

VOLUNTEERS IN LAW ENFORCEMENT

Changing Times - New Approaches

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This Command College Independent Study Project is a FUTURES study of a particular emerging issue in law enforcement. Its purpose is NOT to predict the future, but rather to project a number of possible scenarios for strategic planning consideration.

Defining the future differs from analyzing the past because the future has not yet happened. In this project, useful alternatives have been formulated systematically so that the planner can respond to a range of possible future environments.

Managing the future means influencing the future--creating it, constraining it, adapting to it. A futures study points the way.

The views and conclusions expressed in the Command College project are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST).

SUMMARY

This paper examines volunteerism and its potential value to law enforcement in the future. The information contained in this paper was obtained through literary research and personal interviews of individuals actively involved with volunteerism on a local and national level.

Current trends and critical environmental factors impacting volunteerism are explored. This exploration includes a view of volunteerism in the nation generally, as well as an assessment of current law enforcement volunteer programs. A number of innovative law enforcement citizen volunteer programs are detailed.

Additionally, the benefits and concerns relative to law enforcement volunteer programs are addressed. Effective measures to ensure successful volunteer program design and implementation are discussed.

The paper also looks at senior citizen volunteers and examines their current and potential utilization by law enforcement.

This paper is intended to stimulate administrators to assess their agency to determine if volunteer program implementation or expansion is a viable means of improving the level of service.

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INTRODUCTION

Most law enforcement managers and executives agree that among the most important emerging issues facing them are diminishing fiscal resources, and a need to provide new methods of delivering service.

Coupled with this is an awareness of an increasing desire on the part of citizens to respond to community needs. Volunteerism is one aspect of this community response.

Many administrators are asking the question:

DOES VOLUNTEERISM IN LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFER A VIABLE ALTERNATIVE
FOR IMPROVED SERVICE DELIVERY IN THE YEARS AHEAD?

This paper is intended to provide a greater understanding of that question.

THE VOLUNTEER SPIRIT

The spirit of volunteering has been prevalent in our society since the early settlers arrived in the New World. Neighbors helping each other became a way of life in America. Many academicians attribute the belief in volunteerism in America today to the pioneers strong sense of responsibility to his fellow man which was enhanced by the problems of life in a harsh, strange land. The frontiers could not have been settled without citizen-neighbors banding together to raise barns, build homes and schools, and protect each other from criminal attack.

The professional police organization as we know it today actually originated from a volunteer effort. Volunteers were our first police officers as well as the organizers of our first police agencies. It was not until the early 19th century that police officers were paid. By the 1870's every major city in the United States had a fulltime paid police force.¹ As these departments developed and were accepted, the citizen volunteer was no longer needed. As a result, the concept of volunteering for police duty gradually disappeared.

World War II with its related manpower shortages caused a growth in police auxiliary units. The primary purpose was for civil defense services, although some agencies taught police procedures. After the war many of these groups dissolved.²

However, with the advent of the Korean conflict there were new demands in the male work force. As a result, many police auxiliary units were revived or re-organized. Law enforcement agencies have been training civilian volunteers both for enforcement and non-enforcement duties since that period.³

To assess volunteerism in order to determine its future role with law enforcement agencies, it is important to explore national trends and environmental factors impacting volunteerism generally. The 1960's saw a time when volunteering was seen as a luxury of the upper class and a pastime for those who could afford to work strictly for altruistic motives without thought of their own needs.

The 1970's brought a swift and welcome change in such attitudes. It was suddenly not only appropriate, but also essential to understand and appeal to the self-interest motivations of volunteers. Partially, this change stemmed from the flowing understanding of how and why people work and the society-wide acceptance of self-awareness and individual growth as valid concerns.

The 1970's saw a greater interest in large scale promotion and development of volunteerism throughout the country. Such organizations as VOLUNTEER - the National Center For Citizen Involvement, National Retired Teachers Association, American Association of Retired Persons, and ACTION - the Federal Agency for volunteer service continued to blossom.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS IMPACTING VOLUNTEERISM

In 1980 the Aid Association for Lutherans and VOLUNTEER - the National Center For Citizen Involvement commissioned four widely known and respected experts in the field of volunteerism to research the environmental factors which will affect the future of volunteerism.⁴ Their work resulted in the publication "A Look At The Eighties" - Crucial Environmental Factors Affecting Volunteerism. The four authors of this publication are: Gordon Manser, Harleigh Trecker, Dr. Jon Van Til, and Dr. Ivan Scheier. The authors and select participants through a modified nominal group process identified and placed in rank order the following eleven factors impacting volunteerism in the 80's:

1. Inflation
2. Feelings, attitudes, values, changing expectations, motivations of volunteers.
3. Government, changing roles, responsibility, impact.
4. Energy shortages.
5. Empowerment, minority needs, equal opportunities, womens movement, reaching the young.
6. Mechanization, automation, work, earning a living.
7. Demographics, life styles.
8. Stance of the helping establishment.
9. Corporate involvement.
10. Litigious society.
11. The nature of American society.

