

**By Carolyn Lee**

***The Imperial Republican***

The presence of the Nebraska State Patrol in Imperial has been reduced to one trooper, following the transfer of Trooper Jeffrey W. Dunton to Troop E in Sidney.

According to Capt. Jim Parish of the State Patrol in North Platte, the 23-year old began working in Sidney the first of December. He had been assigned to the Imperial area in late July, 2006.

His wife, the former Christine Hagan, had lived in Imperial until 1997.

Capt. Parish said, "Trooper Dunton will be replaced when we get a new training camp." Typically, it takes six months to advertise for a position opening, and six months for a recruit to go through basic training.

Therefore, Capt. Parish said, it could be a year before another trooper is located in Imperial. Trooper Dan Thompson is currently the only state patrolman now living in town.

Capt. Parish noted that the State Patrol will be receiving economic stimulus money for new job training. That will hopefully fund a training camp in the future.

"Imperial is a critical, and important, place for a second trooper," he stated, adding "We've really been able to do some things in Imperial and impact the fatality figures."

He said that before two troopers were assigned to Imperial, troopers out of McCook had to cover the area, which had "fatality issues" at the time, especially among youths and driving accidents.

"Imperial is an absolutely perfect place for us to put people," Capt. Parish concluded.