

InForce

A publication of the Berks County Sheriff's Office

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December 2016

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A Message from Sheriff Eric J. Weaknecht

At the time of this writing on December 14, 2016, the total number of police officers killed in the line of duty is 64, many of which were ambush-style killings. That's nearly twice the number of law enforcement line-of-duty deaths than at this same time in 2015. Following the most recent deaths of two Georgia police officers, the President of the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund stated, "It's a very sad time for our nation. Our police officers are under attack and when our police officers are at risk, all of us are at risk."

How did we get here? Political pundits, the media, and anti-law enforcement groups are all quick to weigh-in – attention shining on those highly publicized incidents when protests and riots begin following a police-involved shooting. Days of focused media reporting follows. Far

less media attention, and absolutely no protesting or rioting followed the deaths of those two Georgia police officers. As I wrote in the August publication of InForce: . . . We as a society risk creeping ever closer to the edge of lawlessness. It's almost commonplace for rioters to become judge and jury, especially when led by politicians whose own actions are ones which rush to judgment. . .

We will have a new President come January 20, 2017. One who supports law enforcement and the rule of law. It is my fervent hope and prayer that President-elect Trump and this new Administration will acknowledge the need to make a statement to the country that the answer to real or perceived police misconduct must not be by public retaliation and that legal consequences will be enforced to those who trample on the physical and property rights of others. We are a civil nation that seeks justice in a court of law. Let's return to a society that focuses on questions of law, rather than political agendas, and start putting out the fires that have increasingly fueled this divided nation.



"Making a Difference"

BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS



For they shall be called the children of God.

The Berks County Sheriff's Office wishes to express its condolences to the families of fallen law enforcement officers everywhere. May God grant them peace.

Features



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Deputy Zachary Smith

Deputy Zach Smith, assigned to the Courts Division, is being recognized for swiftly subduing a defendant who became verbally and physically aggressive after being held in contempt of court for failure to pay child support. Judge Timothy Rowley gives credit to Deputy Smith and Deputy Pedro Roldan (assisting) for quickly and professionally neutralizing the threat.

Deputy Smith has been a deputy with the Berks County Sheriff's Office since July, 2002. He has



also worked in both the Warrants and Booking Divisions. Deputy Smith is also a certified K-9 decoy and regularly acts as such for K-9 demonstrations and during K-9 training. He has also been an active Advisor with the Kyle Pagerly Explorer Post since 2015.

Deputy Smith is the father of three grown children and loves spending time with his seven grandchildren. He relaxes by finding time to work out and enjoy his favorite jazz musicians, such as George Benson, Brian Culbertson and Walter Beasley.



BERKS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Star Of The Quarter

Save the Date

K-9 Unit Fundraiser: First Annual

Berks County Sheriff Classic Car Show

Saturday, May 20, 2017 at the Doubletree Hotel, 701 Penn Street, Reading



Spotlight on Court Division

The Court Division of the Berks County Sheriff's Office is the largest division comprised of a captain and 36 deputies. Its primary responsibilities are to transport prisoners to and from state and county prisons for criminal hearings, trials, and sentencing; to maintain security in the various courtrooms and in the cell block; and to staff hospital details. The Court Division services Adult Probation, Juvenile Probation, Domestic Relations and the District Attorney's Offices. On any one day, deputies in the Court Division can be responsible for plus or minus 100 prisoners.

No one day is like another when it comes to ensuring that defendants are in court and ready to appear before the judge scheduled to hear a defendant's proceeding. At least one deputy is assigned to every two prisoners, two deputies are assigned to local transports, and an undetermined number of deputies, depending on the day, are assigned to state-wide transports. Unlike a trial which can last one day to several weeks, hearings and sentencing are procedures that take less time which means one judge could have several defendants in his or her courtroom at any one time waiting for dispatch.

It takes logistical skills to ensure each courtroom runs without unnecessary interruptions or delays while waiting for a defendant to appear.

Captain Miller prepares for her day the day before. Based on the court schedule published the previous afternoon, she begins to assign deputies to courtrooms. She telephones the various housing agencies to make arrangements for the temporary release of those defendants scheduled to be in court. Arrangements for defendants coming from points further away in the state are made days in advance, and those inmates may need to be temporarily housed in the Berks County Prison to wait out the time before their respective hearing dates. It takes logistical skills to ensure each courtroom runs without unnecessary interruptions or delays while waiting for a defendant to appear. Depending on the outcome of a criminal proceeding, Miller must also schedule the return of defendants to those same housing agencies as no one is "released" from a Berks County courtroom or from the Berks County holding cellblock. Over 10,000 transports are conducted each year, including the transport of juvenile defendants.

