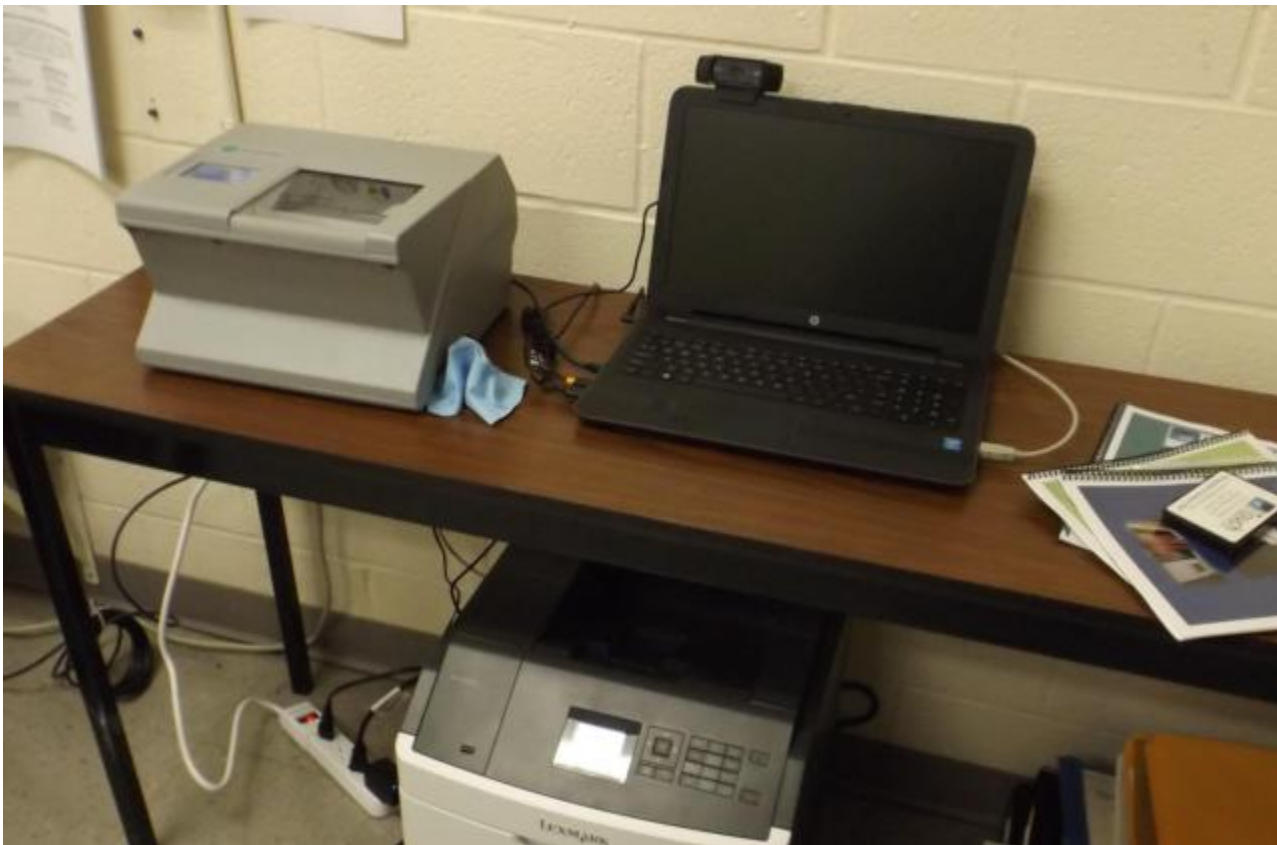


# Bethalto Police Department receives gift of new technology

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer  
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**BETHALTO** - The Bethalto Police Department installed a new Livescan electronic fingerprinting device Wednesday afternoon.

The \$15,000 piece of technology was sponsored in part by Liberty Bank and Dugan Tool, who were both present for the installation and training, which took place shortly after installation. Bethalto Police Lieutenant Craig Welch said the device is the department's first digital fingerprinting device, having previously utilized rolled ink on

paper cards. Welch said the new equipment is much more efficient, and will give the department the ability to identify "John Does" in "real time."

"Many agencies in the area that have higher arrest volumes were granted devices by the State of Illinois about a decade ago," Welch said in an email. "We did not qualify. The cost of these systems has come down a lot since then. We were also able to make this purchase, because Liberty Bank and Dugan Tool made substantial donations to this effort. Also, iTouch Biometrics worked closely with us to configure a system to fit into our budget."

Overall, the new equipment will make the booking process more efficient at the Bethalto Police Department. It will also provide real time communication with both state and federal fingerprint databases. It will also allow the Bethalto Police Department to more effectively collect and store prints once they have been collected.

Donations from Liberty Bank and Dugan Tool were solicited by the police at the beginning of the project. Several other high-capital local businesses were solicited as well.

"We are very grateful that Liberty Bank and Dugan Tool responded with significant donations," Welch said. "The remainder came from our budget. The system is now fully paid for, and will have very minute maintenance costs. We are hoping for a 10-year life cycle on this system."

While Bethalto is a small department inside a small village, Welch said it has the same crimes as other communities in the area. He said the department works vigilantly to ensure people in the village have a perception of safety and security. Welch said such crimes are not as frequent in Bethalto, and credits the work of his department for some of that.

"Bethalto citizens frequently express their gratitude for our efforts, and we are thankful to work for such a great community," Welch said in an email. "Livescan digital fingerprinting is just another tool to keep us current and help us do our job at a professional level."

