

Publicizing Crime Stoppers with New Technology

Crime Stoppers can no longer rely on tradition methods to promote the Crime of the Week or other appeals which have been the life-blood of the program since it was first established by Greg MacAleese in 1976.

Initially pen and paper were used to record tips received anonymously over the telephone and the newly-introduced fax machine allowed information received from tipsters to be transmitted immediately to various units across the department or to Crime Stoppers programs that were springing up at a record rate.

The advent of the computer revolutionized Crime Stoppers and the Internet provided the potential of unlimited resources to promote our crime fighting efforts.

Web sites

Specialized email addresses

Password protected board member area

Facebook

Flickr

Text Messaging

Twitter

YouTube

Email delivery

Electronic newsletter

Traditional media outlets – Newspapers, Radio, Television

Non-traditional media –

Advertising circulars, web information sites, campus media, ethnic publications, community bulletins, transit advertising, newspaper box panels, mall public address systems, billboards, and the list goes on.

Never overlook an opportunity

Always look for inventive and unique ways to promote Crime Stoppers. Think outside the box and be a trendsetter. Crime Stoppers began as a reinvigoration of old fashioned police work and today is listed with fingerprinting and DNA as one of the three top innovations in modern day policing.

The Crime of the Week shouldn't be the only message from Crime Stoppers. You should highlight successes when possible; issue news releases to take advantage of special occasions such as Fire Prevention Week and other dates where crime concerns can be emphasized and promote Crime Stoppers at various times such as spring time flooding, Halloween and Christmas when safety issues can be stressed.

Look for partners who have excess dollars to assist with your promotion campaigns such as the local Safety Council, MADD, anti-smoking groups, various advocacy organizations and even the brewers and distillers who are always trying to get a positive message regarding responsibility and staying safe.

Link up with the local Humane Society to combat animal abuse and promote Crime Stoppers through messages on their pamphlets, newsletters and decals on their vehicles. It's quite possible you'll get more publicity from the media talking about animal welfare than when you issue an appeal to catch a killer.

Always be on the lookout for a positive news story to promote Crime Stoppers. Has one of your board members done something out of the ordinary; has a police officer assisted Crime Stoppers in an unusual way; is there a school that has done something outstanding to help Crime Stoppers or is there someone in the community who turned to Crime Stoppers not to give a tip but to request assistance from the organization in a totally different vein.

You must also remember that times are now tough and the media outlets that have freely assisted with publicity in the past can use your help. Ask the newspaper to produce a supplement so they can gain advertising revenue while promoting Crime Stoppers. Encourage real estate companies and other businesses to promote Crime Stoppers in their regular advertising and remind people they live in a safer community because of programs such as Crime Stoppers. And don't forget to promote the media outlets that have supported you through the years by linking to them on your web site and acknowledging them in public presentations.

Brainstorm with the board and others to see what ideas you come up with the promote Crime Stoppers. Enlist the assistance of students in your local high school and community colleges to develop advertising campaigns. (A good method of measuring the success of a campaign aimed at youth is to have adults hating it.)

Develop shoplifting posters. Put signs in bars encouraging people to Call Crime Stoppers. Get your pamphlets in all public areas, including shopping malls, community centers, police stations, sports facilities, local churches, libraries and grocery stores. Make use of internal publications at companies. Put a Crime Stoppers message on business cards used by local police officers.

Target your message to seniors and utilize Crime Stoppers Month in January to promote your program and thank all those who have assisted in making it a household name.

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Media perception of the relevance of Crime Stoppers in 2010 and beyond.

That is an interesting question and must be posed in light of these very difficult economic times.

Actually Crime Stoppers continues to have a degree of respect with the media that is unparalleled and in reality, astounding.

Through the years there have been incidents that ruffled feathers and caused disruptions, but Crime Stoppers has weathered the storms and maintained not only the trust of the media, but the acceptance and confidence of the general public.

That doesn't mean that Crime Stoppers will continued to get the level of support in the future that it has achieved in the past. The media has been affected by the economic downturn and will be spending more time concentrating on the bottom line.

