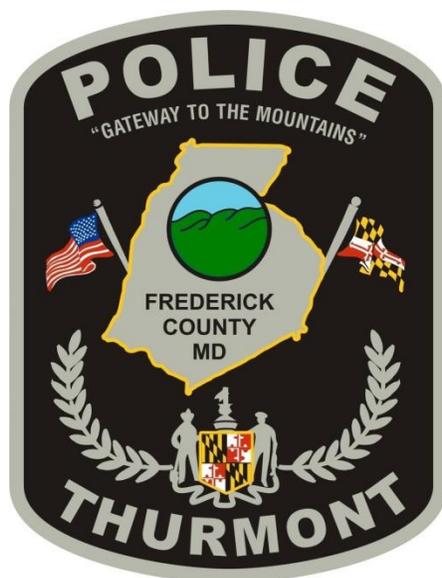


# Thurmont Police Department 2021 Annual Report

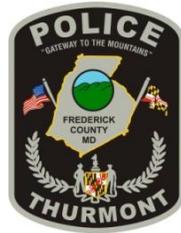


Thurmont Police Department E-Mail Address:  
[ThurmontPolice@FrederickCountyMD.gov](mailto:ThurmontPolice@FrederickCountyMD.gov)

Thurmont Police Department  
2021 Annual Report  
Colonel Gregory L. Eyster  
Chief of Police

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## **MISSION STATEMENT**

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The Thurmont Police Department is dedicated to serving the residents within the corporate limits of the Town of Thurmont. Pursuant to the protections afforded by the Constitution of the United States, we will strive to protect life and property of our citizens, and will enforce all laws of this state and local ordinances in a fair and impartial manner. In partnership with our citizens through Community Policing, we will strive to detect and prevent crime and provide the best quality of life for the citizens of Thurmont. We will promote professionalism of our employees by holding ourselves to the highest possible standard of integrity, ethics, and morals.