I think it is important to look at some of these factors in order to gain insight into the future of volunteerism in America.

INFLATION

Inflation has become a fact of life in America. The authors addressed several possible scenarios for the future. These scenarios varied from substantial inflationary increases to a decline in inflation. The most probable future as predicted by two of the authors, Van Til and Scheier show the following:

Inflation remaining substantially above historic levels (close to 10 percent) coupled with a persisting stagnation of economic productivity. Real per-capital income continues to decline for most employees. Unemployment rates approach 8 percent. Anxiety increases particularly among the retired and underemployed.

Given this, a number of implications for the volunteer community would result. Many volunteers would be affected, due to a reduced ability to give. If a second income is needed, obviously there would be less time for giving.

Inflation may make it harder for volunteers to pay out-of-pocket expenses such as child care costs or transportation. People will be more selective in choosing volunteer programs. Continued inflation will take a toll in volunteers.

There likely will be a closer relationship between volunteering and paid employment. More frequently will volunteers be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses incurred in volunteer work. Those organizations unwilling to reimburse such expenses will tend to lose volunteers.

Volunteering will be emphasized as a bridge to paid employment, in career exploration and preparation, or mid-career change. This will be significant in attracting youth, women, and increasingly seniors. Evidence seems to indicate that volunteer service can and does help an individual secure paid employment.

FEELINGS, ATTITUDES, VALUES, CHANGING EXPECTATIONS, MOTIVATIONS OF VOLUNTEERS

Volunteering is an act of free will, something done without compensation or obligation. Motivation will be a prevailing reason for volunteering during the 1980's.

George Gallup Jr., in his book Forecast 2000 states:

"A tremendous number of Americans are now involved in volunteer work of some sort, and this force of free labor could provide the springboard for far-reaching political and social change in the next two decades".

"It seems that when our citizens know their action can make a difference, they act. On the other hand, when they suspect their actions are merely an exercise in futility, they prefer to stay at home or direct their energies into more fruitful pursuits"

"But there may be reason to believe that in the near future, the activist, volunteer impulse in our people will coincide with a desire to get more involved in the formal government process".⁵

The motivation of volunteers ranges from narrow self interest to enlightened self interest. The self interest embraces a desire to make a significant impact on a community problem and to gain meaningful experience in terms of one's personal career or skills goal. Such volunteers are highly committed and responsible in their work. They also expect more from the organization for which they work. At the same time, the volunteer may be more committed to an issue. If the organization does not live up to the volunteer's expectations, he will likely move on to another organization.

There is no doubt that the changing expectations of volunteers will place new responsibilities in the agencies using them.

In summary, the impact on volunteers will be:

1. Increased competition for volunteers, therefore, organizations desiring to keep volunteers must work harder to make the experience more empowering and visibly impactful on problems.
2. As self-interest motivations to volunteer work are accepted there will be more self-help oriented, mutual assistance volunteering.
3. Volunteers will be attracted to settings and styles in which they feel more personal, direct control of events and purpose.

GOVERNMENT, CHANGING ROLES, RESPONSIBILITY, IMPACT

Government, in particular, as an agent of planning and service delivery, as the maker of laws and regulations and as a provider of resources, must always be sensitive to the critical impact it may have on the strength and independence of the voluntary sector. Government at all levels can be a powerful stimulator and facilitator of volunteering and citizen involvement.⁶

Through the past twenty five years the citizens of America have reaffirmed their commitment to government that is of and by the people, as well as for them. With this we have seen an increased demand for citizen participation in planning, policy-making and resource allocation.

Government has become one of the greatest consumers of volunteer energies. Increasing numbers are being recruited to work in governmental programs at local, state and federal levels. Millions more are involved with organizations that receive the majority of their funding from public sources.

It is predicted that through the 1980's there will be an intensification of public employment and national service programs, and their extension from youth, low-income people to seniors. Volunteering will take more of a citizen participation turn.

MECHANIZATION, WORK, EARNING A LIVING

Changes in the work place affect volunteerism. The work place does have an impact on other parts of life. For example, increased automation means increased leisure time and opportunities to be a volunteer.

The United States is moving rapidly into a post-industrial society. A change from a goods producing to a service producing economy. More than 50 percent of the labor force is in the service sector. It is estimated that by 2000, only 2 percent of the labor force will be needed to manufacture goods. Our society is also experiencing a reduction of agricultural employment, estimated to require only 4 percent of the labor force by 1990. A consequence is increased leisure time and experimentation in creative use of such time which could lead to volunteerism.

With an increase in cybernetics, automation and computerization, a growth in volunteerism is likely. During an interview with Mary Ripley, founding member of "VOLUNTEER" she stated:

"As a result of hi-tech development in our society, people in the work place have less person to person contact - people being anxious to mingle are reverting to volunteer involvement to fulfill the need for interpersonal relations".⁷

I believe this is a key trend that will have a major impact on volunteerism in the future.

