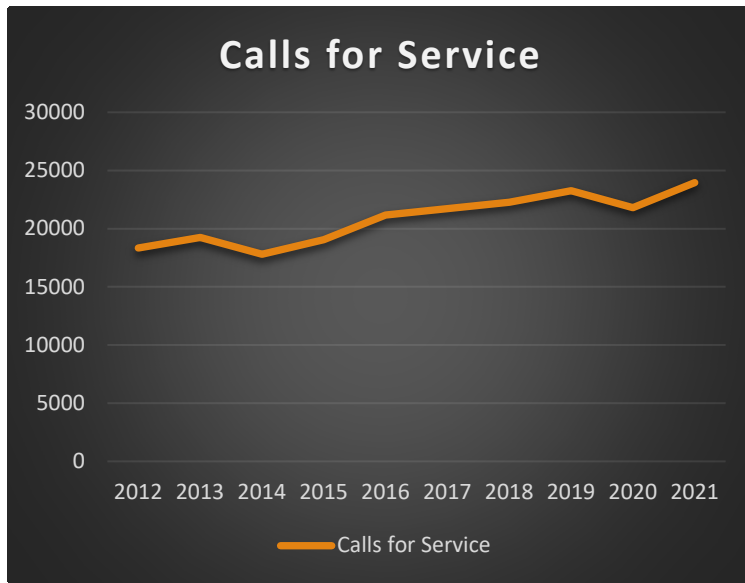


Captain Chris Kuhn and Deputy Scott Johanson retired in 2021. Sgt. Mike Brown was promoted to Lieutenant. Deputies Sam Squire and Ross Mysliwicz were promoted to Sergeant. Deputy Janel Hagerty was promoted to Detective.

Congratulations on your retirements and promotions

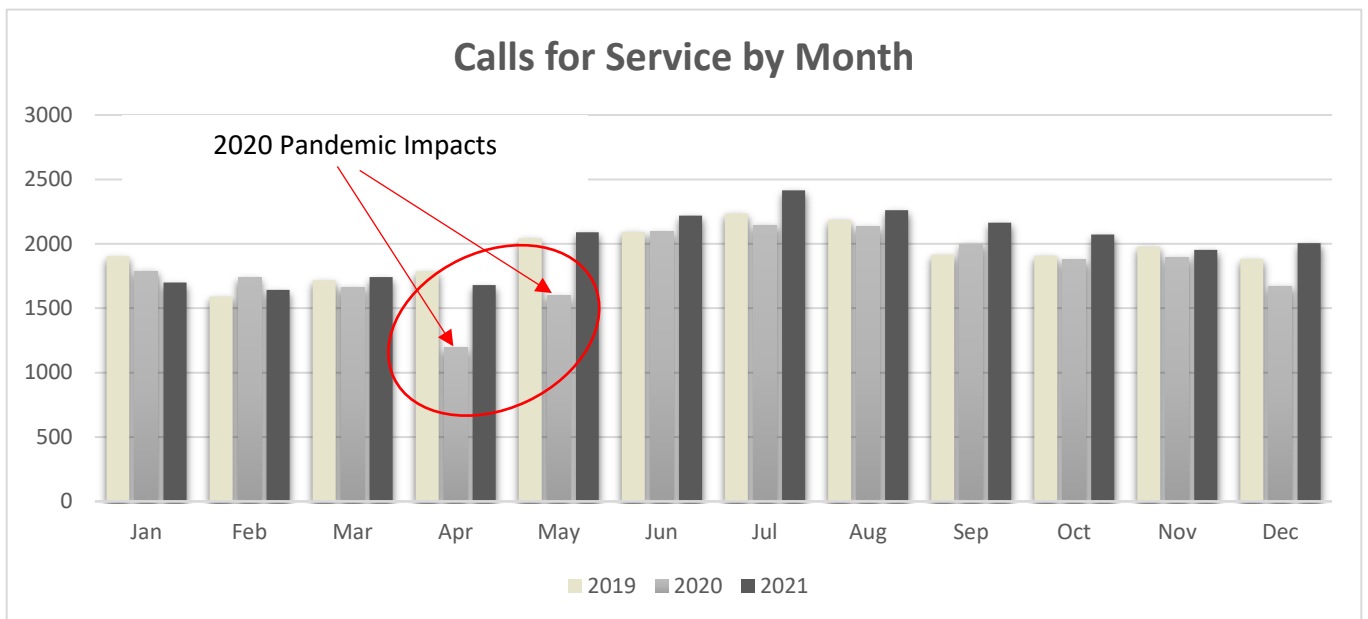


## Law Enforcement Division – Road Patrol



Calls for Service in 2021 were higher than any previous year. The Deputies responded to or initiated 23,956 calls for service last year. This is up from 21,812 the year before, which is a 10% increase over 2020.

We anticipate that as our population grows and economic development occurs the demand for law enforcement service will increase. Another factor that we consider is that call volume will increase as we increase staff. Deputies generate additional call volume from initiating arrests and having to take law enforcement action.

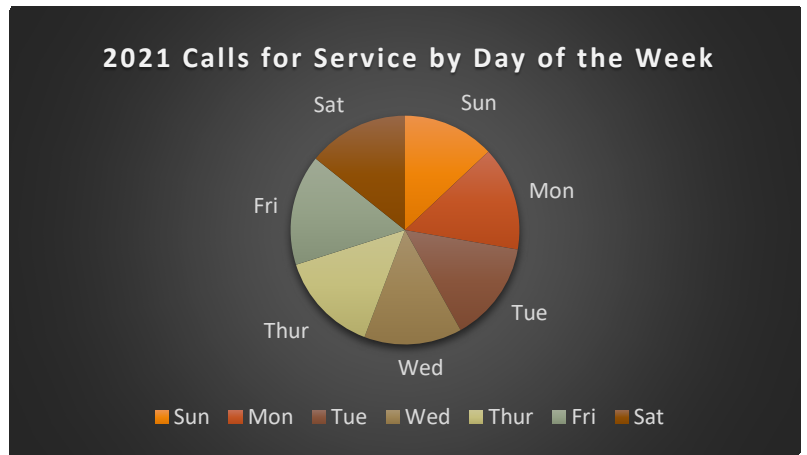


The above chart demonstrates that seasonal differences do not greatly impact call volume. The types of calls do vary depending on the seasons. For instance, we anticipate that the number of car deer crashes will increase in the fall months, and that the number of property damage car crashes will increase in the winter months. The trends from year to year remain rather stable as you can see from the chart.



The chart to the right reflects calls for service by day of the week. The daily call volume by percentage ranges from a low of 13% on Sunday to a high of 15.6% of the call volume on Friday. The remaining 5 days of the week vary slightly from 13.8% - 14.7%.

