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State Farm Donates Equipment to be Used for Auto Theft Investigations

On June 16, 2008, representatives from State Farm Insurance Company presented the Bensalem Police Department with an enclosed transport trailer to help assist with auto theft investigations and crime prevention.

The trailer will be used by the Bensalem Police in cooperation with the PA State Police's Eastern Auto Theft Task Force. They will use the trailer to transport things like stolen motorcycles, ATVs and vehicle parts. They will also use the trailer for evidence collection, transport of department vehicles and equipment, and for public safety and VINgraving events.

According to a press release issued by the Bensalem Police Department, State Farm representative and ATPA board member, Ron Price was on hand and commented that, "Safety, education and community development are key components to State Farm to help build strong and secure neighborhoods." He also noted that they, "Direct [their] resources, both financial and in-kind, to organizations and partners who can and are making a difference.

This includes Bensalem and our auto theft prevention partners. This is a business and social responsibility."

The donated transport trailer is a salvaged stolen trailer recovered by the Pennsylvania



Dave Phillips of State Farm announces the donation of an equipment trailer to the Bensalem Police Department

State Farm, continued on Pg. 3

Message from the Executive Director



In this issue of our newsletter, we share the ATPA's involvement with the PA Chiefs of Police Conference, at which I presented a class on owner give-ups. Now, more than ever, PA drivers are feeling the heat when it comes to the economy. There are even some who are thinking about or who have already given their vehicles up (falsely reporting them stolen) to avoid yet another monthly payment or another pricey tank of gas. An owner give-up is never the right thing to do and likely costs the insurance industry millions of dollars. We offer two free training videos for police and insurance claims/SIU professionals to help them learn how to spot these illegal actions.

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AAA Mid Atlantic Insurance Group

Col. Jeffrey B. Miller
Commissioner,
Pennsylvania State Police

Charles H. Ramsey
Commissioner,
Philadelphia Police Department

Also in this issue, we take time to congratulate our grantees who won achievement awards at the 36th annual NE-IAATI training conference. The gathering, held in Scranton, PA, was well attended by auto theft investigators from the northeast and Canada. I would like to thank PA Attorney General-Tom Corbett, our Chairperson-Julia Hearthway and Lt. Col. Frank Pawlowski, of the PA State Police, for their remarks during the conference's awards banquet.

Since our last issue, we have continued to forge new partnerships in an effort to keep PA's auto theft rates on the decline. While it has been a period of growth — filled with introductions and collaborations — it has also been a time for us to reflect on the existing relationships we have. In this issue, we have highlighted one in particular. After three great years of service, Col. Jeffrey Miller will be leaving our board of directors as he leaves his position as Commissioner of the Pennsylvania State Police. Our organization has benefited tremendously by his guidance and participation. Thank you!

As the long, hot days continue, remember that there are simple things we can all do to keep our cars safe. Don't leave windows open and never leave your keys in the car. If you think rising gas prices are a pain, imagine the headache you'll get if your car is stolen.

Enjoy the rest of the summer!

Sincerely,



Michelle L. Staton
Executive Director, Auto Theft Prevention Authority

August 16, 2008

Mark Your Calendars

Free VINgraving Event - Macungie

The Macungie Police Department and the Lehigh County District Attorney's Office are sponsoring a free VINgraving event at the Macungie Fairgrounds.

For more information, visit www.watchyourcar.org

September 7-10, 2008

IASIU's 23rd Annual Seminar & Expo on Insurance Fraud

IASIU's Annual Insurance Fraud Seminar is recognized as the premier training program for the investigators from the seasoned professional to the new SIU employee. Workshops cover a broad range of fraud topics, including auto and property theft.

The conference will be held at the Marriot Marquis Atlanta, 265 Peachtree Center Ave., Atlanta, GA 30303.

For more information, visit www.iasiu.org

Sept. 29-Oct. 2, 2008

NICB Mega Special Investigation Academy

Eligibility for academy attendance is restricted to direct (not contracted) employees of member companies, the NICB, government agencies and law enforcement.

The conference will be held at the Sheraton Westport Chalet Hotel, 191 Westport Plaza, St. Louis, MO 63146.

For more information, visit www.nicb.org

State Farm, continued from front page

State Police Eastern Auto Theft Task Force. The trailer had been insured by State Farm.

The Bensalem Police Department is Bucks County's representative to the State Police's regional auto theft task force.

