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Sidewalk spectators pay solemn respects

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Starting as just a glimmer of lights in the distance, the procession steadily made its way toward the pockets of people lining Lancaster Avenue in Shillington.

Led by a pack of police motorcycles and trailed by more than 400 police cars, ambulances and other vehicles, the gray hearse carrying fallen Deputy Sheriff Kyle D. Pagerly moved through the borough Wednesday afternoon on its way to the Spring Township Fire Department.

There were American flags and salutes. There were signs thanking Pagerly for his service.

But mostly there were solemn faces, watching intently as a fallen hero passed by.

Pagerly was killed in the line of duty June 29 in Albany Township. On Wednesday, the community - both from Berks County and the larger family of law enforcement - gathered to say goodbye.

Following a service at the Sovereign Center, a procession wound its way through the city, south to Shillington and then back north to Spring Township.

Dozens of people gathered in Shillington to witness the procession, which stretched out in a seemingly endless line of flashing red and blue lights.

Most said they didn't know Pagerly, but came simply to pay their respects.

"We're just trying to show support for him," said Glenn Kraft, who erected a homemade sign outside his Lancaster Avenue business thanking Pagerly. "It's such a tragedy."

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Tracy Demello, Shillington, said a sense of responsibility drew her to the sidewalk in front of Gov. Mifflin Middle School.

"It's just a miserable situation," she said. "This is the least I could do to show my support."

Emily Renkin, 12, also of Shillington, said Pagerly's death will be felt throughout Berks County.

"It's sad," she said. "He worked so hard. He did a lot for the community."

Contact David Mekeel: 610-371-5014 or dmekeel@readingeagle.com.

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Glenn Kraft holds his homemade sign supporting slain Deputy Sheriff Kyle D. Pagerly as the funeral procession passes Kraft's business, Kraft Code Services LLC, on Lancaster Avenue in Shillington.

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