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## Board Member Ronald L. Price Retires

After 15 years of service, Ronald L. Price will retire as Treasurer of the Pennsylvania Auto Theft Prevention Authority (ATPA) Board of Directors. He is credited with being a founder of the organization, one of its longest standing board members and a true advocate for the reduction and prevention of auto theft in Pennsylvania. His commitment to this cause, however, began before the ATPA was created when he served as President of the Pennsylvania Anti-Car Theft Committee (PACT). On June 1, 2009, he will leave his post as one of two remaining original ATPA Board Members and as Claims Manager for State Farm Insurance Company.

The ATPA would like to express sincere appreciation for the leadership and dedication Mr. Price has contributed. As the ATPA set out to recognize his achievements, it became clear that the memoirs of his service also tell the story of the formation and growth of the organization—the history and success of the ATPA is intimately tied to his participation.

As a career employee of State Farm Insurance Company, Mr. Price was familiar with the issue of auto theft in Pennsylvania. His early participation with PACT led to the collaborative development of PA Act 171, the ATPA's formative legislation. Mr. Price worked with Senator Edwin G. Holl, a member of the Banking and Insurance Committee; Paul Holl, Esq., current ATPA counsel; the Insurance Federation and others to introduce Act 171, which was signed into law in 1994.



*Ronald L. Price, Treasurer of  
the ATPA Board of Directors*

## Message from the Executive Director



### Board of Directors

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Pennsylvania State Police

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Commissioner,  
Philadelphia Police Department

In this issue of our newsletter, we recognize the contribution of Ronald L. Price, Treasurer of the ATPA Board of Directors, who will retire on June 1, 2009.

Mr. Price is a founding father of the ATPA. He was involved in the development of the ATPA's formative legislation, and was integral in the establishment of the ATPA's operating and assessment process. He served as the Board of Directors' first Chairman and was an active committee member and leader. His insight and determination has directly impacted auto theft in Pennsylvania. His dedication to this cause began before the ATPA existed, however, when he served as the President of the Pennsylvania Anti-Car Theft Committee.

I would like to express sincere appreciation for Mr. Price's service, wisdom and dedication. It has been a pleasure to work with him and he will be deeply missed.

Also in this issue, we present our 2008 statistics, which were recently published in the ATPA's Annual Report to the Pennsylvania Legislature. Since the inception of the ATPA, auto theft has declined by 57% in PA. Our grantees continue to work efficiently and effectively to combat auto theft in PA.

Lastly, the ATPA is proud to share the achievements of our grantees. In this issue, we acknowledge the Pennsylvania State Police Western Regional Auto Theft Task Force who received the IAATI/AGC award for outstanding investigative efforts related to heavy equipment.

With warm weather right around the corner, resist the temptation to leave your vehicle running unattended. Keeping your vehicle cool is not worth the risk of losing your vehicle. Become proactive and take extra steps to secure your vehicle and keys!

Sincerely,



Michelle L. Staton  
Executive Director, Auto Theft Prevention Authority

## Mark Your Calendars

June 18, 2009

### Free VINgraving Event

Quartermaster Plaza | Oregon Ave. | Philadelphia, PA  
10:00AM - 2:00PM | No Rain Date

For more information, visit [www.watchyourcar.org](http://www.watchyourcar.org)

June 21 - 25, 2009

### South East Chapter, IAATI Regional Seminar

The Clarion Townhouse Hotel | 1615 Gervais St. | Columbia, South Carolina

For more information, visit [www.seiaati.org](http://www.seiaati.org)

August 10 - 14, 2009

### IAATI International Conference

The Westin Westminster | 10600 Westminster Blvd. | Westminster, Colorado

For more information, visit [www.iaati.org](http://www.iaati.org) or contact Det. Jim Kautz at 303.658.4229.

September 23, 2009

### Free VINgraving Event

AAA Chambersburg Office | 1666 Lincoln Way East Shopping Center | Chambersburg, PA  
9:00AM - 3:30PM | Rain Date: 9/25/09

For more information, call AAA Chambersburg Member Services at 800.222.1469

October 7, 2009

### Free VINgraving Event

AAA State College Office | 200 Shiloh Road | State College, PA  
9:00AM - 3:30PM | Rain Date: 10/9/09

Fore more information, call AAA State College Member Services at 800.222.1469

## Price Retires, continued from front page

Mr. Price was the driving force behind the establishment of the ATPA and the attentive architect who created a way for the auto insurance industry and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to efficiently partner to reduce and prevent auto theft.

Mr. Price was instrumental in the establishment of the ATPA's operations and assessment process. He worked with the Governor's Office, Treasury and Budget Department, procured office space and initiated the hiring process for the organization's first Executive Director. He worked with PACT to coordinate the appointment of the first board of directors and carried out legislation which he worked to create. He navigated Pennsylvania's political environment with leadership and strength.

He was elected as the ATPA Board of Director's first Chairman, and was followed by the current Chair, Julia K. Hearthway, Esq. His tenure on the ATPA Board includes participation in the Grant Review Committee and service as Treasurer, the position from which he will retire.