DEMOGRAPHICS, LIFE STYLES

Based upon my research, I feel the demographics will have a tremendous impact on volunteerism. In the text, A Look At The Eighties, two of the authors make the following statements that reinforce my feelings.⁸

Fred Kile:

"Demographic factors played a substantial role in engendering the youth/student social emphasis of the late sixties and most of the seventies. Moods of the new decade will flow from a different demographic mix".

Gordon Manser:

"The rapid increase in older persons provide a vast number of potential volunteers".

The following age distribution chart reflects graphically this fact with a 9.2 percent increase in persons 65 and over between 1980 and 1990.⁹

Age Distribution and Percent of Change in the United States Population
1980-1990
(in thousands)

Ages	Total	1980 Percent change (from 1970)	Percent distribution	Total	1990 Percent change (from 1980)	Percent distribution
ALL AGES	224,066	+6		254,715	+6.6	
Under 5 years	17,927	+27.7	8.0	24,616	+7.6	9.6
5-13	30,197	+2.7	13.5	38,591	+7.6	9.7
14-17 years	15,765	-8.7	7.0	12,771	-11.3	15.2
18-24 years	29,462	-5.5	13.1	25,148	-9.7	5.0
25-34 years	36,172	+10.2	16.1	41,086	+3.1	16.1
35-44 years	25,721	+22	11.5	36,592	+16.6	14.4
45-54 years	22,698	-1.1	10.1	25,311	+12.7	9.9
55-64 years	21,198	+2.5	9.5	20,776	-4.4	8.2
65 and over	24,927	-9.5	11.1	29,824	+9.2	11.7
Median Age	29.9					31.4

The increased number of older persons in the population has been described as the most important demographic shift of the 20th century. In 1980 there were about 23 million Americans older than 65. If low birth rates and declining death rates continue, within 50 years there will be about 55 million people 65 and older.¹⁰ Because of health care and education programs, the United States has generated the largest population of able, educated elders of any nation on earth.

At present, our youth-oriented society has provided few opportunities for retired people to contribute constructively. The older population is a latent resource to help meet the needs of the nation.

It is estimated that if all older persons who wish to serve were volunteers, somewhat less than a third would participate. If the percent remains constant, there would be 18 million older volunteers (65 plus) in about the year 2025. It would certainly be shameful to waste this resource of skill and commitment.

There is no doubt that with this largest increase of potential volunteers, special attention should be directed to this group with so much to offer.

CORPORATE INVOLVEMENT

Through my research I found corporate involvement in volunteerism to be a strong movement.

Ivan Scheier in the text, A Look At The Eighties comments:

"Corporations will become increasingly influential in shaping the course of organized volunteering in the 1980's. The impact will be on both operating volunteer programs and the resource structure for volunteering".

Many corporations are expressing social responsibility by encouraging employee volunteerism. The common management feeling is that financial contributions to philanthropy are not sufficient methods for expression of company and employee responsibility.

These corporate programs take many forms, but there is an increasing trend towards employee release time.

An ad, run by one of the nations largest corporations, appeared in national magazines. It boasts that "we pay some of our best people not to come to work". Strictly speaking, the tag line is misleading; the company is actually paying its people to work somewhere else.¹¹

The ad is part of a campaign, one of many now underway by Fortune 500 Companies, to publicize a corporate volunteer program. Such programs generate favorable publicity, sometimes work as a tax break and improve conditions in surrounding communities. They also teach employees. "Why do we do it?" the ad asks, "because the people we get back are even better".

My research revealed that "VOLUNTEER" has done a great deal to promote, encourage and facilitate corporate volunteer programs.

It is felt by some that as corporate involvement grows, corporations will exercise greater influence on the direction and style of volunteerism in the future. As employee involvement in volunteering accelerates, there will be increased funding by corporations.

91% of American corporate leaders believe that their firms have an obligation to meet community needs. This can include monetary contributions, in-kind resources and incentives for employee volunteerism.¹²

EXTENT OF VOLUNTEERISM IN AMERICA

Having examined some of the crucial environmental factors affecting volunteerism, I think it is important to take a global view of volunteer activity in the United States. To facilitate this, a review of data compiled from Gallup surveys conducted in 1981¹³ and 1983¹⁴ is beneficial. In both surveys, volunteering was defined as:

"working in some way to help others for no monetary pay".

TOTAL NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

1981	-	84 million
1983	-	92 million

As can be seen, 92 million adults engaged in some type of volunteer activity in 1983.

PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL ADULT POPULATION ENGAGED IN VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY

1981	-	52% adults
1983	-	55% adults

There was an increase of 3% in adult volunteerism from 1981 to 1983.

PERCENTAGE OF ACTIVE ADULT VOLUNTEERS INVOLVED
IN VARIOUS ACTIVITIES

	<u>1981</u>	<u>1983</u>
Health	12%	13%
Education	12	16
Justice	1	3
Citizenship	6	7
Recreation	7	10
Social welfare	5	6
Community action	6	11
Religious	19	19
Political	6	6
Arts & culture	3	4
Informal, alone	23	23
Work-related	6	7
Fundraising	6	10

As can be seen, volunteer involvement in Justice activities is in the lowest percent of all activities listed in both 1981 and 1983. There has been a significant increase however. This is due to large increases in volunteer activity over the past few years in three areas.¹⁵

- 1 out of every 7 neighborhoods has a crime-watch organization.
- National Center For Missing And Exploited Children
- More than 8,000 parent groups have been formed across the country to stop drug abuse in adolescents.