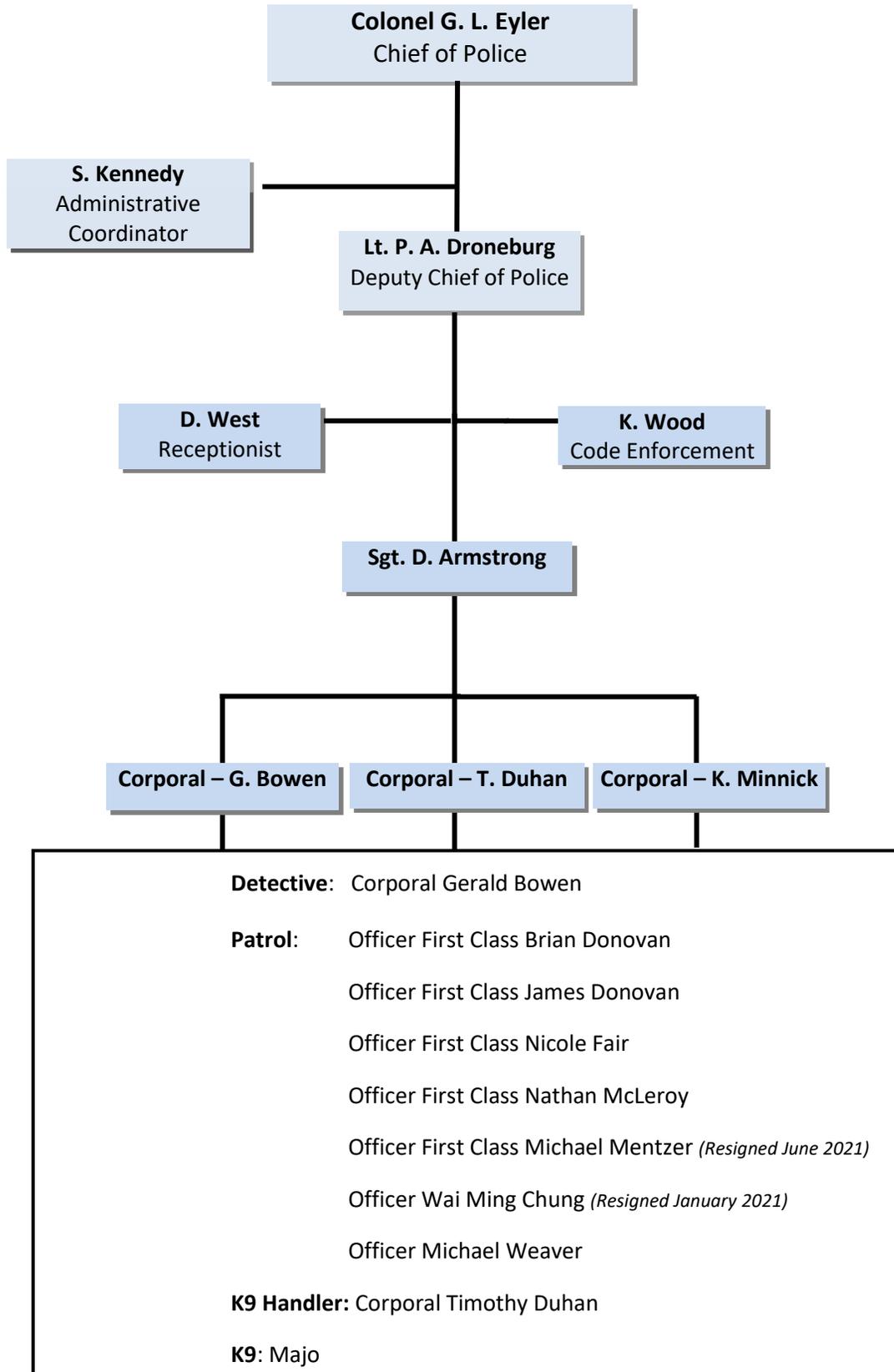
## **VISION STATEMENT**

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The Thurmont Police Department is committed to providing services that are fair, impartial, and effective while holding employees to the highest standards of efficiency, morality, and professionalism. We maintain the highest standards of law enforcement ethics and personal integrity. The Thurmont Police Department is committed to the philosophy of community policing and problem solving with those that we serve. We are responsible and accountable to each other as well as the public we serve. We believe in the concept of continuous improvement in all our endeavors, always striving to be the best we can be.

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## ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



**STAFFING:**

The Thurmont Police Department is authorized fourteen (14) sworn positions, which include the Chief of Police (Colonel), and Deputy Chief of Police (Lieutenant); as well as one (1) full-time Administrative Coordinator, one (1) full-time civilian Receptionist, and one (1) full-time Code Enforcement Officer.

The Thurmont Police Department hired one (1) new officer in 2021: Officer Michael Weaver.

<b>Position</b>	<b>Authorized</b>	<b>Actual (as of 12/31/2021)</b>
Chief of Police (Colonel)	1	1
Deputy Chief of Police (Lieutenant)	1	1
Sergeant	1	1
Corporal	2	2
Corporal/Detective	1	1
Patrol Officers	8	5
<b>Total Officers</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Civilian</b>		
Administrative Coordinator	1	1
Receptionist	1	1
Code Enforcement Officer	1	1
<b>Total Civilian</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Total Number of Employees</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>16</b>

In January, Officer Michael Weaver was sworn in as a Police Officer with the Thurmont Police Department. Officer Weaver previously served as a police officer and retired from Frederick Police Department



