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The Official Communication of The Wisconsin State Crime Stoppers

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President's Message

by K. Scott Abrams, CPA

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Everyone loves to hear someone tell a good story. For me, I love listening to National Public Radio on a Saturday evening and listen to Garrison Keillor on the Prairie Home Companion spin a yarn on just about any topic. However, my most favorite Garrison Keillor stories are his tales about Lake Wobegon, the little town that time forgot. With that in mind, how do we best formulate a story for Crime Stoppers?

Crime Stoppers has a story to tell whether it be with your local program, your state association or through Crime Stoppers USA. First, people want to know what Crime Stoppers is, what it does for the community and how it has performed. It continues to amaze us that we can go into our communities where Crime Stoppers programs has existed for years and yet many members of the community don't realize a Crime Stoppers program exists or how it works. This is a continuing public relations dilemma that local Crime

Stoppers programs need to address in getting out of front of their community as much as possible through the print media, radio, television, and now more than ever, social media. There's an old axiom or saying: there are three things we can do to improve our community awareness— Communicate, Communicate and Communicate!

For Crime Stoppers to succeed another 25 years we must be innovative in our approach to assisting law enforcement.

This can also come through different venues as well within the community, perhaps presenting at a local service organization. In some cases, this is a great way also to invite and recruit new board members as well. The point is, take every opportunity your organization can to promote itself throughout the community. It might be at a community law enforcement fair or it might be a fundraising event. Whatever it is, make sure you take the opportunity to share the Crime Stoppers mission and how we improve our community!

**Crime Doesn't Pay. .
Solving It Does!**

Anonymous Crime Reporting

President's Message Continued

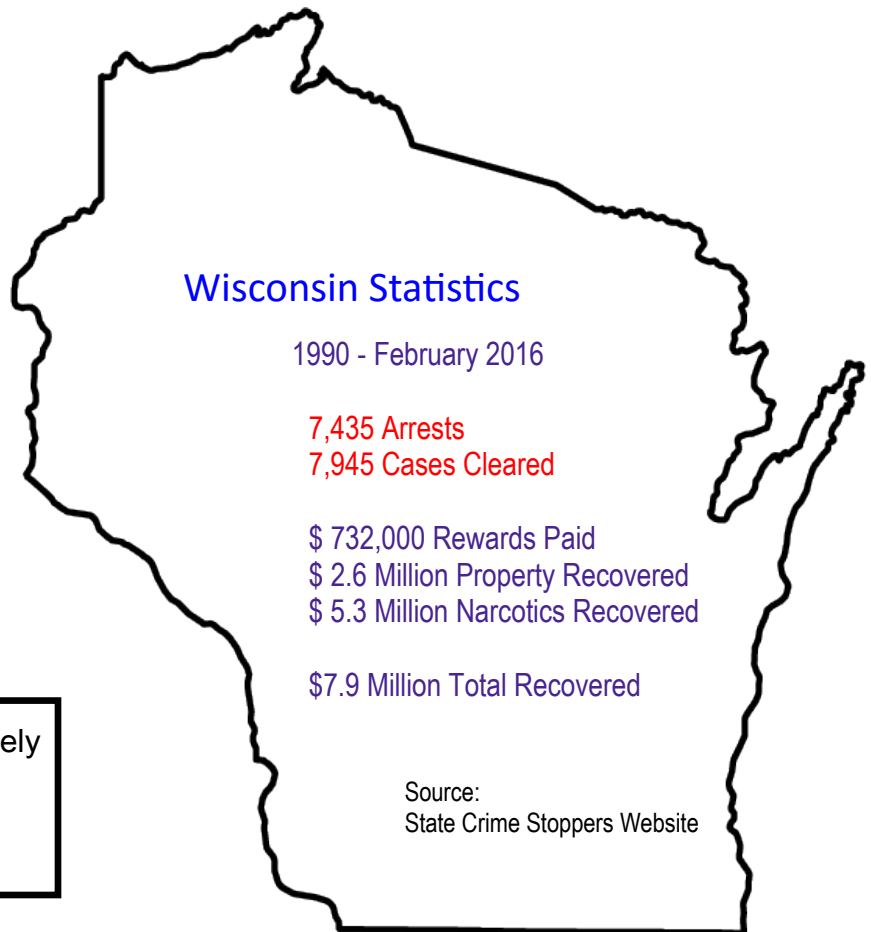
However, one of the most important aspects we need to convey to the media, to our communities and even to ourselves is how successful and effective our local Crime Stoppers programs have been. The primary element of our success is our statistics. Think of this as sort of the punchline of a joke, without it, there is no conclusion. It is sort of like starting a sentence, but not completing it. The Crime Stoppers punchline and the end of our sentence is amazing! For example, solving close to 1 million cases since 1976 is a huge statement as to the accomplishments of Crime Stoppers in the United States! Paying out over \$100 million throughout the US in rewards is astounding! In Wisconsin, we have recorded over 12,000 cases cleared while paying out over \$8.8 million! But the statistics for Wisconsin are woefully understated! Looking at the Crime Stoppers USA membership database where this information is maintained reveals that less than 10% of our membership has updated their statistics over the last

year! Some haven't reported in numerous years!

