

# Crime Commission Update

December 2009



<http://www.ncc.ne.gov>

Dave Heineman, Governor

## DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Here at the Crime Commission, we are tasked with several critical responsibilities to serve our fellow Nebraskans. One of these responsibilities is the administration of the following grants: Juvenile Services, Byrne/JAG for state and local law enforcement, Victim Assistance, Residential Substance Abuse, Juvenile Justice, Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) and Nebraska's Criminal Justice Information System (NCJIS).

During 2009, the grants division also developed and administered the new Office of Violence Prevention (OVP) grants and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds, which nearly doubled the work load of our grants division staff.

The Grants Division Chief, Jennifer Kirkpatrick, leads a staff of six members, which includes two administrative personnel and four staff members who are responsible for the administration of grants and overseeing projects in the following areas: federal aid to victims of crime and juveniles, ARRA funds administration and a jail standards examiner who works with issues regarding juvenile regulations.

Since 2000, the Crime Commission has processed nearly 10,000 grant payments totaling more than \$99,000,000 to assist state, county and local organizations throughout Nebraska. The positive impact of funds to organizations across Nebraska is tremendous and invaluable to our customers, our citizens of Nebraska.

Happy Holidays to all and please remember the men and women in the Armed Forces serving our Country in the United States and over-seas.

~ Michael E. Behm, Executive Director

## TEN YEAR ANNIVERSARY FOR VINE

Ten years ago, a new service launched in Nebraska aimed at providing peace of mind for the victims of violent crime. Since 1999, VINE, which stands for Victim Information and Notification Everyday, has alerted Nebraskans to changes in an offender's custody status 24 hours a day, via telephone or email.

Coordinated by the Nebraska Crime Commission, VINE provides around-the-clock status of offenders held in a Nebraska Department of Correctional Services facility and county jails throughout the state. The service is free, anonymous and available to crime victims and any concerned citizen.

In the aftermath of a crime, knowing the offender's whereabouts can be a valuable way to reassure victims as part of their recovery. VINE helps empower victims by giving them important safety information in a fast and convenient way.

During the past decade, use of this technology-based application has been widely adopted across the country. When Nebraska's VINE program was implemented in 1999, less than 10 states offered this automated service. Today at least 2,300 communities in 46 states offer victim notification services.

Callers to the VINE hotline can talk with operators available 24 hours a day to help new users register, locate an offender or access local victim services. Updates are provided in English and Spanish, with a recent addition of Vietnamese.

Users can register to receive status updates via email. In addition to registering to be notified in the event of an offender's release, death, transfer, escape and return to custody after an escape, more specific information is available on Nebraska inmates. It ranges from a pardon or commutation of a sentence, to temporary releases such as furloughs, work release or volunteering with a community program, cancellation of scheduled release, 30-day advance notice of an upcoming parole hearing and any cancellations, as well as the results of parole hearings.

In 2008, there were 4,773 registration requests and an update on inmate status was requested more than 23,000 times in Nebraska. These are requests that otherwise would have gone to jails and county attorneys across the state.

VINE is one example of the many ways state government can provide a valuable service that benefits citizens, while also ensuring better efficiency for our partners at the local and county level.

Victims and other concerned citizens access the service by calling toll free to (877) 634-8463, or by logging onto the VINE website, available at [www.vinelink.com](http://www.vinelink.com) and entering the offender's name or identification number.

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## MATCH ACT OF 2009

It appears that legislation pending before the United States Congress may have an impact upon Nebraska's Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) funds. These funds are also known as the Byrne funds.

The House passed a bill establishing a national criminal arsonist and criminal bomber registry program and a grant program to encourage states, territories and tribes (on voluntary basis) to comply. The Managing Arson Through Criminal History (MATCH) Act of 2009 would require convicted bombers and arsonists to register with the state or territory in which they reside. The Attorney General would establish and maintain a database within the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), and also develop and support software to enable jurisdiction to participate in the registry. This bill also includes establishing a Criminal Arsonist and criminal Bomber Management Assistance Program to offset the costs of implementing the bill. Any jurisdiction that implements this program within two years of enactment would be eligible for a bonus payment in addition to regular JAG funds that go to the state. The proposed failure to comply with the bill would be a penalty of up to 10 percent of the Byrne JAG award. Many criminal justice associations and agencies are opposing penalizing funds for non-compliance. If you are part of an association, it may be important to share this information as it has the potential to impact grant funds.

For more information please refer to the bill, H.R. 1727, that passed the House on September 30 and the companion bill S. 1684.

## CJIS TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE

The 2010 CJIS Technology Conference will be held at the Ramada Inn, 301 2nd Avenue, Kearney, Nebraska on March 10th and 11th. Room registrations for this room block must be made by February 7th by calling 1-800-272-6232 or 308-237-3141. The room rates are \$68-standard room per night plus tax (14.2%). The conference room block is under the name "Nebraska Crime Commission". Additional hotel and conference center information can be found at [www.kearneyramada.com](http://www.kearneyramada.com).

\*Please note the SLEUTH and CMS Users conference will be held March 8-9th at the same location. You can make hotel room reservations for those dates as well. The companies will handle registration for these events.