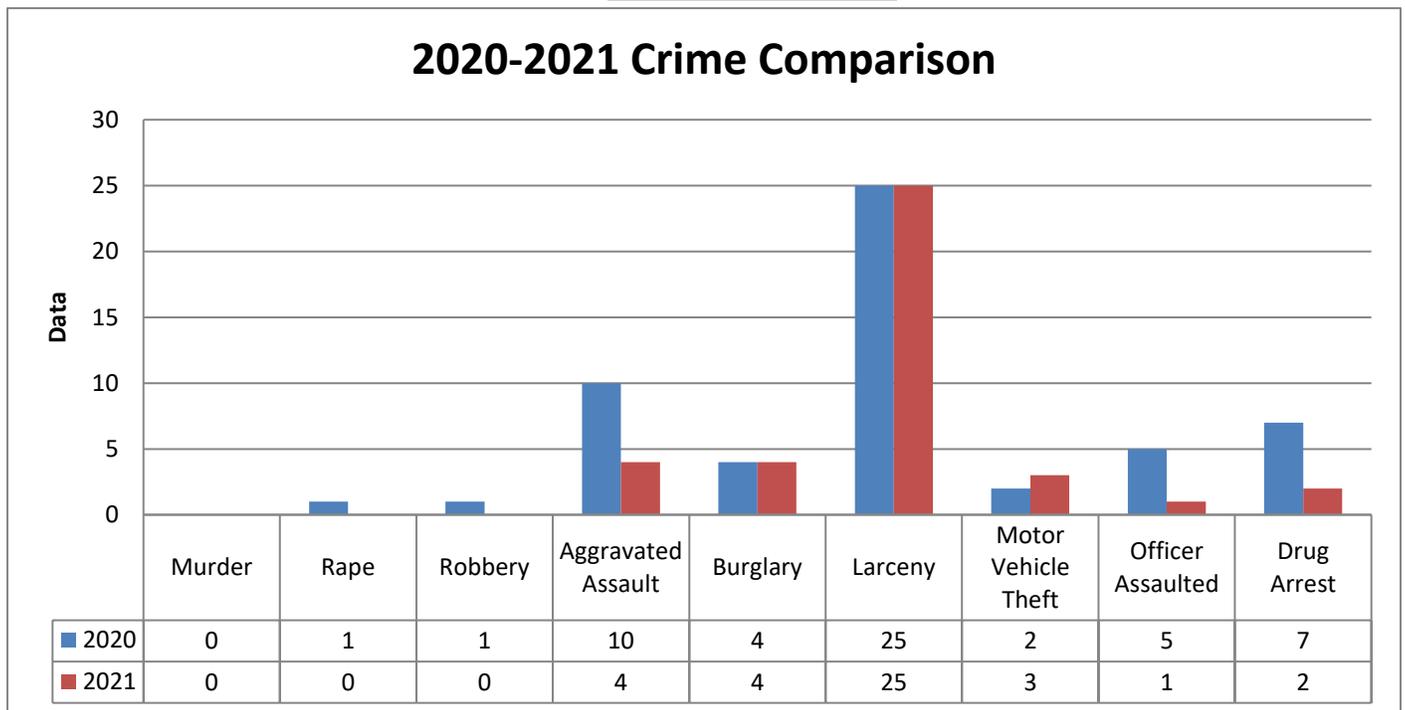
## MOUNTAIN BIKE PATROL:

The Thurmont Police Department’s Mountain Bike Unit maintains two Trek Mountain Bikes with full police packages. Both bikes are equipped with red and blue emergency lights, sirens, and a cargo bag. The lights and siren are powered by a rechargeable power pack shaped like a drink bottle that fits into a standard mounted bicycle bottle holder.

## PATROL DIVISION:

The Thurmont Police Patrol Division consists of thirteen (13) sworn Officers, including the Chief of Police, Deputy Chief of Police, one Sergeant, and three Corporals. The patrol officers rotate in their schedule to provide twenty-four (24) hour coverage seven days a week working three different shifts. The officers are the first to respond to all types of calls for service while providing an average response time of two minutes. Other than taking prompt action, the Officers are excellent at resolving conflicts while exemplifying community policing. While handling more involved or serious incidents, the patrol officer may handle the initial call for service and then refer the case to the Department’s Criminal Investigator for further investigation.

### Part 1 Crime Statistics



## TPD Annual Statistics

	2021 Total
Calls for Service (Total)	7,328
Calls for Service (Non-Traffic)	6,543
Patrol Checks	2,584
Destruction of Property	36
Criminal Citation	1
Sex Offense	1
Adult Arrests	56
Juvenile Arrests	8
DUI Arrests	5
K9 Demonstration	2
K9 Scan	2
CDS Arrests	2
Parking Citations	164
Traffic Citations	284
Traffic Camera Citations	228
Traffic Warnings	481
Total Cases Reported	442
Total Cases Closed	322**
Total Cases Open (Further Invest)	29***
Total Cases Suspended	91

\*\* Open cases from previous months that have closed are only counted in closed category.