PERCENTAGE OF ADULT VOLUNTEERS BY REGION OF COUNTRY

	East	Midwest	South	West
1981	51%	54%	48%	57%
1983	55%	51%	54%	62%

As indicated, the greatest percentage of adults involved in volunteer activity reside in the Western region.

PERCENTAGE OF ADULTS INVOLVED IN VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY BY AGE

1981	14-17 53%	18-24 54%	25-44 59%	45-54 55%	55-64 45%	65 or older 37%
1983		18-24 53%	25-29 67%	30-49 63%	50-64 54%	65 or older 32%

It is significant to note the increased percentage of involvement by adults 25 through 64 years of age.

PERCENTAGE OF ADULTS IN VARIOUS OCCUPATIONS INVOLVED IN VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY

(1983)

Professional/business	76%
Clerical/sales	51
Manual labor	54
Skilled workers	61
Unskilled workers	48
Farmer	63
Non-labor force	36

Take note that professional/business occupations substantially lead other occupations in volunteer participation.

PERCENTAGE OF ADULTS INVOLVED AS VOLUNTEERS BY EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

	1981	1983
College degree	75%	77%
Some college	65	67
High school graduate	54	51
Some high school	31	32
Grade school	26	26

Higher educated individuals volunteer more readily and their percentage of involvement has increased between 1981 and 1983.

PERCENTAGE OF ADULTS INVOLVED AS VOLUNTEERS BY HOUSEHOLD INCOME

	1981		1983
Under 4,000	40%		
\$ 4,000 - \$ 6,999	36		
\$ 7,000 - \$ 9,999	35	Under \$10,000	37%
\$10,000 - \$14,999	46		
\$15,000 - \$19,999	53	\$10,000-\$20,000	52
\$20,000 and over	63	\$20,000-30,000	56
		\$30,000-\$40,000	74
\$40,000 and over	62	\$40,000 and over	78

Persons with the higher incomes tend to volunteer in substantial numbers.

Based upon this Gallup survey data, there is no doubt that volunteerism in America is growing at a rapid pace.

The volunteer movement has also enjoyed strong support from the current presidential administration. In December 1981 President Reagan established "The President's Task Force On Private Sector Initiatives" with a goal of encouraging more private contributions of both human and financial resources to the progress of America's communities. One of eleven committees, Marshalling Human Resources, set an agenda to encourage increased commitment, recruitment, placement, and management of volunteers in community service, and to enhance the atmosphere of volunteering.¹⁶

In the State of the Union message on February 6, 1985 President Reagan stated:

"From thousands answering peace corps appeals to help boost food production in Africa, to millions volunteering time, corporations adopting schools, and communities pulling together to help the neediest among us at home, we have refound our values -- we have refound America. Private Sector Initiatives are crucial to our future".

Each year VOLUNTEER - The National Center and ACTION, the Federal Agency For Volunteer Service co-sponsor, the "President's Volunteer Action Awards". The President, at a special White House ceremony, presents awards to exemplary volunteer programs in ten categories. One of the categories is Public Safety.

It is obvious that there is a national commitment to volunteerism.

VOLUNTEERISM IN LAW ENFORCEMENT TODAY

After having viewed the extent of volunteerism in the country, it is interesting to look at the law enforcement community and assess the scope of volunteerism there. As indicated in the Gallup surveys referred to earlier in this paper, only 1 percent of active American volunteers participated in Justice Programs in 1981. The percent had risen to 3 percent in 1983. It should be noted that Justice Programs in the survey include courts, corrections, and law enforcement.

Through my research, I found a great deal of literature detailing court and correction volunteer programs. I would conclude that law enforcement is utilizing a minute portion of the volunteer pool available today.

In July 1984 the Criminal Justice Services Section of the American Association of Retired Persons released a report on volunteerism in law enforcement.¹⁷ The report is the result of an 18 month survey designed to review the scope, operation, and potential future for volunteerism in law enforcement.

Four methodologies were used for gathering information:

1. Literature search.
2. On site interviews and assessments in 24 communities coast-to-coast.

3. Solicitation for participation through 191 law enforcement publications, resulting in 39 responses.
4. A survey in five states, Colorado, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina and Virginia - of all Sheriff and police agencies with 821 responding.

In as much as the agencies were free to participate or not, the report suggests caution in generalizing the findings.

For purposes of the survey, a volunteer was defined as:

"Any individual who provides a law enforcement agency (Police or Sheriff's Department) with more than two hours per week of service in crime prevention, support services or in law enforcement functions, normally without financial remuneration".

No volunteers serving in functions that are primarily of benefit to themselves are included; ie: neighborhood watch participants, citizen patrols. Organizers and Block Captains were included.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE REPORT INCLUDE:

- Citizens are formally involved as volunteers in law enforcement agencies in greater numbers than has been previously assumed. It appears likely that over 600,000 citizens are serving in Police and Sheriff Departments of every size in all parts of the nation.

