

# InForce

A publication of the Berks County Sheriff's Office

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April 2018

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## A Message from Sheriff Eric J. Weaknecht

The Berks County Sheriff's Office is partnering this July with The Pennsylvania Sheriffs' Association for its annual conference to be held in Berks County. County sheriffs, their deputies, staff, solicitors, family members, outside law enforcement and vendors come together to take part in training and educational seminars, activities, events, and demonstrations of the latest state-of-the-art law enforcement equipment during the four day conference. Over 250 will be in attendance.

BCSO staff members have



been busily making plans for the conference since last year.

The Pennsylvania Sheriffs' Association's only source of revenue is through different levels of membership. In today's climate of increased scrutiny of all law enforcement, it is more important than ever that law enforcement and law abiding citizens come together in a shared goal of keeping our society safe.

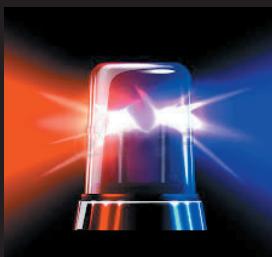
I want to thank you Berks County for our 2017 ranking as a top five supporter of the Association among the Commonwealth's 67 counties. To learn more about the Pennsylvania Sheriffs' Association, including the history, news, events, membership information, and legislation proposed and lobbied by the Association on behalf of Pennsylvania sheriffs, logon to [www.pasheriffs.org](http://www.pasheriffs.org).

The Pennsylvania Sheriffs' Association will never solicit donations by phone.



"*Making a Difference*"

## Features



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## Deputy Guy Lehman and K-9 partner Max

Deputy Guy Lehman and his K-9 partner Max are recognized for their combined dedication to the Sheriff's Office and to the jobs they do. In March, K-9 Max was deployed as a BCERT operator (the only K-9 with the Berks County Emergency Response Team) and assigned to a high level dangerous narcotic

and homicide investigation -- Operation Shattered. K-9 Max assisted in the takedown of the main target charged with multiple counts of attempted homicide in the first residence and was the lead in on a second residence in search of hiding suspects with guns (thus making it safer for law enforcement to enter).

K-9 Max has been part of BCERT since 2016 and has completed additional high-level trainings including K-9 tactical operations. With BCERT and the Berks County Sheriff Warrants Unit, Max has helped the teams clear houses and forced many subjects to surrender. Max loves training with the guys and riding in the BearCat with them.

Deputy Lehman has completed basic SWAT and close-quarters combat trainings. He also recently completed a 600 hours (12 weeks) Dual Purpose Police K-9 Trainer's Course at Shallow Creek Kennel in Sharpsville, Pennsylvania and is now certified to train police dogs and their handlers in multiple fields, including scent work - detection of narcotics (meth, heroin, cocaine, marijuana); explosives; and patrol work – suspect tracking and apprehension, building, area, and article/evidence searches.

Deputy Lehman has been with the Berks County Sheriff's Office since 2011 after retiring as a police officer and K-9 handler with the City of Reading Police Department. He has received certification and/or special training as a K-9 trainer and handler; is a tactical firearms instructor, SWAT operator, and is a member of the U.S. Marshal's Fugitive Task Force.

NEVER

FORGOTTEN

Ride in the 2nd Annual Thin Blue Line Hero's Ride on June 23, 2018.

Registration forms available at [kylepagerlymemorial.com](http://kylepagerlymemorial.com) or email [kylepagerlymemorial@yahoo.com](mailto:kylepagerlymemorial@yahoo.com)

# Spotlight on the Patrol Division



Deputies in the Berks County Sheriff's Office Patrol Division

The Patrol Division of the Berks County Sheriff's Office is comprised of a captain, one sergeant and 13 deputies. Its primary focus is the service of civil processes, including Protection from Abuse Orders (PFA). The Sheriff's Office is the only law enforcement agency in Berks County that has a division devoted exclusively to law related matters not considered criminal. In fact, the Pennsylvania Deputy Sheriffs' Academy extends training beyond traditional police academy training to include additional weeks of civil law instruction.

