



The Commissioner

The newsletter of the Kansas City Metropolitan Crime Commission

Volume 3, Issue 1

MEET THE COMMISSIONERS



Charles "Charlie" Wunsch, General Counsel, Senior Vice President and Corporate Secretary of Sprint, joined the Crime Commission this past November. He had told the Sprint Community Affairs group that he was looking for a solid community organization to become involved with and they suggested the Crime Commission.

"I believe as citizens we have a responsibility to help our communities through volunteer service," he said. "I also think it's important for Sprint to be active in our community."

In the Crime Commission he found an organization whose scope of activities impressed him.

"I liked in particular that the Commission works on the crime solving side through the Crime Stoppers TIPS Hotline, but also works on the crime prevention side through Second Chance," he explained. "I am very impressed with what I have seen in my limited time."

When asked what initiatives or ideas he might like to see brought to the Commission in the future he answered, "I have been thinking about the Crime Commission in terms of area youth after hearing at a recent meeting about activities of the Wichita Crime Commission and based on my involvement for many years in the Boy Scouts and various youth programs through my church."

Mr. Wunsch stated that his overall early impression of the Crime Commission is of a dedicated and caring organization that is focused on doing the best for the community.

"Everyone I have met from the Commission has been friendly and enthusiastic. I look forward to working with the Commission," he added.

He grew up in the Shawnee and Fairway, Kansas area and attended Shawnee Mission East High School before going to Stanford University where he majored in history and economics. He then went to law school at Cornell University.

Between college and law school Charlie married his high school sweetheart. They now have two grown sons. One is a research scientist who earned his PhD from MIT. His other son earned a degree in film from NYU and runs his own video production company here in Kansas City.

He began his legal career with the Watson Ess Law Firm here and became a partner specializing in business law. In 1990 he went to work for United Telecommunications which would later become Sprint. Then in 2008 he was selected as General Counsel, the position he now holds.

He listed his interests as traveling, visiting art museums and trying local foods along with collecting stamps, reading and trying to grow vegetables, which he said is difficult due to hungry deer in his neighborhood. He and his wife also have two Shelties.



CRIME STOPPERS NEVER STOPS

Our Crime Stoppers program held its annual Law Enforcement and Media Appreciation breakfast on January 30th at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in downtown Kansas City. This event honors those media and law enforcement agencies from the metro area that worked most closely with our TIPS Hotline in the previous calendar year.

KMBC TV9 News anchor Len Jennings served as emcee for the event. Nine media outlets and more than 35 law enforcement agencies or individual units were recognized for their work. Certificates of appreciation were presented to each. More than 130 people attended.

Crime Stoppers board member Steve Brown of Burns and McDonnell played host at the breakfast to a special guest, retired U.S. Army Colonel Donald “Doc” Ballard who was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his valor in action during the Vietnam War.

At the breakfast, Crime Stoppers Coordinator, KCPD Detective Kevin Boehm, announced that to date from its inception in 1982, our program had taken over 128,000 tips which helped area law enforcement make nearly 10,500 arrests which cleared over 24,000 crimes. These tips have earned over \$1,273,000 in cash rewards.

Det. Boehm also informed the crowd that the Crime Stoppers board had approved a boost in the maximum possible reward to be paid from program funds. From 1982 our maximum reward was \$1,000 but in keeping with other successful program we will now offer rewards of up to \$2,000 for tips leading to an arrest.

A highlight of this annual breakfast is the awarding of two \$1,000 scholarships to one winner from each side of the state line. The Crime Stoppers/Metropolitan Chiefs and Sheriffs Association Scholarship Essay Contest is open to all area high school seniors and consists of a written essay and faculty recommendations. Each winner gets a \$1,000 award sent directly to their tuition fund at the college of his/her choice.

This year’s Kansas winner was Samantha Hurst from DeSoto High School who plans on attending either the University of Kansas, Texas A&M or the California Polytechnic State University.

The Missouri winner was Alexis Broadhurst from Blue Springs South High School who plans to begin her college career at either Longview or Blue River Community College.

We wish both of these intelligent and talented young women the best in their futures.



Samantha Hurst



Alexis Broadhurst

The annual Crime Stoppers/Bill Grigsby Memorial Golf Tournament will be held on August 11th at the Oakwood Country Club in south Kansas City. The tournament is returning there after being held at Lakewood Hills for several years. We appreciate the excellent service Lakewood Hills has provided us and look forward to again enjoying the great hospitality at Oakwood.

If you are interested in buying a team, playing individually or sponsoring the event, please contact Jamie Hallam at 816-960-6800 or at jhallam@kc-crime.org.

Crime Stoppers was also pleased that the Kansas City Missouri Police department presented Det. Boehm with its Meritorious Service Award. Kevin was cited for his hard work and dedication since being assigned to the Crime Stoppers office in 2008. Great work, Kevin!

