



Prince George's County, Maryland Office of the Sheriff

SERVING THE COMMUNITY SINCE 1696 **News**

A MESSAGE FROM THE SHERIFF

The Meaning of Service Never Changes

Like many law enforcement officers, I became a police officer because I believed I could help people. I held fast to that belief through the years I've served as a police officer and when I'd gained the vital experience it takes to be a police executive. That belief propelled me as I served as police chief in Norfolk, and when I became chief in Prince George's County. Now, as Sheriff, I believe as strongly as ever that a critical aspect of the work law enforcement does is the effect it has in the lives of people – our neighbors, and friends, and co-workers.



fender we capture is no longer a threat to community safety. The person served a Protective Order is notified that a legal process has begun. A victim of domestic violence will be helped because deputies' investigation determines that (s)he is in danger.

A prisoner is kept safe and treated humanely on his way to court and visitors to our court houses have confidence in our security plan for their safety.

Families and children are supported by the work we do. Custodial parents obtain financial support for the care of children when parents who are behind in child support are brought before the court.

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While we are ever focused on doing our work safely and professionally, we are also mindful that our business is the business of serving people. The violent of-

What is Emergency Petition Services (EPS)? Responding to Persons in Mental Distress

Most county residents can name one or two responsibilities of the Office of the Sheriff - our work and response in Domestic Violence, maintaining security at our courthouses, the safe transport of persons in custody, or certainly, our work in serving all warrants. The one critical area they may not be aware of is Sheriff's Deputies' response for Emergency Petition Services (EPS).

What is an EPS? The state's Emergency Petition statute facilitates sheriff's depu-

ties delivering a violent or suicidal person with a mental disorder or in extreme distress to an emergency facility for evaluation to determine the need for emergency treatment. Most EPS calls occur during the evening and night shifts.

Responding to an EPS call is one of the most unpredictable and dangerous calls we receive because persons in mental anguish or distress may be confused,

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Melvin C. High
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Colonel Darrin C. Palmer
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unruly and violent, and uncertain that sheriff's deputies are there to assist them.

In the 321 year history of the Sheriff's Office, the only deputies lost in the line of duty - Sergeant James Arnaud and Deputy First Class Elizabeth Magruder - were killed responding to an EPS call. Since then, three deputies are required to respond to EPS calls – a precaution for community and deputy safety.



In the past, EPS's had been handled by Domestic Violence or Warrant deputies while they were on duty. Last year, Lieutenant Colonel Mark Roccapriore, head of the Bureau of Field Operations, noticed that the high number of EPS calls they were responding to was reducing their court document service time.

Colonel Roccapriore thought an EPS squad with the most highly trained and experienced deputies from the Specialized Services Team (SST) could be a solution to serving EPS orders without sacrificing warrant service productivity. "With this team, we put a refined skill-set to the service of EPS's to assure the safety of the person in distress and the safety of deputies," said Roccapriore.

The new EPS squad is divided into three shifts daily, who serve on average, three to seven EPS orders a day. The dedicated EPS Team has resulted in more consistent response and completion of EPS orders. "The EPS order is signed by a judge and has to be served within five days. Because we are responsible for serving the order, we're able to make more attempts that yield positive results," says Acting Lieutenant Mewshaw. "Now we have the capacity to respond to more calls, to secure the person safely, to assuage the fears and concerns of their family members, and to do so safely for all concerned."

Innovative thinking and planning developed into a successful protocol and mission, reducing overtime and maintaining service levels for protective orders and warrants.

Retirements/ Separations : Cpl. Gerald Henderson ~ Cpl. James Salley
D/S Ebenezer Akuetteh ~Tyronne Lester Jr. ~ Tyana Clarke
Jack Booz ~ Zera Willett ~Jonathan Marks

New Hires /Academy Graduates: Alyssa Hoffmann
Marlene Green ~ Malik Cochran ~ Clarice Bynum
Michelle Jackson ~ Letitia Green ~ Dawayne Bryant

In the Academy: Ryan Harris ~ Jalaeme Gomez
Alejandra Medrano-Munoz ~Saheed Lawal

Leonardo Johnson, Jr. ~Emmanuel Bawuah ~Toria Roberts

EPOs: Aaron Nureni ~Tam Cragg ~ Jonathan Bunch

Civilian: Grace King ~ Daniel Schwartz

Promotions : Captain Shawn P. Davenport

Administrative Aide I Leslie R. Brown ~ Administrative
Aide III– Monica Cornelius

Lt. Winifred K. Faris ~Lt. Ecolia Whitmire ~

Investigator I Francisca E. Binet-Molina

Sgt. Kristina A. Coleman~ Sgt. Tanesia E. Gibson ~ Sgt.
Terena S. McCreary

General Clerk IV Veronica A. Drew ~ Erica D. Paulk

Awards/Recognition : Sgt. Christine Wiseman (Instructor of
the Year 2017)

Cpl. Nicholas Romanchick #375 (Outstanding Service Award)

**Ms. Barbara "Bobbi" Harvard
2017 MNADV Leadership Award**

The Office of the Sheriff celebrated the news that Senior Special Victim Assistant (SVA) Barbara (Bobbi) Harvard was awarded the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence's (MNADV) 2017 Leadership Award. The award recognized the outstanding work Ms. Harvard has done for over eleven years in the Domestic Violence Intervention Division (DVID).



