

THE GUARDIAN




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Park Police Mourn One of Their Own

It is with deep sadness that Park Police Chief Nathaniel J. Barber announces the sudden death of Detective Brent LaMere. Detective LaMere collapsed on Monday, June 11, 2007, and was unable to be revived. Detective LaMere was assigned to the Montgomery County Division's Investigative Services Section. He began working with the Park Police in 1995 as a volunteer and became a police officer in 1998. Detective LaMere received numerous commendations and awards including Park Police Detective of the Year for 2003 and 2006. Chief Barber stated, "Brent was truly an asset to the Montgomery County Park System and to the police profession. He will be sorely missed."

His wife, Summer Lynn LaMere, his 5-year old daughter, Allison Lee LaMere, his parents, three brothers, and one sister, survive Detective LaMere. A funeral service was held on June 16, 2007, at St. Mary's Church in Rockville, Maryland. Honor Guards and bagpipers from multiple jurisdictions performed at the service. Maryland State Police helicopters flew overhead to honor Detective LaMere. The family requests that, in lieu of flowers, contributions in Detective Brent LaMere's memory be made to H.E.R.O.E.S., Inc., 666 Eleventh Street, N.W., Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20001 or to Concerns of Police Survivors, Inc., P.O. Box 3199, Camdenton, Missouri 65020. 



Detective Brent LaMere
November 29, 1974 -
June 11, 2007



Park Police Mourn the Loss of K-9 Stryker



K-9 Stryker

On July 30, Park Police dog Stryker, was euthanized due to muscular problems in his hind legs. He was 11-1/2 years old. Stryker was adopted by the Park Police from Czechoslovakia when he was one year old.

Stryker served the Montgomery County Division of the Park Police from 1997 until his retirement in 2004. During his career, Stryker and his handler, Park Police Officer Alice Hanan, worked some of the most high-profile cases in our area. When the Pentagon was struck in the 9-11 disaster, Stryker and Officer Hanan sifted through the debris and made 108 finds.

Stryker helped search for missing persons Michelle Dorr, Susan Stottmeister and Chandra Levy. He also helped out at a gas tanker accident on I-95 and the water taxi accident in Baltimore Harbor in 2004.


“Stryker was an incredible K9 partner and I am honored and thankful for our time together,” Hanan said. “He had the best life possible for a dog and I am pretty sure he knew that. Thanks to everyone who helped us along the way.”

Stryker was certified yearly in obedience, agility, area search, article search, building search, tracking, trailing, search and rescue, and narcotics and cadaver. The dog participated in investigations leading to 113 narcotics arrests totaling \$152,923 in value of drugs seized. He also was credited with helping find two missing persons and took part in more than 100 public demonstrations.

In addition to being named the Park Police K9 team of the year four years in a row – from 1999 to 2002 – Stryker and Hanan received numerous other accolades and commendations. **G**



Welcome to New Park Police Officers

Congratulations to five new Park Police Officers who graduated from the 50th Montgomery County Police Academy. A grueling six-month program, the academy prepares recruits for their new jobs as police officers. Two of the members received awards at the graduation ceremony on July 12, 2007. Officer Michael Bennett received first runner-up in firearms and Officer Donald Brew received first runner-up in physical fitness. Congratulations to our newest Park Police Officers! 



L-R: Officers Donald Brew, Kristina Gigas, Michael Bennett, Crystal Volk, and Jeffrey Utterback

Photo by Sgt. Pam Skaife

Welcome also to Officer Anthony DiVincenzo, a transfer officer from Washington, D.C.



Officer Anthony DiVincenzo

Photo by Margaret Kingsley

Officer Caleb Garcia Rodriguez also joins us from Baltimore County Police. Welcome!



Officer Caleb Garcia Rodriguez

Photo by Ofc. Mary McDonnell



Officer Justin Andrews and Shadow Graduate from K-9 School

Officer Justin Andrews and his K-9 partner, Shadow, graduated from the 39th Montgomery County Police K-9 Academy. An intense three-month class, the program teaches the K-9 team how to patrol together. The dogs also learn how to search for drugs and other items.