It does not mean that Crime Stoppers programs will be cut off. In fact, it's mostly likely that they will continue to have high ratings in the form of general coverage from the media community.

As I said, today and into the future all media outlets are putting priority on their bottom line and Crime Stoppers will suffer in the form of less exposure and support in the coming years.

Newspapers will not give Crime Stoppers free space in a spot where they can sell an ad. They also won't be providing the level of financial support in the form of purchasing tickets to fundraising dinners or financially supporting an event when they are in the midst of cutting staff.

Simply the media will not be able to support Crime Stoppers at the level they have in the past.

We must also recognize that newspaper readership has dwindled and with that reduction their revenues are down. Television stations are

also not getting the amount of viewers they did in the past because of increased channel options and they again will have to curtail spending and review the amount of public service announcements they can provide. It is the same with radio stations. Their audience and ratings have dropped and so have profits.

Basically everyone is suffering.

Crime Stoppers will also be impacted by the poor economy in areas of fundraising and community support as well as losing some media exposure.

The media was once the best friend and a solid partner of Crime Stoppers, and I expect media outlets will continue to give what they can to the program, but it won't be at the level they have contributed in the past and I don't believe the situation will fully recover to the extent of support that it was in previous years.

Because Crime Stoppers has enjoyed such a remarkable relationship with the media, I don't believe it will deteriorate to a negative extent, but don't expect it to be anywhere near what has gone on in the past 30 or so years.

You have to recognize the media is still in the corner of Crime Stoppers, but they have lost a considerable amount of spark and some of their ability to fight.

To recognize the completely unique position that Crime Stoppers had with the media, you must look back and see what was accomplished and achieved. The concept that Greg MacAleese envisaged and implemented was above and beyond what anyone could imagine, appreciate or even comprehend. Crime Stoppers instantly became the golden child of the media and gained a reputation that is unrivaled in the history of public relations.

The formula was something the media embraced since it gave them an inside look at a local crime. Even more than an inside look was the

potential of presenting the crime in the form of a re-enactment similar to the “You Are There” approach that Walter Cronkite delivered in the early days of television. Viewers could actually see a crime taking place and were given the opportunity to play detective and see if they could crack a case for the police. It was a concept made for television and something that has been copied by countless programs including America’s Most Wanted, Unsolved Mysteries and even a show called Crime Stoppers.

From a public relations standpoint there isn’t a company or organization that has been able to develop the type of positive relationship that Crime Stoppers created in the initial stages and maintained for a period of more than 30 years. As I said, it’s unrivaled.

You have to consider that Crime Stoppers received media coverage for the majority of events and also obtained dedicated time and space in newspapers, on radio and television for a Crime of the Week. All businesses and most non profit groups have been required to

purchase advertising space to guarantee the type of media support that Crime Stoppers received on an ongoing basis.

This obviously won't come to an abrupt end, as I said earlier, but media outlets are being forced to cut back and reduce support as they face economic difficulties and reengineer to improve profits.

It's also not doom and gloom for Crime Stoppers. Basically, we must find new ways to do business with the media and create win-win opportunities.

It is possible for Crime Stoppers to come to the rescue by examining what we have achieved in the past and considering new promotional initiatives for the future. Something that many of you in this room have probably not given much thought to, but the media is much more than the local reporter who shows up at your door from the newspaper or the assignment editor at the television who you contact regarding to get exposure for Crime Stoppers.

It has been the typical view that most Crime Stoppers programs have held about the media, but it's really a very narrow perspective. The media is actually a conglomerate that has focus on the bottom line more than on getting facts to the public. They are a business, not a community service organization.

We must look at the media as a multi-faceted organization and consider how Crime Stoppers can provide benefit and added value to the various parts of the corporation. Some concepts are quite simplistic while others are complex.

Something that is simple and would be easy to implement would be making use of newspaper distribution box cards and provide a source of revenue, not for Crime Stoppers, but for one of our media partners.