- Volunteers are found in nearly every aspect of police work - crime prevention, law enforcement and internal support. The variety of roles open to volunteers appears to be related to an agency's philosophy and knowledge about volunteers rather than to the number or capabilities of the available volunteers.
- Police concern about the motivation, capability and dependability of volunteers is dispelled as soon as agencies began to interact with and experience volunteers. Many point out however, that success is dependent upon careful screening selection and a willingness to "fire" volunteers who do not keep their commitments to the agency.
- Older persons make up an important percentage of those who volunteer in the programs surveyed. One-third of the volunteers interviewed were age 64 and over. One-half were age 55 and older.
- Volunteers in law enforcement agencies represent all segments of society. The variety of functions performed by Police and Sheriff Departments affords opportunities for persons of varied interests and skills. Once perceived as a masculine, power-oriented and closed society, law enforcement now attracts citizens who belie that image and have made a significant contribution to its achievements.

- The perception of volunteers as irresponsible and undependable is not supported by the findings of the survey.
- Law enforcement officials predicted substantial future growth both in volunteer numbers, the number of agencies providing volunteer opportunities and the number of functions in which volunteers will be allowed to serve.
- When asked what the major cause for a future increase or decrease of volunteerism, one-third of the executives responded - "an increase due to budget problems and demand for services".
- Age and sex were not found to be barriers to productive involvement of volunteers, although they are important considerations for assignment to specific functions. Initial selection and training of volunteers appear to be more critical to the success of a volunteer program.
- Volunteers are not free. Successful programs require staff, training and resource support. However, the cost-benefits to taxpayers are at least 4 to 1.
- Many agencies use volunteers primarily to maintain services in lieu of budget constraints. Others use volunteers primarily to improve police/community relations. In either case, both cost-savings and improved citizen support are achieved.

- The principal resistance to volunteers in law enforcement emanates from the paid sworn staff. Their concerns are job security, loss of overtime pay, personal safety and professionalism.
- Sixty percent of the volunteers report a change in attitude toward law enforcement with 85% of those having a more positive understanding of law enforcement's problems as a result of their contact as volunteers.
- Recruitment of volunteers is done most successfully through individuals and community organizations rather than through general promotion and media. Half of the current volunteers reported they were recruited by another volunteer or through an organization of which they were already a member. Thirteen percent were recruited through the media.

Based upon the estimate by the American Association of Retired Persons that 600,000 volunteers assist law enforcement agencies and the fact that there are 350,000 members of the National Association of Reserve And Auxiliary Peace Officers it follows that the majority of volunteers in law enforcement serve in traditional roles:

- Reserve Officer
- Posse Member

- Search & Rescue Member
- Crime Prevention/Neighborhood Watch Participant
- Police Explorers

This deduction is supported by a non-published report prepared by Richard A. Sundeen PH.D. and Gilbert B. Siegel PH.D., School of Public Administration, University of Southern California.¹⁸

In their report they examine a random sample of 18 municipal police departments in Los Angeles County excluding Los Angeles Police Department because of its size. The writers found that:

"While 19 different types of volunteer activity were identified, only three types -- Reserve Officers, Neighborhood Watch, and Explorer Scouts -- were used by a majority of the departments".

Further, Sundeen and Siegel found that:

"The type of volunteer activity which attracts the largest number of volunteers is the Neighborhood Watch Block Captains. They account for nearly two-thirds of all volunteers in the 18 departments. If neighborhood and business watch programs are excluded from volunteer activities, the 18 departments have a total of 979 volunteers. Of this total, Reserves comprise over one-third and Explorers make up one quarter".

The types of volunteer programs that Sundeen and Siegel identified in the 18 departments were:

- Reserve Officers
- Neighborhood Watch (Block Captains)
- Explorer Scouts
- Clerical
- Professional or Consulting Services
- Bilingual Interpreter
- Citizen Advisory Commodities
- Amateur Radio Operators
- Public Education Activities
- Police-Probation Counselor
- Crime Prevention Groups
- Mounted Patrol
- Business Watch
- Student Interns
- Citizen Patrol
- Desk Receptionist
- Station Tour
- Victim Assistance

The writers conclude:

"While the 18 departments in our survey employ a wide array of types of volunteers, they use only Reserves,

Neighborhood Watch and Explorer Scouts, extensively. Only a few departments have made other 'innovative' attempts at increasing police manpower levels, assisting police in non-sworn personnel duties, or supplementing police services".

Based upon my research, I agree with their assessment.

RECENT "NON-TRADITIONAL" LAW ENFORCEMENT VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

During my research, I found very limited information detailing "non-traditional" law enforcement programs. However, I did identify some that were highly innovative and productive.

Cottage Grove, Oregon Police Department

- Senior volunteers participate in a program designed to orient the public in crime prevention techniques, especially burglary prevention. Volunteers visit homes, by request, and demonstrate the value and methodology of property identification systems. They also conduct security surveys to help residents identify problem areas within their homes.
- Volunteers are utilized to assist with property and evidence processing.