\*\*\* Indicates number of 2021 cases that remain open since the beginning of the year.

## SIGNIFICANT CASES:



The Thurmont Police Department has one officer assigned as the Criminal Investigator. This position allows timely resolutions to involved cases. The Criminal Investigator conducts a follow-up investigation which is an extension of the initial investigation in order to obtain additional evidence/information for the identification and possible apprehension of a suspect(s). Once the investigation is completed, and a suspect is identified and charged, the investigator is responsible for preparing the case for court. The investigator also serves as the agency's liaison with the State's Attorney's Office and other allied agencies.

The following significant case of 2021 was disclosed to the citizens of Thurmont and distributed to media outlets to document police investigations that had occurred within the town limits of Thurmont.

### **July 27, 2021**

On Monday, July 26, 2021, at approximately 5:00am, the Thurmont Police responded to a residence on Sunhigh Drive for a Burglary and Assault. The responding officers learned that the mother of the residence woke to find a male neighbor in her children's bedroom hiding on the floor. After she escorted him out of the house, her children said that the neighbor had touched them inappropriately. Thurmont Police conducted an investigation and identified the male suspect as:

Jose Diaz-Rodriguez, age 21, of Sunhigh Drive, Thurmont. Mr. Rodriguez was placed under arrest and transported to the police station. Additional interviews with the mother and children provided the officers with enough information to place the following charges against Mr. Rodriguez:

- 3 charges of "Breaking and Entering";
- 2 charges of "Sex Offense"; and 2 charges of "Assault."

Mr. Rodriguez was held without Bond pending a Bond Review.

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### **2021 Scam & Fraud Cases**



This past year, the Thurmont Police Department took an increased number of fraud and scam reports. Our department sent out notifications and Facebook posts regarding common frauds and scams that have been seen in our area.

These people are criminals. Don't let them win your hard-earned money. Do not send them money or provide any account numbers. Do not go to the store and purchase money cards or gift cards as they may have instructed. If you ever think something is suspicious, contact the Thurmont Police Department or stop in to have officers check it BEFORE you send any money. Please contact us with any questions.

Additional information regarding these common scams can be found on the Thurmont Police Department's website and Facebook page.

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAMS:

The Thurmont Police Department uses several methods of informing the residents of information of interest.

**Community Alert System (CAS):** This is an e-mail based system. To join this system and to receive e-mail notices, send your name and e-mail address to:  
**ThurmontPolice@FrederickCountyMD.gov.**

**Facebook:** In March 2020, the Police Department created an official Facebook page. The page exists to provide access to information about the department and safety in the community. It also provides a platform for interaction with the department. The Facebook page is not monitored at all times and should not be used to report crimes in-progress. The Thurmont Police Department Facebook page can be found online at **www.facebook.com/ThurmontPoliceDept**

**Sign Board at Police Station:** The Thurmont Police Department had a sign board donated by a resident so the Department may place notices or messages of upcoming events.



**Bicycle Registration:** The department offers, free of charge, to anyone who wishes to have their bicycle registered. Once your bicycle is registered it is entered into a county-wide database; if your bicycle is ever lost or stolen and it is found by a member of any law enforcement agency, it can be returned to you.



## Drug/Medication Disposal:

In the lobby of the Thurmont Police Department, residents of Thurmont are able to safely dispose of their medication(s). Below is a list of what is acceptable and what is unacceptable.



Acceptable items include but are not limited to: Over the counter medication(s), medical samples, pet medications, medicated ointments and lotions, and prescription medication(s).

Items that are **not accepted** include: thermometers, IV bags, infectious waste, business medical waste, liquid medication(s), syringes (no sharps), aerosolized medication, oxygen tanks, and blood products.

## **Business Check Program:**

As part of the Department's continuing Community Policing effort, the Department offers, free of charge to all businesses, the option to register their business with the Department, giving us their business name; their address, the owner's name and phone numbers of persons to contact in case of an emergency.

## **Residential Check Program:**

Our Residential Check Program is available to all residents of the Town of Thurmont as part of our Community Policing effort. When a resident is going away for an extended period of time they can have their home placed on the Residential House Check; an officer will make checks of their home while they are away to assure their home is safe awaiting their return.