Although the civil side of the law and the role deputies serve within those boundaries may not seem glamorous or as exciting as enforcing the law on the criminal side, it can still be dangerous work. The thousands of civil documents the Sheriff's Office serves each year include civil complaints and petitions, sheriff sale and tax sale notices, and summonses (subpoenas) to testify. In addition, and in accordance with the Pennsylvania Rules of Civil Procedure, the Sheriff's Office is ordered by the court to levy on personal, tangible property; ordered to remove an individual from his or her residence (either because of mortgage default or landlord eviction); and will remove a minor child per court order from a non-custodial parent. Each of these examples can be very emotional for all parties involved, and the same is true when serving a PFA. The Sheriff's Office serves close to 1,500 PFAs a year, and never is a deputy sheriff welcomed when serving a PFA or any civil paperwork that results in the loss of someone's time, money, or sometimes, personal property (such as household possessions, vehicles, or even livestock).

Captain Tim Moore says his division always does its due diligence when serving civil paperwork, and although all services are important, he says none are more important than the service of PFAs. It's not often easy to locate a defendant (named in a PFA or otherwise), and due diligence means employing various methods for tracking down a defendant's whereabouts.

The Patrol Division is also responsible for maintenance of the fleet of 31 vehicles and 2 trailers.

Should you see a sheriff vehicle in Berks County, it's more likely than not a deputy is in the process of serving civil paperwork that may take that deputy from one area in the County to another area. Nearly a hundred miles separates one point in the county from its farthest counterpoint. During a deputy's travels, it's possible that he or she may stop to enforce the PA Vehicle Code as deputy sheriffs have all the same powers to enforce traffic laws as do police officers. Deputy sheriffs on the road will also stop to help a stranded motorist, or even make headlines by stopping a robbery or pulling a driver away from a truck ablaze (as just two of the more sensational stories reported about BCSO deputies in recent time). Deputies may also be called to back up and assist other law enforcement agencies, including foot pursuit when necessary. On average, just one deputy in the Patrol Division may log close to 5,000 miles a year. Annually, process services can top 25,000 miles a year.





# Exploring Partnerships

**North End Rod and Gun Club has been a loyal supporter of the Kyle Pagerly Explorer Post #027 since its formation in January, 2012.**

Through them, the Berks County Sheriff's Office has been able to purchase Class A and Class B uniforms, recognition awards, and helped to offset the costs of field trips taken over the years to places such as Washington, DC, the Deputy Sheriff Training Academy at Penn State, and (new this year), New York City to visit the 9-11 Memorial. The Post, named after Kyle Pagerly who was killed in the line of duty in June, 2011, continues to recruit young members interested in law enforcement. Savannah Pagerly, pictured right, is Kyle's daughter. She refers to the Sheriff as "Uncle Eric" – the Sheriff and his wife Jessica have been a consistent presence in Savannah's life since she was born.

Many thanks to North End Rod and Gun Club!



Sgt. John Parsons, Explorer Advisor; Tim Sherman, President of North End Rod and Gun Club; Nikki Swiegar of North End Rod and Gun; Sheriff Eric Weaknecht and Savannah Pagerly



Lieutenant General Steven A. Hummer (center left), keynote speaker at the 42nd Annual Boy Scouts of America Leadership Dinner with young members of the Kyle Pagerly Explorer Post #027 and Post Advisors. (Photo courtesy of photographer, John A. Secoges)

## ANNUAL BOY SCOUT LEADERSHIP DINNER Explorers Again Invited to Attend and Participate

Members of the Kyle Pagerly Explorer Post #027 were invited guests and participants at the Hawk Mountain Council Boy Scouts of America's 42nd Annual Leadership Dinner held at the DoubleTree Hotel in downtown Reading on February 27, 2018. Post Explorers presented the Colors (carrying in the United States and Pennsylvania flags), and remained on stage for the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance and National Anthem.