From left to right: Paul Holl, Esq.-ATPA Counsel, Julia K. Hearthway, Esq.-ATPA Board Chair, Ronald L. Price-ATPA Board Treasurer/past Chairman and Michelle L. Staton, ATPA Executive Director

The ATPA thanks Mr. Price for his years of service and for the insight and determination to challenge convention and define new partnerships which have led to a reduction of auto theft in Pennsylvania.

# ATPA Releases Statistics in 2008 Annual Report

Thefts down 57% since the inception of the ATPA



ATPA 2008 Annual Report, entitled "A True Crime Story" highlighted the players that make fighting auto theft in Pennsylvania an ensemble effort.



**"Of the individuals arrested in 2008, 76% were adults and 24% were juveniles."**

The ATPA recently published their 2008 Annual Report. Each year, the ATPA releases statistics, information regarding the organization's financial standing, a review of grantees and a recap of the year's notable highlights.

The 2008 report was entitled, "A True Crime Story," and emphasized the collaborative nature of the organization. The introduction, reminiscent of the first lines of a film noir, stated that, "The battle against auto theft is fought on many fronts. Thieves get smarter and more resourceful every day; law enforcement personnel, legislators and car owners must continue to keep pace. To fight this costly crime, all three groups must play their part. The safety of the streets depends on it..."

In 2008, 22,476 vehicles were stolen; the ATPA grantees arrested 1,281 individuals and had 629 convictions. In addition, the grantees assisted in the arrests of 590 offenders. Their investigative efforts led to the

recovery of \$34.5 million worth of stolen vehicles and parts.

Since the inception of the organization, the grantees have recovered \$357.6 million worth of vehicles and \$18.6 million worth of parts. In 2008, the grantees' efforts resulted in restitution ordered of \$4,505,604. Since the inception of the organization, there has been \$11,816,349 of restitution ordered.

The ATPA is in good financial standing and operated at 8% of the total assessments collected. Nearly 90% of the assessment was committed to law enforcement grants.

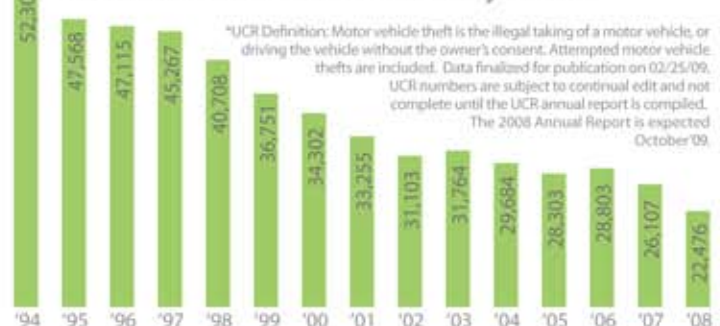
For every dollar spent on law enforcement grants in 2008, there is a return of \$7.15 in vehicles and parts recovered.

For a free copy of the ATPA Annual Report, call 717.591.7097, or visit [www.watchyourcar.org](http://www.watchyourcar.org) for a digital copy.

## Types of Arrests 2008



## Motor Vehicle Thefts in Pennsylvania\*





**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**

**FOLLOW ATPA ON  
TWITTER  
@WatchYourCarPA**



Do you want daily tips on how to protect your vehicle? Do you want to receive real-time updates regarding auto theft in PA?

Follow the ATPA on micro-blogging site, Twitter. Our user name is: WatchYourCarPA. Not a member? You can still follow along by visiting [www.twitter.com/watchyourcarpa](http://www.twitter.com/watchyourcarpa).

**ATPA URGES TRAINING  
IN PA CHIEFS OF  
POLICE ARTICLE**



The ATPA recently submitted an article for publication in the Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police quarterly publication. The article highlights PA's evolving auto theft problem and features the ATPA's training programs which have been designed to keep law enforcement professionals up-to-date with current theft trends. All PA law enforcement agencies are encouraged to take advantage of the free training.

Courses are taught by the ATPA's training instructor, Joeseeph Datesman, who is a retired PA State Police Lieutenant with 33 years experience investigating and training other investigators on vehicle theft. Courses range from basic VIN identification and titling to truck, tractor and semi-trailer identification. To schedule a training session, call the ATPA at 717.591.7097.

**"TAKE YOUR KEYS"  
LAUNCHED IN  
ALLENTOWN**



On February 11, 2009, at a joint press conference, Lehigh County District Attorney James B. Martin, Allentown Police Captain Daryl Hendricks and ATPA Executive Director Michelle Staton, launched the Take Your Keys program in Allentown.

The program, which had previously been launched in Reading, educated drivers that it is illegal to leave their vehicles running unattended, that they could get a ticket for it—or worse—their vehicle could be stolen.

Pictured from left to right are Allentown Police Captain Daryl Hendricks and Lehigh County District Attorney James B. Martin.

For more information regarding the Take Your Keys program, visit [www.watchyourcar.org](http://www.watchyourcar.org).

## In the News

### Stolen vehicle found in Lehigh River

Emergency officials fished a stolen SUV out of the Lehigh River, the latest in a string of vehicles dumped off a sleepy stretch of Canal Park in Allentown, PA.