## **School Crossing Guards:**

The Town of Thurmont employs three full-time and one part-time School Crossing Guards: Faye Grimes, Eleanor Putman, Kristi Wood, and Ed Himes who handle crossing details at the following intersections:

- Summit Ave. at E. Main St.;
- Hammaker St. at E. Main St.;
- Rocky Ridge Rd. (Rt. 77) at the Primary School; and
- E. Main St. at Apples Church Rd.

The remaining school crossing guards throughout the county are funded by the County.

## **Thurmont Police Commission:**

Each holiday season, the Thurmont Police Commission puts together a fundraising drive to help families in need. Whether it's money for groceries, to pay rent, or to get a child a toy for Christmas, the goal is the same: to help someone less fortunate than yourself. The importance is not placed on who is being helped, but rather on how they can be helped. The donations are all anonymously done, with the families typically receiving the holiday gifts from local churches.

As the Thurmont Police Commission has done in the past, this year's goal was to help as many families as they could, and their success is entirely driven by donations by individuals who are able to help and the business community. The commission takes donations through November and the first week of December and will give VISA gift cards to local churches to help out during the holidays.

If you would like to donate to help out a family in need this holiday season, you can mail VISA gift cards to the Thurmont Police Department at 800 East Main Street, Thurmont, MD 21788, with attention to the Police Commission.

## Operation Chill:



Operation Chill is a partnership with 7-Eleven which is designed to enhance relationships among 7-Eleven stores, police and the youth. The program gives law enforcement the opportunity to award kids they observe doing good deeds or exhibiting positive behavior with drink coupons. The coupon is good for a free, medium Slurpee drink at any participating 7-Eleven store. The program makes it easy to interact with kids in a positive way.

## SafetyPup:

SafetyPup is part of the National Child Safety Council, who has been sent to the Town of Thurmont to promote a positive approach for children to learn safety techniques for daily life. SafetyPup is a special friend to all children who makes learning about safety issues fun, entertaining, and non-threatening. You may see SafetyPup at events with the Thurmont Police Officers or greeting children after school with a special message.



SafetyPup is also very active on the department's Facebook Page with various contests and safety tips.

- Valentine's Day Cards
  - In February 2021, SafetyPup exchanged Valentines with children in Thurmont. Everyone who sent SafetyPup a valentine was then entered into a raffle for a chance to win a sweet treat from the Thurmont Kountry Kitchen.



- Easter Egg Hunt
  - From Saturday, March 27<sup>th</sup> through Thursday, April 1<sup>st</sup>, SafetyPup held an Easter Egg Hunt in ten of the parks in the Town of Thurmont. Every child who found an egg could come to the police department to claim a prize. There were two golden eggs hidden; the children who found these eggs won the grand prize. This event was very successful and a larger egg hunt is planned for 2022.



- Teddy Bear Hunt
  - On Saturday, August 7, 2021, SafetyPup hid Teddy Bears throughout the Town of Thurmont. If a Teddy Bear was found, it was for the child to keep. One Teddy Bear with a special card was hidden and the child who found it was the winner of a special prize.
- Beach Ball Party
  - In celebration of the last weekend before school, SafetyPup held a Beach Ball Party! On Saturday, August 14, 2021, SafetyPup hid Beach Balls at some of the Thurmont Town Parks. If a beach ball was found, it was for the child to keep. Children who found a special world globe, sports, or USA beach ball, could bring it to the Thurmont Police Department for a prize.
- SafetyPup's Halloween Safety Tips
  - Each day during the week leading up to Halloween, a safety tip from SafetyPup was posted on the Department's Facebook page. These tips included safe and comfortable costume considerations, seatbelt safety, and reminders on how to be a safe pedestrian while trick or treating.

- Where is SafetyPup: 12 Days of Christmas
  - Each day during the twelve days leading up to Christmas, Monday, December 13, 2021 - Friday, December 24, 2021, Thurmont Police staff posted a photo of SafetyPup somewhere in the Town of Thurmont. The first child to correctly identify the location of SafetyPup won a prize. Additionally, every child who correctly commented the location gained one entry into an overall drawing. At the end of the 12 days, a drawing was held and three children each won a gift certificate to Gateway Market and Candyland.



