

InForce

A quarterly publication of the Berks County Sheriff's Office

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Winter 2014

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"Making a Difference"

A Message from Sheriff Eric J. Weaknecht

It's a common goal for those in law enforcement to find effective ways to work together for the betterment of communities. Law enforcement officials often call upon each other to

assist beyond boundary lines that separate city from county, county from state, and state from

federal agencies. The Berks County Sheriff's Office, for example, often assists local police departments with security, community events and compliance checks of individuals

on probation; we work with the county District Attorney's office to conduct

fugitive roundups designed to get drug dealers and other criminals

off the street, and we have partnered with the U.S. Marshals

Task Force to locate and arrest fugitives in and outside

county and state lines.

Most recently, members of the Berks County Sheriff's Office K-9 Division and deputies assigned to BCERT (Berks County Emergency Response Team) joined hundreds of federal, state and local law enforcement in the hunt for the shooting suspect accused of killing one State Police Trooper and injuring another this past September. On two separate occasions during the weeks-long manhunt, Berks County Sheriff Deputies and K-9s traveled to the remote area of Canadensis, Monroe County, Pennsylvania to search for the fugitive who allegedly ambushed Corporal Bryon Dickson and Trooper Alex Douglass. Dickson died from a lethal gunshot wound.

Berks County Deputies worked 12-15 hour days in pursuit of the fugitive who remained on the run for over 7 weeks. He was captured on October 30, 2014.

We are proud to assist whenever called and were prepared to continue the search in the Poconos for as long as was needed.



**BERKS COUNTY
SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

*Stars Of
The Quarter*

 **Deputy Sheriff Kevin Freed**

 **Deputy Sheriff Troy Wolf**

 **Deputy Sheriff Scott Henry**

 **Deputy Sheriff Phil Bentz**

 **Deputy Sheriff Ryan Swartz**

The Berks County Sheriff's Office recognizes the team of deputies who assisted in the manhunt in the Pocono Mountains for the suspect charged in the ambush of two Pennsylvania State Troopers this past September. The suspect allegedly killed Corporal Bryon Dickson and seriously injured Trooper Alex Douglass.

Berks Deputy Sheriff teams twice traveled to the remote mountain area in Pennsylvania to join other state and federal law enforcement officers in the search for the fugitive who was eventually captured by U.S. Marshals on October 30, 2014.

Please see page 2 for details.



The National Sheriffs' Association on Immigration Page 3

Cabela's

Hosts "Your Right to Carry" Presented by Sheriff Weaknecht Page 4

Happy New Year 2015

The Berks County Sheriff's Office wishes you a Safe and Prosperous New Year

Deputy Sheriffs Joined the Hunt for Elusive Gunman



Deputy Sheriff (K-9) Kevin Freed



Deputy Sheriff (K-9) Scott Henry



Deputy Sheriff (K-9) Troy Wolf



Deputy Sheriff (BCERT) Phil Bentz



Deputy Sheriff (BCERT) Ryan Swartz

Hundreds of local, federal, and state officers joined the hunt for the elusive gunman who shot and killed one Pennsylvania State Trooper and severely injured another on September 12, 2014 outside the Blooming Grove State Police barracks in Pennsylvania. Berks County Sheriff K-9 deputies, Kevin Freed, Scott Henry and Troy Wolf, and deputies assigned to the Berks County Emergency Response Team (BCERT), Phil Bentz and Ryan Swartz, were alternately assigned to travel to the wooded Pocono area to help in the search.

Deputies Freed and Henry (first assigned) and Deputy Troy Wolf (second assigned) say they were worried about more than being shot. The suspect was termed a “survivalist,” someone who knows how to survive in the wild and, in this case, someone also known to be a skilled marksman. Survivalists who commit a crime often do so with a plan. The plan might include luring law enforcement into booby traps such as trip wires and pipe bombs. The term “sitting duck” is often used by law enforcement when searching out in open areas, especially for someone they believed to be fully armed and an expert marksman.

All law enforcement are aware of the dangers of the job. But few understand what it’s like to personally know and work with another officer killed in the line of duty. Deputy Wolf, during the long 90 minute ride to join in the search (on the second assignment), could not help reliving the horrible reminders the night his friend and partner, Deputy Kyle Pagerly, was ambushed and killed over three years ago. Would they all be walking into an ambush like his friend, Kyle?

