

Training is Key Part of Theft Prevention

SUMMER

It's no secret that one of the most important parts of reducing vehicle theft is training, for law enforcement and vehicle owners alike.

In our latest effort to educate law enforcement about auto theft and auto theft prevention, the ATPA has developed six training courses that are offered free to Pennsylvania law enforcement agencies. Each program lasts two to four hours. The instructor, Joseph Datesman, is a retired Pennsylvania State Police lieutenant who spent 33 years of his career investigating and training other investigators on vehicle theft and related subjects.

It is recommended that all officers interested in the training attend Auto Theft 101 (unless they have already attended a similar course).

Auto Theft 101 is designed to teach patrol officers what to look for during traffic stops and update them on laws concerning auto theft-related crime. The course also includes information about VIN numbers and license plates, as well as methods of theft.

Auto Theft 102 was developed for officers who will be participating in stolen vehicle investigations. The course will address vehicle identification and methods used to alter VINs.

Auto Theft 103 focuses on identifying all-terrain vehicles.

Auto Theft 104 addresses motorcycle identification.

Auto Theft 105 addresses heavy equipment identification.

Auto Theft 106 instructs officers about identifying trucks, tractors and semi-trailers.

If you're interested in the training programs offered, or for additional information, please contact Joseph Datesman at: 717-975-9074 or jdatesman@theauthorities.org.

Requesting agencies must have a room to seat a class of at 10 to 20 officers and a video monitor for training films. Since September 2005, the Authority has trained 428 officers in 27 training classes across Pennsylvania, and we look forward to seeing that number rise!

In other training news, drivers are never too young to start learning about the dangers of auto theft. The ATPA has developed an auto theft prevention film to be shown in high school driver's education classrooms. Information was pulled from the "50 tips" brochure and formatted in a fun and engaging way to interest teens. We also spoke with a local driver's education class to gain insight into what the best concept for the video would be.

continued on page 6

insidethisISSUE

page 2 - Message from the Chair

page 3 - New ATPA Board Members

page 4 - Latest VIN-Etch Event a Success!

page 5 - Lock It or Lose It Hits Northeastern PA

page 6 - Training Cont'd

page 7 - In The News

page 8 - Grantees

message from the CHAIR

board of DIRECTORS

Julia K. Hearthway, Esq.

*Chair, Authority Board of Directors
Legislative Committee Chair
Chief Deputy Attorney General
Office of Attorney General*

Alan P. Demers

*Secretary and
Public Relations Committee Chair
Associate Vice President, Claims
Nationwide Insurance Company*

Ronald L. Price

*Treasurer
Claims Manager
State Farm Insurance Company*

Judith G. Hopson

*Safety and Security Manager
Avis Rent-A-Car*

Sylvester Johnson

*Commissioner
Philadelphia Police Department*

Ronald Kosh

*Vice President,
Public and Government Affairs
AAA Mid Atlantic Insurance Group*

Col. Jeffrey B. Miller

*Commissioner
Pennsylvania State Police*

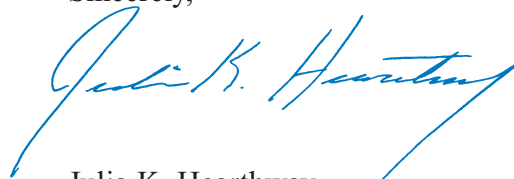
Thanks to the hard work of the ATPA community, Pennsylvania has become a much less friendly place for auto thieves. But even though auto theft numbers are down from previous years, Pennsylvania still has a long way to go in eliminating this type of crime.

The ATPA is continually looking for new ways to educate the public and law enforcement personnel on auto theft. It is crucial for law enforcement agencies to continue training to maximize their ability to combat auto theft. As you'll read about in this issue, the ATPA provides a training series for police officers. Since September 2005, the Authority has trained 428 officers from police departments across Pennsylvania, and I'm proud to report that number is on the rise.

And our education effort doesn't stop with law enforcement. We continue to educate drivers and help them to protect themselves from auto theft. In July, we held an extremely successful "Lock It or Lose It" awareness event near Scranton, garnering significant media coverage. Our most recent free VIN-Etch event was held May 6 at Capital City Mall in Camp Hill. We etched more than 300 vehicles and partnered with ABC 27 to get the word out about the event and the value of VIN-Etching.

