

InForce

A publication of the Berks County Sheriff's Office

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April 2019



"Making a Difference"

Features



New Series:
County Connections
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digital safety

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NEVER
FORGOTTEN

Ride in the 3rd Annual
Thin Blue Line Hero's
Ride on June 29 –
Insert Included

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A Message from Sheriff Eric J. Weaknecht

Each Berks County office holder is responsible for an office budget to be approved by the Berks County Commissioners. I believe it important to do more than just receive approval each year for the office budget and will eye potential expenditures with the view of saving money for the County. One of the more recent examples involves the heavily reported constable issue.

With a few administrative changes by the courts, the county has the potential to save hundreds of thousands each year.



Deputies in the Berks County Sheriff's Office receive training greater than or equal to most law enforcement agencies and, aside from being restricted to make arrests only on what a deputy personally witnesses, have all the same powers as any other law enforcement

agency. The passage of House Bill 466 would give deputy sheriffs investigative powers thus fully establishing their authority. Currently, any non-witnessed crime requires that a deputy sheriff call to the scene local law enforcement which is simply a waste of time, money, and resources.

The Sheriff's Office maintains security for the courtrooms, one of its primary responsibilities. It also services Adult Probation, Juvenile Probation, Domestic Relations and the District Attorney's Office. Assuming responsibility for security at the doors of both the Courthouse and Services Center is a logical addition to those duties deputies already perform.

Talks are still underway for supplying a local school district with a requested on-site resource officer. Not only would it be a deterrent for would-be criminal actions to occur on school property, it would be great for community relations and would increase in-house deputy staffing by one during the summer months when school is closed.

The Commissioners' goal to save County tax payer dollars is really the same as mine; we most often just reach that goal along different paths.

Abigail Leaman

Abby is coming up on her first year anniversary with the Sheriff's Office this June. She will graduate from the Deputy Sheriffs' Academy at Penn State in May. While at the Ramada Hotel, State College, Pennsylvania (where class members live during the 19 weeks of training), she was one of the first on the scene this past January to provide CPR to a shooting victim. The first victim died at the scene, his son (the young man Abby worked diligently to save) died the next day. The gunman fled the scene, broke into an older couple's home and killed the husband before taking his own life. The fourth victim, a female,



has since been released from the hospital. Police say the shooting was random. More information about the shooting incident can be found at <https://apnews.com/0a4f455d89494c4cbe309b366d401eca>.

Abby worked for the Lancaster Emergency Medical System prior to being hired as a deputy sheriff. She obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice from Penn State in Harrisburg and is licensed as an EMT through the Pennsylvania College of Health. She is assigned to third shift in the booking division.

Join the BCSO Explorer Post when we visit Washington DC for
National Police Week
National Peace Officer's Memorial Service



**Wednesday,
May 15, 2019**
Seating is limited
See pg. 3 for more information

GEARING UP!

Outfitting a BCSO Deputy

A Deputy Sheriff with the BCSO is required to wear a uniform with Sheriff Office patch and badge. Each is also required to carry specific equipment while on duty. Fully outfitted, gear weighs approximately 20 pounds. Sometimes, a deputy has a choice regarding how he or she will wear equipment; other times it's mandatory. For a few, some of what is carried is optional. There are five separate law enforcement divisions within the BCSO, and each division deputy wears equipment in a way that doesn't hinder that deputy's ability to perform required duties specific to that division (Warrants, Patrol, Booking, K-9, and Courts).



Deputy Frank Parker Stewart – Booking

Deputy Joe Wood – Patrol

Deputy Tim McFarland – Warrants

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>1 Badge
 1a Metal badge
 1b Embroidered badge</p> <p>2 Body Armor
 2a Worn under uniform shirt
 2b Worn over uniform shirt
 2c Steel plate worn inside body armor
 2d K9 body armor</p> <p>3 MOLLE System that allows pouches to be attached to vest</p> | <p>4 Duty Weapon Dominant hand determines placement on duty belt
 4a Drop holster</p> <p>5 Radio Attached to vest with velcro</p> <p>6 Duty Belt Designed to allow gear to be carried behind (such as handcuffs and baton)</p> | <p>7 Handcuffs More often carried behind on duty belt</p> <p>8 Taser</p> <p>9 Pistol Magazine</p> <p>10 Med Kit Includes tourniquet, pressure bandages, antiseptic wipes, etc.</p> <p>11 Keys</p> <p>12 Narcan - Carried by all deputies (see pg. 6)</p> |
|--|--|--|

ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT



Deputy Norm Garipolli – Courts



Deputy Chris Gorel – K-9

Vehicle Door K9 Release Button

Spend the day in Washington D.C.