## Toys 4 Tots

This year, the police department was an official Marine Toys for Tots Foundation drop-off site. From November through the beginning of December, our department collected donations of new, unwrapped toys. We were able to donate two full bins of new toys!



## Shred Event:

There were three Community Shred Events held throughout 2021. The events were held on April 24<sup>th</sup>, June 26<sup>th</sup>, and September 25<sup>th</sup>. The Thurmont Police Department, Town of Thurmont, and Woodsboro Bank co-sponsor these events. The Community Shred Events not only allows the public to securely dispose of confidential documents. It also supports our local food bank. We would like to thank our co-sponsor Woodsboro Bank, the Town of Thurmont, the Thurmont Police Commission, and Mayor Kinnaird for helping with all three events.



## AUTOMATED SPEED CAMERA:

In 2019, the town of Thurmont launched its automated speed monitoring program in an effort to decrease drivers' speeds in school zones throughout the Town. The Town's primary goal is to provide consistent enforcement to make our streets safer for our children, citizens, and motorists.

An automated speed enforcement system (ASE) is an enforcement technique with one or more motor vehicle sensors producing recorded images of motor vehicles traveling at speeds above a defined threshold. Images captured by the system are processed and reviewed in an office environment and violation notices are mailed to the registered owner of the identified vehicle.



The following are monthly statistics for the number of violations captured by the ASE in 2021:

<u>Month</u>	<u>Number of Violations</u>
January	25
February	27
March	22
April	26
May	8
June	16
July	27
August	24
September	18
October	16
November	1
December	18
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>228</b>

## CODE ENFORCEMENT SECTION:



The Code Enforcement Section was created in 2008 and is staffed by a full-time employee. The Code Enforcement Officer patrols the Town looking for possible code violations as well as answering calls and e-mails of possible Code violations. There is a continued effort of reviewing and revising the Codes of the Town of Thurmont. The Code Enforcement Officer does not have jurisdiction over zoning matters and does not handle cases involving wild animals. Any questions regarding zoning matters, the safety of a building, and the condition of the streets and or sidewalks are handled by the Zoning Inspector at the Town Office.

The total amount of code enforcement cases handled for 2021 are 242.  
30 of those cases had more than one complaint.

The following is a breakdown of the type of violations reported:

Complaint Type	# of Violations	Complaint Type	# of Violations
Tall Grass/Weeds	82	Uncovered/Untagged Vehicles	36
Trash	35	Premise ID	21
Bush/Tree/Shrub Overhang Street	17	Dog Feces	7
Past Due Citations	6	Loose Dog	5
Yard Waste	5	Sign on Pole	4
Grass in Street	3	Sign Down	3
Sports Equipment in Street	3	Bagged Grass on Curb	2
Bush/Tree/Shrub Overgrown	2	Feces Odor	2
Feeding Feral Cats	2	Livestock Complaint	2
Loose Chicken	2	Outdoor Storage	2
Property Check	2	Sports Equipment on Street	2
Trailer on Street	2	Vehicles Parked in Yard	2
Boat on Street	1	Building Structure Inquiry	1
Cats in Yard	1	Damage Sidewalk	1
Dead Tree	1	Digital Sign Broken	1
Dirt/Mud on Street	1	Fallen Tree	1
Horse Manure on Sidewalk	1	Items on Sidewalk	1
Mail Delivery Complaint	1	Night Club in House	1
Open Burn	1	Overgrown Shrubs in Neighbors Yard	1
Parking Inquiry	1	Pool Inquiry	1
Position of Drain Spout	1	Pothole	1
Shrubs Block Street View	1	Snow on Sidewalk	1
Tree Complaint	1	Tree Limbs Block Sign	1
Tree Limbs in Bag	1	Trespassing	1
Yard Waste Site Inquiry	1		
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>272</b>

The following is a breakdown of the source of the complaints for the year 2021:

Source of Complaint	Number
Code Enforcement Officer	134
Resident	94
Town Employee	5
Homeowner	4
LT	1
Mayor	1
CAO	1
Mortgage Company	1
Real-estate Agent	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>242</b>