We are also undertaking a public awareness campaign intended to teach young drivers about the dangers of auto theft. A DVD and a lesson plan are in the works to be shown in high school driver's education courses. It is never too early – or too late – to learn about auto theft prevention.

Sincerely,



Julia K. Hearthway
Chair, Auto Theft Prevention Authority

New Board Members Join ATPA Team

Colonel Jeffrey B. Miller



Colonel Jeffrey B. Miller was recently appointed to the Board of Directors of the ATPA. Colonel Miller serves as the 18th Commissioner of the Pennsylvania State Police. As Commissioner, he exercises administrative command, fiscal authority and responsibility over the Department. He oversees a budget of over 670 million dollars and commands a statewide accompaniment of more than 6,000 enlisted and civilian employees, which includes 4,300 State Police Troopers.

As the commissioner of the state police, he is empowered to assist the governor by enforcing the law and preserving the peace through the detection of crime, apprehension of criminals, and patrol of the highways. Miller is involved in a variety of law enforcement organizations, including, but certainly not limited to:

The Municipal Police Officers Education and Training Commission; the Middle Atlantic Great Lakes Organized Crime Law Enforcement Network; the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency; and the Governor's Homeland Security Executive Cabinet and Advisory Council.

A Harrisburg native, Colonel Miller enlisted in the Pennsylvania State Police in July 1984. Following Academy graduation, he served as a Trooper in the Bedford, York and Harrisburg stations. He was promoted to Corporal in 1988; Sergeant in 1990; Lieutenant in 1993; Captain in 1995; and Major in January 2002. Colonel Miller was assigned as the Director of Legislative Affairs for the Department in March of 2000.

Colonel Miller resides in Harrisburg with his wife, Andrea, and their two daughters.

Ronald W. Kosh



Ronald W. Kosh, Vice President of Public and Government Affairs for the AAA Mid-Atlantic organization, has also joined the ATPA board.

Kosh has been with AAA for more than three decades. He is responsible for all aspects of public policy development and advocacy, including communications and media relations in Delaware, Pennsylvania, Maryland, New Jersey, Virginia and the District of Columbia. Kosh is also the organizational liaison for AAA's various regional and local advisory boards.

He served for more than a decade as chief executive of regional affiliate, AAA Potomac, and its insurance and travel subsidiaries serving Washington, D.C., Maryland, and Northern Virginia. Kosh also served as a vice president responsible for merger/acquisition integration, real estate management, purchasing, logistics and membership systems.

Kosh is a Penn State graduate and he holds a law degree from George Mason University. Currently, Kosh serves as a Director of the Delaware Valley Crime Commission, the Greater Wilmington Convention & Visitors Bureau and is Vice Chair of the Better Business Bureaus of Eastern Pennsylvania and Washington, D.C. He resides in East Bradford, Pa., with his wife and three children.

Latest VIN-Etch Event a Success



On Saturday May 6, 2006, the ATPA and WHTM-TV (ABC 27) held a free VIN-Etch event at the Capital City Mall in Camp Hill. It was staffed by volunteers from the ATPA, Pennsylvania State Police, Cumberland County District Attorney's Office, Erie Insurance, Progressive Insurance and Neiman Group. The event was held to educate and protect vehicle owners from auto theft.



ATPA's Roy Miller and ABC27's Dennis Buterbaugh

A week prior to the event, WHTM's consumer reporter, Dennis Buterbaugh, who runs the channel's "Cool Car Wednesday" reports, alerted viewers to the event with promotional spots and a Friday evening preview package, which included sound bites from ATPA's Roy Miller. Our partnership with WHTM did the trick! On the day of the event, patrons were lining up well in advance of the 10 a.m. start time.

Once the etching started, it didn't take long for all the lanes to fill up with cars, and the flow remained constant throughout the event. Patrons enjoyed meeting Dennis and interacting with all the ATPA volunteers, learning whatever they could about the VIN-Etching process. While volunteers scrubbed windows, printed VIN stickers, and handed out additional ATPA information, WHTM was collecting video of the entire process for the evening news. The VIN-Etch event package ran during the 6 p.m. news and featured sound bites from Roy, volunteers and consumers, and gave an up-close look at what VIN-Etching is all about.