Wednesday, May 15, 2019



Sponsored by Berks County Sheriff's Office

This is a fundraiser to benefit their law enforcement Explorer Post 027

In honor of:

National Police Week

National Peace Officer's Memorial Service

Seating is Limited

Bus leaves promptly at 7:00 am from the Berks County Agricultural Center, County Line Road, Bern Township, PA and leaves Washington D.C. at 6:00 pm. (returning to the same drop off location at approximately 9:00 pm)

(Drop off is at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center)

Cost: \$45.00/Person

Please make your checks Payable to
"Berks County Sheriff Explorer Post"

Contact Teresa @ tmedaglia@countyofberks.com
or 610-478-6240 x3262 for reservations

BCSO Procedures in Place to Comply with Enactment of Pennsylvania's Vacant and Abandoned Real Estate Foreclosure Act

By: Jen DeFrees, Real Estate Administrator

On July 13, 2018 Governor Wolf signed into law, a new chapter to the Pennsylvania Statutes entitled, "Vacant and Abandoned Real Estate Foreclosure Act". The Act permits lenders and servicers to utilize an expedited foreclosure procedure for properties that are deemed, by municipality in which it resides or by the court, to be "vacant and abandoned."

Upon certifying that a property is "vacant and abandoned," the Sheriff is then instructed to accelerate the foreclosure sale. This means a sale must be held within 60 days of the certification of abandonment. The deed recording is also accelerated and must be recorded within 30 days following the Sheriff Sale.

The signing of this new legislation is to assist communities in resolving the problem of blight, danger to health, safety and welfare of communities.

This Act took effect on December 18, 2018.

As of the date of this article, the Berks County Sheriff has not received any requests for these "accelerated sales;" however procedures are in place to comply with the new legislation.



Explorer Post Tours Reading Police Department

Touring different Law Enforcement agencies is just one of the many activities members of the Kyle Pagerly Explorer Post enjoy. Recently meeting one of the Reading Police K-9 Officers in February was an unexpected treat while the Explorers toured the Reading Police Department.

K-9 Officer Hector Santiago has been with the Reading Police

Department since 2003. Hemi, a 5 year old Belgian Malinois from Hungary specializing in narcotics detection and patrol, is Santiago's second K-9 partner.

Officer Santiago reinforced the varied and specific requirements necessary to become a K-9 Officer with Reading, which mirrors that of the K-9 Division in the Berks County Sheriff's Office.

Reading Police Department has four narcotics K-9 teams, and one explosives. The Berks County Sheriff's Office has three narcotics teams, one explosives, and one cellphone detection and tracking.



County Connections - Office of the Prothonotary

The Prothonotary is the Chief Clerk and record-keeper for all filings related to Civil Cases.

The Pennsylvania Rules of Civil Procedure require that personal service be made upon a named defendant/respondent in a legal matter. The thousands of civil documents the Sheriff's Office serves each year include civil complaints and petitions, sheriff sale and tax sale notices, and Protection from Abuse (PFA) Orders, among other legal matters. Each of these formal actions begins with an initial filing in the Prothonotary's Office followed by process service via authorized agents or deputies in the Sheriff's Office. Timely matters, such as the service of a PFA, take priority and make up approximately 1,500 of the thousands of services the Sheriff's Office effects annually.

The cost for effecting service is the responsibility of the party initiating the legal matter, except for PFA services which is sometimes charged back to the County at the discretion of the judge hearing the motion on an abuse allegation.