Day	%
Monday	14.7
Tuesday	14.2
Wednesday	13.8
Thursday	14.3
Friday	15.6
Saturday	14.3
Sunday	13.0

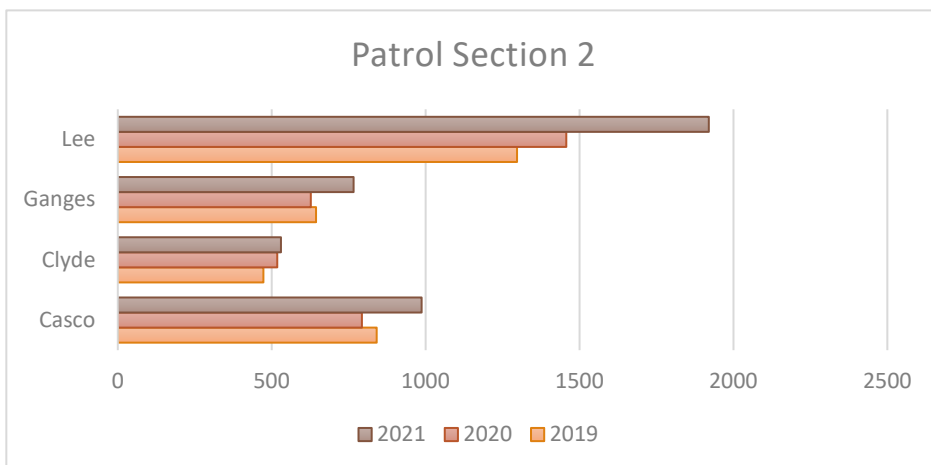
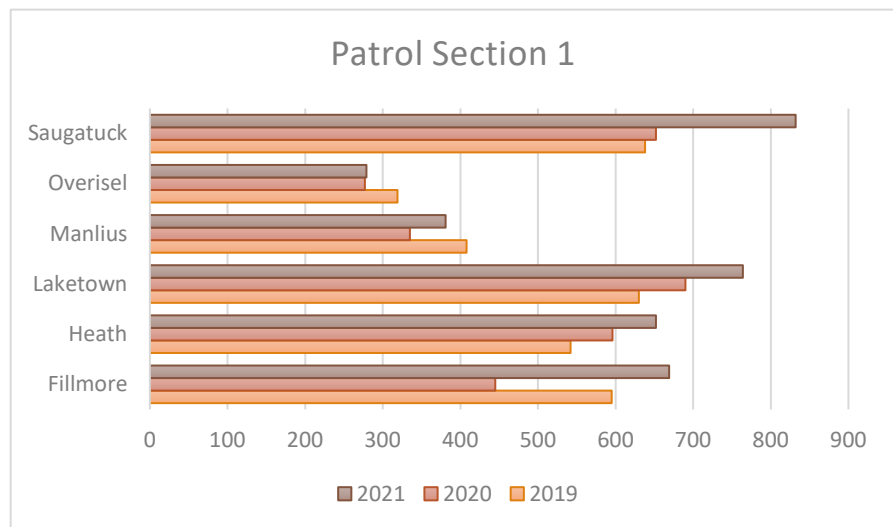


As you can see from these charts, the day of the week has little impact on call volume. There are other factors, however, that do have an impact on call volume. Snow storms, high winds, heavy rains, and other weather related calls for service for instance. Also, holiday celebrations like the 4<sup>th</sup> of July or community events and festivals increases typical call volumes.

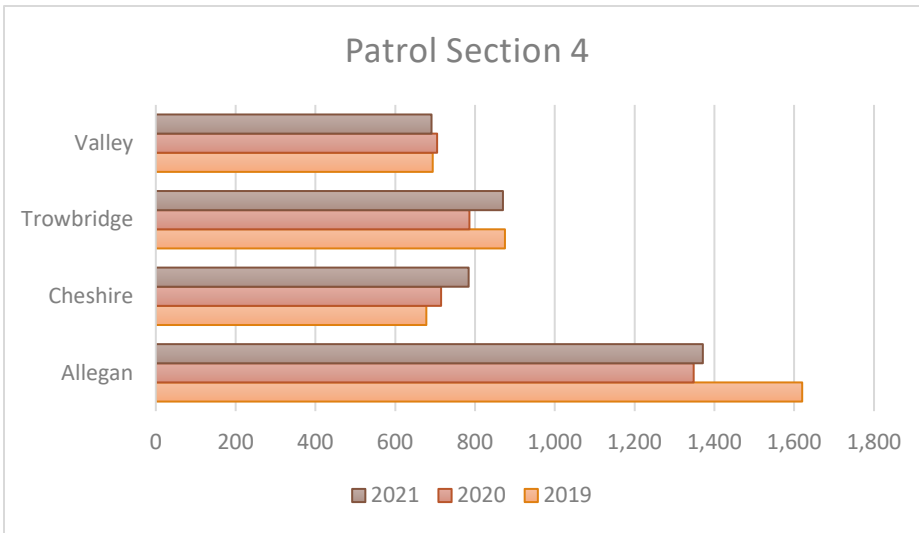
### Call Volumes by Patrol Area

The total call volume in Patrol Section 1 for 2021 was 3,577. This would be a 20% increase over the volume in 2020 which was 2,975.

Saugatuck City, which was not included in the above total had a call volume of 1,068.

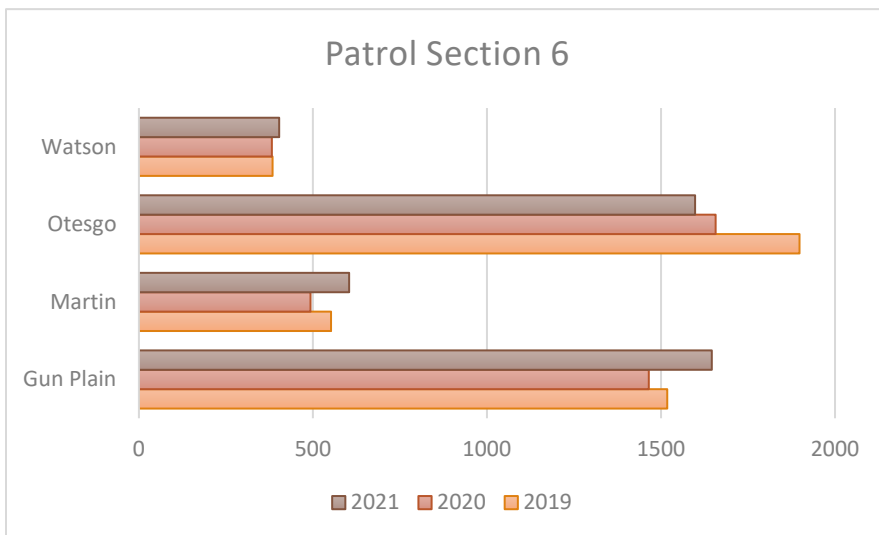
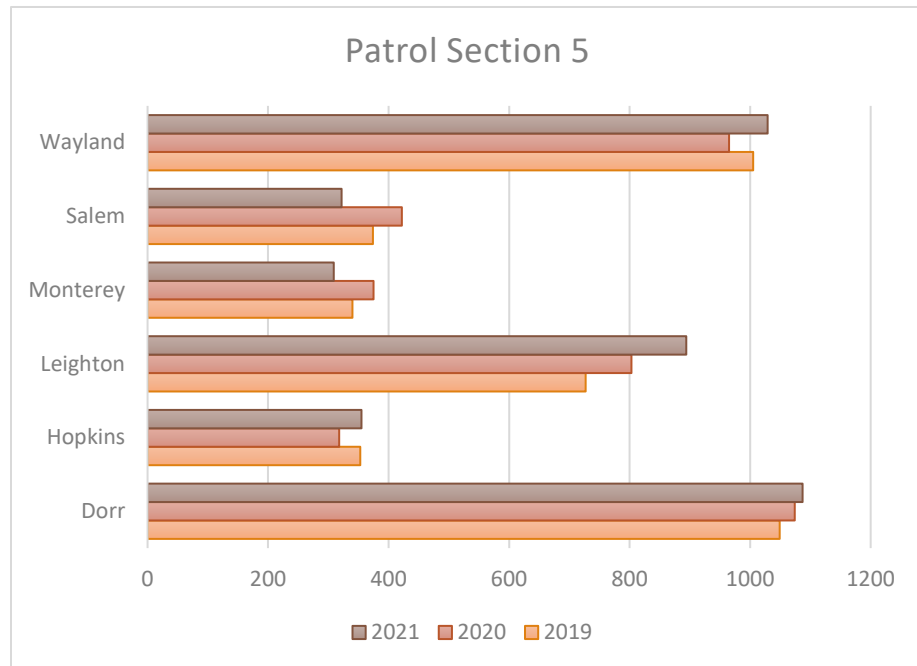


The total call volume in Patrol Section 2 for 2021 was 4,203. This would be a 24% increase from the 2020 volume of 3,395. Lee Twp. had the largest increase going from 1,457 to 1,920 which was a 32% increase.