Santa Ana, California Police Department

- A Senior Citizen assistance program (SCAP) is designed to actively attack the crime problem as it relates to older persons. Activities of the volunteers in this program include:

- Crime Prevention Program Delivery

- Community Education Programming
- Victim Assistance
- Information and Referral

Pima County, Tuscon, Arizona

- In a victim-witness program, a number of volunteers help victims of sexual assault, family violence, child abuse, and attempted suicide. Often working in tandem with police officers, the volunteers counsel crime victims, find food, shelter and jobs for them. They also work with crime witnesses to help prepare them for court appearances.

American Association Of Retired Persons

- Utilizing volunteers AARP trains police officers and volunteers in crime prevention and crime analysis techniques. As a result, many police agencies are utilizing volunteers to perform these functions.

Athens, Ohio Police Department

- In conjunction with AARP and the Local Retired Senior Volunteer Program-RSVP, Athens Police Department developed a Senior Volunteer Program.. In this program, seniors process warrants. By use of data bases, they locate current addresses of persons with outstanding warrants. On minor warrants, they

make telephonic contact, or forward form letters to the person named on the warrant advising him to satisfy same or face incarceration. This program has proven to be highly successful in generating revenue.¹⁹

- Seniors also research and publicize departmental history, prepare uniform crime reports, and assist with crime analysis and crime prevention.

Livermore, California Police Department

- Volunteers, mostly seniors, are utilized in several capacities. Some assist the Crime Analysis Unit with computer processes, others work in the Criminal Investigation Unit assisting with computer entry and statistics. In the business office, a volunteer prepares purchase requisitions and performs clerical duties. A 14 year old volunteer assists Animal Control with clerical, reception, and data entry functions.²⁰

Colorado Springs, Colorado Police Department

- This agency is one of the more advanced, in terms of volunteerism, that I discovered. Volunteers, about 150, are utilized in virtually every major bureau in the department. All are un-paid and undergo a polygraph examination prior to

assignment. Many are retired military personnel who have proven to be excellent volunteers.²¹ Volunteer roles include:

- Crime Analysis - volunteers review criminal cases and provide statistical data.
- Organized Crime Strike Force volunteer types confidential reports and receives and records information from informants.
- Warrant Detail volunteer edits the weekly warrant newsletter.
- Business Office volunteer assists with clerical work.
- Extra-duty office volunteers assist with scheduling duties.
- Senior-victim volunteers respond to assist elderly crime victims with needs - these volunteers receive extensive training and are on-call with pagers.
- Public Relations volunteer assists with the police desk and makes public presentations. Others provide advertising, commercial artist and graphic skills to the preparation of brochures.

According to Mary Klever, Director of Volunteer Services, some volunteers were introduced to the department after being victimized and decided they wanted to serve. She further related that the

relationship between the community and the police department is outstanding.

As can be seen by this sampling, there are some very innovative approaches to volunteerism being taken by some agencies.

BENEFITS OF EXPANDING VOLUNTEERISM IN LAW ENFORCEMENT

Based upon the research data, it is quite apparent that a strong volunteer movement is underway in this country. It also appears however, that law enforcement, generally, has not taken full advantage of this trend. There are a number of reasons why expansion of volunteer involvement would be beneficial to a law enforcement agency.

Few administrators would disagree that one of the greatest problems facing law enforcement in the future is the need to provide growing police service with shrinking funds. Administrators are being forced to find alternative means of delivering service. Volunteers can provide many benefits to an agency and can augment current services to enable departments to meet service delivery needs. When 80-85 percent of a total budget is required for salaries, if portions of that amount can be redirected because of volunteer labor no doubt efficiency can be increased. And with improved service delivery by law enforcement officers and volunteers, the public image of the police department is enhanced.

An aspect that I believe even more valuable today is the human factor. When a law enforcement agency opens the door to volunteers, it also opens the door to the community. Many volunteer programs, as part of their activities, help explain the police role and function in society to the service population. Volunteers open new communication channels between the community and the department.²²

As Chief John L. Tagert, Colorado Springs Police Department, stated when talking about his agencies expanded volunteer program:

"Historically, police agencies have internalized all law enforcement problems. Volunteerism means sharing problems with the community. People want to be involved and help. Volunteerism opens the door to do this and do it creatively".²³

When a law enforcement agency delegates meaningful duties and responsibilities to volunteers, the community becomes involved in the prevention of crime and takes a greater interest in supporting the work of agency employees. Public confidence in the department and in local government as a whole grows.

One other valuable benefit which is frequently overlooked is political support. When volunteers increase community involvement in law enforcement activities, the political support for the department increases as well. With increased political support, may come such attendant benefits as salary increases for police employees, funds to purchase needed equipment, etc.

Lastly, volunteers can help reduce crime. Volunteers can provide law enforcement officers with greater flexibility to meet enforcement duties and responsibilities - the officer can focus on tasks which require special skills and training while volunteers handle some of the more routine functions and service activities.