All fears had to be pushed to the back of the mind when on site and assigned to a team of fellow officers, all common in profession and training, but strangers to each other. Zones were established and boundaries identified. First shift and second shifts blurred. Squads A, B and C (75 to 100 per), searching houses, bungalows and any outside structure -- Reports of legitimate hunters in the way; lack of communication and information -- False reports, false sightings and false findings. Just a great big area with low-lying brush so dense that Deputy Henry at times had to carry K-9 Storm over and above it.

Two BCERT deputies, not present when Freed and Henry were first assigned, joined the search on the second assignment. “Although we are all law enforcement and assigned to squads,” Henry said, “we felt pretty alone that first time.” Freed and Wolf agree that having BCERT Deputies Bentz and Swartz with them for the second go-round made them feel like less of a target. The fugitive could, after all, be behind the next tree, or up in it – rifle scope aimed “on one of us,” said Wolf.

Each K-9 team experienced the feeling of being “on the edge of capture” as each was involved in a search of grounds or structures following evidence that indicated the cop killer “was either there or had recently been there.” The fugitive at times seemed to have disappeared into the dense thickness of the Pocono Mountains and at other times seemed to be taunting law enforcement by allowing himself to be seen, a kind of “catch me if you can” game.

It was mentally and physically exhausting for them and for their K-9s, Blitz, Storm and Rökk. All water each could carry was for their K-9 partners. Working 10-15 hour days, and with the weight of extra equipment, . . . “Adrenalin is what keeps you going,” they all said, (for them and their K-9s). In fact, K-9 Rökk, dubbed “The Beast” by other law enforcement, was noted by Wolf as having so much adrenalin that he seemed to have a different personality up there. “He was just wired,” says Wolf.

The experience was one each K-9 deputy says he would do again. Each says he learned a lot -- about working in a different type of environment, about himself, and about other law enforcement. Their only regret? Not being in on the actual capture of a cop killer.



A Message from the National Sheriffs' Association on Immigration

Sheriffs around the country marched on the nation's capital December 10 hoping to send a message to President Obama and Congress that they oppose amnesty for illegal immigrants and to reiterate demands to secure the border.

history. We are elected by the people, and we answer directly to the people who we are sworn to serve and protect.

"Unfortunately, a patchwork of laws and inconsistent messaging from our Federal government has caused problems to increase all over the nation.

"In 2011, the National Sheriffs' Association released its first position Paper on Comprehensive Immigration Reform outlining three primary areas of concern:

- Border security
- Workplace verification
- Pathway to legal employment and status

"Sheriffs are uniquely aware of the threat to public safety posed by the problems along our borders. And while sheriffs recognize that most individuals come into this country to make a better life for themselves and their families, there are those who illegally enter this country as fugitives on the run or with dangerous ties to terrorist cells and international crime syndicates. It is those individuals who pose the greatest danger to our communities and our citizens.

"As an organization, the National Sheriffs' Association will continue to support and encourage all sheriffs of this country to fully participate in the discussion of immigration reform in their communities, their state capitols and in Washington, DC."

Sheriff Carolyn Welsh of Chester County attended the march as a representative of all sheriffs in Pennsylvania.

Per the National Sheriffs' Association:

"The National Sheriffs' Association has long been a leader on the issue of comprehensive immigration reform. Our nation's more than 3,000 sheriffs have seen the devastating impact of the broken immigration system in our communities for far too long.

"Sheriffs across this nation hold a noble and honorable office that is rich in



Chester County Sheriff, Carolyn "Bunny" Welsh

Kyle Pagerly Explorer Post #027 Third Annual Banquet

Explorer Zachary Loeb was named Explorer of the Year at the third annual Kyle Pagerly Explorer Post #027 awards banquet held December 16 at Stokesay Castle in Reading. Zachary began as an Explorer the second year the Post was active. He also received an award for perfect attendance for attending every monthly meeting, including a week of consecutive instruction this past July. Zachary plans to continue with the Post in 2015.