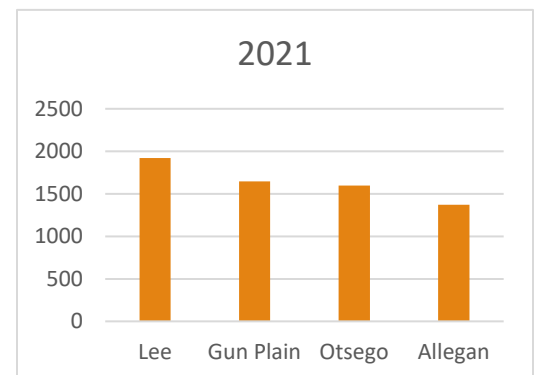


The total call volume in Patrol Section 4 in 2021 was 3,716. This would be a 4.5 % increase over the volume of 3,554 in 2020. Valley Twp. experienced a slight decrease in volume; however, the other Twps. experienced increases over their 2020 numbers.

The total call volume for Patrol Section 5 in 2021 was 3,996. This would be an increase of 1% from the volume of 2020.



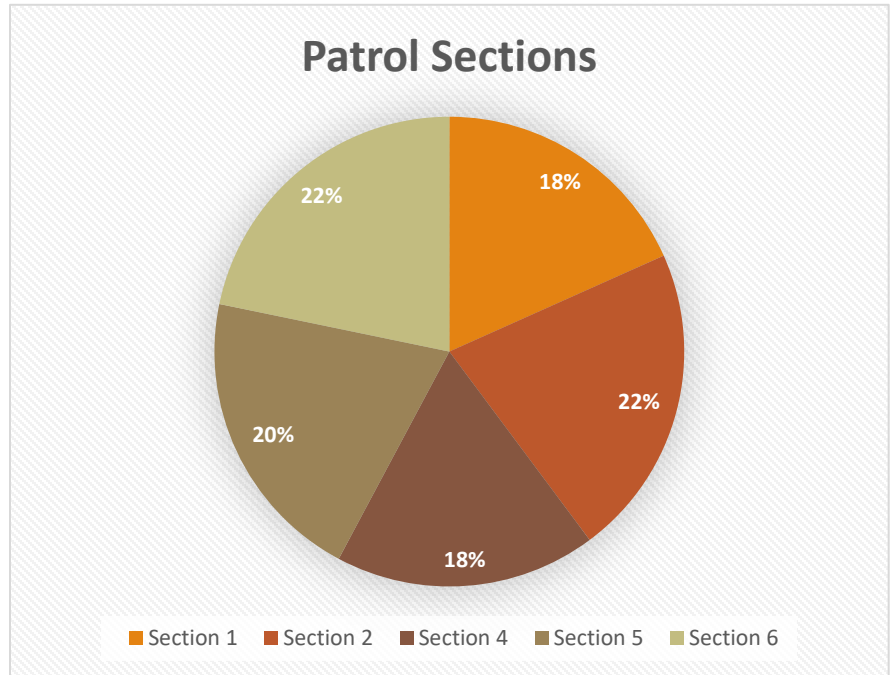
The total call volume for Patrol Section 6 in 2021 was 4,251. This was a 6% increase over the volume of 3,997 in 2020. The largest increase occurred in Gun Plain Twp.



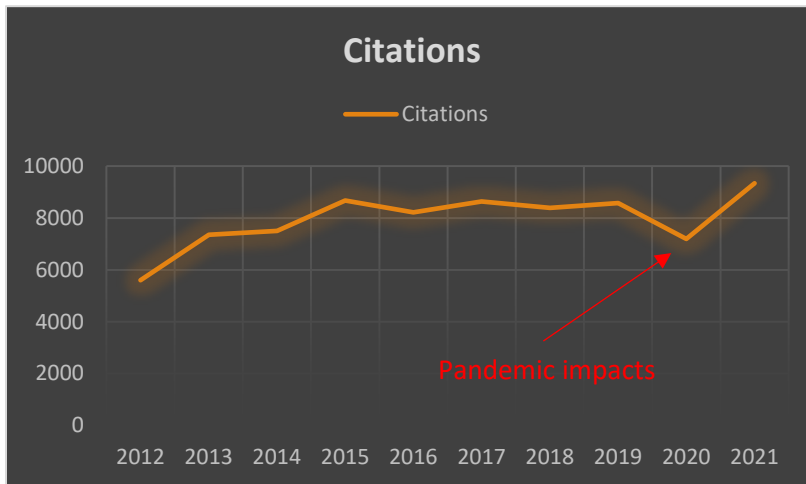
Typically Otesgo Twp. has the highest call volume; however, this year that honor goes to Lee Twp.

One of the objectives in designing patrol areas is to balance call volumes. The pie chart to the right would indicate that we are very successful in achieving that objective.

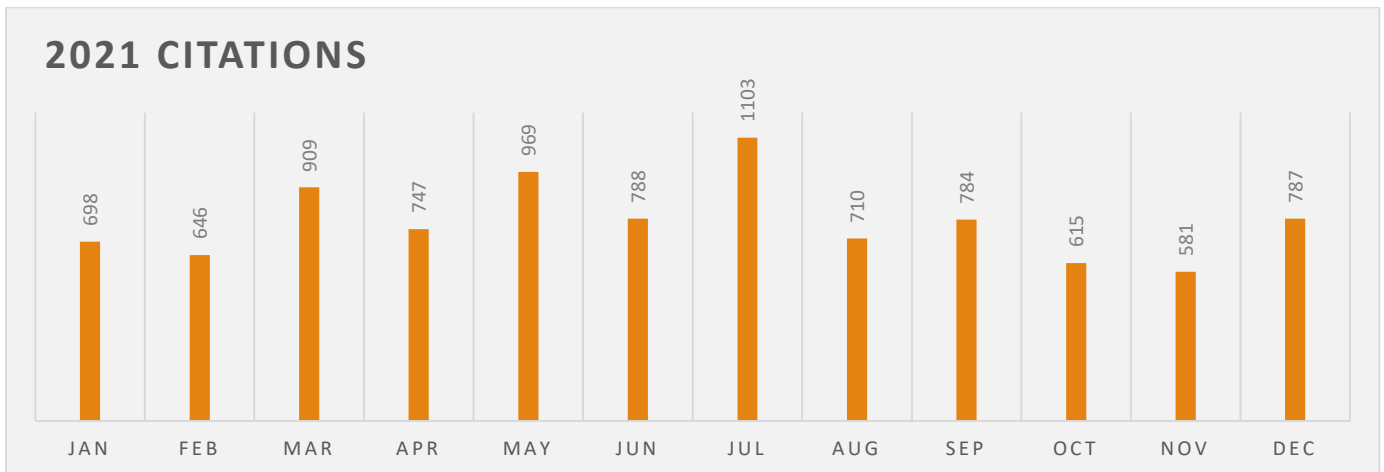
In addition to the calls for service reported by section, we handled another 1,068 calls for service in Saugatuck City. That would be an increase of 9% from 2020 when 976 calls were handled in Saugatuck City.