Jonathan K. Del Collo, Prothonotary

Responsibilities of Prothonotary:

Process, files, and records all :

- civil actions
- equity actions
- judgments
- orders
- Writs and Decrees of Court
- mortgage foreclosures
- federal and local tax liens
- city liens
- family court matters
- arbitrations
- license suspension appeals
- appeals to higher court
- Uniform Commercial Code filings
- passport applications

K-9 Rizzo Recuperating



K-9 Rizzo following surgery to repair torn ACL

The "Friends of the Berks County Sheriff's Office K-9" is a non-profit fund established by the Sheriff's Office to offset expenses related to maintaining its K-9 Unit. These funds are used for all things relative to K-9, including veterinary expenses. Sadly, K-9 Rizzo suffered a torn ACL during a training exercise and is recuperating from a March 29 surgery to repair the injury. He will return to work 6-8 weeks post surgery.

Very little county funds support the BCSO K-9 Unit. Instead, the Sheriff's Office relies on paid memberships, t-shirt sales, and fundraisers throughout the year to cover annual expenses. Unexpected costs related to a K-9 injury are an unknown making it all the more important to continually raise funds.

Thank you K-9 Friends and community supporters for your generosity! It's been 10 years since the K-9 Unit became operational and, with your continued support, we'll be able to go another ten years and more!

The Friends of the Berks County Sheriff K-9 fund is a component fund of the Berks County Community Foundation. The Community Foundation is a nonprofit corporation whose purpose is to develop, manage, and distribute funding to meet existing and emerging community needs. Tax deductible contributions to the K-9 fund can be made by check payable to "Berks County Community Foundation" and mailed to 237 Court Street, Reading, PA 19601 with "Sheriff K-9 Fund" in the memo line.

DIGITAL DEVICE SAFETY TIPS WHEN AWAY FROM HOME

During times of travel, there are different points of vulnerability compared to normal everyday use at home. While traveling, you are operating outside of your normal, safe routines. This means using your devices on different networks and putting them down in different locations. By following some smart practices, you can connect with greater confidence while away from home.

Getting Ready to Go:

Avoid mayhem and make magical family memories by taking a few simple cyber safety steps before you head out of town. The goal here is to prepare your devices for travel and to keep them from being used against you.

- **Keep a clean machine:** Before you hit the road, make sure all security and critical software is up-to-date on your mobile devices and keep them updated during travel. These protections are your best line of defense against viruses and malware.
- **Lock down your login:** Your usernames and passwords are not enough to protect key accounts like those you use for email, banking, and social media. Fortify your online security by turning on multi-factor authentication, commonly referred to as two-factor authentication, when available. This typically pairs your username and password (i.e. something you know) with a message sent to your phone (i.e. something you have) or your fingerprint (i.e. something you are).
- **Password protect:** Use a passcode or security feature like a finger swipe pattern or fingerprint to lock your mobile device. Also set your screen to lock after a short period of time by default. If you do choose to use a finger swipe, make sure it has at least one turn (preferably two) and that a pin code has at least 6 numbers!
- **Think before you use that app:** New apps are tempting! It is important to always download new apps from only trusted sources like the Apple App Store or the Google Play Store. Additionally, consider limiting your apps access to services on your device, like location services.
- **Own your online presence:** Set the privacy and security settings on social media accounts, web services, and devices. It is okay to limit how and with whom you share information – especially when you are away.

While on the Go:

Once you and your gang are at your destination, you are in new territory and are facing new potential cyber threats. Here are some ways you can keep up secure practices while out and about.

- **Get savvy about what you do on other peoples' Wi-Fi and systems:** Do not transmit personal info or make purchases on unsecure or public networks. Instead, use your phone carrier internet service for these needs. For laptops/tablets, it is easy to use your phone as a personal hotspot to surf more securely using carrier data. Also, never use a public computer or device to shop, log in to accounts, or do anything personal.
- **Turn off Wi-Fi and Bluetooth when idle:** When Wi-Fi and Bluetooth are on, they may connect and track your whereabouts. Only enable Wi-Fi and Bluetooth when required, and disable your Wi-Fi auto-connect features.
- **Protect your \$\$\$:** Be sure to shop or bank only on secure sites. Web addresses with "https://" and a lock icon indicate that the website takes extra security measures. However, an "http://" address indicates your connection is not secure (not encrypted) and you should not transmit payment or sensitive information over to such a site.
- **Share with care:** Think twice before posting pictures that signal you are out of town. Knowing you are away from home is a great piece of information for a criminal to have and they may target your home for physical crime. Also consider limiting your social media apps' access to location services on your device, and omit location information while making your posts and sharing your pictures.
- **Keep an eye on your devices:** Laptops, smartphones, and tablets are all portable and convenient, making them perfect for a thief to carry away! Keep your devices close to you and hold onto them if strangers approach you to talk, as a common scam consists of a stranger distracting you and placing a map or newspaper over your device and walking away with it when finished talking.
- **Know your destination's laws:** If you are heading out of the country, check up on any specific laws on internet and device usage. Additionally, bring as few devices as possible and consider using a device specifically purchased for international travel.