Kiansi Freytiz, a first year Explorer, was acknowledged with the Chief Deputy Participation Award for not only attending every monthly meeting and block week of instruction, but also for attending every office and community outreach event, but for one. Other Explorers receiving awards were Tyler Shriver (Community Service), Bryce Johnson (Fitness for Duty) and Sahara Randall (Most Improved). A special thanks to Berks County Register of Wills Larry Medaglia, who emceed the event again this year. Chief Bryant Semenza (former Supervisory Deputy in the U.S. Marshals Service and keynote speaker), spoke about transitions, in life and in career, and the need to be both mentally and physically prepared for the known and unknown events in life that often take us down different paths than what we may intend.

The Berks County Sheriff's Office thanks Stokesay Castle for contributing

towards the costs of this year's banquet. Also appreciated are the families of the Explorers who not only contribute toward the cost of hosting this memorable event, but support their children and the program the entire year.



Sheriff Weaknecht with Explorer of the Year, Zachary Loeb. Sergeant John Parsons and Deputy Chris Gorel are Advisors with the Post.

Learning for Life partners with thousands of businesses and organizations to provide "real-world" career experiences to young men and women through its Exploring programs.

Berks County Sheriff Eric J. Weaknecht will present

“YOUR RIGHT TO CARRY”



Cabela's

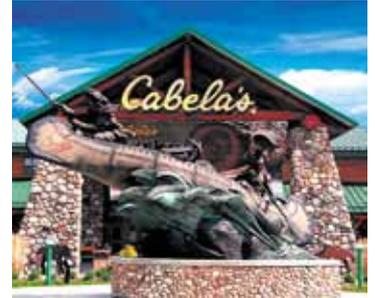
WORLD'S FOREMOST OUTFITTER

100 Cabela Drive, Hamburg, PA 19526

Saturday, February 7, 2015 @ Noon

Sunday, February 8, 2015 @ Noon

NO REGISTRATION REQUIRED



This free seminar is on firearm laws and regulations and will be followed by a question and answer session. Rules regarding carrying and your license to carry firearms, safety, reciprocity, and upcoming legislation will be covered.

Thank You

Bosco's

Bosco's permitted members of the Berks County Sheriff's Office K-9 Teams and Explorer Post to sell K-9 hats, t-shirts and sweatshirts in December at its store in Wyomissing. Proceeds from the sale of K-9 merchandise benefit the Friends of the Berks County Sheriff K-9!



And the Winner is...

A popular item auctioned off at this year's Friends of the Berks County Sheriff K-9 picnic was a "Ride to Work or School with a K-9." The auctioned item raised the most money for the annual fundraiser which benefits the BCSO K-9 Division. Chase Moyer, a 4th grader in the Brandywine School District and winner of the "Ride to School with a K-9," immediately picked Blitz when asked which K-9 team would be driving him to school! Other items up for auction included K-9 merchandise and a variety of items donated by office employees.

The day's events also included all-you-could eat hamburgers, hotdogs and French fries catered by Spuds Restaurant in Kutztown and K-9 demonstrations by the explosives, narcotics and cell phone K-9 teams.



Chase Moyer, bottom right, won the "Ride to School with a K-9," an item up for auction at the Friends of the Berks County Sheriff K-9 picnic this past September. Brother Zachary and parents Peter and Andrea Moyer are also pictured above with Deputy Kevin Freed and K-9 Blitz

To become a member of the Friends of the Berks County Sheriff K-9, download the membership form from www.countyof-berks.com/sheriff. Gold membership includes two tickets to next year's K-9 picnic in September, 2015.

Safety Tips

Staying Safe While Staying Warm

Record lows temperatures were set across the country last winter, and another record-low winter is forecast this year. For some, extremely cold weather presents concerns beyond higher monthly utility bills. Those wishing to offset the bitter hike in heating costs may resort to using those stored-away portable heating devices from attics and basements or find a used bargain from a second-hand store. Others may rely on their indoor fireplaces. The risk of a house fire and carbon monoxide poisoning increases when space heaters and fireplaces are used to stay warm.

The Berks County Sheriff's Office wants you to remember the following tips so that you can stay safe while you stay warm:

- Be sure portable heaters have an automatic safety shut-off switch and never leave children or pets unattended in rooms with portable heaters.
- Never use generators, grills, camp stoves or similar devices indoors.