The K-9 class consisted of five dogs and their handlers. Officer Andrews spoke to the class at the graduation ceremony on July 13, 2007. Congratulations Officer Andrews and Shadow! **G**



*Photo by Sgt.
Pam Skaiife*

Officer Justin Andrews and K-9 Shadow



Park Police Win Chief's Challenge



*Photo by
Barbara Beckett*

L-R Middle: Officer Misti Hoffmaster, Lt. Lisa Vasco, and Officer Dennis Benden accept Chief's Challenge Award.

Every year, thousands of loved ones, valued co-workers, and fellow citizens are needlessly injured or killed in traffic accidents. Many of these injuries and fatalities could have been prevented by safety belt use. In fact, numerous national studies prove that safety belts reduce the risk of serious injury or death by nearly 50 percent, and nearly 60 percent when they are combined with air bags.

Recently, the Park Police joined other agencies throughout the State of Maryland in the annual Chief's Challenge. The Chief's Challenge Program challenges law enforcement members to increase the public's awareness and use of safety belts and child safety seats. This year, Officer Misti Hoffmaster led the Division in winning in the 66-100 officer category. Agencies are awarded points for a variety of activities, including conducting surveys, distributing information, performing inspections, enforcement and public information briefings.

Officer Hoffmaster compiled a professional-looking booklet documenting everyone's work during the program. Officer Dennis Benden was the top enforcer during the "Click It or Ticket" campaign, reminding Maryland drivers to buckle up when they ride or drive. Congratulations, everyone, on another successful year! **G**



Park Police Receive Kudos

by Lt. Lisa Vasco

As part of our accreditation process, guests from across Montgomery County gathered to endorse the Maryland-National Capital Park Police, Montgomery County Division, on September 17, 2007. At the invitation of the Assessment Team from The Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA), individuals from County government, The Park and Planning Commission, the Recreation Department, private business partners, citizens, and other police departments stood at the podium and gave high praises to the Park Police Division and its officers. In fact, several officers were mentioned by name for their exceptional accomplishments, life saving efforts, and remarkable community activity.

Ms. Mary Bradford, Director of Parks, made opening remarks and then, one by one, Chiefs, Sheriffs, Lawyers, Correctional Officers, Recreation Department managers, and the Gaywood Garden Club members gave details of their positive interactions with the Park Police. Many included specific instances and personnel where they were uniquely impressed with our professionalism, enthusiasm, and dedication to the mission of the Park Police.

The Keith Joseph Memorial Basketball Tournament was praised for its value to the youth of the county. The Garden Club ladies were impressed with the assistance we gave the soldiers injured overseas. Recreation



Photo by
Francine Bethea

L-R: Chief Nathaniel J. Barber, Director of Parks Mary Bradford, CALEA Assessors Dorris Certain, William Benson, and Randy Nichols



Park Police Receive Kudos

(Continued from Page 6)

employees were amazed with the interaction between officers and park facility users. The Chiefs and Commanders from our fellow law enforcement agencies each spoke of our willingness to work together to solve problems in the community and to lend a helping hand whenever and wherever needed.

All combined, the public addresses painted a well-rounded and clear-cut picture of our adaptability, cooperation, and compassion for our community. The

suggestion was made to send the video recording of the session to the local cable channel, because according to Marie Warner, “All the citizens of Montgomery County need to know how wonderful the Park Police are.”

It was inspirational to hear from our Park patrons that the job we do as Park Police is appreciated at so many levels. While we don’t often get feedback, on this occasion – it was all positive. Thanks to everyone who showed up to show their support. **G**



Chief Larry Brownlee, Prince George’s Division


Photo by Ofc. Ed Rivera





The Latest Scoop

Welcome to New Park Police Member Dispatcher Mark Moser

Please welcome our newest Park Police Communications Technician, Mark Moser. Mark previously worked for the Maintenance Division at Needwood Golf and Black Hill Regional Park. Mark has been with the Parks Department for five years. He will be training on the day shift during the month of October and will switch to the evening shift in November. Stop by and say hello! 



*Photo by Margaret
Kingsley*

Dispatcher Mark Moser

Baby News

Congratulations to Officer Tom Mock and his wife, Renee, on the birth of their son, Garrett Austin, on July 17, 2007. All are fine and well. Best wishes to the Mock's! 