The final tally of VIN-Etched vehicles came to more than 250, and consumers were satisfied with the results! Some even mentioned they were going home to bring their other vehicles back to be imprinted. The event was definitely a success, and consumers were willing to brave the hot weather to come out and protect their cars. Grassroots activities like this continue to prove invaluable in educating Pennsylvanians about auto theft prevention.



Drivers wait for expert Vin-Etching

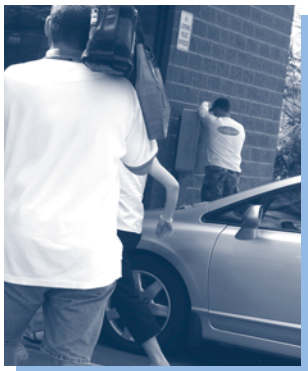
LockItOrLoseIt HitsNortheasternPA



A 2006 Honda Civic Was Stolen From Joe's Kwik Mart!

Well, not really. On Thursday, July 20, the ATPA held a mock auto theft at Joe's Kwik Mart in Dunmore, and our "thief" showed onlookers and the local media just how fast – and easy – a vehicle can be stolen when left running outside a convenience store. We joined forces with the Northeastern Pennsylvania Auto Theft Task Force to hold this "Lock It or Lose It" event. Participants included members of the ATPA, Northeastern Pennsylvania Task Force, Dunmore Police, Scranton Police, Wilkes-Barre Police, Pennsylvania State Police and Neiman Group.

In the week prior to the event, teasers were sent to the local media with the phrases, "A car will be stolen at 11 a.m. Thursday. Will it be yours?" and "In the time it takes to buy a cup of coffee, someone could steal your car." The media was so intrigued by the cryptic statements they sent reporters from WYOU-TV/WBRE-TV and WNEP-TV, and the Scranton Times-Tribune showed up to witness the mock auto theft.



After the road was blocked off, the "victim" pulled into a parking space near the entrance to the convenience store, and darted into Joe's Kwik Mart while her 2006 Honda Civic was still running. She passed a man "talking" on the pay phone, and as soon as she entered the store, he quickly hopped into the Civic and drove off. In seven seconds, her car was gone – the cameras capturing the whole sequence.

The outlets received on-site quotes and sound bites to include in their news packages from Roy Miller and Myles Walsh, administrator for the Northeastern Pennsylvania Task Force. They also shot footage of one of the Kwik Mart employees hanging a "Lock It or Lose It" informational bumper-size sticker on the front door. The colorful sticker provided a great visual and acted as a conduit to getting the ATPA logo in front of viewers. By the event's end, Joe's Kwik Mart was armed with stickers to display around the store.

The event coverage was phenomenal, with all major local media outlets showing up and running news packages/stories. Additional events are in the works!

TrainingCont'd

continued from the cover

The overwhelming choice from the class was a concept called “STOPS” – a Cops and Reno 911! parody about a self-appointed auto theft prevention officer. The full script has been developed and is in the process of moving to production. Lesson plans that will be distributed with the video are also in the works.

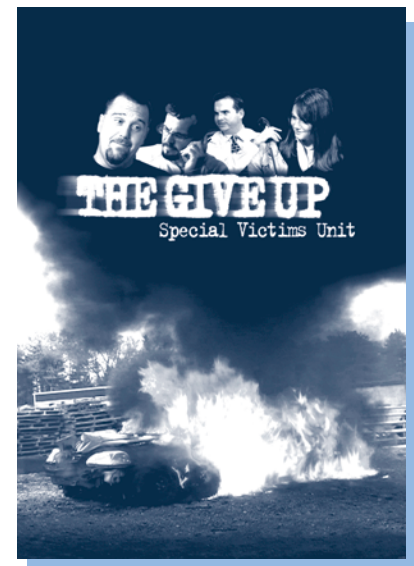
These new training and education initiatives will be instrumental to our mission of combating auto theft through improved enforcement and public education.