The top of the silver SUV was spotted by a parks employee. No one was inside the swamped vehicle, and police said no bodies were found nearby after the vehicle was towed back to shore by a boat.

"In any given year," the parks employee said, "half a dozen cars, trucks or SUVs might get dumped in that area."

*The Morning Call*

### More auto & car insurance fraud cases in bad economy

Across the country, desperate Americans are lighting their own cars on fire when they can no longer afford the payments. Then they report the vehicles stolen and try to collect the insurance money.

According to a spokesman for The Coalition Against Insurance Fraud, such cases have been on the rise since December 2007. National statistics on the number of auto fraud cases that occur are not available because each insurance company maintains their own stats and they each consider different acts to be fraudulent.

The National Insurance Crime Bureau released a study in 2008 reporting that owner give-ups skyrocketed in five major cities.

*ABC News*

### Four indicted for roles in PA, NJ car thefts

Four people were indicted for their alleged roles in a multi-million dollar theft ring that stole luxury cars from dealerships in NJ and PA and shipped them to West Africa.

Investigators believe members of the ring stole car keys from dealerships and would then return and steal the cars.

The cars were reportedly loaded onto shipping containers bound for Sierra Leone.

*The Philadelphia Inquirer*

### Leaving car idling could cost you big in the future

A New York councilwoman introduced legislation that would raise the penalty for idling and or leaving a car unattended to \$250.

The legislation was in response to an earlier case in which a man driving a car he had stolen while it was idling on the street fatally struck two teen boys.

The proposed penalty, up from \$5, should deter drivers from leaving their engines idling on the street unattended.

*Queens Examiner*

### Police make three arrests in Nebraska missing-car case

Nebraska police have arrested three executives from a troubled car dealership where 81 vehicles worth roughly \$2.5 million vanished.

The dealership owner, controller and general manager were arrested separately and had no previous criminal records. They intended to sell the vehicles privately, rather than pay Toyota Financing.

About two dozen cars were traced to Salt Lake City where at least 16 were sold at auction. Six others were found at an airport, one was found at a Wal-Mart parking lot in Wyoming and the FBI found

others in Las Vegas.

*The Bulletin*

### Burger King manager robbed, his car stolen

A man robbed a Stroud Township Burger King employee at gunpoint early one morning and stole his car.

The night manager at the fast food restaurant told police he was approached by a man, brandishing a silver-colored handgun. The manager was told to lie on the ground and give the robber his money, keys and cell phone.

The thief then drove away in the manager's car. The car was abandoned and recovered by police shortly afterward.

*The Morning Call*



## ATPA Grantee, PSP West, Wins IAATI/AGC Heavy Equipment Award

- Trooper Michael Pisarchick, Pennsylvania State Police
- Detective Paul Koropal, Pennsylvania State Police
- Trooper David Aldridge, Pennsylvania State Police
- Trooper Michael Kokoski, Pennsylvania State Police
- Trooper Scott Monroe, Pennsylvania State Police

The Pennsylvania State Police's Western Auto Theft Task Force was nominated and received an award from the International IAATI last August. The ACG/Heavy equipment award is presented at their annual seminar held each August. Unfortunately, last year's seminar was held in Sydney, Australia and travel was prohibited. Therefore, the award was presented to them by the ATPA's Executive Director, Michelle Staton, who also serves as 4th Vice President for the NE Chapter of IAATI.

The case they were nominated for demonstrates excellent auto theft investigative efforts, as well as excellent cooperation between multiple agencies and multiple jurisdictions. The case involved Pennsylvania and Ohio. The Troopers were called by the Meadville Station to assist at a heavy equipment auction in Crawford County, as there were several pieces of heavy equipment in question but they were unable to confirm their status. Upon examination by Western Auto Theft Task Force personnel, it was determined that all eight pieces of heavy equipment were re-tagged and re-stamped. Specifically, the accused had changed the last digit or two by re-stamping the numbers as well as located and changed the secondary P.I.N. numbers. Further investiga-



From L to R: Tpr. Monroe, Tpr. Aldridge, Michelle Staton (ATPA Executive Director), Det. Koropal, Tpr. Pisarchick and Tpr. Kokoski

tion determined that all the machines had been stolen from the Cleveland, Ohio area.

Investigators used the intelligence gathered during the initial incident to recover an additional 12 machines from various areas of Pennsylvania and Ohio, with several suspects committing crimes in both states. The Pennsylvania officers were assisted by an investigator with the Ohio State Police and an NICB agent from Ohio who coordinated the investigation in Ohio, and also recovered several machines.

The Western Auto Theft Task Force coordinated their efforts with the Ohio agents and numerous county and municipal law enforcement agencies, as well as with the United States Attorney's Offices in Ohio and Pennsylvania to commence prosecution. After a lengthy investigation, the total value of the equipment recovered is estimated in the \$1,000,000 to \$2,000,000 range. The case is now in the prosecution phase.

## 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



## 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:

Phone: 717.591.7097  
Media Inquires:  
717.443.1025  
Fax: 717.591.9046  
Toll Free:  
1.888.777.ATPA  
[www.watchyourcar.org](http://www.watchyourcar.org)

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