Our *Kansas City’s Most Wanted* newspaper continued to be of great assistance to local law enforcement. As of March 17, 2014, 380 fugitives had been arrested due to readers’ tips. More than a dozen new sales locations had been added in the last quarter and a paid ad was bought by a Kansas City law firm to run in two issues. Though the paper has gained readership over the last several months we still would like to increase sales locations, sell more ads, or more desirable, locate a sponsor to underwrite the newspaper annually so it can be more widely distributed at no cost to readers. If you or your company is interested in any of these facets please contact Executive Editor Craig Sarver at 960-6800, ext. 231, or at csarver@kc-crime.org.



SECOND CHANCE NEWS

By Ron Smith, Program Director

The Second Chance Program is enthusiastic and encouraged by events at the beginning of 2014. The SCP Risk Reduction Center located on the Campus of Pioneer College is starting its fourth year and recently reached a milestone of providing direct reentry services or resource information to over 1700 formerly incarcerated persons which includes quarterly “Welcome Back Sessions” and weekly “Job Club” meetings.

Second Chance is pleased to be one of the recipients of a grant from Jackson County’s COMBAT Anti-Violence Special Initiative (AVSI). The award is \$35,000 and provides for SC to work with the MO Department of Corrections to deliver intense case management to pre-selected residents at the Kansas City Community Release Center. The aim of the COMBAT AVSI is to lower the degree of violent crime in Kansas City by mobilizing community resources which includes addressing the risk factors of violence prone former offenders with a criminal history of serious crimes against persons. Second Chance will work collaboratively with The Heartland Center for Behavioral Change, Dismas House, the Ad Hoc Group Against Crime, Catholic Charities and others within the Greater Kansas City Reentry Community. Brittany Peterson, Second Chance Resource Specialist, is the AVSI lead person for the Crime Commission and will be working at least one full day a week on site at KCCRC.

Recently, Barry Mayer, Kansas City Metropolitan Crime Commission Vice President, and Second Chance Director Ron Smith were asked to participate in Kansas City Mayor Sly James’ *Violence Free KC Committee*. The committee seeks to use the perspectives, talents and creativity from all segments of the city to develop new and progressive ways to reduce violent Crime. Members have been tasked with soliciting information to determine what specifically might be the city’s root causes of crime and what non-traditional interventions might be employed in Kansas City, Missouri.

The KC Metropolitan Reentry Coalition will be honored by Communities Creating Opportunity (CCO) as the recipient of the 2014 Community Spirit Award. The presentation will be made at the *Soul of the City CCO Gala* on April 26, at the American Jazz Museum. The award will be accepted on behalf of the Crime

Commission by founding Coalition/SC director Lora McDonald and current director Ron Smith. CCO is a faith-based, non-partisan, non-profit, community organization which, like the Crime Commission, seeks to improve the quality of life in Greater Kansas City.

Finally, Second Chance says goodbye to Shannan Taylor, Resource Specialist, and wishes her every success as she ventures into her new career adventure. Shannan was one of the first team members with Second Chance and her smile and good humor will be missed.

In other Second Chance news, we were happy to welcome Ms. Adkin Vobach to our staff as our new Resource Specialist.

Adkin is a graduate of the University of Missouri, Kansas City with a bachelor’s degree in sociology. She earned membership in Alpha Kappa Delta, the International Sociological Honors Society.

She previously worked for the Missouri Department of Social Services in the Family Support Division, aiding needy families in obtaining child care, medical assistance, food stamps and other resources.

“I see my duties at Second Chance as a natural evolution of my experience,” she said. “I look forward to helping put our clients together with the resources they need to help them be successful.”

Even though a graduate of UMKC she is a “Huge KU fan” who roots enthusiastically for the Chiefs and Royals and is also active with her church. She has also volunteered with the Urban Scholastic Center, Harvesters, restart, Cross-Lines and other organizations, but most of all enjoys time with her family.

Welcome aboard, Adkin!

Adkin Vobach



MCSP BRINGS GREAT NEWS

By Wendy Steinhaus and Barry Mayer

The Metropolitan Community Service Program enjoyed the great news this month from the City of Blue Springs Public Works department that another community service participant found employment from performing their community service. This is one of the great side benefits community service provides. Each year at least a dozen participants are hired by the worksites. For those needing to improve their employable skills, community service offers a way to improve and build skills to make the participants more employable. It provides networking possibilities and improves self esteem when they know they contributed to the betterment of the community.

More good news....Jackson County COMBAT announced they will be funding our Adopt Prospect worksite to work with 120 clients who are unemployed. This year our funded Adopt Prospect is going to be geared specifically toward job readiness, referrals and mentoring. We are looking forward to our partnership with Second Chance and Missouri Probation and Parole in seeking probationers who will benefit the most from this program. There is strong evidence that being employed will reduce the likelihood that our clients will commit new offenses, so we consider Adopt Prospect a public safety endeavor first.

MCSP is proud to say that most of our personnel have more than ten years with the program. Nicole Clark will celebrate her ten year anniversary with the program on April 9. The participants get to know who they need to talk to and appreciate hearing a familiar voice and seeing a familiar face. Our staff has developed good relationships with the courts and probation offices that can't be found anywhere else.