Pennsylvania case law has established that a Pennsylvania Sheriff's primary responsibility is to the courts. As such, the

Court Division takes priority over all other divisions within the Berks County Sheriff's Office. This means that to ensure each courtroom is adequately staffed, those deputies assigned to other divisions may find themselves "reassigned" for a day to fill in when shortages occur or when more deputies are needed in a courtroom because of the nature of the case. For example, during the trial of Miguel Torres, a Reading, Pennsylvania fugitive once profiled on "America's Most Wanted" for the murder of his wife in 2005, Captain Miller assigned a total of six deputies to the courtroom each day during the week-long trial and an additional six after a verdict was rendered. The reassignment of deputies from other divisions to the court division almost always occurs for high-profile criminal cases.

Judges rely heavily on the deputies to keep their courtrooms safe and orderly.

Reassignment of deputies can also occur in the event of a hospital detail. Once charges have been filed and an individual becomes a defendant who subsequently needs medical attention, it is the responsibility of the court division to staff the detail during business hours, the duration of which can last a few hours to, in one recent example, three months.

Captain Miller has been with the Sheriff's Office since June of 1997 and is keenly aware of the importance of courtroom security. No one knows what is going on in the mind of someone about to lose his or her freedom. A defendant can be desperate, mentally unstable, or highly emotional which can mean an orderly procedure can turn disorderly in seconds. Judges rely heavily on the deputies to keep their courtrooms safe and orderly, and Miller takes pride in ensuring the deputies in her division do exactly that.



As Captain of the Court Division, Mandy Miller's duties include the supervision and scheduling of deputies who provide security to 13 courtrooms in the Courthouse and Services Center. She also works with various County offices to ensure inmate attendance at hearings and is responsible for scheduling the transport of inmates to and from housing facilities throughout Pennsylvania

First “Civil Roundtable” Meeting Ends with Plans to Grow

By: Jennifer DeFrees, Real Estate Administrator, Berks County Sheriff's Office

Each year, Sheriffs from around the Commonwealth gather together for an annual conference and opportunities to network. Valuable information is often exchanged that many find useful for improving the inner-workings of their respective offices.

Noting a need for Real Estate Deputies and Administrators to do the same, over 35 counties participated in the first “Civil Roundtable” meeting held this past November in Harrisburg. Those who attended shared ideas and discussed policies, laws and procedures relative to civil matters. Presenters from the Department of Revenue and Berks County Solicitor, Attorney Fred Mogel, spoke for nearly two hours on Sheriff Sale monetary proceeds that may be due to the Commonwealth and general Sheriff Sale procedures. A substantive question and answer period followed.

Plans are underway to host a similar meeting for counties located in the western part of the state.

Thanks to Cory Fregm of Teleosoft, York, Pennsylvania, who sponsored the meeting, which all who attended agreed is needed to maintain consistency with respect to policies and procedures throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.



Attorney Fred Mogel, Berks County Sheriff's Office Solicitor was the keynote speaker at the first “Civil Roundtable” held to benefit real estate deputies and administrators in Sheriff's Offices throughout the Commonwealth of PA

Kyle Pagerly Explorer Post #027 Fifth Annual Banquet



Members of the 2016 Explorer Post #027
Uniform (L-R): Captain Eric Seidel, Deputy Terry Ely; Sergeant John Parsons, Sheriff Eric Weaknecht; Deputy Chris Gorel. Explorers (L-R): Gunnar Bakke, John Bowman, Xena Vazquez, Kiancsi Freytiz, Jozef Wilczynski, Julian Millikin, Bobbie King, Dominic Lombardo, Ryan Hurlbrink



Congratulations to Bobbie King, 2016 Explorer of the Year!

Explorer Bobbie King was named Explorer of the Year at the fifth annual Kyle Pagerly Explorer Post #027 awards dinner held December 6 at Chef Alan's Restaurant in West Reading. Bobbie, a junior in high school, plans to return to the Explorer Post in 2017, but her tenure with the Post will be abbreviated come June to follow through with plans to leave for training with the National Guard.



Barry J. Harvey, MS, Chair of the Criminal Justice Department at Alvernia University was the keynote speaker. Harvey spoke about his 30+ years in law enforcement and encouraged all Explorers to seek out various avenues within the field of law enforcement until they find that which best suits them.



Special recognition was given to inaugural Explorer Ryan Hurlbrink, who, after five years with the Post, must now retire.