Harvard is a doer. She served on the task force that helped establish the county's Family Justice Center – only the third in the state. With a lifelong commitment to educating the public and raising awareness about victim's rights issues through community education and outreach, Harvard's affiliations have impacted her ability to provide top quality service to victims. They include membership in the Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault
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Women of Color Network, the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council, the Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team, the Sexual Assault Response Team, and more.

Ms. Harvard and the team of SVAs guide victims through the range of services available in the county to help them escape violence and abuse - from legal services to emergency shelter. Harvard says many victims have questions about what happens after they're done with court dates, separations, divorces, child support, and custody battles. “Some people move forward more quickly and successfully, while others find themselves unsure and on shaky ground,” Some, she says, even consider returning to abusive partners without a solid support system.

Harvard created a safe space and catalyst for victims to talk about their concerns with counselors and with each other. It's called the “Stay in Touch” (SIT) program. SIT is a self-empowering support group for victims who are exploring the future, an idea that grew out of Harvard's thinking about ways to extend outreach to



victims even after their cases were officially closed. It would be a way to let survivors know that “they were not alone”.

“Every person is different, and the time and space they need to go on can be different,” says Harvard. “In some cases victims have not only been physically abused, they've been victims of financial and emotional control; their confidence is shaken and they may lose sight of their own self-worth.”

SIT addresses victims' needs and concerns working with a certified specialist. Pleased with results, Harvard has seen victims become encouraged by talking with others who'd been in similar situations and who empathize with victims' challenges. “Re-establishing control is no easy task,” she says. “Its hard work but being connected to others and to our team of professionals helps”.

For more information about the SIT program please contact Barbara Harvard, Special Victims Advocate at 301-952-4423.

New Public Safety Training Complex

The county broke ground on a new state-of-the-art public safety firearms and tactical training complex in July – a critical investment in having the very best trained public safety personnel serving the citizens of Prince George's County. The amazing facility is loaded with upgrades that surpass what's available at current facilities, and will be utilized to train all county public safety personnel.

It's an amazing look inside to what's coming. There will be an indoor firearms range to facilitate training year-round regardless of weather. The new driving emergency vehicle operations course (EVOC) will help to teach officers how to handle adverse driving conditions and includes a skid track.



An exciting addition to the training academy is the “tactical village.” The village is a realistic setting in which officers can train in ways that help them make the most appropriate and safest decision, including the decision to use force.

The new academy means recruits in their 8-month session and officers doing yearly in-service training have access to the most advanced training equipment. Sheriff High, who attended the groundbreaking said, “Changing and adapting in public safety means staying current in our training protocols and incorporating new technological advancements to help us sustain and improve our service to the public.”



Another PGSO Woman in the Spotlight

Congratulations to Sgt. Wiseman on receiving the Instructor of the Year Award from the Maryland Police & Correctional Training Commissions



By any measure, Sgt. Christine Wiseman had a very impressive 2017. Not only did the Sheriff's Office Training Coordinator and Police Training Academy instructor earn the "Instructor of the Year" Award from the state organization that sets the training standards for law enforcement personnel in the state, fate also put her in the midst of a crisis that tested her skills.

Wiseman met the challenge head-on, rendering aid to injured guests of a restaurant near the Sheriff's Office where she was having lunch when a driver lost control of her vehicle and crashed into the restaurant's building. We were already aware that Sgt. Wiseman knew her stuff; her demonstration, shown on the local news, was what we call "swift action in the face of danger" and what young people call "off the chain"!

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A child can know who (s)he is when paternity is established through the court process, freeing that child from a lifetime of unknowing. As Sheriff, we have no role in the legal matters pertaining to rental or single-family housing matters, but when the court instructs us to preside over an eviction or foreclosure, our deputies at the scene are an independent and impartial law enforcement presence that assures respect and consideration of the needs of each of the parties and to the needs of the community.



In the life of any community, nothing can be more important than the safety and well-being of our young people. Our investment in them today is the assurance of a prosperous future for our county. The students in our middle-school mentoring program have prospered well with fewer absences and suspensions, improvement in their GPAs and in their confidence. Many have become leaders among their peer age group.

We continue to hire and train the best people available; our training protocols are focused on best practice policies that keep the community and our officers safe.

On behalf of the men and women of the Sheriff's Office, we appreciate your confidence and we look forward to seeing you around the county in 2018 and beyond.

Sheriff Melvin C. High

Season for Giving and Sharing

Public Safety Assistance Program, Inc.

33rd Annual Christmas Food Basket