Nicole Clark

MCSP was happy to reopen Independence Public Works Recycling centers this month. This worksite will add a much needed weekend worksite to the Independence area. We also added BRP Counseling Services in Wyandotte County. BRP is referred participants from non-profits for life skills classes and provides grant assistance to non-profits.

In February Crime Commission Vice President Barry Mayer attended the national conference for Keep America Beautiful in Charlotte, North Carolina with the Kansas City program's manager Sadie Gardner who is also an MCSP board member. As MCSP and its clients work hard to help clean up blighted areas KEEP KC Beautiful is a valued partner and resource.

Barry will be serving on the program's advisory board at the Bridging the Gap organization which has several environmental programs including Keep KC Beautiful.

"Every year the city of Kansas City, Missouri contracts with Keep KC Beautiful to provide a litter index that helps the city focus resources," Mayer said. "Our MCSP program also uses that index to focus our clean ups to the areas that need us most."





SAFE HONORS SUPPORTERS

“The best news for our program is that there were no line of duty deaths of public safety officials in the past quarter,” said Sonny Wilson, Executive Director of the Crime Commission’s SAFE (Surviving Spouse and Family Endowment Fund). “We are always ready to help those families but prefer it when we don’t have to because that means no families have had to face that tragic consequence.”

Recently the immediate cash benefit to the family of a law enforcement officer, firefighter or emergency medical responder was raised from \$10,000 to \$15,000. The SAFE board was proud to announce this as they know that during such a stressful and sorrowful time that these families often need this assistance quite badly to meet immediate needs.

Wilson was pleased however, to announce two new members to the SAFE board, Mr. Tom Lyons, owner of Title Boxing, whose company sponsors SAFE’s annual Guns ‘N Hoses boxing event, as well as Ronald E. Snyder, a Vice President at Commerce Trust.

SAFE also was happy to add two new Life Memberships, Financial Counselors Incorporated and Tom Van Buren of Ferrellgas. In February, the West Central Missouri Fraternal Order of Police held a formal “Night in Blue” Policeman’s Ball at the Downtown Marriott Muehlbach. Money raised at that event is donated to SAFE. This year’s dinner/dance yielded a donation of \$20,000. Many thanks go out to the WCMFOP for their generosity.

As of this year SAFE’s annual Ed Wynn/SAFE Memorial Scholarship Essay Contest will see for the first time the awarding of two \$3,000 scholarships. One will go to an area high school senior and the other will benefit a current college, trade or technical school student. Entrants must be the dependent of an active public safety official within the 9 county area served by our SAFE program. For complete details on how to enter see SAFE’s website at www.survivingspouseandfamily.org.

Sonny Wilson wished to remind all our readers that this year’s SAFE golf tournament will be at The National II in Parkville. Several sponsorships are still available. Please call Sonny at 816-960-6800 or email at swilson@kc-crime.org for details.



Above, Peter Greig of Financial Counselors, Inc. is presented a shadow box honoring his company for its lifetime membership donation. Below, Tom VanBuren receives a shadow box noting his lifetime membership.



FOP President Rick Ingolia presents Sonny Wilson with a \$20,000 check for SAFE.





In Memoriam

On February 13, 2014, the Crime Commission and Crime Stoppers lost a very good friend and supporter.

Mary Zakovich, the wife of Crime Commission member and one of our Crime Stoppers program founder, Ray Zakovich, passed away after a brave battle with a long illness.

We will all miss Mary's beauty, her grace, and her infectious smile as well as her ready willingness to help with our many events. She was truly a special person.

Our deepest condolences go out to Ray and all his family for their loss.

Mary Zakovich



(Volunteering, cont'd from column 1)

We are always happy to welcome new businesses to our list of organizations that provide opportunities for its employees to volunteer with us.

If your business wishes to join our volunteer list, please contact Craig Sarver at 816-960-6800 or at csarver@kc-crime.org and let us know your contact person in charge of volunteerism.

Extreme Office Makeover

For anyone who is used to visiting the Crime Commission office, your next visit may hold a few surprises.

The management of the PennTower office building, where our offices are located, made available some updated furniture which was left when a company relocated from the building.

This furniture included a new reception area desk for our Office Manager, Jamie Hallam, and an attractive new conference table for the meeting room, complete with padded captain's chairs.

MCSP received all new updated work stations and new desks were provided for the TIPS staff.

Our thanks go out to the management team at the PennTower Building.

Volunteering

As it is with all not-for-profit organizations, the Kansas City Metropolitan Crime Commission relies heavily upon fund raising events to help cover the ever-increasing costs of operation.

In order for these events to be successful we need volunteers. These volunteers provide much needed assistance, without which these events could not take place.

ITEM DONATIONS

At all of our fundraising events much of our proceeds come from items donated for raffles, auctions and games. With that in mind we always welcome donations of anything from sporting goods to trips and from art to jewelry (and about anything in between!)

If you or your business would like to donate any of these types of items, including gift cards or donated services, please give Jamie Hallam a call at 816-960-6800 or at jhallam@kc-crime.org.