## Traffic Enforcement

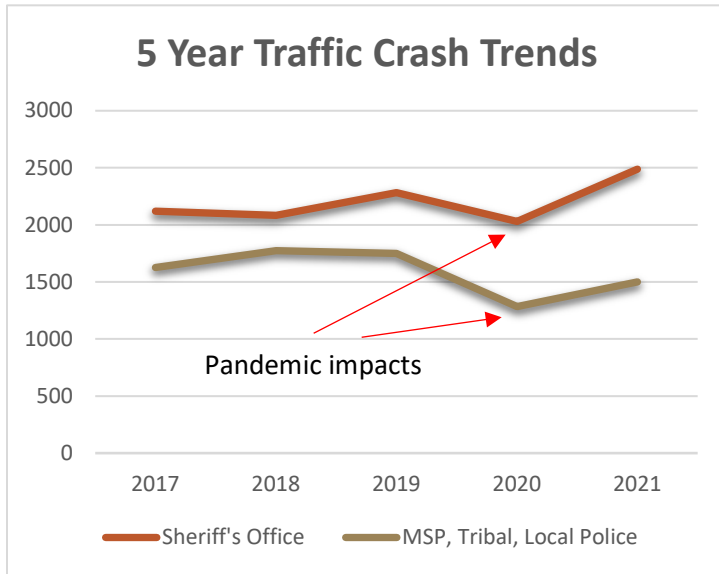


2021 saw a return to normal traffic enforcement trends. The number of traffic citations issued in 2021 was up considerably from 2020.

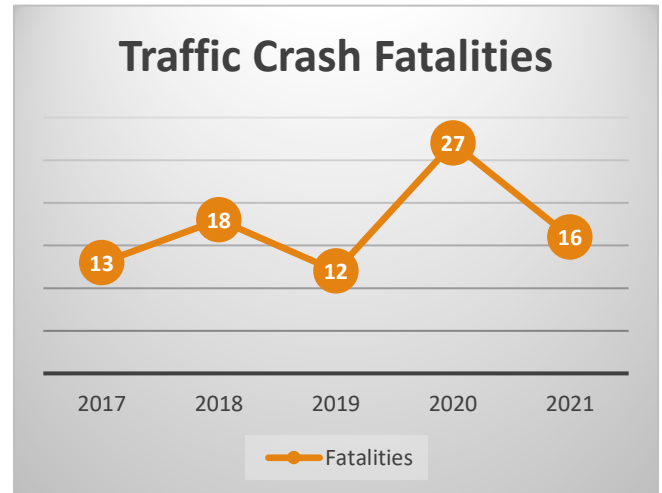




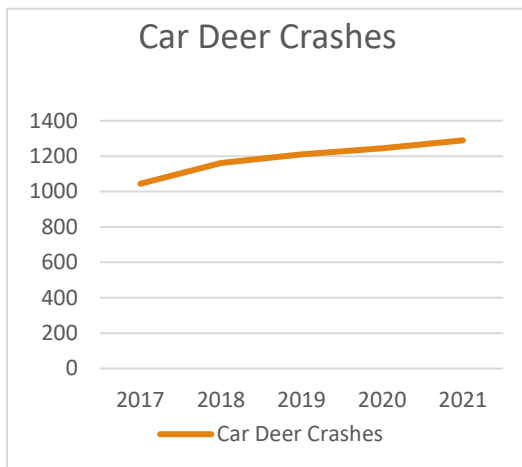
## Traffic Crashes



There were 3,897 traffic crashes in Allegan County in 2021. The Sheriff's Office investigated 2,488 of those crashes. Our law enforcement partners from the State Police, Tribal Police, and City Police Departments investigated the remaining 1,499.



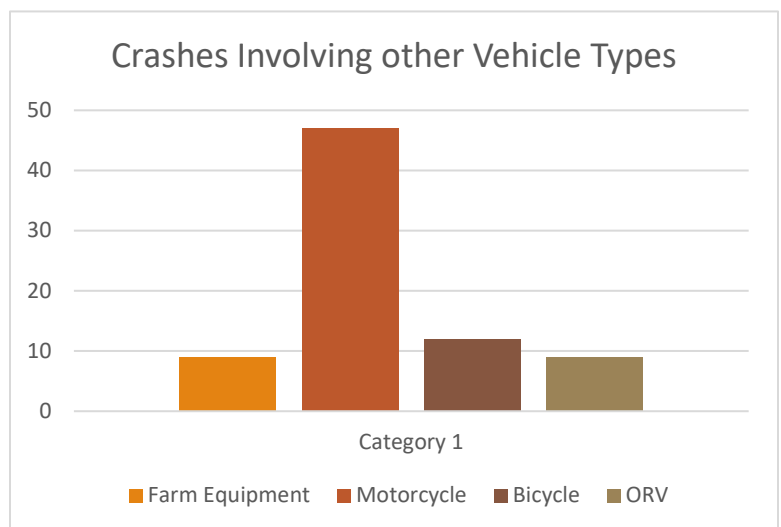
We were pleased to see a reduction in the number of fatal crashes and fatalities in Allegan County in 2021. The Sheriff's Office investigated 9 of the 16 fatal crashes last year.



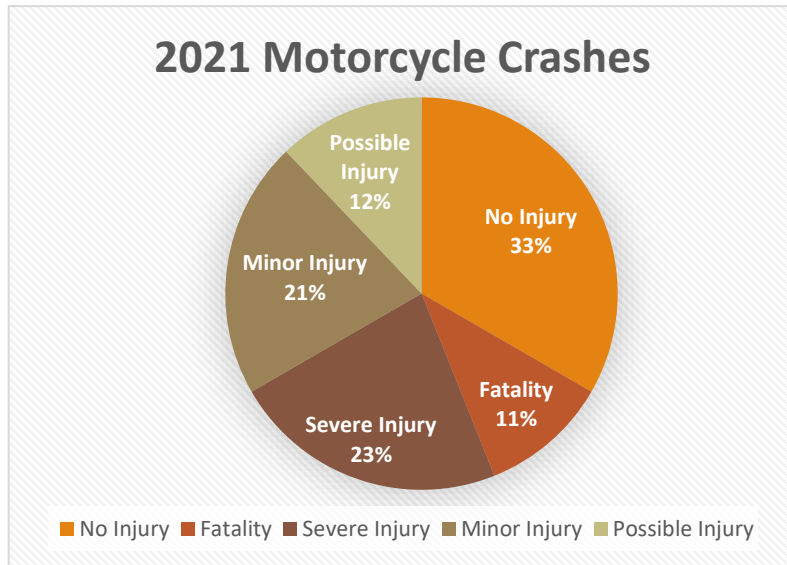
There has been a slight increase in the number of car deer crashes occurring over the last 5 years. The Sheriff's Office handled 959 of the 1,289 car deer crashes in Allegan County last year.

There were reports of 47 crashes in Allegan County last year involving motorcycles, 9 involving Farm Equipment, 9 involving ORVs, and 12 involving bicycles.

4 of the crashes involving ORVs occurred on a roadway and another incident occurred on a roadway when an ORV caught fire. The remaining crashes that were reported occurred off road.