The release also included remarks from the Bensalem Township Director of Public Safety, Frederick A. Harran, who noted that, "Being a part of the Pennsylvania Auto Theft Prevention Authority team and a member of the Pennsylvania State Police Auto Theft East Unit has been a true asset to auto theft investigations and prevention for Bensalem Township."

The ATPA would like to thank State Farm for their generosity and partnership with Pennsylvania's auto theft investigators.

For more information about State Farm, visit: www.statefarm.com.



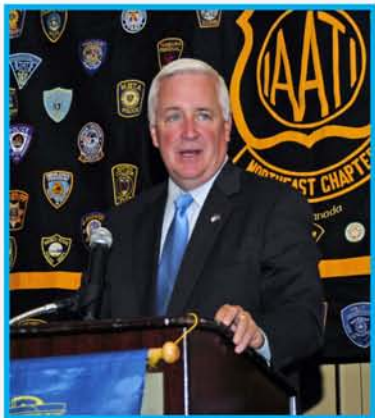
The donated trailer will be used for transport of stolen motorcycles, ATVs and vehicle parts, among other things

ATPA Participates in 36th Annual NE-IAATI Seminar

**Executive Director Staton
Chairs Conference, Becomes
4th Vice President**



International Association of Auto Theft Investigators, North East Chapter Officers are sworn in. (L to R) Eileen Langer Smith - 1st VP, Colleen Cassidy - 3rd VP, Michelle Staton - 4th VP, Kim Hormann - Exec. Director, Jeff Davis - 2nd VP and Charles T. Meade - Treasurer



Tom Corbett, Pennsylvania Attorney General, delivers the keynote address during the seminar banquet



Michelle Staton - ATPA Exec. Director (Center L) and Julia Hearthway - ATPA Board Chair (Center R), are presented with an appreciatory co-host/sponsor plaque by George Kleinsteiber - Past President (L) and Heidi Jordan - NE-IAATI President (R)

May 13 -15, 2008 members of the North East Chapter of the International Association of Auto Theft Investigators (NE-IAATI) converged in Scranton, Pennsylvania for the 36th annual training seminar.

The seminar, organized by Michelle Staton, Executive Director of the ATPA and Myles Walsh, Grant Administrator for the Northeast Regional Auto Theft Task Force, featured training classes on topics ranging from vehicle and motorcycle identification to forensic locksmith analysis. ATPA Training Instructor, Lt. Joseph Datesman, (Ret.) PA State Police, taught a class on heavy truck and trailer identification. ATPA grantees, Sgt. David Fisher and Tpr. Steve Myers, both of the PA State Police, taught classes on cargo container/trailer theft and agricultural equipment identification; Tammy Kohr of PennDOT, taught a class on title fraud and was the recipient of the Roger Overton Award; Officer Jack Logan of the Philadelphia Police Dept., taught a class on organized auto theft crimes and owner give-ups; and Paul Peterson of the Lackawanna County DA's Office taught a class on preparing to prosecute.

Also on hand were instructors from AVIS, the Baltimore RATT team, CT State Police, Magloclen, Manheim, NICB, NY DMV, NYPD and Sterling.

The conference was attended by nearly 300 of the 1,453 NE-IAATI members. Attendees enjoyed remarks by ATPA Chairperson Julia Hearthway, as well as Lt. Col. Frank Pawlowski of the PA State Police and a keynote speech delivered by PA Attorney General Tom Corbett during the awards banquet. In addition, many ATPA grantees received well-deserved awards recognizing their commitment to and achievements in the field of auto theft investigation.

CONGRATULATIONS to the following award recipients:

ANTHONY KANE AWARD

Presented for outstanding achievement in the field of vehicle theft or fraud investigation or prevention



Lead investigators:

Tpr. Michael Pisarchick, PA State Police
Det. Paul Koroal, Pa State Police

Assisted by:

Tpr. David Aldrige, PA State Police
Tpr. Michael Kokoski, PA State Police
Tpr. Scott Monroe, PA State Police
Sgt. Dennis Goodhart, Ohio State Police
John Paskan, Sr. Special Agent, NICB
Tpr. Daren Huggins, Ohio State Police

GEORGE ACKER AWARD

Presented for outstanding efforts and work in the field of auto theft or fraud prevention, detection, or investigation, specifically in the area relating to documentation



Tammy Kohr, PennDOT

ROGER OVERTON AWARD

Presented for outstanding efforts and work in the field of auto theft investigation, and motor vehicle identification



Bill Sutch, Special Agent, NICB, Ret. from Philadelphia Police Dept.
Jack Quinn, Special Agent, NICB, Ret. from Philadelphia Police Dept.