Lieutenant General Steven A. Hummer (retired, Marines) was the keynote speaker. A veteran of combat operations in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom launched in the early 2000's, Hummer spoke about experiences as a Boy Scout and as an officer in the United States Marine Corps where he learned problem solving, leadership, self-discipline, responsibility and the importance of contributing to society – all qualities the Berks County Sheriff's Office strives to instill in its young Post members.



First year BCSO Explorer, Zachary Shenk, leads the presentation of Colors at the Hawk Mountain Council's 42nd Boy Scout Leadership Dinner held February 27 at the DoubleTree Hotel in downtown Reading. Explorers Kyren Turner, Bobbie King, Katynee Rhein, and Zach Smith were also part of the procession (photo courtesy of the Reading Eagle).

## In appreciation....



Deputy Scott Henry and Deputy Kevin Freed with Sheriff Weaknecht hold appreciation plaques which recognize their retired K-9 partners, Storm and Blitz. Each plaque reads, "In recognition of your faithful service and dedication to the citizens of Berks County and the Berks County Sheriff's Office." Storm and Blitz were both retired on November 20, 2017.

## BCSO K-9 Demonstrations Back at Pet Expo

It's been a while, but the Pet Expo has returned, and so have we! The BCSO K-9 teams regularly participated in the Pet Expo held for years at the Greater Reading Expo Center. When the Expo Center closed in 2013, the Pet Expo moved to the Reading Fairgrounds, but crowds were thinner in the outdoor venue. Fast forward to 2018; excited pet owners and their pets packed into the Pet Expo's newest location at the Morgantown Center for two days of exhibits, vendors, demonstrations and other attractions.



*Deputy Chris Gorel demonstrates aggression training with K-9 Axel at the Pet Expo*

## WELCOME NEW K-9 TEAMS

### Deputy Chris Gorel and K-9 Vito



Deputy Chris Gorel has been with the Sheriff's Office since 2011. Having served in both the court and patrol divisions, he has spent the last five years with the fugitive warrants division and is a sworn member of the US Marshal's Fugitive Task Force. A New Jersey native originally, he is a

veteran of both the United States Marine Corps and the U.S. Army Reserve, as well as a former correctional officer. In November of 2017, Gorel was selected as a member of the K-9 Division and was paired and trained this past winter with his German Shepherd partner, Vito, while at Shallow Creek Kennels in Sharpsville, Pennsylvania. K-9 Vito, from the Czech Republic, specializes in narcotics detection and all areas of patrol work.

### Deputy Nick Wingate and K-9 Axel



Deputy Nick Wingate graduated cum laude from Alvernia University with a degree in psychology in 2012 and has been with the Sheriff's Office since 2015. He served in both booking and court divisions before joining the K-9 division following the retirement of

two K-9 teams last November. He is a tactical operator with the Berks County Emergency Response Team and is a sworn member of the U.S. Marshal's Fugitive Task Force. Wingate and K-9, Axel, a full bred German Shepherd from the Czech Republic, were paired and trained together at the Shallow Creek Kennels in Sharpsville, Pennsylvania. K-9 Axel is certified in explosives detection and patrol.

# Safety Tips

## Tips To Ensure Your Home Is **SAFE** and **SECURE** While You Travel

It's been a cold and icy winter, and warm vacation days are just around the corner. Unfortunately, the typical vacation months of July and August are reported by The Insurance Information Institute as the most popular months for home break-ins. As you plan for fun in the sun, keep the following in mind to ensure your home is safe and secure as you travel:

- Avoid posting vacation plans on social media sites and voice messaging devices.
- Tell only those needing to know of your plans to be out of town.
- Put timers on indoor and outdoor lights so it seems like someone is home at night.
- Parking a car in your driveway can also give the appearance that someone is home.