## 2021 Motorcycle Crashes

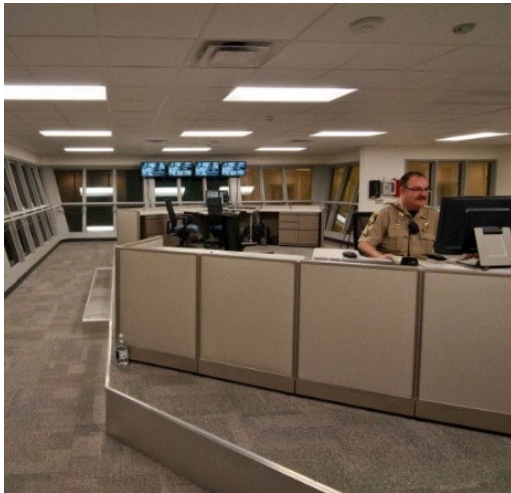


The Sheriff's Office investigated 37 of the 47 motorcycle crashes occurring in Allegan County last year. The remaining 10 crashes were investigated by the Michigan State Police, the Otsego Police Dept. and the Holland Police Dept.

There were 7 fatalities last year involving a motorcycle. This accounted for 44% of the fatal vehicle crashes in 2021.

Deer were involved in 12 of these motorcycle crashes and 2 of these motorcycle deer crashes resulted in a fatality.

## Corrections Division



The Corrections Division continues to be impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. Transmission prevention protocols, such as masks and testing, are still required by the Michigan Department of Corrections. The occasional outbreaks within dorms has resulted in periodic shutdowns of certain inmate programs. For instance, the ability to utilize inmate workers at the Animal Shelter. Many of the programs had to be shut down entirely as we could not allow volunteers and certain service providers into the Corrections Center and risk exposing inmates.

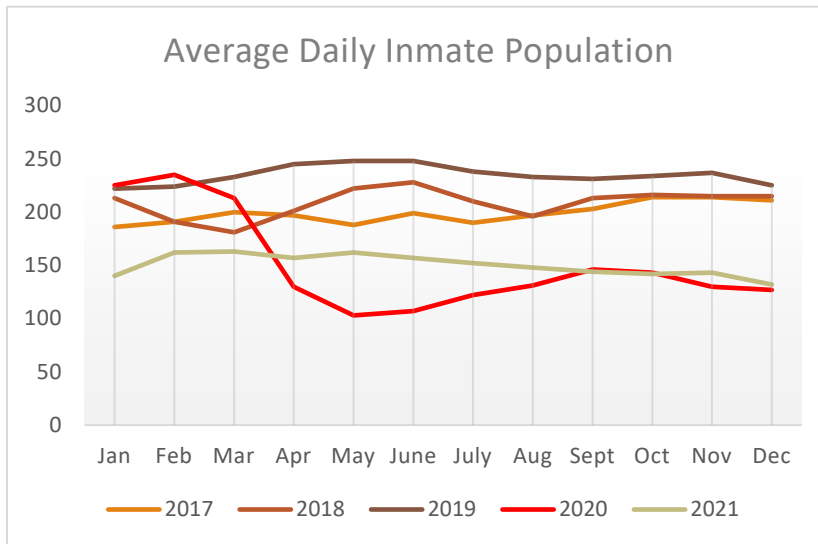


Close monitoring of the inmate population remains critical as we come out of the pandemic. We anticipate we will experience an increase in inmates as the Courts resume full operations.

We will continue working with our criminal justice partners to fully understand the impact Covid-19 has had on our inmate population and if those impacts are

temporary or long term. That information is necessary to plan for and predict the future inmate population.

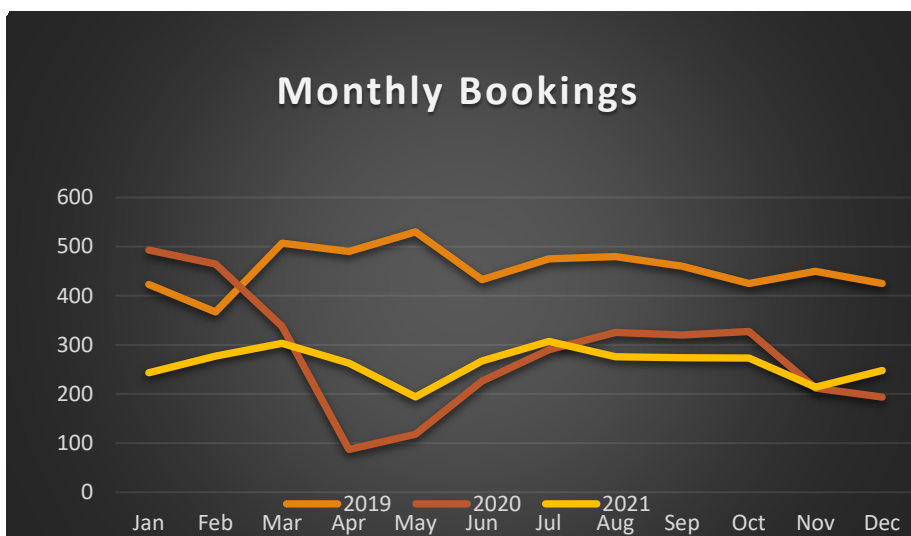
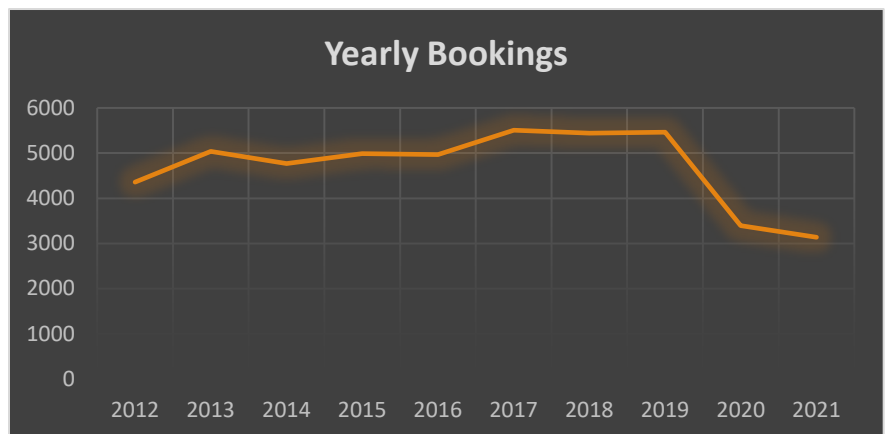
# Corrections Division



The average daily inmate population numbers continue to be lower than pre-pandemic; however, we anticipate those numbers will continue to rise as the courts begin consistently having jury trials. Our desire is that this number rises slowly to reduce impacts on staffing and operations as we return to pre pandemic numbers.

The number bookings continues to be lower than pre pandemic times. There are several factors we believe to be impacting this trend. Some are pandemic related:

- Counties not lodging individuals in their jails for us to pick up on our warrants.
- The Courts have not held as many trials so there are fewer defendants being sentenced, fewer failure to appear charges and fewer failure to pay charges.
- Our own restrictions on lodging during various outbreaks and the need for quarantine space within the Corrections Center.



There has also been legislative changes that have resulted in a reduced number of people being lodged for certain non-violent offenses. Citations are now being issued to appear in Court rather than lodge in the Corrections Center as a result of this change in law. Additionally, the arresting officer is now required to document why an arrest was made on these types of cases and a citation not issued.

## Inmate Programs

Inmate programs were significantly impacted last year as a result of the pandemic. The volunteers and vendors necessary to conduct many of our inmate programs were not able to enter the facility due to our Covid-19 protocols. The need to limit entry into the facility was necessary to reduce potentially exposing staff and inmates to individuals that may be positive for Covid-19. We continued to operate, to the extent possible, with limited program staff utilizing technology to conduct programs.

The Inmate programs had a total of 557 participants in 2021. This is down from the 951 in 2020. This allowed us to save 3,473 bed days which is down from the 4,091 in 2020.