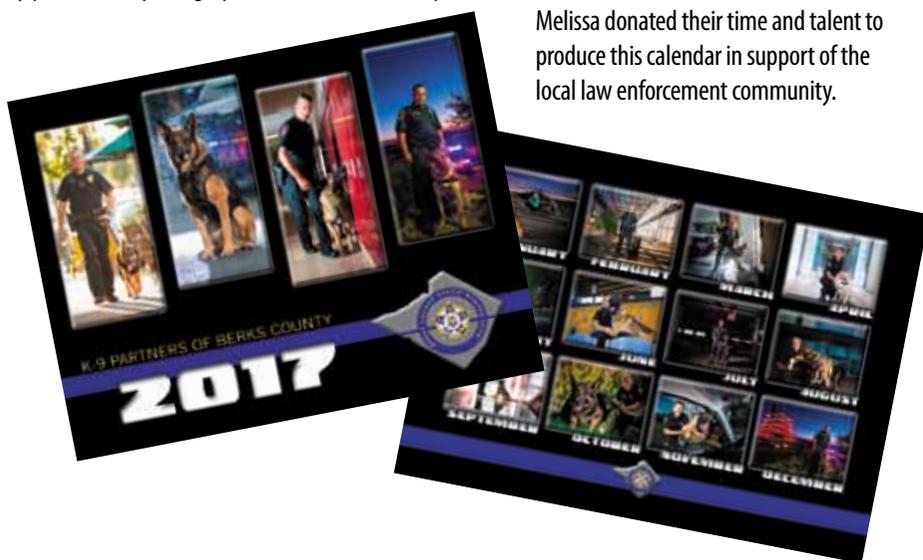
Learning for Life partners with thousands of businesses and organizations to provide “real-world” career experiences to young men and women through its Exploring programs.

Help Support the Berks County Police Heroes Fund by Ordering 2017 K-9 Calendar!

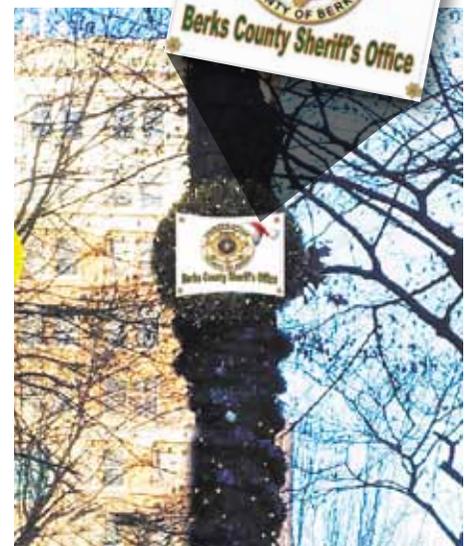
Established in 2009, The Berks County Police Heroes Fund is dedicated to helping the men and women of law enforcement and their families by providing financial assistance to those injured or permanently disabled in service to the public; family members of those killed in the line of duty; and law enforcement facing extreme medical expenses.

To purchase your K-9 calendar to help support the mission of the Berks County Police Heroes Fund, send your \$18 check or money order made payable to BERKS COUNTY POLICE HEROES FUND to the attention of Teresa at the Berks County Sheriff's Office, 633 Court Street, 3rd Floor, Reading, PA 19601. You can also make in-person purchases at FOP Lodge 71 in Temple or either of the license to carry offices (Courthouse or Airport). You can also e-mail calendars@berksheroes.org with your request to purchase.

Calendar photos of local K-9 teams (including the Berks County Sheriff's Office K-9 teams) were taken by professional photographer and Exeter Township Police Officer, Sean Fullerton. Sean and his wife Melissa donated their time and talent to produce this calendar in support of the local law enforcement community.



I-Lead Charter School Displays Holiday Spirit



The trees in front of the I-Lead Charter School on Penn Street in downtown Reading are shining with bright lights in celebration of the holiday season. Deputy Doris Natal, the school's safety officer and regular representative from the Sheriff's Office (see page 6), took part in the annual decoration of trees which celebrates the various nationalities of students who attend the charter school.

Friends of the Berks County Sheriff K-9 Adds New Member



The Berks County Sheriff's Office K-9 Unit always appreciates new and returning members to its list of "Friends," but when a call came into the Sheriff's Office about a woman who, in the process of making arrangements for her own funeral after a diagnosis of ovarian cancer, wanted to make sure that her estate made a contribution to the BCSO K-9 unit, we simply had to make sure we met her. Margaret Kakas, pictured here, is, thankfully, on the road to a full recovery, and we're so glad we had the opportunity to meet such a lovely and optimistic woman who has a great love of shepherds and appreciation of police dogs. Margaret wanted memories of her to include helping to bring awareness to the great job these K-9 teams do to protect our community.