- Have someone mow your grass and take in the mail while you are gone.
- Consider purchasing a home security system (which may reduce home insurance rates as well).
- Keep your air conditioner on low while away; hot days with doors and windows shut and air conditioner off invite curiosity as to occupancy.

Ensure peace of mind while on vacation by following one or more of the above suggestions. And although it likely goes without saying, lock up expensive jewelry and electronic devices (or give them to a friend to store for you). All financial and personal information should be securely stowed out of sight.

## ON PATROL

WITH BERKS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

A sample traffic citation from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The citation includes fields for vehicle information, driver information, and a summary of the offense: "DISPOSING OF WASTE FROM A MOTOR VEHICLE INTO ANOTHER VEHICLE". It also includes sections for witness information and a signature area.

### Did you know...

that it is unlawful to deposit waste and other material on highway or property of waters?

A person shall not throw or deposit any substance on a highway or on public or private properties (without consent of the owner), or into or on the waters of the Commonwealth, from a vehicle.

Pa.C.S. Title 75, §3709(a)

**MAX FINE: \$300 + \$115.50  
(Minimum Costs) = \$415.50**

BERKS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

## Most Wanted



Name: Dante Jackson  
DOB: 12/11/1985  
Charges: DJ Warrant  
LKA: 148 Buttonwood St., Reading, PA 19601



Name: Eric Snyder  
DOB: 12/02/1972  
Charges: DJ Warrant  
LKA: 20 Summit Avenue, Shillington, PA 19607



Name: Kian Prince  
DOB: 10/12/1993  
Charges: DJ Warrant  
LKA: 449 Spring Garden St., Reading, PA 19602



Name: Tyreik Davis  
DOB: 12/15/1995  
Charges: DJ Warrant  
LKA: 211 West Douglass St., Reading, PA 19601

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.

# TECHNOLOGY REPORT:

By: Jen DeFrees, Real Estate Administrator

In October, 2017, the Berks County Sheriff's Office rolled out a new software application specifically designed to meet the challenges of its records management processes, which are many. "CountySuite" by Teleosoft, a company based out of York, Pennsylvania, designed the web based application to streamline data for sheriff sales, levies of personal property, all civil and criminal services, and includes a robust accounting and reporting platform.

The new system replaces software which has been in place since 1993.

Teleosoft's software specifically designed for sheriff offices is currently in use by nearly half of Pennsylvania's 67 counties. Future plans in Berks will incorporate records management of warrant services, include logistical information for transport of prisoners to and from holding facilities, and establish a portal for use by attorneys to check the status of civil services.



## Welcome – Sergeant Michael Hoffert



The Berks County Sheriff's Office welcomes Michael Hoffert who was sworn-in on March 28 and assigned to the Central Processing Division as a sergeant.

Mike Hoffert's extensive background includes 30 years in law enforcement with the Bern Township Police Department, including 15 years as a patrol officer, 8 years as a patrol sergeant, and the remaining years as Sergeant/Detective.

Hoffert graduated from both the Reading Police Academy and the Pa Chief's Command Institute for Police Executives and completed over 4,000 hours of law enforcement related training courses. He received several letters of commendation, a lifesaving award, and exceptional service award. He is also serving his second term as councilman for the Borough of Shillington.

As one of the four sergeants assigned to Central Booking, Hoffert is responsible for the timely processing, arraignment and transport of inmates and for ensuring effective communication with judges, central court staff, and outside agencies.

## Project Lifesaver Featured on

**bctv.org**  
Be informed. Be involved.

Wandering away from home is a common occurrence for those with dementia or Alzheimer's. On April 5, BCTV aired a segment helpful to caregivers of individuals with the disease. Captain Tim Moore of the Berks County Sheriff's Office talked about Project Lifesaver, and Kellie Butsack of Alzheimer's Association talked about the Safe Return Program. Both programs require registration.

To view a replay of the half hour segment,  
log onto [bctv.org](http://bctv.org).