LOJACK AWARD

Presented to recognize any law enforcement officer whose efforts, in conjunction with the use of any electronic tracking device, make the most significant impact on the recovery (s) of stolen vehicle (s).



Philadelphia Police Dept. - Major Crimes Auto Squad



The ATPA continually strives to find new ways to combat and prevent auto theft in Pennsylvania. Here are a few note-worthy highlights.

ATPA Highlights

ATPA Extends Thanks and Well Wishes to Board Member



*Col. Jeffrey B. Miller,
Commissioner,
PA State Police*

The ATPA would like to extend thanks to Col. Jeffery B. Miller, Commissioner of the Pennsylvania State Police for his gracious years of service to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and to the ATPA Board of Directors.

Miller, who announced his retirement from the Pennsylvania State Police and ATPA Board of Directors this summer, has accepted an offer to become the head of security for the National Football League.

While serving as Commissioner, Miller was active on the ATPA Board of Directors for 3 years. His participation has been extraordinary and he will be missed.

Joint Press Conference Garners Impressive Coverage

As previously reported, the ATPA celebrated a landmark reduction in auto theft rates in Pennsylvania in 2007. Since the ATPA's inception, auto thefts have decreased by 50%.

A joint press conference was held on May 21, 2008 at which Attorney General Tom Corbett and PA State Police Commissioner Jeffrey Miller announced the record auto theft reduction in PA. TV, print and radio media outlets covered the story, resulting in an estimated audience of over 400,000 Pennsylvanians.

ATPA Board of Directors Chairperson, Julia Hearthway (also of the Attorney General's Office) was on hand to answer questions. The ATPA's website and regional statistics were prominently featured.

Eagles Fans: Lock Your Car & Enter to Win Eagles Prizes



The ATPA will officially launch their second year of partnership with the Philadelphia Eagles in the beginning of September.

As the Eagles begin their 2008 - 2009 season, the ATPA will launch a contest designed to inform Eagles fans and the residents of southeast Pennsylvania about the common sense things they can do to protect their cars from theft. Participants will also have the opportunity to enter to win Eagles prizes, including a pair of season tickets and great Eagles merchandise.

In September, check out www.watchyourcar.org and www.philadelphiaeagles.com. Enter for your chance to win!

Attorney General announces arrests of men in connection with a staged auto-theft insurance scheme gone wrong

Attorney General Tom Corbett announced that two men were arrested after their plan to collect insurance money for a stolen 2005 Ford Explorer went awry when the vehicle's LoJack Stolen Vehicle Recovery System was activated and led officers to its location.

The vehicle was reported stolen to both the Philadelphia Police Department and an insurance company. The insurance claim was for about \$14,000.

Corbett said that once the vehicle identification number (VIN) was entered into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) system, the Explorer's LoJack beacon was activated.

Both defendants are charged with multiple felonies and one misdemeanor.

Office of the Attorney General

Suspected carjacker stole seven autos in an hour

Police in Canada spent an afternoon chasing a suspect who appeared to be playing a real-life version of the video game Grand Theft Auto.

In total, the man is suspected of snatching up to seven different vehicles at gunpoint before eventually crashing and being nabbed by police.

The spree started at about noon when a man forced a car to stop at gunpoint. He took the car and raced to a supermarket where he swiped another car, also at gunpoint.

The chase eventually came to an end when the suspect lost control and crashed into a signpost, ending up on the front lawn of a school. There were two people in the vehicle when it stopped, leading to speculation the suspect may have taken a hostage at one point.

The Chronicle Herald / Canada

Cops bust huge illegal car registration ring

PA State Police broke up a huge scheme to illegally register hundreds, possibly thousands of cars in PA, NY and NJ. Four people are under arrest, charged with forgery, identity theft, conspiracy and falsifying official documents.

State Police say this scheme has the potential to affect thousands of innocent people who had their personal identity information used to register cars for people who couldn't register one legally.

After sentencing, the perpetrators received varying sentences and will pay collective restitution of over \$520,000.

Pennsylvania State Police

Man indicted on 30 counts

A PA man charged with breaking into 26 vehicles was indicted by a Warren County grand jury.

The suspect allegedly stole his sister's vehicle in Scranton before driving to the Spring Meadows development in Oxford Township. There, he allegedly broke into 26 vehicles.

Police at the time said he stole cell phones, cash, wallets and other items, and smashed the windows of about half the vehicles. He then stole a victim's vehicle, police said.

PA State Police captured the suspect after being led on a car and foot chase.