The following is a breakdown of how the complaints were closed for the year 2021:

How Complaint Closed	Number
Owner Complied	170
No Violation	16
Reminder Letter	10
Pending	8
Citation Reminder Letter	6
Inquiry Answered	6
Code Officer Removed	4
Referred to TPD Officer	4
Contacted MDOT	3
Referred to Town Employee	3
Closed per Chief	2
Corrected by Town	2
Referred to FCAC	2
Unfounded	2
Closed per Complainant	1
Corrected by MDOT	1
No Resolution	1
Town Mowed	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>242</b>

The following is a disposition breakdown of the seven citations issued for the year 2021.

Citation	Referred to Attorney	Paid	Non Payment	Paid Prior to Court	Plea Guilty or Not Guilty	Paid After Court
1			X			
2			X			
3			X			
4			X			
5			X			
6			X			
7			X			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

## TECHNOLOGY:

**E-TIX:** The Department is always trying to update its technology, as its budget permits. Each police vehicle has an E-Tix device. E-Tix allows the officer to see how many times a person has been stopped by any participating agency. With E-Tix the officer can issue a traffic citation, warning or a safety equipment repair order in a short amount of time.



**In-Car Video:** Some patrol vehicles are equipped with an In-Car Video which will record an event as it occurs, which can be used in court as evidence. As well as recording what is occurring in front of the vehicle, it has the capability of recording the behavior of a prisoner seated in the rear of the cruiser. The purpose of the In-Car Video is twofold; officer safety as well as protecting suspects.



**Mobile Data Terminals (MDT's):** Each patrol vehicle is equipped with a Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) which allows the officer to stay in contact with the Frederick County Emergency Communication Center (Dispatch). It also provides them with an active map of the entire County which would allow them to use it as a GPS if necessary. The officer can receive calls from Dispatch via the MDT as well as complete their paperwork from their vehicle, such as an accident report.

**License Plate Reader (LPR):** Enhances law enforcement's ability to spot vehicles tied to investigations and other infractions. In return, it helps solve cases and deter crime. In 2018, TPD applied for a Homeland Security Grant to obtain an additional LPR for patrol and successfully was awarded one.



**Automatic External Defibrillator (AED):** The Thurmont Police Department received a donation of five AED units from a private source for use by the officers in the cruisers while on patrol. Since there are not enough units for each patrol vehicle; a unit is signed out at the beginning of the officer's shift and returned at the end. Every employee of the Department has received training in the proper use of the AED.



**Preliminary Breath Test (PBT):** The Department utilizes Preliminary Breath Test (PBT) units as a tool to assist officers in determining if a suspected driver is in fact driving under the influence of alcohol. They also use Standardized Field Sobriety Tests (SFST), where a suspect is put through a series of standardized field tests to assist the officer in making his decision whether to place the suspected intoxicated driver under arrest.

**Narcan:** Thurmont Police Department personnel have received training provided by the Frederick County Health Department to administer Naloxone through the Overdose Response Program. Naloxone is a fast-acting opiate antagonist used in emergency medicine to rapidly reverse opiate-related sedation and respiratory depression. Naloxone is marketed under various trademarks including "Narcan," "Nalone," and "Narcanti." Narcan is a scheduled drug but has no euphoric properties and minimal side effects. If it is administered to a person who is not suffering an opiate overdose, it will do no harm. During an opiate overdose, a patient may suffer a disruption in normal breathing. In some cases, breathing may stop altogether, quickly leading to death. Law Enforcement often arrives on scene of overdoses before EMS personnel. The administration of Narcan by trained Law Enforcement officers will help save lives.



## ANNUAL TOWN EVENTS:

### **The 57th Annual Catoctin Colorfest:**



The 57th annual Colorfest was held on the weekend of October 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>. The Thurmont Police staffed this event, as it has in the past with officers working modified shifts, which resulted in a limited amount of overtime being spent to staff this event. With a reported crowd for the two-day event of over 100,000 visitors, there were no major events, which resulted in an enjoyable event for vendors and visitors alike.