AREAS OF CONCERN IN VOLUNTEER PROGRAM EXPANSION

There are several areas of concern which frequently confront law enforcement volunteer programs that need be addressed in order to ensure a successful program.

LABOR UNIONS

- Unions or associations frequently voice concerns that volunteer programs will:
 - Eliminate paid positions.
 - Inhibit promotions.
 - Interfere with regular personnel.
 - Limit preferred assignments
 - Cause a reduction in fringe benefits such as overtime pay.²⁴

A volunteer should never be recruited to replace paid staff. The union needs to be consulted at the initial planning stages and involved along the way. The clear message must be two-fold - volunteers will not take away jobs and volunteers will make jobs easier to perform. Agreed upon working relationships with the union before the volunteer activity is initiated is essential.

INSURANCE

Many government agencies have shied away from volunteer utilization because legal liability issues were too confusing or risky. Agencies have found that volunteers can be utilized without increasing liability risk, provided proper insurance coverage is included in the regular policies. In some cases, adding volunteers to liability insurance policies doesn't increase premiums significantly if at all. If volunteers are not covered by workers compensation benefits, due to the nature of their classification - Reserve Officers are covered - the agency needs to also provide Accidental Injury coverage. Liability coverage needs to be provided for all volunteers. It is imperative that police agencies utilizing volunteers confer with their respective Risk Management administration to ensure that proper insurance coverage is provided.

CONFIDENTIALITY

This is an area of concern frequently voiced by law enforcement administrators when contemplating the utilization of citizen volunteers. The reality is that when volunteers work in such agencies covered by laws of privacy and confidentiality, they are under the same sanctions and prohibitions as every other "employee".²⁵ Volunteers have been successfully recruited throughout the country by agencies working with confidential files and information.

Volunteers can be trained and supervised by agency staff to ensure that they maintain the same standards of confidentiality as salaried employees. Their access to confidential information should be on a "need to know" basis, just as it is for paid staff.

FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT - FLSA

The impact of the Fair Labor Standards Act on volunteerism had raised some concerns after the Supreme Court's decision in Garcia vs. San Antonio Metropolitan Transit Authority. On November 13, 1985 President Reagan signed into law a Bill lessening the impact of FLSA on states and local governments. The amendment exempts volunteers from coverage of FLSA even if the volunteer is paid expenses or a nominal fee or receives reasonable benefits. However, volunteer services cannot be of the same type the individual is paid to perform for that government.

KEY ELEMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

There were a number of key elements that existed in the citizen volunteer programs that I examined. I believe each is critical to the success of such programs within a law enforcement agency.

COMMITMENT

There must be willingness on the part of an agency and its employees to establish a citizen volunteer program. This willingness must extend from top management to those employees working side by side with the volunteers. Benefits and drawbacks must be discussed early on so that input can be obtained. Outside community groups can be enlisted to help gain agency commitment.

MANAGEMENT AND SUPERVISION

Volunteer programs are not "free". Most agencies I examined allocated at least one budgeted position to the management and coordination of volunteers. In addition, personnel were provided opportunity for daily supervision of volunteers. Agencies must be willing to allocate personnel time to added management and supervisory responsibilities.

PLANNING

Planning should integrate agency and staff needs with volunteer services. The process must involve everyone who will be impacted by implementation. All employees working with the volunteers should participate in identifying unmet work needs, opportunities for volunteers, and requirements for converting these needs into opportunities.

A key aspect of this process is the design of volunteer job descriptions. These descriptions should include:

- Objectives and responsibilities of the job.
- Accountability
- Time requirements and,
- Qualifications

Care must be taken to ensure that meaningful job responsibilities are identified. As George Sunderland, AARP, Director of Criminal Justice Services related to me:

"If you want quality volunteers, give them quality things to do".²⁶

Obviously, agency administrators must review and approve program plans as they are developed.

EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION

Prior to implementation, agency employees should undergo an orientation. They should be made aware of the scope and purpose of the volunteer program. In addition, they should clearly understand their role in conjunction with the volunteer program.

RECRUITMENT AND CAREFUL SELECTION

Recruitment can take many forms, community resources, media, word of mouth, etc. What is important is that the volunteer job qualifications are carefully considered when volunteers are interviewed and screened. The same considerations taken when hiring a regular employee should be used when "hiring" a volunteer. If the volunteer does not meet the qualifications, the agency should not hesitate to say "no". Several agencies I reviewed require polygraph examinations. One agency, Livermore Police Department, also requires and pays for psychological screening of volunteers.²⁷

VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

It is extremely important that the volunteer have a clear understanding of the organization and its purpose and functions. In addition, the volunteer must be given ample training to perform the required duties. This training may take place in a formal setting, on the job, or a combination thereof.

VOLUNTEER EVALUATION

The performance of a volunteer must be reviewed and evaluated on a regular basis. If a volunteer cannot perform the required duties or is disfunctional he should be replaced - no different than a regular employee.

The volunteers need to know how they are doing. Regularly scheduled performance review, involving progress and needed improvement, provides support for the volunteer and the program.