### Community Re-entry Units

The Community Re-Entry Units rely on volunteers to teach, educate, counsel, and minister to the inmates. Therefore, we had to shut down the Re-entry Units to mitigate the potential spread of Covid-19 in 2021. Chaplain Sarah has done a great job remotely to remain involved with the inmates. We look forward to the face to face time needed to effectively run the program and have our volunteers back within the facility.



### D.E.B.T.S. Crew (Detail Enabling Better Transition to Society)

There were 24 participants in the D.E.B.T.S. crew during 2021. 20 of the participants finished successfully. This was down due to the impacts of the pandemic. We were still able to save 328 bed days during 2021.

### Community Service

There were a total of 67 participants in Community Service last year saving 708 bed days. 56 of the participants completed successfully. The prior year we had 98 participants with 78 completing successfully and saving 798 bed days.

### Case Management

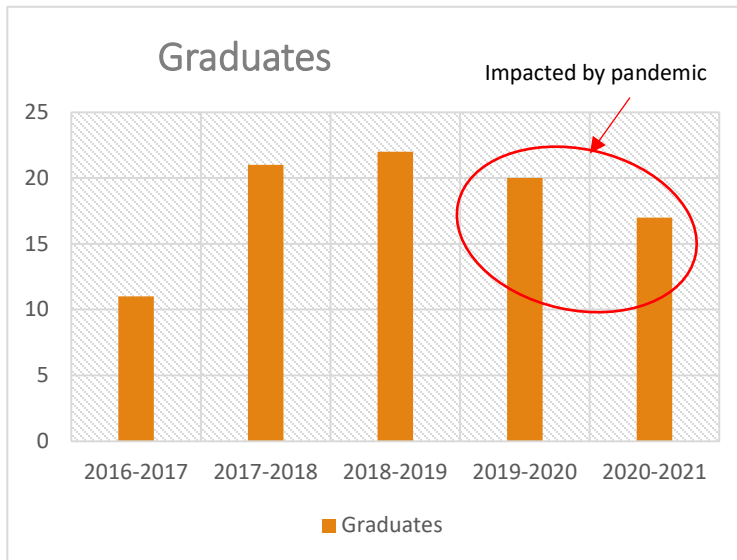
This consists of the inmate workers assigned to job functions within the Corrections Center such as the kitchen, laundry, and cleaning crews. We had 126 participants in 2021. 88 of those completed successfully and saved us 2,306 bed days. The previous year we had 200 participants with 142 successfully completing for a total bed days saved of 2,336.

### Work Release

Was suspended during 2021 due to Covid-19 and the need to limit exposure to staff and inmates. We hope to resume offering Work Release in 2022.

## General Educational Development (GED) / Career Readiness

We anticipated fewer graduations in the 2020-2021 school year due to the reduced number of inmates. We still managed to have 17 completed GED graduations.



*Congratulations to our Graduates*

### Career Readiness (CCAB funded)

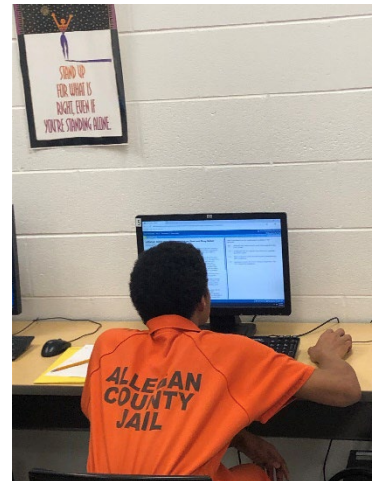
We are very proud of the Career Readiness program. It is one of the newest programs at the Corrections Center. We work along with partners such as Michigan Works to assist in finding employment with area businesses. The program helps the inmate to prepare a resume, practice job interviews, complete college applications, financial aid forms, and set up and facilitate actual on-line job interviews from the Corrections Center. We have had success and have had inmates leave here to a waiting job.

### MRT – Moral Recognition Therapy – Cognitive Behavior (CCAB funded)

There were 80 participants in MRT in 2021 with 35 successfully completing the program. This program does not provide bed days saved as inmates do not earn good time for participation. There were 109 participants in 2020 with a 34 completing successfully.

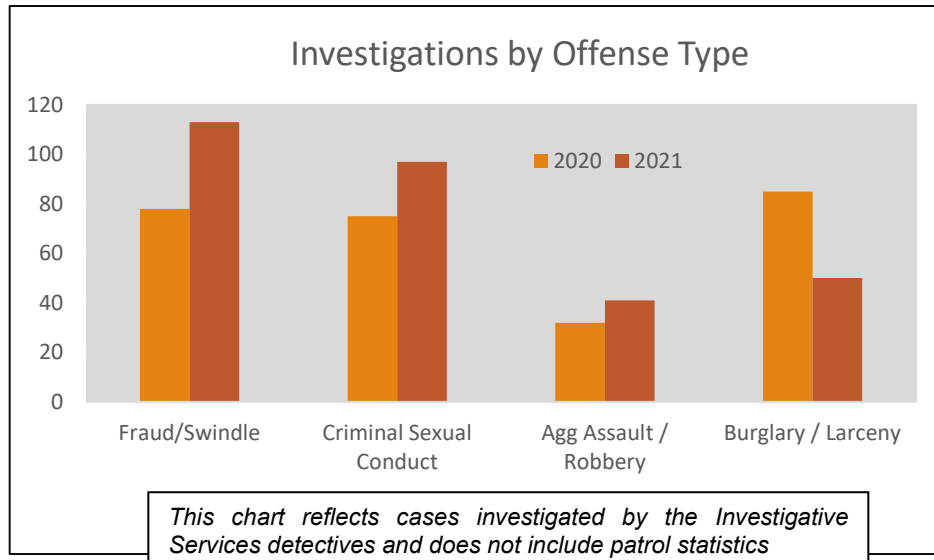
### Relapse Prevention – Substance Abuse Classes (CCAB funded)

Relapse Prevention had 28 participants in 2021 with 8 successfully completing the program. This program does not allow for good time so it does not safe bed days. We had 51 participants in 2020 with 29 successfully completing the program.



## Investigative Services Division

911 requests from citizens for assistance are received by Allegan Central Dispatch who dispatch the closest available road patrol officer. Incidents which require additional or specialized investigations are turned over to the Investigative Services Division for follow up investigation.



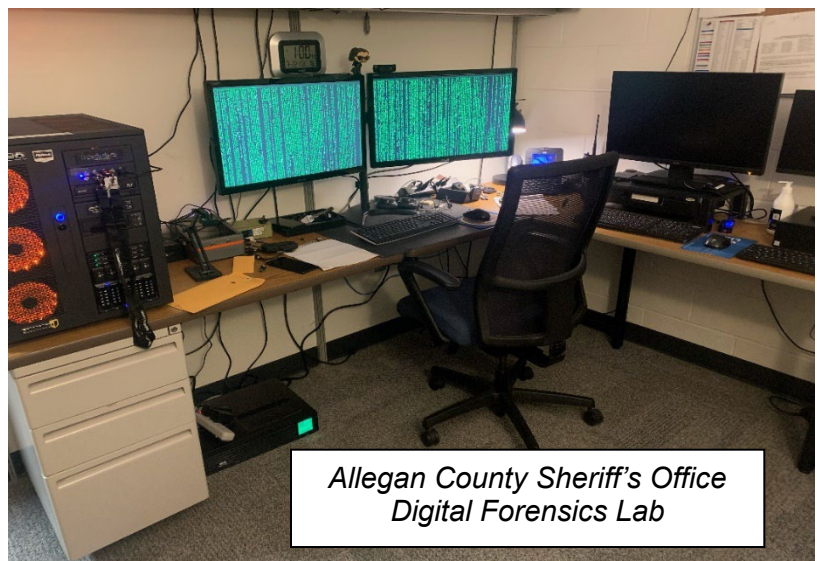
The Investigative Services Division consists of four general case detectives, a digital forensics detective, and one drug team detective. The unit is supervised by Lt Mike Brown.