In order to share a success, we need all the local Crime Stoppers programs to share their statistics on a regular basis. As you may recall, it is the responsibility of each local Crime Stoppers program to ensure their program is up-to-date and that the statistics are entered on at least a quarterly basis in the Crime Stoppers USA database. How do you do this? Quite simply, go to the Crime Stoppers USA website at www.crimestoppersusa.com, go to the upper right-hand corner on the homepage and click on the blue box, 'Member Login'. This will take you to the login page and enter your username and password. (Hint, your username is your program number). If you don't remember your program number and/or program password, please send an email to 4info@crimestoppersusa.com and it will be sent to you.



Eau Claire County Crime Stoppers is now actively taking calls. They have received 27 calls and made two arrests since February of 2016.



Conference Auction Items

Custom framed, signed and numbered print by famous artist Charles Peterson (#540-780)



Signed Arron Rogers Print
(framed 26" X 15") value \$350.00

Signed Clay Mathews Print
(framed size 24" X 19") value \$299.00

RAFFLE PRIZES



1st Prize: 55" SMART TV



2nd Prize: KINDLE FIRE HD 10



3rd Prize: \$100

Correctly Handling Donations

For many Crime Stoppers organizations, donations by individuals and businesses make up a significant portion of the annual receipts. These individuals and businesses provide monetary donations because they believe in and support the cause and mission of the organization while feeling their donation will make a difference.

Therefore, it is extremely important that we acknowledge and recognize people parting with their limited financial resources in order to assist a charitable organization meet their financial obligations. Personally, and I have shared this many times over the years, I think it is just a good business practice to send a thank you note any time a donation is received by a Crime Stoppers organization. Be it large or small, someone has recognized your organization with their hard earned financial resources.

Despite being just a good business practice, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) require charitable organizations to provide a written substantiation to the donor when amounts of \$250 or greater are received. The charitable organization acknowledgment must contain specific IRS required language, as follows:

- ⇒ Be written.
- ⇒ Be contemporaneous, meaning the acknowledgment should occur as soon as practical after receiving the donation.
- ⇒ State the amount of any cash received.
- ⇒ State whether the organization gave the donor any goods or services in return for the donor's contribution (a quid pro quo contribution).
- ⇒ Describe goods or services the organization gave (good faith estimate of value needed).

Let's discuss some sample language in writing to the donor. For example, when no goods or services were provided to the donor for their donation, a sentence to satisfy the IRS language would be:

"Thank you for your contribution of \$400 to Crime Stoppers made in support of our reward fund. No goods or services were provided in exchange for your contribution."

Keep in mind, this is just a several sentences taken from a thank you letter regarding the actual contribution. In many cases, you have an introductory paragraph thanking them for their participation, and perhaps utilizing this as your second paragraph, and then follow-up with how the funds may be used and seeking their continued contributions in the future. Now, let's look at a more complex example when something may be provided to the donor.

As part of a donation, and again keeping in mind this might be just one paragraph of a thank you letter, this is an example when some goods or services are provided to the donor for their contribution:

"Thank you for your contribution of \$1000 to Crime Stoppers in support of our upcoming golf outing. As part of your donation, you received a foursome package worth \$440 in exchange for your contribution."

Every good fundraiser will tell you that it just makes good sense to acknowledge each and every donation that comes into your organization. However, it is important to remember the specific Internal Revenue Service requirements and guidelines for donations \$250 or more to protect the organization and the donor. Without this written substantiation, the donor, according to IRS guidelines, is not allowed to take a donation on their individual tax forms.

So whether it is a handwritten thank you note or a formal written letter on Crime Stoppers stationary, make sure you acknowledge your donors for the wonderful contribution they have made to your Crime Stoppers organization.

Risk Management

Okay, many from our local Crime Stoppers programs may not know what ‘risk management’ means per se, however, it is very important to understand and implement in your local programs, particularly if you engage in any fund raising events that may include public functions or gatherings.

