

From the Office of the Sheriff:

“Are you wanted?”

The Sheriff’s Dept. is responsible for the entry of arrest warrants into criminal data bases as well as the maintenance of those files. The process of entry and cancellation of these warrants is time consuming but a necessary function of the department. We have integrated several changes since 2004 which has reduced the work load significantly but we still have a ways to go.

From 2000 – 2004 we entered more warrants into the system than we cancelled. For example, in 2003 we entered 1,776 new warrants and only cleared (arrested) 1,466. The number of active warrant files we had to maintain exceeded 2,000. We had to change the way we did business and reduce this number. We launched a few initiatives directed at combating this issue. The first, launched in 2003, was our Most Wanted list in which five individuals are published monthly through the local media. This has been very successful as citizen’s call in tips on the locations of these subjects, giving us a 75% arrest rate of those published, owing a cumulative \$1.5 million in delinquent child support. We launched another initiative in 2005, linking our active warrant list to our website at www.dodgecountysheriff.com. This allows people to check on themselves and others to see if there are any active warrants.

From 2005 – 2009 we have turned the tide and we have cancelled more warrants than we entered each and every year, currently now sitting at just over 1,000. In 2009, we entered just 970 while clearing (arresting) 1,180, this is progress. Though these are numbers we are proud of, we are still not satisfied and will soon launch the next phase in our efforts to reduce the number of those walking our streets, shunning their fines, child support, and jail commitments. We have contracted with local media and websites and will advertise our wanted list, providing greater visibility and access to our department warrant data base and website. This effort will continue for a period of six months in an effort to determine its success. Private funds are being used in this effort; no tax dollars are being spent. The ultimate goal is to inform the public and provide additional means of accessing the current warrant list.

There are two types of warrants, one for money owed, the other requiring a jail commitment. Often those that owe money successfully elude authorities for awhile, usually getting caught when they have no money, can not post, and then are taken to jail which can increase the penalty due to vehicle towing fees and booking charges. Those whom owe jail time often are confronted at the work place or family gatherings as they fail to answer their door when we try to confront them at home. Though our goal is not to intentionally confront people in this way, they have left us little choice. These people are out there as I located several after a half hours work on the social website - Facebook.

In the last two years, almost 30,000 people accessed the warrant list link on our website, many of those click from those who see their name listed, yet fail to act. If you know people that are on the warrant list, tell them, it is easier for them to call in, turn themselves in, or stop at their local police department and pay the fine, rather than have us chase them down.

On the War College front, a strategic options paper, a means of determining how to make the right choices using the most appropriate resources to accomplish your goals. Coffee filter count at 48, thanks for listening, tnehl@co.dodge.wi.us.