Safety Tips

If Stranded While Driving In Winter

- Today, most people have cell phones. If you find yourself stranded, call 911 to summon help. When you talk to authorities, be prepared to:
 - Describe the location, condition of your companions and the trouble you are experiencing.
 - Listen for questions.
 - Follow any instructions. You may be told you should stay where you are to guide rescuers or to return to the scene.
 - Do not hang up until you know whom you have spoken with and what will happen next.
- If you don't have a cell phone, stay in your vehicle. Walking in a storm can be very dangerous. You can lose your way, wander out of reach, become exhausted, collapse and risk your life. Your vehicle itself is a good shelter.
- Avoid overexertion. Attempting to push your car, trying to jack it into a new position or shoveling snow takes great effort in storm conditions. You could risk heart attack or other injury.
- Calm down and think. The storm will end and you will be found. Don't work enough to get hot and sweaty. Wet clothing loses insulation quality making you more susceptible to the effects of hypothermia.

- Keep fresh air in your vehicle. It is much better to be chilly or cold and awake than to become comfortably warm and slip into unconsciousness. Freezing-wet or wind-driven snow can plug your vehicle's exhaust system causing deadly carbon monoxide gas to enter your vehicle.
- Don't run the engine-unless you are certain the exhaust pipe is free of snow or other objects. Keep the radiator free from snow to prevent the engine from overheating. Run the engine at 10 minute intervals for heat.
- Turn on the dome light at night, but only when running the engine.
- Keep your blood circulating freely by loosening tight clothing, changing positions frequently and moving your arms and legs. Huddle close to one another. Rub your hands together or put them under your armpits or between your legs. Remove your shoes occasionally and rub your feet.
- Don't expect to be comfortable. The challenge is to survive until you're found.
- Make yourself visible to rescuers. Tie a bright cloth to your antenna or door handle.



ON PATROL

WITH BERKS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Did you know...

That it is unlawful to operate a vehicle while wearing one or more headphones or earphones.*

Pa.C.S. Title 75, §3314(a)
FINE: \$25 + 103.50 (Minimum Costs) = \$128.50

*Pa.C.S. Title 75, §3314(b) provides an exception for hearing aids or headsets in conjunction with cellular telephones that only provide sounds through one ear. . .



BERKS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Most Wanted



Name: Gabrielle Jaslow
DOB: 07/20/1978
Charges: Forgery
LKA: 2076 Fraley St., Philadelphia, PA 19124



Name: James Schronick
DOB: 07/07/1974
Charges: Recklessly endangering another person
LKA: 902 James St., Sinking Spring, PA 19608



Name: Wanda Cruz-Gonzalez
DOB: 11/18/1978
Charges: Retail Theft
LKA: 758 N. 6th St., Reading, PA 19604



Name: Andi Ortiz
DOB: 07/13/1993
Charges: Robbery
LKA: 1531 Delaware Ave., Wyomissing, PA 19610

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.

BCSO Deputies Take Part in “No-Shave November”



Over 40 deputies in the Berks County Sheriff's Office participated in the 2016 “No-Shave November” campaign, a non-profit organization devoted to “grow” cancer awareness by “growing” out facial hair. BCSO deputies are prohibited by office policy to grow a beard. That policy was relaxed from November 1 through November 30 to allow voluntary participation. \$1,440 was raised and donated to the “No-Shave” drive which supports cancer prevention, research and education.

Information related to No-Shave and the organizations it supports can be found at www.noshave.org.

Fewer than half of the deputies who participated in “No-Shave November” are pictured above.

BCSO Frequent Presenter at Area High Schools’ Career Days



Deputy Doris Natal speaks with students at I-Lead Charter School in downtown Reading.

Many area junior and senior high schools hold a “career and college” day for their students as a way to get them thinking about possible careers following high school graduation. Students are more likely to understand the importance of maintaining good grades and study habits as they prepare to enter post secondary institutions to train and obtain an education in fields that interest them. A career and college day (or similar event) connects students with many different professions and gives community members a chance to share their expertise with students. The Berks County Sheriff's Office regularly participates in several career and college day fairs, including Wilson, Schuylkill Valley, Daniel Boone, I-Lead Charter School and BCTC in Oley.

Tours for Scouting Groups Help Scouts Earn Credit Toward Crime Prevention Award



Deputies in BCSO Central Processing Division meet with Tilden Cub Scout Pack 149.

The Berks County Sheriff's Office receives a few calls each year requesting a tour of the courthouse, sheriff's office, or central booking -- any or all of which helps scouts earn credit toward an award in law enforcement prevention or to simply learn more about law enforcement. Although learning about fingerprinting is a popular topic within law enforcement, the Berks County Sheriff's Office relies solely on “live-scan” technology to record fingerprints and will refer those interested in ink fingerprinting to the Scout Troop's local police department.