

## **Alburtis Police Department - Bicycle Patrol**

Alburtis Police Department Bike Patrol was started in 2001 by Officer Chris Lubenetski with approval by Chief Ken Solomon. Since the Bike Patrol's organization, the department has purchased one bicycle and received a donation of a second bicycle. The Bike Patrol has been utilized during the annual Alburtis 5K run, Trick or Treat Nights, and for regular patrol duties.

Putting police officers on bicycles is actually a very old idea that has made a strong come back in the past decade. Bike patrol was started by the New York Police Department over 100 years ago in an attempt to find a less expensive alternative to the mounted horse patrol. Bicycles were less expensive than vehicles and did not have the high maintenance cost of horses. Eventually these patrols were replaced with motorized vehicles. In the past 10 years the use of Bike Patrols has seen a phenomenal resurgence because of the increased effectiveness for their use in highly populated areas. The Seattle Police Department was the first on the West Coast to implement a Bike Patrol and their program is now considered a model for modern Bike Patrol programs.

Putting a police officer on a bicycle has many advantages. It makes the officer more approachable by the public without the car doors and windows forming a barrier between the officer and citizen, allowing for more informal interactions. This approachability augments the Alburtis Police Department's commitment to community policing, working in partnership with the community we serve. The bicycle also attracts children to officers, which creates a learning situation for safe riding discussions.

A bicycle also has access to areas that a car cannot go, such as trails and side yards. This broadens our patrol abilities, especially when it comes to pursuing suspects who are on foot. A bicycle is also less obtrusive and more low-key than a patrol car. It allows the officer to approach a situation without being observed and without as great an interruption in "normal" activity than driving a car into the area.

The Alburtis Police Department Bike Patrol currently consists of Officers Chris Lubenetski, Cory Fluck, Art Williams, and Kevin Kennedy.

**REMEMBER TO ALWAYS WEAR A HELMET WHEN RIDING A BIKE OR SCOOTER AND WHEN SKATEBOARDING.**