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

This is critical. Many of the agencies I reviewed have an annual affair where volunteers are recognized. Many present certificates of service, pens, and awards. All of these are worthwhile and prove rewarding to volunteers.

The most appreciated recognition, however, appears to be the personal "pat on the back for a job well done". Supervisors should be cognizant of this and when appropriate express appreciation.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

An ongoing evaluation of the volunteer program is a necessity. It should include:

- Effects on service.
- Responsiveness to citizens.
- Effect on paid staff.

All of these issues are important in assessing a volunteer program. If modification, expansion, or termination of a program is needed, the only means of making that determination is through careful, regular evaluation.

OLDER VOLUNTEERS - AN UNTAPPED RESOURCE

One source of volunteers that has barely been tapped by law enforcement is the Senior Citizen. When one looks at the demographic trends with the rapid rise in numbers of elderly projected for the future, it follows that prudent administrators should seek a means to utilize this valuable resource.

During my research I visited the Criminal Justice Services section of the American Association of Retired Persons in Washington D.C. My belief that elderly volunteers are a viable volunteer resource for law enforcement was strongly re-enforced.

George Sunderland, AARP, Director of Criminal Justice Services, vividly remarked:

"There are more retired people out there than law enforcement can use - if you only search and give them things to do".

He went on to state,

"For those who remain active there is tremendous interest in law enforcement - we've never given them an opportunity to volunteer in law enforcement. I believe we are on the forefront of an evolution. In the past, law enforcement has resisted intruders into their field, the attitude of law enforcement has changed".²⁸

The AARP's organization certainly serves as a model of the power and potential of seniors, many volunteers, working together. There are over 20 million AARP members today, and the numbers are increasing rapidly. A major motto of the organization is "to serve, not to be served". And so it follows that they are encouraging members to volunteer.

AARP and the National Retired Teachers Association have developed extensive user and instructor manuals dealing with:

- Aging
- Victimization Of The Elderly
- Communication Principles
- Volunteers In Law Enforcement
- Older Americans And The Criminal Justice System

and countless other educational materials.

In addition, utilizing volunteer instructors, AARP trains police officers and volunteers throughout the country in crime prevention and crime analysis techniques. Also, with the demise of the Federal Law Enforcement Assistance Administration in 1980, AARP found itself serving as a focal point and central clearinghouse on volunteerism with many law enforcement agencies.

AARP and NRTA have identified several attributes of older volunteers that I feel are accurate and support utilization of seniors.²⁹

- Available - A growing number of retirees have time to give and want to provide volunteer service. They generally no longer face time consuming responsibilities of fulltime work or raising a family.
- Skilled - Older persons as a result of their life experience can offer a wide range of experience, knowledge, insights, know-how and personal contacts.
- Conscientious - The majority of older citizens relate the work ethic to their self esteem and value as an individual. They are often motivated to volunteer because they want (and need) to continue to make a valuable contribution and to be involved in meaningful work. Research shows that older people are more conscientious in the evaluation of decision criteria before making a decision.
- Dependable - Older volunteers have impressive attendance records and low turnover rates and they show steady performance in their work. They possess the patience necessary to persist with a task until it is completed.
- Influential - Often, older persons are actively involved in many community activities and can provide a valuable community relations function for a law enforcement agency. Many older persons have personal contact in business, industry,

government, and the local community. They can form support groups for law enforcement programs.

- Supportive - Gerontological research indicates that older persons are more often "system-oriented" than other groups. Generally, older persons strongly support the police and the criminal justice system.

Seniors can be recruited either by staff or with community assistance. Many communities have active community groups such as:

- AARP Chapters
- Retired Teachers Association
- Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)
- Religious Institutions
- Retired Community Centers

I can't help but believe there is a viable opportunity to utilize older volunteers in the law enforcement environment. I must agree with a final comment by George Sunderland:

"The only thing that will limit older volunteers in a law enforcement agency is the attitude of the agency itself".³⁰

THE FUTURE - OPPORTUNITY FOR "EVOLUTION"

At this point in my research, it is clear in my mind that a true "evolution" in volunteerism for law enforcement is on the horizon. There are tremendous opportunities, only limited by the imagination and commitment of agency administrators. This is especially true with skilled senior volunteers where the resource pool is ever-increasing and the benefits so substantial.

My original intent in this project was to design a "model" volunteer program for a law enforcement agency. As my research progressed, it became evident a "model" was impractical. Each volunteer program is unique. Every agency has special needs, environmental conditions, and capabilities. Community composition and support, which varies greatly, play an important role in success or failure of a particular volunteer program.

It is important to look at other volunteer programs and that is why I chose to share some of my findings. It must be kept in mind however, what is successful for one agency or community may prove to be failure for another.

The decision whether or not to implement or expand volunteer programs, obviously lies within the agency. That decision though, should be made only after a thorough, open-minded assessment of needs and potential coupled with a cost-benefit analysis.

My challenge to law enforcement administrators is to take those steps. I have little doubt that the result will be the "forefront of the evolution" predicted by George Sunderland.³¹

FOOTNOTES

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