- Use only the type of fuel your heater is designed to use – don't substitute.
- Never use space heaters to dry flammable items such as clothing or blankets.
- Keep all flammable objects at least three feet from space heaters and fireplaces.
- Never place a space heater on top of furniture or near water.
- Avoid using extension cords to plug in a space heater.
- Install smoke detectors on every level, test them monthly and replace batteries at least yearly.
- Store a multipurpose, dry-chemical fire extinguisher near the area to be heated.
- All gas or oil fired heating devices in your home CAN produce carbon monoxide (CO), so be sure to install CO detectors in your home and then test and properly maintain the detectors.
- Have a qualified service technician check and clean your heating system every year.
- If you use your fireplace, consider hiring another qualified professional to check your chimney to ensure it's safe for use.

Although it may be cliché, it's always better to be safe than sorry. Please take the time to ensure safety well before the cold weather sends you scurrying to stay warm.

ON PATROL

WITH BERKS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Did you know...



That it is unlawful to disregard traffic-control devices warning of hazardous conditions?

(Unless otherwise directed by emergency responders), "No driver shall drive past, go around or through a sign or traffic-control device closing a road or highway due to an existing or potentially hazardous condition.

Pa.C.S. Title 75, §3111.1(a)
FINE [sliding]: \$250.00* + \$102.50
(Minimum Costs) = \$325.50 (est.)

*Fine doubled if injury to emergency responder or tow service provider.

BERKS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Most Wanted



Name: Kleve Panayoty
DOB: 07/14/1982
LKA: 4380 Bronx Blvd.,
Bronx NY 10466
Charges: Forgery



Name: Joseph Gresko
DOB: 12/04/1972
LKA: 1215 Powdermill Hollow Rd.
Boyertown, PA 19512
Charges: Accident Involving
Damage Attended Vehicle/Property



Name: Ricardo Torres
DOB: 02/07/1988
LKA: 337 Pear St.
Reading, PA 19601
Charges: Simple Assault



Name: Joshua Burgos
DOB: 12/14/1995
LKA: 17 North St Peter St.
Schuylkill Haven, PA 17972
Charges: Kidnapping of Minor

If you have information that can help apprehend any of the fugitives in this publication, call the Berks County Sheriff's Office Fugitive Tip Line at 610-478-6390 or Crime Alert Berks at 1-877-373-9913.

All your information will be kept confidential.

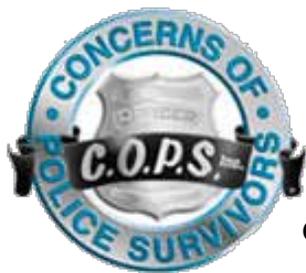
Helping to Prepare Future Professionals in Law Enforcement

Chief Deputy Bryant Semenza was part of a panel of professionals who interviewed students in the criminal justice program at Alvernia University this past November. The mock interviews are a requirement for seniors majoring in criminal justice. Students first prepare resumes and letters of application for fictitious jobs in the criminal justice field and then later answer questions posed by each panel member. Joining Chief Semenza on the panel were U.S. Marshal, Brian Hicks; FBI Special Agent, Rodney Loose; Wayne Dainty, Ed.D., Trainer and Staff Recruiter of Glen Mills Schools; Steve Elmarzouky, owner of Queen City Family Restaurant, Heidelberg Family Restaurant and Wyomissing Family Restaurant; and Edgar J. Hartung, M.A., JD, Associate Professor and Chair of Alvernia's Criminal Justice Department. The varied professional backgrounds of the panel members expose students to different types of questions they may one day encounter when applying for an actual position in a very competitive job market.



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Law Enforcement United Holding Two Fundraisers to Benefit Concerns of Police Survivors and Officer Down Memorial Page



Call or e-mail Michelle Moyer for Tickets to one or both events:
pmmoyer21@gmail.com • (484) 955-2503

Saturday, February 21, 2015
BREAKFAST

8:00 AM – 11:00 AM



*Pancakes, sausage, juice,
coffee and smoothies*

820 Kenhorst Plaza, Kenhorst, PA 19607

\$7 PER TICKET

Sunday, March 29, 2015
PURSE BINGO

Doors Open 12:00 PM • Games Start 1:00 PM
(18 games)



Vera Bradley



COACH
NEW YORK

GRILL FIRE COMPANY

743 Mountain View Road Grill, PA (near Kenhorst)

\$20 PER TICKET