‘The Give-Up: Special Victims Unit’

An estimated 50 percent of all reported auto thefts are fraudulent. That may seem hard to believe, but some auto theft experts claim it could be even higher. To help insurance companies better identify and prevent fraudulent auto theft claims, the ATPA has produced a new training DVD that looks at the typical theft and what insurance companies can do to prevent it.

In the past, we distributed a similar training video to law enforcement personnel. The “actors” in the new DVD are the same Philadelphia and Lancaster officers featured in the previous video.

In this DVD, two claims representatives are on the case of a man who reported his car stolen. In actuality, he and his buddy are scheming to outsmart the insurance company by filing a false auto theft report. As the story unfolds, viewers get a glimpse inside the minds of the claims reps and the criminals. The training DVD is free to all insurance companies. Also included in the DVD is an easy-to-follow guide for claims personnel as they process auto theft claims.



Remembering Reading City Police Officer Scott Wertz



It is with a heavy heart that we mourn the death of Reading City Police Officer Scott Wertz. Officer Wertz was a member of the Authority’s State Police Auto Theft Task Force. He was shot and killed in the line of duty on the morning of Sunday, August 6. Scott, a nine-year veteran of the force, was a dedicated

police officer, husband and father of two sons. His absence from the table and the roll call will be greatly missed.

This tragic event typifies the dangerous job that our dedicated men and women serving in law enforcement face on a daily basis. Scott’s courage and dedication will not go unnoticed or unappreciated. In that final roll call we all must face, Scott’s ultimate sacrifice will not go unrewarded. We at the Authority extend our heartfelt sympathy to Scott’s family, co-workers and friends.

A scholarship fund has been established for Scott’s children. Contributions can be made to the Jared and Joshua Wertz Scholarship Fund, c/o Barta-Berks Federal Credit Union, 1049 Exeter Road, Reading, PA 19604.

Those Pesky Surveillance Cameras...

This case started in Silver Spring Township where police and fire units responded to a 2005 Dodge Neon on fire at the Wal-Mart store in Silver Spring Commons. A man was seen fleeing the car and surveillance video showed the male entering the store shortly afterwards.

Officers ran the vehicle identification number, but there was no record of the vehicle. Silver Spring police followed up the next day and discovered evidence that pointed to an 18-year-old male from Susquehanna Township who matched the physical description of the person fleeing the vehicle. The case was transferred to the Cumberland County District Attorney's Office and the 18-year-old was arrested. During an interview, he admitted to being in the vehicle at the time of the fire, but denied stealing it.

Additional witnesses said the suspect had test driven the vehicle several weeks before the fire and took the keys after the test drive. The suspect and another male allegedly returned to the dealership later that night and swiped the car. Police are searching for the other suspect.

— *(Cumberland County District Attorney's Office)*

One Theft Leads to Another

In January, two vehicles were broken into and a gun was stolen from one of them. On the same night in the same neighborhood, a vehicle was stolen as well. Later that evening, Harrisburg Police Auto Theft Detectives Donofrio and Krokos spotted the stolen vehicle and arrested the three occupants, one of whom was in possession of the stolen gun.

During subsequent interviews, the detectives were able to obtain confessions to these crimes and to a few others. The detectives learned that the suspects had stolen 77 sets of keys to new General Motor vehicles that had been on display at the Pennsylvania Auto Show, held in Harrisburg's Farm Show Building. The suspects led detectives to the keys, which were recovered. Detectives also found and confiscated two guns at one of the suspects' homes.

— *(Harrisburg Bureau of Police)*

P.I.G.S.T.Y. Making Progress

It is well known among law enforcement that scrap metal and auto salvage businesses often give aid and comfort to thieves. A Philadelphia task force is drawing attention to salvage yards by raising issues of health and/or environmental concerns.

The Philadelphia Intergovernmental Scrap and Tire Yard (P.I.G.S.T.Y.) is a multi-agency task force that addresses concerns on violations of city, state and federal environmental laws. The force ensures that scrap and salvage yards are in compliance with all zoning regulations, that they are properly licensed and that they are in compliance with all laws. This endeavor has prevented these Philadelphia yards from returning to their era as open-air chop shops and stolen vehicle parts warehouses.

