



## More police cooperation

Daily Record/Sunday News staff editorial

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Responding to a recent news story about a big heroin bust in York County, a letter to the editor writer wondered about a news conference on the courthouse steps by the various law enforcement agencies involved in the sting operation.

Why do they need all those cops from all those different departments standing there, asked the writer -- couldn't just one person do the news conference? Wouldn't it be a better use of resources for all the other officers to be out fighting crime?

The writer makes a point -- though a pretty narrow and naive one. What's the harm in allowing police officials who spend so much time dealing with the dark side of humanity to have a day in the sun to tout a major success?

Sure, these news conferences are mainly about politics and public relations. But police had some big news to tell, and it was worth gathering the troops and the news media to share it with citizens.

And in this particular case, the news conference had some important extra symbolic value.

The story the officers told was of a widespread heroin problem in our community -- 73 people arrested in connection with more than \$5 million

sales -- stretching from Hallam to Hanover to Dillsburg to Springettsbury Township and other corners of our county, including York city.

The officers at the news conference represented Carroll Township, Hanover, Springettsbury and York.

They all worked to put a dent in the deadly heroin problem that has seen a resurgence in recent years. Roses to them all for some great police work -- though, of course, the people charged in the operation are considered innocent until proven guilty in court.

That cooperation is the symbolic value of the news conference.

Police cooperation is crucial if we hope to slow the flow of drugs in our county.

And note that we said "county" there, not just city. This is a region-wide problem. It's not just a York problem, as many mistakenly believe as they badmouth the city.

Yes, drugs are a problem in the city, but they're a problem elsewhere, too. And the suburban and rural demand for drugs helps exacerbate the problem in the city as it has become a central location for dealers and their customers.

But those dealers and customers are doing business out in the county, too. Police told about a nearly 60-year-old Hallam man wearing Oxford shirts who they allege drove around the county in his Chrysler Crossfire selling bags of

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heroin.

Certainly not your stereotypical drug dealer.

People who sell and buy drugs come from all classes and communities.

We need coordinated police work to deal with that problem.

So we're *glad* all those cops were there together at the news conference. It showed they have been out there *working* together on the streets.

York County, of course, has a drug task force that brings together officers from departments across the county.

But we need to do more.

We need a regional police department at the county's core, a metro-York department that combines city and suburban officers into a more efficient crime-fighting machine.

The folks at YorkCounts have been working hard to make that happen.

This big drug bust should be touted as yet another example of why it should happen.

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