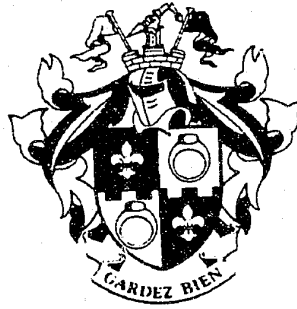


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**MEDIA,
EDUCATION,
AND
INFORMATION
REFERRAL
COMMITTEE
REPORT**

JUNE 1993



Office of Community Policing

Montgomery County, Maryland Department of Police

**MEDIA, EDUCATION,
AND
INFORMATION REFERRAL COMMITTEE**

OFFICE OF COMMUNITY POLICING

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Captain Fred B. Ailes, Co-Chair***

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Officer Evelyn S. Cahalen
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Responsibilities

The Media, Education and Information Referral Committee has recommended strategies to educate the public on our community policing philosophy. Educating the public is the first step in gaining their participation in our problem solving efforts.

Communication

Communication is essential to increase community involvement. A strong network of continual communication in the community is vital for successful community policing. It is our responsibility to introduce and prepare the citizens for community policing.

Goal

We are committed to empowering our members and the community to resolve problems by creating an environment that encourages solutions which address the needs of the community.

Phase I

A visual representation of our new community policing logo and slogan should be released to the media by a combination of police and political leaders. This logo displays the triad: Community, Business, and Government, "Working Together for our Community."

This symbol and phrase will kickoff our campaign of information and training for our citizens and officers.

Strategies

- Develop a logo/slogan that will represent the working relationship between the community, business, and government.
- Display this logo/slogan on all county police cruisers, station front doors, department letterhead, business cards, uniform pins, and resource guides.
- Add our logo/slogan to the D.A.R.E. Program curriculum; add logo to rulers, book covers, and shirts provided for our children.

Phase II

The release of our logo/slogan will be followed with a timely introduction and education period for our citizens on our community policing commitment.

Our county consists of 208 established neighborhood watch groups, and 25 new groups recently submitting requests for affiliation. Added to this are an additional 230 homeowners and citizen associations, along with Rotary Clubs, Lions Clubs, Kiwanis Clubs, Jaycees, and a myriad of ethnic and religious organizations where a strong base exists to share information.

Strategies

- Provide established neighborhood watch groups and citizen associations with an overview of community policing, and our approach to problem solving in the community.
- Selected officers and citizens can make themselves available to attend meetings and familiarize these groups with our philosophy which involves their participation.
- Develop an educational introduction to community policing to add to our D.A.R.E. Program.
- Create a Speakers Bureau by utilizing trained officers and citizens to initiate a communications link to the community. Once a communications link has been established, the beat officers in that group's area will be responsible to communicate with the group and handle all requests.
- Provide a monthly newsletter for citizen groups. A representative from each group should receive additional training in our philosophy and specific plans for their area, so that they can pass this information on to their members.
- Provide open forums after PTA meetings in local schools to allow citizens to address problems and provide suggestions.

Additional Strategies

These consist of varied approaches to reach our community and provide the community with an avenue to reach us.

- Develop media interest by providing examples of community policing successes and human interest stories involving the community.
- Utilize the Gazette Newspapers to reach the largest section of our county by securing a regular column.
- Utilize Hispanic and Vietnamese newspapers as well as those in other languages.
- Utilize morning talk radio shows that feature a topic of interest for the community.
- Create a monthly cable television program to promote community policing. Montgomery County has two cable stations that are dedicated to providing Montgomery County residents thorough local coverage, Channel 21 and Channel 49. Channel 21 is a commercial cable channel; Channel 49 is the dedicated public access channel. Both have a potential audience of 170,000 homes.

Suggested programs from month-to-month include:

- What is Community Policing and How Will it Affect Your Community?
- "Walking the Beat" with a Community Policing Officer
- How to Establish a Neighborhood Watch Program
- How Community Policing Benefits the Business Community
- How to Prevent Car-Jackings
- Provide one telephone number that utilizes a tree flow to provide information and referral service for county citizens. This number can utilize an existing 217 line at no charge or utilize an 800 number and acronym for a charge. This line can provide simple instructions, and provide the caller with access to different units within our department, as well as other county agencies. This can be done in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, and in a TDD format for the deaf.

- Develop a Resource Guide for the community which provides addresses and telephone numbers for county agencies. This guide can also provide the reader with scenarios to help them select the appropriate agency.
- Establish bi-yearly police open houses.
- Provide a Citizen's Academy at the Public Service Training Academy to involve citizens in various topics, which could include:
 - How to properly secure your residence to prevent burglary.
 - Firearms safety.
 - A day in the life of a Homicide detective.
 - How to interpret State laws.
- Provide reality tapes to the Library system on various police topics.

Control/Follow-Up

Strategies

- Provide open forums after PTA meetings in local schools to allow citizens to address problems and provide suggestions.
- Instruct supervisors to conduct follow-up calls to measure the quality of police services provided.
- Establish a citizen complaint and commendation procedure pamphlet.

Conclusion

For successful implementation of community policing our citizens must be provided the opportunity to share responsibility and participate in this process. These strategies provide such an avenue.