### **2021 Guardian Hose Fireman's Parade and Carnival:**



The Guardian Hose Fire Company's carnival returned for 2021. Unfortunately, the parade was cancelled this year. Throughout the week of the carnival, the Department provides extra officers to patrol the carnival grounds and surrounding area.

### **National Night Out:**



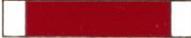
Unfortunately, as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic, National Night Out was canceled for 2021.

## RECOGNITION & AWARDS:

### **7<sup>th</sup> Safest City in Maryland**

In 2021, Thurmont was ranked by SafeWise as the 7th Safest City in Maryland due to its commitment to the safety and security of its residents.



Life-Saving Award: 

**Ofc. Brian Donovan received two Life-Saving Awards in 2021.**

The Life Saving Award is given to Officers of The Thurmont Police who, during the course of their duty, comes to the aid of a citizen and saves their life. For their actions to preserve each person's individual life, these officers received the Thurmont Police Department's Life-Saving Award.

## Letters of Acknowledgement from the Chief:

### Presented to:

Sgt. David Armstrong, Cpl. Gerald Bowen, Cpl. Kyle Minnick, Ofc. Brian Donovan, Ofc. James Donovan, Ofc. Nicole Fair, Off. Nathan McLeroy, and Off. Michael Weaver for their outstanding performance in the handling of a suspicious death investigation that occurred April 12, 2021. During the course of the investigation, these officers displayed dedication to duty, professionalism, perseverance, and work ethic that is a great reflection upon the Thurmont Police Department. They played a crucial part in the successful outcome of the investigation. Congratulations on their achievement.

## Certificate of Valor:

**Ofc. Brian Donovan was presented with a Certificate of Valor by the Maryland State Police.**

In August 2021, Ofc. Donovan and a Maryland State Trooper responded to a report of an armed, suicidal male in Catoctin Mountain Park. Ofc. Donovan and the Trooper were able to successfully locate, disarm, and provide medical assistance to the injured subject until emergency medical personnel arrived. This certificate was presented to Ofc. Donovan for his outstanding performance under the most stressful circumstances and without regard for his own safety.



## Officer of the Year:



This year, the nomination for Officer of the Year was: *Sergeant. David Armstrong*. Sergeant Armstrong was recognized as Officer of the Year by the Thurmont Lions Club.



### Sergeant David Armstrong

Sergeant Dave Armstrong joined the Thurmont Police Department in 2012, after retiring from the Frederick Police Department. Sgt. Armstrong has proven to be an asset to the Thurmont Police Department since the day he began. After serving in Patrol and as a First Line Supervisor, Sgt. Armstrong was promoted to the rank of Sergeant in 2018. His service has been exemplary. He has responded to numerous call-outs for death investigations and other significant criminal investigations. His work ethic has been outstanding.

In January 2021, Sgt. Armstrong received a compliment from a citizen; (excerpt): *"The sergeant then took it upon himself to look for my daughter as a missing person (as she had fled the scene) and once he found her he took her to the hospital. I did not expect the professionalism and great concern for everyone's safety that the officer provided."*

Sgt. Armstrong assumed the role as the agency's Training Coordinator after being promoted and has developed a Time Line for all mandated training. During this past year, he attended numerous training sessions to improve his knowledge and to better serve the agency. In May 2021, Sgt. Armstrong completed a De-escalation Training Course so he could be an instructor for the agency.

In July 2021, Sgt. Armstrong received a Letter of Acknowledgement from Chief Eyler for his outstanding performance in handling a suspicious death investigation. Additionally, in July 2021, Sgt. Armstrong nominated a citizen for a Certificate of Appreciation for their assistance with a young female found walking along a roadway. This nomination enhanced community involvement and recognition.

During this past year, Sgt. Armstrong became an advocate for the skateboarding youth in Town and was instrumental in assisting them with their presentation to the Board of Commissioners, which led to the construction of the Skate Park.

In October 2021, Sgt. Armstrong worked with the agency's Administrative Coordinator to prepare for a significant CJIS Audit. Their combined effort provided the agency with one of the best Audit Evaluations ever received.

Sgt. Armstrong provides daily supervisory leadership for the officers. His service to the Thurmont Police Department projects a professional image to the community with efficient and quality police service.