The Express Times / Easton

Cop shoots carjack suspect

A gun-toting carjacker was wounded after a confrontation with a Philadelphia police officer.

The suspect carjacked a man, said police spokesman Lt. Frank Vanore.

The victim then flagged down a Highway Patrol Officer who happened to be passing by on his motorcycle on his way back to the office from a court hearing.

Within seconds, the suspect jumped out of the vehicle and pulled out a fully-loaded Tec 9 semi-automatic handgun.

"The officer fired and struck him in the abdomen and arm," Vanore said.

The suspect was taken to Temple University Hospital where he was positively identified by the carjacking victim.

Philadelphia Daily News / Philadelphia Police Dept.

Thief got leg up at car rental lot

A suspect, who, despite losing his right leg 10 years ago — his then-girlfriend's ex-husband blasted him with a shotgun — became accomplished at driving right-centric autos with his left foot. Maybe too good.

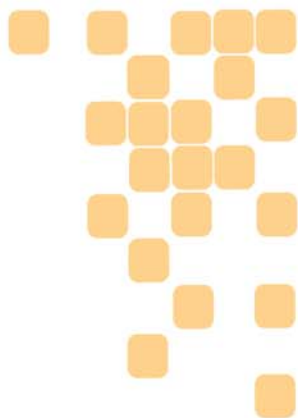
Philadelphia police charged him with driving off with five new SUVs last month from a Philadelphia International Airport rental car lot. Police said the investigation began after the first car — a 2008 Ford Expedition — was stolen in May.

A video surveillance camera at the Budget and Avis Rental outlets on Arrival Road near the airport showed a one-legged man enter the lot and drive off with the vehicle.

The Philadelphia Inquirer



Pennsylvania Police Chiefs Learn About Owner Give-Ups



The Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association members recently converged in Lancaster for their annual conference.

The ATPA sponsored the event and Executive Director, Michelle Staton, taught a class on owner give-ups.

An owner give-up may occur when a vehicle owner can no longer afford payments due to loss of job or a change in their economic status. In an effort to eliminate their financial responsibility associated with the vehicle, owners falsely report the vehicle as stolen.

Owner give-ups also occur when leasees are near the end of their lease and/or can not afford pricey mileage overages. Some drivers even exchange their vehicles for drugs. Owner give-ups falsely inflate auto theft rates in PA.

Staton noted during her class that, "owner give-ups likely cost the insurance industry millions of dollars each year. As the economy slows down, there are more and more individuals feeling a financial pinch and may choose to commit this type of fraud. Law enforcement and insurance professionals must be vigilant for owner give-ups."

Law Enforcement and Insurance Claims/SIU Professionals: Order Free Training Videos

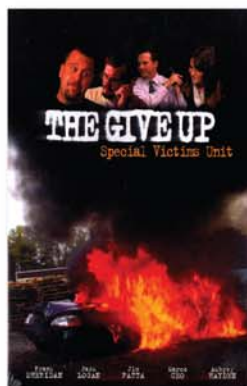
The ATPA offers two training videos relating to owner give-ups. "The Give Up" is tailored for law enforcement professionals, while "The Give Up: Special Victims Unit" is for insurance claims/SIU Professionals. Both videos come with related reference material.

Both videos and additional copies of the reference materials are available free-of-charge by calling the ATPA at: 888-777-ATPA.



"The Give Up"

A training video designed for law enforcement professionals, "The Give Up," reviews the basics for spotting and investigating owner give-ups.



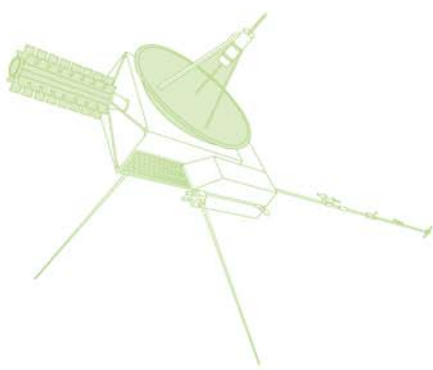
"The Give Up: Special Victims Unit"

A training video designed for insurance claims personnel and special investigative units, "The Give Up: Special Victims Unit" reviews the basics for spotting and investigating owner give-ups from the insurance company's point of view.

THE AUTHORITY'S GRANTEES

- Allegheny 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
- 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

We've gone electronic.



The ATPA offers electronic distribution of this newsletter.*

E-mail us at
newsletter@watchyourcar.org
 to receive your electronic copy.

*The ATPA will continue print distribution of this newsletter.

THE AUTHORITY

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:

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