

To our Highway Patrol Family,

By now, we have all heard the news release indicating Trooper Josh Risner allegedly had a blood alcohol level of .08 when he lost control of his patrol car, resulting in the death of himself, Sergeant Dale Holcomb, and Lori Smith. We were all shocked when this information was released. While we are not experts, there appear to be substantial problems with these conclusions. As professional law enforcement officers, we all understand the importance of the presumption of innocence in criminal cases. Unfortunately, it appears this standard has been ignored in this case. We offer the following points in defense of our friend and coworker.

1. Trooper Risner reported directly to the post at the beginning of his shift and spoke at length with two other Troopers. Both of these Troopers are highly skilled at detecting people under the influence of alcohol and or drugs. Neither Trooper noticed anything unusual about Josh. Both of the Troopers spent over one hour with Josh in the dispatch area of the post. Anyone who has visited a patrol post knows what a confined area this is. We also know both Troopers very well and have no doubts that if they suspected something was wrong, Josh would not have left the Patrol Post.

2. If Josh had a blood alcohol level of .08 at the time of his death, he would have been a conservative .15 test at the beginning of his shift. Again, no one noticed this while talking with Josh.

3. Another Trooper assigned to the Gallipolis Patrol Post spent a large portion of his shift visiting with Josh at a rest area later in his shift. It is unlikely that Josh would have been sitting around drinking alcohol while visiting with another Trooper.

4. Josh also spent time with a Gallia County Deputy. He has confirmed he spent at least thirty minutes visiting with Josh and did not notice any signs of impairment.

5. Josh volunteered to pick up Sergeant Dale Holcomb and bring him to work. Dale has over twenty years of service to the Division and has arrested more impaired drivers than most of us ever will. We firmly believe that Dale would have noticed immediately if Josh was under the influence. There is no doubt that if Dale suspected Josh had been drinking, Josh would not have been driving the patrol car. In fact, he would have been a back seat passenger, wearing handcuffs, enroute for test! We can also tell you Josh was not stupid enough to volunteer to pick up Dale if he was or had been drinking.

6. The news reports fail to emphasize that two blood samples were taken from Josh. The first was taken during the same day as the crash from a major artery. It tested .000. The second sample was taken at least 2 1/2 days later from Josh's chest cavity or heart. This is the sample that allegedly tested .08. Keep in mind the difference in time and the fact that Josh's remains had been at two different funeral homes and a local high school prior to being transported to another facility for the autopsy. Again, we are not experts, but there seems to be some sort of problem here.

7. As Troopers, Sergeants, and Dispatchers, we have all spent a lot of time working with Josh. We have spent countless hours with Josh and have never noticed any signs of drinking while he was on duty. This includes being in confined office spaces, supervisor ride alongs in a patrol car, and "gripe and

gossip sessions" in the radio room. If any one of us had even suspected Josh was ever under the influence while working, it would have been addressed.

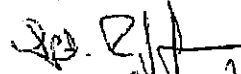
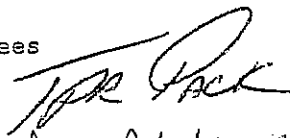


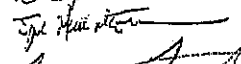


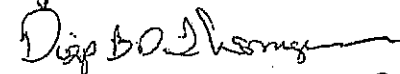
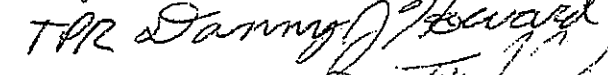
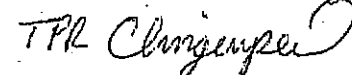
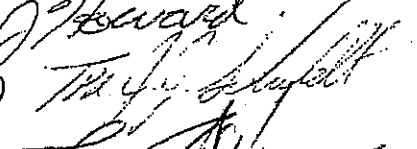

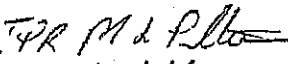
8. We strongly believe that Josh would never allow himself to come to work if he had been drinking. We are not attempting to make excuses or trying to cover anything up, we are just trying to pass along information that was not released by the media or the Division. We also want to point out that there was no investigation of the alleged drinking prior to the media release. We are asking everyone to keep an open mind. We find it unfortunate that the above facts did not appear in the news release. To our knowledge, none of the above facts were checked or verified prior to the media release. Once the Division's investigation into "when, where, and how, Trooper Josh Risner was able to consume alcohol while on duty" is complete, we are confident his good name will be restored.

Fortunately, this past May, Josh made the decision to turn his life over to Christ. He was excited about his salvation and shared his faith on a regular basis. It is a relief to know Josh is in a far better place now.

In conclusion, the Gallipolis Post Family greatly appreciates all of the calls, cards, and support we have been given during this terrible time.

Respectfully,

Gallipolis Post Employees

	
	Disp. P.A. Weaver
	TPR. S.A. [unclear]
	
	TPR. A.A. Jordan
	TPR. Nick [unclear]
	
	
SGT. B.L. CALL	
	TPR. D. G. [unclear]