From a business perspective, risk management can be defined as:

- ◇ The identification, assessment and prioritization of potential organizational risks; and,
- ◇ Undertaking a coordinated and economical application of resources to minimize, monitor and control the probability and potential impact of unfortunate events.

The overall objective of a risk management plan is to assure that uncertainty does not deflect or impair an organization’s endeavors and business goals. Perhaps putting it into a more personal perspective may assist with understanding the elements of risk and how to manage it.

For me, living in Wisconsin has many elements of risk during the wintertime. For example, I just came in from shoveling the snow from my driveway and sidewalks. Even though I take good care in the snow removal process, apply some salt where there may be some slippery spots, I may still be at risk. Let’s say my neighbor comes over and delivers some of her wonderful chocolate chip cookies that she has baked especially for me. Unfortunately, while carrying the box of cookies in front of her she may not see an icy spot on the sidewalk located on my property, slips and falls, and breaks her arm. Since she slipped and fell on my property, and even though I had taken steps to remediate the snow and ice from my property, I am at risk for the bodily injury she suffered and may be responsible for any damages she incurs.

How do we mitigate this risk? Of course, any homeowner knows that they acquire homeowners insurance to cover this type of potential risk or injury. So in the simple sense, each home owner identifies and prioritizes a potential property risk, and then consider undertaking a coordinated approach in controlling any unfortunate event, as we defined in the definition above for risk management.

Now we can take this knowledge from our own homeowners experience and apply it to our Crime Stoppers organizations. Many of our Crime Stopper programs undertake fundraising events such as golf outings, gala events, chili cook-offs, etc., and each one of those has an element of risk where injury could occur, through no fault of the organization’s efforts or at the venue in which the event is undertaken.

An organization may look at which risk management option is most appropriate for its program. Traditionally, most businesses and organizations want to transfer this type of risk to an external agency such as an insurance company. In some cases, some local programs may go bare and acquire no insurance coverage at all, however, knowing that the organization needs to realize that they may be putting its put entire organization’s assets completely at risk. Also a part of evaluating organizational risk options may look at avoiding risks altogether, which may require eliminating a particular event or activity. Finally, it is important to periodically review the risk management process annually in case some new events or activities have been modified, added or deleted that may impact insurance coverage.

If you take the traditional route and consider acquiring general liability coverage for your organization, make sure it meets the programs needs in terms of what events are taking place. For example, based on your state laws, if alcohol is served to participants at an event, you may need to consider having dram shop coverage. As a Crime Stoppers USA member, your organization may obtain discounted insurance coverage for lawsuits resulting from bodily injury and property damage through Marsh Insurance. You can find out more about this discounted insurance product on the Crime Stoppers USA website under the menu item ‘Resources’, or go directly to this website address: <http://www.crimestoppersusa.com/insurance.htm>.

This is just one of the basic risk management areas your organization should consider.

WSCS Seeks Law Enforcement Board Members

Do you have a desire to work closely with other Crime Stopper programs throughout the State of Wisconsin? Would you like to put some of your leadership skills to use in serving on a nonprofit board of directors? Do you have a strong belief in the Crime Stoppers concept? If so, the Wisconsin State Crime Stoppers would like you to consider joining our board of directors!

WSCS currently has two board positions up for nomination at the annual meeting to seat two law enforcement representatives on the Board of Directors. As a Board of Director, the responsibilities include meeting with the board on the first Wednesday of the even numbered months, take on the responsibility of contacting approximately five local Crime Stoppers programs in the State of Wisconsin, participate on WSCS committees and participate in the annual training conference. Please reach out to any of the current Wisconsin State Crime Stoppers board members should you have any questions about the roles and responsibilities of our board.

In order to qualify for the law enforcement representative board member positions, the law enforcement candidate must be associated with a duly constituted Wisconsin Crime Stoppers program in good standing. In addition, due to our most recent bylaws change, the law enforcement representative may include individuals who were active law enforcement officers previously and have since been honorably retired from the profession.

So, if you want to make Crime Stoppers better throughout the State of Wisconsin, please join us on the Wisconsin State Crime Stoppers Board of Directors! You'll feel a sense of accomplishment for your local program as well as for the entire state.

Welcome

New Board Member

Sergeant *Bruce Olson*

Sergeant Olson has been in Law Enforcement for 24 years at the Vernon County Sheriff's Office. In 2001, Bruce was promoted to Sergeant and since has been the supervisor for the 9-1-1 call center. Over the years outside of the 911 dispatch center, Bruce has worked in the Jail and Patrol divisions for the Sheriff's Office as well as a part-time patrol officer for the City of Westby and City of Hillsboro. Also, in 2001, Bruce became the Assistant Law Enforcement Coordinator for Vernon County Crime Stoppers and in 2011 became the Law Enforcement Coordinator.

