

From the Office of the Sheriff: “Volunteers provide value-added Support”

As fiscal restraints prevent government agencies from maintaining a high level of services, we, as managers, must come up with creative ideas to fill the voids created by reduced resources. Your Dodge County Sheriffs Department has experienced success in this area and currently relies upon 200 volunteers to facilitate our day-to-day responsibilities. I would like to introduce a couple of our larger volunteer groups to you.

The Sheriffs Posse - It was heartwarming last week when I had the opportunity to address the Dodge County Sheriffs Dept. Posse Volunteers. The Posse was holding a regular meeting and pot luck, concluding with a jail tour. To stand before this wonderful group of 32 volunteers was very rewarding. Launched in 2009, this group has developed into a select group of professional volunteers, providing value-added assistance to the department and relieving sworn deputies from minor duties allowing them to focus on law enforcement related responsibilities.

Their numbers are impressive. Three-thousand volunteer hours in 2010, with almost half of the hours conducting patrol operations. Scanning reports, delivering items to local police departments, running radar, crossing guard duties, shuttling squads, motorist assists, and sorting mail in the jail are just a few of the valuable services the Posse provides the department.

The Dodge County Emergency Response Team is another large group of citizen volunteers providing unmatched services to the county, saving tens of thousands of dollars annually in overtime costs. These late night road warriors number a couple of dozen and respond upon request for traffic control during serious crashes and major fires. DCERT frees up sworn deputies from traffic control so they can respond to other calls for service. Well organized and led, these volunteers have spent thousands of personal dollars equipping their personal vehicles with emergency lights, radios, and other safety equipment.

Often envious at the high-tec equipment they have, I applaud these men and woman who have provided thousands of volunteer hours, usually during the worst of weather conditions, assisting the Sheriffs Department and other county law enforcement and fire agencies. As with the Posse, we provide training and some equipment to these individuals to ensure they execute their duties in a safe and professional manner.

Lastly, our Dodge County Detention Facility welcomes several dozen volunteers on a monthly basis to ensure the needs of our inmate population are being met. Alcohol and drug treatment, religious services, parenting classes, language courses, and sewing are just a few of the necessary services and demands we satisfy by our great volunteers.

Volunteering is not for anyone and there are various ways each of us volunteers to assist the community for which we reside. I am very pleased that so many have chosen to assist the department because without them, we would not experience the level of success we enjoy. So, if you happen to see one of the Posse Volunteer squads or our DCERT members directing traffic, say hello and thanks. Thanks for listening tnehls@co.dodge.wi.us.