Incidents referred to the Investigative Services unit rose by 3.2% in 2021. Their work led to convictions in three homicide trials in 2021, a fourth is still awaiting trial.

One homicide was reported in 2021 in which two subjects have been arrested. The chart below represents additional types of criminal activity investigated by the Investigative Services Division in 2021 and is compared with statistics from 2020.

## Digital Forensics Lab / Detective

The Allegan County Sheriff's Office maintains the only digital forensics lab in Allegan County. It is currently staffed by Detective Dave Ashton. Digital forensics is a branch of forensic science encompassing the recovery, investigation, examination and analysis of material found in digital devices, such as cellular phones, computers, and tablets. This position was approved by the Allegan County Board of Commissioners in 2020 and has had a tremendous impact on our ability to investigate and solve crime. It is also essential in providing evidence to assist in the prosecution of criminal activity occurring within Allegan County. In 2021 Detective Ashton examined 163 devices and collected more than 12.5 TB of digital evidence.



The Sheriff's Office is proud to offer this service to all of our partner law enforcement agencies within Allegan County.

## Human Trafficking and Child Exploitation

There has been an increase in the amount of time children are spending on electronic devices, especially during the pandemic. This may partially account for the dramatic increase observed nationwide in human trafficking, child exploitation and the possession, production, and distribution of child sexually abusive material. To address this issue within Allegan County, the Sheriff's Office has partnered with the Michigan State Police Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force (ICAC). The Sheriff's Office also assigns one general case detective to participate in the FBI's West Michigan Based Child Exploitation Task Force (WEBCHEx). ICAC and WEBCHEx are multijurisdictional task forces which investigate human trafficking and the online exploitation of children. In 2021 detectives investigated 34 incidents related to child sexually abusive material.

## South West Enforcement TEAM (SWET)

Controlled substance abuse is a leading cause of criminal activity in Allegan County as well as bookings at the county jail. Controlled substance abuse has a direct impact on our county. Directly by arrests for possession or distribution, but also indirectly by persons who commit criminal activity while under the influence of a controlled substance or to fuel a controlled substance addiction. The Allegan County Sheriff's Office assigns a detective to the South West Enforcement Team (SWET) to address these issues. This detective joins other investigators from the Michigan State Police, Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), and Organized Crime and Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) to investigate criminal activity related to the import, sale, and use of narcotics within Allegan and Barry Counties.



One case of particular interest resulted in the seizure of 18 pounds of crystal methamphetamine, two firearms, and over \$27,000.00 in drug proceeds. The operation began in 2019 and took down high-level narcotics distributors within multiple counties, while simultaneously indicting the large regional sources of the narcotics supply coming from Kalamazoo and Chicago. This organization was responsible for supplying multiple pounds of meth into Allegan County and our neighbor county to the east. There were 9 defendants in this case and 4 of them were from the Allegan area. The Allegan County defendants were charged and convicted in Federal Court. Two of defendants received sentences of 10 years. The other two received sentences of 7.5 years and 2 years.

## Domestic Violence Investigator

The term “domestic violence” refers to felony or misdemeanor crimes of violence committed by a current or former spouse, or intimate partner of the victim, or by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, or by a person who is living with or has lived with the victim. Statistics from the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence show the following alarming statistics regarding domestic violence.



- In the United States more than 10 million adults experience domestic violence annually. If each of these adults experienced just one incident of violence that would equate to an act of domestic violence occurring every 3 seconds.
- From 2016 to 2018 the number of intimate partner violence increased by 42%
- In 2018 partner violence accounted for 20% of all violent crime
- 1 in 2 female murder victims and 1 in 13 murder victims are killed by intimate partners.
- Victims of intimate partner violence lose a total of 8,000,000 days of paid work each year, the equivalent of 32,000 full time jobs.

Locally in 2020, 472 adult charges were authorized for domestic violence by the Allegan County Prosecuting Attorney’s Office. That number rose to more than 700 in 2021.

In 2021 the Allegan County Board of Commissioners approved the implementation of a permanent Domestic Violence Investigator Detective. This position will become effective in early 2022 and will be dedicated to the investigation of domestic violence, follow up with victims, coordination of services, and education and prevention of domestic violence.

## Administrative Services

Fingerprinting	2018	2019	2020	2021
Concealed Pistol License	722	607	876	816
School Employment	86	95	34	101
Criminal Justice	69	115	93	52
Totals	877	817	1,003	969



The staff typing reports and processing documents for the courts and the Prosecutor’s Office did a great job adapting to new schedules and remote work. They prepared the records of the nearly 24,000 calls for service in 2021. They also responded to 2,538 Freedom of Information requests and processed 7,339 pistol sales records.



# Marine Patrol

2021 was a unique year with two different grants and reporting methods. In addition to the typical Marine Patrol grant the State offered a slow No-Wake grant for the purpose of providing additional patrols in certain areas. This grant was specific to high speed boating and slow no-wake enforcement on bodies of water where there are regulations in place such as state laws, local ordinances, or watercraft controls. In Allegan County these areas consisted of the Kalamazoo River, Hutchins Lake, Dumont Lake, Big Lake, Round Lake, Selkirk Lake, and Lake 16.



Slow No-Wake Violations	287
Slow No-Wake Citations	38
Slow No-Wake Warnings	224
Other Warnings	25
Total Hours	980

The Marine Patrol handled 649 boating violations in 2021. This does not include the additional 287 No-Wake Violations. This represents a 60 % increase in violations and activity over 2020.

Year	Violations
2021	649
2020	392
2019	361
2018	219



The Marine Patrol conducted 7 boating safety classes in 2021. During these classes they trained and certified 185 students. The Marine Patrol issued 83 citations during last year's boating season. This represents an enforcement by citation ratio of about 13%. The Marine Deputies focus their efforts on education either in the classroom or out on the water.



# Emergency Management

Busy year for Emergency Management. Director Corbin, his team, and the many volunteers through E.M. and the Allegan County Health Department played a key role in assisting the Public Health during the vaccination clinics held throughout the County in 2021.



EM Director Scott Corbin



Plainwell Schools Student Volunteers (set up / tear down) with Director Corbin, Commissioner Storey, Sheriff Baker, and E. M. staff



Besides our law enforcement agencies and Fire Departments, Director Corbin Coordinates and works with our Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC), Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), Allegan County Search and Rescue (ACSR), Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Radio Service (RACES), and several other volunteer organizations.



Brett Apelgren, LEPC Site Area Specialist



Trained weather spotters reported this funnel in the area of 30<sup>th</sup> Street and 142<sup>nd</sup> Avenue on October 8<sup>th</sup>. It did not touch down.