Bruce has been married for 24 years to his wonderful wife, Kerri and they have 3 children: Tyler, Zachary and Chelsea.

"I am very passionate about Crime Stoppers simply because of our work with the public and it allows me to stay in tune with the criminal side of my job. Realizing that Vernon County is a smaller county, I do look forward to gathering new ideas from the other state directors and really look forward to working with all of you!!! Thank you!"

WISCONSIN STATE CRIME STOPPERS, INC.

Hans W. Lux, Jr., Retired, Chief of Police
2548 Remington Rd.
Green Bay, WI 54302
920-468-6008



Crime Prevention Bill Becomes Reality

After many years and numerous attempts to create a funding mechanism for crime prevention programs statewide, the recently passed and signed budget bill for the State of Wisconsin's next two years has made the efforts of many a reality. Under the leadership of Rep. Andre Jacque (R-Bellevue), the State of Wisconsin now has a non-taxpayer, citizen led source of funding for area crime prevention programs in all 72 counties.

Having worked with Rep. Jacque for many years to see this through, I can tell you that without his continued efforts through many roadblocks and both personal and political attacks, this bill would not have come to fruition. The Crime Prevention Funding Bill that was passed may not have been what was originally intended to be, but we now have a way criminals convicted of felonies and misdemeanors are assessed a \$20 surcharge which the Clerk of Courts forwards to the County Treasurer for retention in a crime prevention fund.

While the process of implementation still needs to be worked out in all 72 counties, under the bill each county must set up a Crime Prevention Funding Board (CPFEB) made up of seven members that are designated in the bill. The CPFEB would receive grant requests from described crime prevention programs such as local Crime Stopper programs and award at least one-half of the funds received money to those programs. The other one-half of the funds may be directed to a law enforcement agency that has an established crime prevention fund to be used for crime prevention purposes. There are also annual reports that must be submitted by the groups receiving funds describing the amount of money spend, the purpose for the spending, and contact information of the group and its leaders. These reports would then be available to the governing boards within the county for review.

I have included the wording from the budget bill. Again, more work needs to be done to set up the procedure for each county to use to establish these CPFEB's and for the process of groups to have access to these funds. When we get more information, we will share that with you. In the meantime, all of us owe a debt of gratitude to Rep. Jacque for his hard work and dedication to see this through.

WISCONSIN STATE CRIME STOPPERS, INC.

Hans W. Lux, Jr., Retired, Chief of Police

**2548 Remington Rd.
Green Bay, WI 54302
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Crime Prevention Bill from AB-21/SB-21 (Budget Bill)

Under current law, a person who is convicted of a crime is generally ordered to pay various surcharges that fund a variety of programs related to criminal justice. The bill creates a surcharge of \$20 for each felony and misdemeanor that the clerk of court forwards to the county treasurer, for retention in a crime prevention fund. Moneys from the fund are distributed as grants at the direction of a crime prevention funding board (CPFEB).

Under the bill, a CPFEB is created in every county whose treasurer receives funds from the surcharge. Each CPFEB consists of seven members, who serve for a term that is determined by the CPFEB: the presiding judge of the circuit court, or his or her designee; the district attorney, or his or her designee; the sheriff, or his or her designee; the county executive, county administrator, or county board chairperson, or his or her designee; the chief elected official of the city, village, or town with the largest population in the county, or his or her designee; a person chosen by a majority vote of the top law enforcement officials of the departments that are located in the county; and a person chosen by the county's public defender's office. Members of a CPFEB may be reimbursed for expenses but may not receive any other compensation.

A CPFEB may solicit grant applications from certain specified entities and may award grants to such entities. At least one-half of the funds must go to one or more private, nonprofit organizations that has as its primary purpose preventing crime, providing a funding source for crime prevention programs, encouraging the public to report crime, or assisting law enforcement agencies in the apprehension of criminal offenders. A CPFEB may direct that the rest of the funds be distributed to a law enforcement agency that has a crime prevention fund, if the contribution is credited to the crime prevention fund and is used for crime prevention purposes.

The bill requires that a CPFEB and any entity that receives a grant from a CPFEB must submit an annual report to certain specified entities detailing the amounts spent, the purposes for which the grants were spent, and contact information for the entity and the entity's leaders. The reports must be distributed to the clerk of court for the county that distributed the funds, the county board, and the governing bodies of the cities, villages, and towns in the county.

About



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