Armed with these tips and practices, you should have a cyber-safe time away from home. To learn more about staying cyber safe and secure while traveling, including countless resources on staying cyber secure, please visit staysafeonline.org.

(Source: Center for Internet Security at <https://msisac.cisecurity.org>) via Berks County employee newsletter.

ACT 139 of 2014 (Opioid Overdose & Naloxone)

By: Sergeant Michael Hoffert

Act 139 is a law that allows first responders (law enforcement, firefighters, EMS) acting at the direction of a health care professional who is authorized to prescribe Naloxone, and administer the drug to individuals experiencing an opioid overdose. The law also provides immunity from prosecution for those responding to and reporting overdoses.

Deputies in the Berks County Sheriff's Office are now carrying Naloxone on their person in the event they are called on an opioid overdose. K-9 handlers must be especially diligent to protect their K-9 partners from accidental exposure.

Naloxone, most commonly sold under the brand name "Narcan," is a medication used to block the effects of opioids, especially in overdose. Narcan can be administered in various ways: When given intravenously, Naloxone works within two minutes; when injected into a muscle, it works within five minutes; it may also be sprayed into the nose achieving the same effects as taken intravenously. The effects of Naloxone last about half an hour to an hour. Multiple doses may be required, as the duration of action of most opioids is greater than that of Naloxone. That being said, anyone who is treated with Naloxone should immediately be taken to the closest hospital for follow-up treatment.

Before a deputy is issued a Naloxone kit, he or she must complete an online training course provided through the Pennsylvania Virtual Training Network. The training is sponsored by the Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association. The course covers the effects of opioids, signs of an overdose, and the administration of Naloxone. Upon successful completion of the course, the deputy is issued a Naloxone kit containing two doses of the drug in the form of a nasal spray.

To comply with Act 139 and any regulations published by the PA Department of Health, the County of Berks, the Berks County Sheriff's Office, and an Emergency Medical Services Provider (EMS), have entered into an agreement. The agreement sets forth the terms under which the Berks County Sheriff's Office will distribute and administer the supplied Naloxone kits to its deputies. The District Attorney's Office will provide these kits free of charge, supplied by the Council on Chemical Abuse.



The Sheriff's Office is shouldering the added responsibility of Naloxone administration to expand its services to the residents of Berks County and protect its deputies. In 2017, Berks County law enforcement officers administered Naloxone on numerous occasions and were successful in saving seventy (70) lives. The unfortunate reality is the people who are overdosing are our friends, family members and neighbors.



Internship Experiences

From time to time, the Berks County Sheriff's Office will provide internship experience for a college student majoring in criminal justice. Although an intern doesn't work as a deputy or complete work that only deputies are by law allowed to complete, each spends time gaining experience by completing tasks as assigned by division captains and sergeants. Ride-alongs are also part of the semester-long experience, as is time spent in each of the six divisions. Intern, Jacob Moyer, (pictured here with Captain of Patrol, Tim Moore), spends approximately 20 hours a week in the Sheriff's Office.

Moyer earned the prestigious Eagle Scout Award in 2015, is in the Marine Corps Reserves, and plans to receive his Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Justice from Penn State Berks at the end of 2019. He wants to one day work for a federal law enforcement agency (or perhaps as a deputy in the Berks County Sheriff's Office).

"I never realized how much the Sheriff's Office does and how close of a family they all are. This internship helped me to realize that I may want to one day pursue a career here."

Jacob Moyer – Penn State Berks