Unscheduled environmental inspections are unnerving for salvage businesses. Some have closed. Since the inception of this task force over one year ago, auto theft has decreased by more than 10 percent. P.I.G.S.T.Y. has performed more than 50 inspections, several of which have resulted in criminal arrests, along with a multitude of violations to environmental codes and regulations.

— *(Philadelphia Police Department)*

Hot Pursuit: Mercedes Benz Recovered

A used car lot in Manheim Township, Lancaster County a 2001 Mercedes Benz stolen from its lot on June 14. Later that day, a Lancaster City police officer saw the stolen vehicle. When the driver refused to stop, a brief pursuit ensued, but the suspect managed to get away.

Shortly thereafter, the stolen vehicle was seen by East Hempfield Township Police. The second pursuit involved officers from the East Hempfield Township Police, Manor Township Police, Millersville Borough Police, Columbia Borough Police, the Lancaster County Sheriff's Office and the

Lancaster City Police. During this pursuit, the suspect rammed one of the pursuing vehicles and narrowly missed hitting some of the officers. The suspect was arrested and taken into custody in the Borough of Millersville, and there were no serious injuries to the suspect or the officers involved.

During the investigation, it was determined that the car thief stole another Mercedes on June 8 and had been involved in a pursuit in that vehicle as well. The suspect has been charged with several offenses and the investigation is currently being reviewed by the Lancaster County District Attorney's Office. — *(Lancaster City Police)*



Chop Shop Operations Come To A Halt

From April through June, members of the Pennsylvania State Police from Indiana, Cambria and Jefferson Counties recovered \$80,000 in stolen property from three chop shop locations. The charges against the four accused include: robbery; owning, operating or conducting a chop shop; altered or illegally obtained property; and receiving stolen property.

Police were notified that a Chevrolet Trailblazer had been discovered abandoned on private property, so members of the Indiana PSP seized the vehicle. After the vehicle's identifying numbers did not match up, officials contacted the Western Auto Theft Task Force to identify the vehicle.

It turns out the Trailblazer was stolen from a dealership in Poland, Ohio and the search led authorities to the first of three chop shop locations on April 3 and 4. The officers recovered a retagging operation, a stolen backhoe, which was being used to bury parts of chopped vehicles, and remnants of three chopped vehicles. After serving search warrants on the other two locations, a stolen trailer and Ford F-250 were recovered, as well as more than \$2,000 in tools that had been inside the Ford. The search also resulted in the recovery of several firearms stolen during a robbery in Cambria County.

— *(Pennsylvania State Police Auto Theft Unit Western Region)*

theAUTHORITY's grantees

Allegheny County District Attorney's Office
Cumberland County District Attorney's Office
Delaware County District Attorney's Office
Erie Bureau of Police
Good Shepherd Mediation Program
Harrisburg Bureau of Police
Lancaster City Police
Lehigh County District Attorney's Office
Northeast Regional Task Force of Pennsylvania
Pennsylvania Anti-Car Theft Committee (PACT)
Pennsylvania State Police Auto Theft Unit (Central Region)
Pennsylvania State Police Auto Theft Unit (Eastern Region)
Pennsylvania State Police Auto Theft Unit (Western Region)
Philadelphia District Attorney's Office
Philadelphia Police Department
Pittsburgh Police Department Auto Squad
York County District Attorney's Office



theAUTHORITY

is published by the Pennsylvania
Auto Theft Prevention Authority.
The Authority and its grantees receive
operational funding from nearly 400
insurance companies operating in
Pennsylvania. If you have questions
or need additional information,
please contact us at:

Telephone: 717.975.9074

Media inquiries: 717.232.5554

Fax: 717.975.9089

Toll Free: 1.888.777.ATPA

www.watchyourcar.org

Staff

Roy A. Miller, Executive Director
Michelle L. Staton, Associate Director
Christine E. Cassel, Grant Assistant
Joan A. Dockery, Secretary

theAUTHORITY

Pennsylvania Auto Theft Prevention Authority
6 Kacey Court, Suite 101
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055