You can register at <http://conference.cjis.state.ne.us/>

The annual CJIS Technology Conference provides an ideal opportunity to learn about developments in Nebraska as well as general technology advancements and opportunities. There is always a lot going on at the local, state, federal and general vendor levels. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend. 2010 is also the 10th anniversary of NCJIS coming online.

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## CRIME COMMISSION WEBSITE UPDATE

The Crime Commission continues to try and provide information on our website in a useful and easy to use manner. Some recent and upcoming changes include:

- Mapping of crime and arrest data: users can select time periods and types of data (arrest, offenses, etc.) and see maps comparing rates of activity. This can assist in looking at changes over time.
- Mapping of criminal justice agencies: users can select types of agencies (jails, sheriffs, etc.) and see where they are located across the state. This will also provide contact information per site.
- Mailing list availability: online users will be able to generate spreadsheets of agency types (jails, sheriffs, etc.) with contact and address information. These can be used to generate mailing lists/labels by the user.
- Historical grant information: inactive grant programs will be maintained on the website so past grants can be located.

If you have suggestions for changes or additions to the Crime Commission website please let us know.

## CRIMINAL JUSTICE VIDEO LIBRARY

The following videos have been added to the library and are available for loan:

### WHAT EVERY STREET COP NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT TERROR AND TERRORISTS (DVD)

46 Minutes Color In The Line of Duty: 2009 AD

There is no doubt that an officer with good communication and observation skills can play a part in stopping a potential terrorist from injuring or killing people. This program includes the following segments:

(1) Clues – what to look for during a traffic stop or on patrol. (2) Types of explosive devices. (3) Never forget the basics of good field interviews and don't become complacent. (4) Never overlook the obvious.

### RACIAL PROFILING (DVD)

15 Minutes Color In The Line of Duty: 2009 AD

Racial profiling has become one of the major problems facing law enforcement. Making stops on the basis of race or ethnicity, rather than on grounds of reasonable suspicion, is illegal and a violation of rights. This program explains the three key elements of reasonable suspicion and emphasizes that the officer should be able to articulate why he or she made the stop. This is a good program for in-service training.

### SERVING WARRANTS (DVD)

9 Minutes Color In The Line of Duty: 2009 AD

Serving warrants can be an officer's most dangerous job, especially when they are felony or narcotics warrants. This program looks at an incident in Idaho where two officers were shot and killed while serving a warrant. There are several short segments that explain the best methods to serve warrants including: (1) Planning, (2) Weapons, (3) Manpower and equipment, (4) Day versus Night, (5) Officer Identification, (6) Controlling the Subject, (7) Communicating, and (8) Debriefing.

### COPS AND ETHICS (DVD)

28 Minutes Color In The Line of Duty: 2009 AD

Ethics and leadership is one of the biggest issues facing the law enforcement profession today. This program covers the do's and don'ts of proper ethical procedures via more than a dozen real-world situations. Ethical issues discussed include brutality, discrimination, excessive force, corruption, dishonesty, and character.

### STAYING CALM UNDER PRESSURE: DISPATCHING (DVD)

29 Minutes Color In The Line of Duty: 2009 AD

This program, designed for law enforcement dispatchers, features comments from dispatchers across the country. Also included are tips and "lessons learned" from experts in dispatcher training. This is an excellent video for refresher training.

### ORDER IN THE COURT (DVD)

30 Minutes Color Cambridge Educational: 2004 AD

This video is an excellent overview of the court system, including the differences between adult and juvenile procedures. Segments include pretrial procedures, the grand jury, preliminary hearings, indictments, pretrial release, bail, arraignment, plea bargaining, trial, sentencing and right to appeal. Concepts such as alibi, burden of proof and reasonable doubt are also explained. This is a good program for refresher training or for the general public.

### VICTIMS WITH DISABILITIES: THE FORENSIC INTERVIEW (DVD)

56 Minutes Office for Victims of Crime: 2007 AD

This program provides a specific set of guidelines for practitioners conducting forensic interviews with victims of crime with disabilities. It is designed for professionals who already conduct forensic interviews to help them improve their methods. Segments include: (1) terms and concepts, (2) pre-interview process, (3) profiles for practice, (4) the interview process, and (5) the post-interview process.

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## NEW MEMBERS APPOINTED TO THE CRIME COMMISSION BOARD

The following new members have been appointed to the Crime Commission governing Board:

- Alex Hayes, Omaha's Police Chief
- Candice Batton, an Associate Professor at UNL
- Richard Pierce, a Buffalo County Supervisor
- Brenda Smith, a College Instructor and retired Police Commander from Omaha.

We wish to thank Scott Arnold, James Riskowski and Susan Jacobs for their years of service on the Commission.

The next meeting of the Nebraska Crime Commission is January 29, 2010 at 9:30 AM at the Nebraska State Office Building in Lincoln, "LLA" Conference Room.

# HAPPY HOLIDAYS

## FROM THE STAFF OF THE CRIME COMMISSION



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### THOUGHT(S) FOR THE DAY ON LIFE:

“How we spend our days is, of course, how we spend our lives.”

~ Annie Dillard

“Life is like an onion: you peel it off one layer at a time, and sometimes you weep.”

~ Carl Sandburg

“There was never yet an uninteresting life. Such a thing is an impossibility.  
Inside the dullest exterior there is a drama, a comedy, and a tragedy.”

~ Mark Twain

“Life is what you make of it. Always has been, always will be.”

~ Grandma Moses