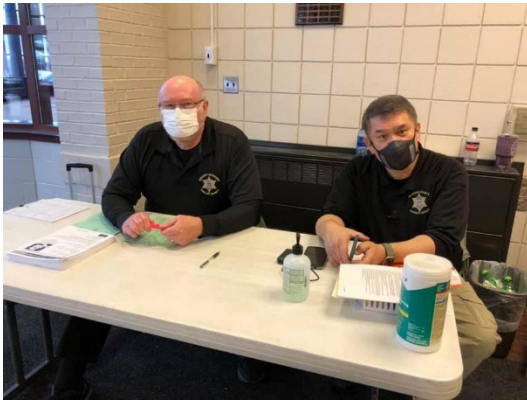
Allegan County Search and Rescue



Jim Steuer, EM Deputy



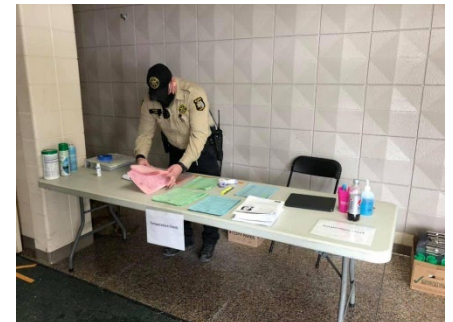
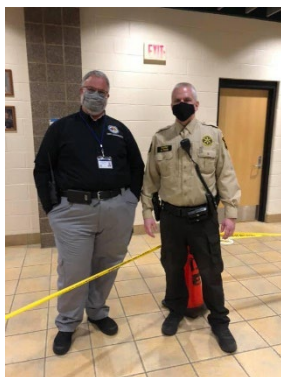
Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Graduation from ACATEC



The 2020 Eagle Award honoree was Jennifer Woodstock and 2021 Award recipient was Phil Holscher. They are pictured with our EM Director Scott Corbin at the Volunteer picnic. Congratulations Jennifer and Phil!

## Reserve Deputy Division

The Reserve Deputies put in a total of 3,452 hours last year. They provide essential services such as hospital sits with inmates, court house security, traffic control, house moves, foot patrol in Saugatuck, school events, US 131 Motorsports Park security, beach patrol, Allegan County Fair security, and other duties such as the vaccination clinics held last year. The total hours includes nearly a thousand hours of volunteer time. They volunteer to ride-along with deputies on patrol, conduct property inspections, and attend training.

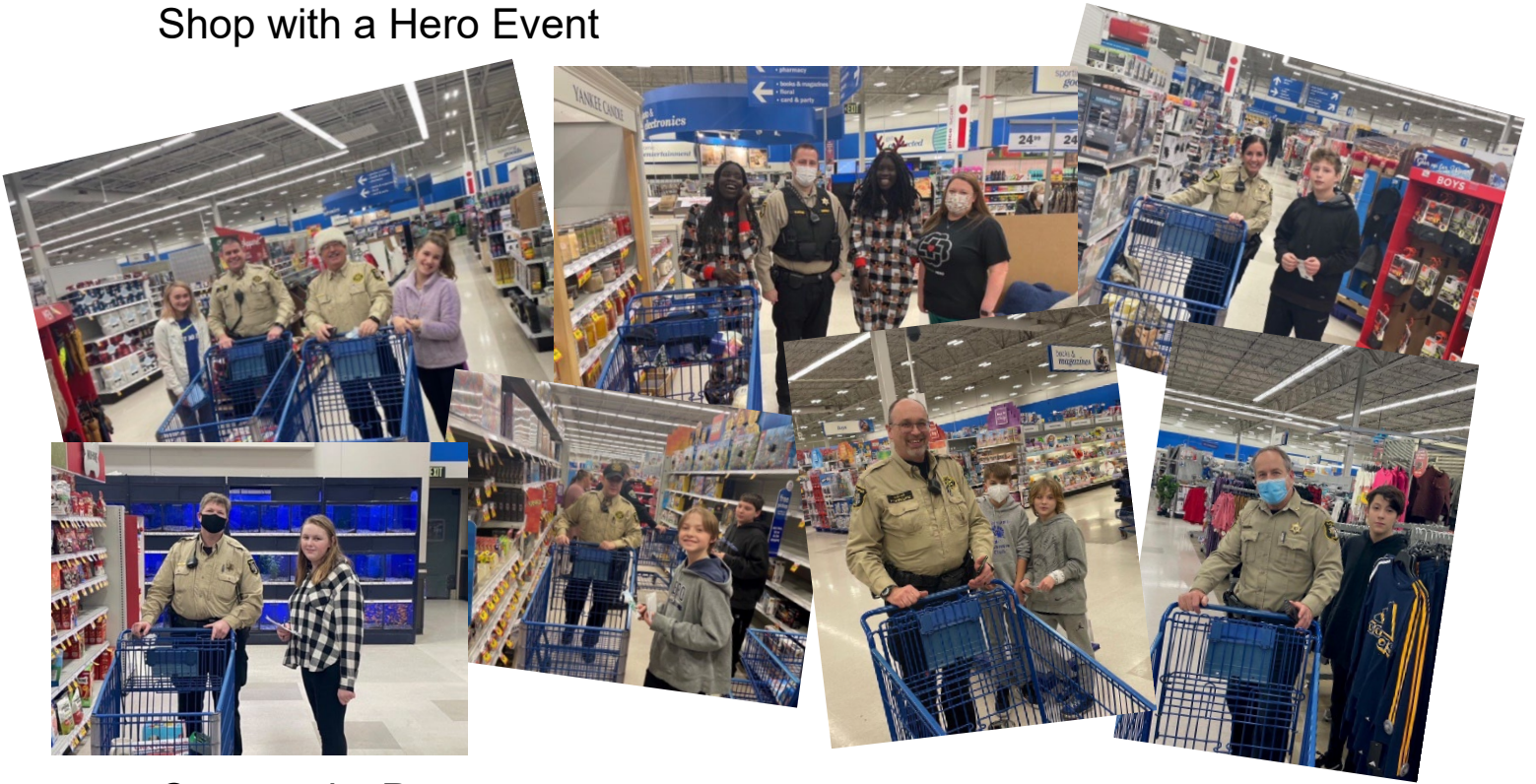


## Challenges and Looking to the Future

One of the biggest challenges in our profession is recruiting law enforcement and corrections Deputies. The policing field is seeing a reduced number of applicants and has resulted in on-going efforts by agencies to develop recruitment and retention strategies. We have worked with County Administration address to address this challenge; such as, sponsoring a cadet to attend the academy in 2022. We will continue our involvement with the regional academies to assist us in identifying and recruiting the best candidates.

Technology such as body cameras will be implemented in 2022 and we will be evaluating our first hybrid patrol vehicles. It is hoped that this could significantly impact the fuel budget in a positive way and justify the additional costs provided there are no adverse service needs.

## Shop with a Hero Event



## Community Partners (just a few of our many supporters)



The Allegan County Marine Division was the recipient of life jackets donated by Cow Hill Yacht Club and West Michigan Lakeshore Realtors in Allegan County. The life jackets were on board our boats and given to boaters who were in need. We also established life jacket stations on lakes for boaters to borrow and return. Thank you Cow Hill Yacht Club and West Michigan Lakeshore Realtors.



The Sheriff's Office would like to thank Frontier Truck Parts and the Weller Family. Harry Weller donated screen barriers to use for first responders to use at traffic crash scenes. This will make their job safer and prevent secondary crashes from distracted motorists looking at the scene. They will be staged on each side of the county.





We want to thank our friends at the Wayland Chamber of Commerce and all of the businesses that provided us a great meal during the Chambers #JustSayThanks campaign last May. We appreciate your support.



Community support is a key to success



### In Conclusion

The Sheriff's Office would like to thank the Board of Commissioners for your support over this past year. Please reach out should you have any questions, or would like more information, or are looking for something not included.

The Deputies and Staff at the Sheriff's Office would also like to thank the communities and citizens we serve for all their support.

It is honor to serve Allegan County as your sheriff and all of us at the Sheriff's Office look forward serving our communities in 2022.