You could have Crime Stoppers supporters advertising your program on these box cards and create a positive benefit for the newspaper. This is something that hasn't been done before and would be extremely beneficial for a cash strapped company. Currently the

cards are utilized to promote what's in the paper or an upcoming feature. In the past Crime Stoppers have been able to make use of this high exposure venue to highlight a missing child or an unsolved murder.

Consider a realtor congratulating Crime Stoppers in this non-traditional promotional effort for helping keep the community safe and a secure and viable place to purchase a home.

Before going into an area of alternative promotional initiatives and new technologies that can be adopted by Crime Stoppers, I wanted to touch on the structure of media organizations and the elements of the business that can be useful resources for your program. The key people and the individuals Crime Stoppers should be tapping are the publishers of the newspapers and the owners of television and radio stations. These are the decision makers and the people who have influence and personal wealth.

Leaving the editorial or news departments for the moment, the division that feeds the economic engine is the advertising department. They generate the majority of the money and provide the budget for the news department. The advertising manager usually knows all the businesses in the community, attends all the need to be seen at events, courts top advertisers with sports and theatre tickets and has memberships at the best golf courses, private clubs and business organizations such as Rotary or the Chamber of Commerce. Does this sound like someone who might make an interesting Crime Stoppers board member.

The circulation department is responsible for the distribution of newspapers to homes, retail outlets and newspaper boxes in an area known as the publication's reach. This will likely cover an area at least to the boundary of the community, but for most daily newspapers, a radius of several hundred miles. They look after the delivery trucks which crisscross the distribution area and the people who bring your newspaper to the door. They also coordinate with the stores carrying the paper and private contractors who fill newspaper

boxes every day. Circulation is obviously a revenue generator and vital to the success of the newspaper, but from a Crime Stoppers standpoint, it provides the potential of getting a message, separate from the newspaper delivery, to a good number of homes and specialized promotion through the newspaper box signs that were mentioned earlier.

Going back to the question about the relevance of the media in the future, it becomes more evident now that an expansion of the relationship between Crime Stoppers and the media is even more important tomorrow than it was in the past.

One of the newest revenue streams for the media are web pages and millions of dollars have been spent by newspapers, radio stations and television broadcasters around the world to encourage the public to get their news instantly from their web sites. There was a great deal of reluctance by some media moguls to embrace this technology but those who are in with both feet are finding the profits to be enormous. This success is also driving an attitude that everything produced by

the paper should have a price tag and there is currently a swelling number of media owners who are developing processes where people will have to purchase news from the web rather than just reading it gratis.

Personally I would like media outlets to pursue innovative methods to generate extra revenue, possible through direct web marketing of advertisers products, rather than trying to charge for an article that is most often in newspapers distributed free to hotels and coffee shops to bolster sagging circulation figures.

At the same time, Crime Stoppers should be looking at new ways to promote their programs especially through the increasing number of specialty channels and alternative and ethnic publications.

Work with the newspaper's advertising department to produce a Crime Stoppers supplement supported by advertising from the community. It's a win-win situation for everyone.

Consider telethons and radio promotions. Look at the possibility of forming partnerships with advertisers to gain extra revenue for the media while promoting Crime Stoppers.

These are very tough economic times and you can't expect the media to continue providing support at the level they once did, but you should expect a favorable response to a request that will help them make money.



Book about unsolved murders just released

ANDREW PALAMARCHUK

October 29, 2009

Patrick Jay Santos and his girlfriend were at separate downtown nightclubs in the early hours of Sept. 17, 2006. They briefly spoke on the phone at 5 a.m. The girlfriend asked Santos where he was. "I'll get back to you. I love you babe," was the reply. What happened in the next couple of hours remains a mystery.

Santos, 21, was found dead by his dad at 7:27 a.m. in the backyard of their Scarborough home.

The case is among 258 unsolved murders featured in a newly published book by retired Toronto Star reporter Cal Millar.

"The goal was to put together an open-ended Crime Stoppers appeal," Millar said. "The book is basically an appeal for people to call Crime Stoppers if they know anything about any of the crimes."

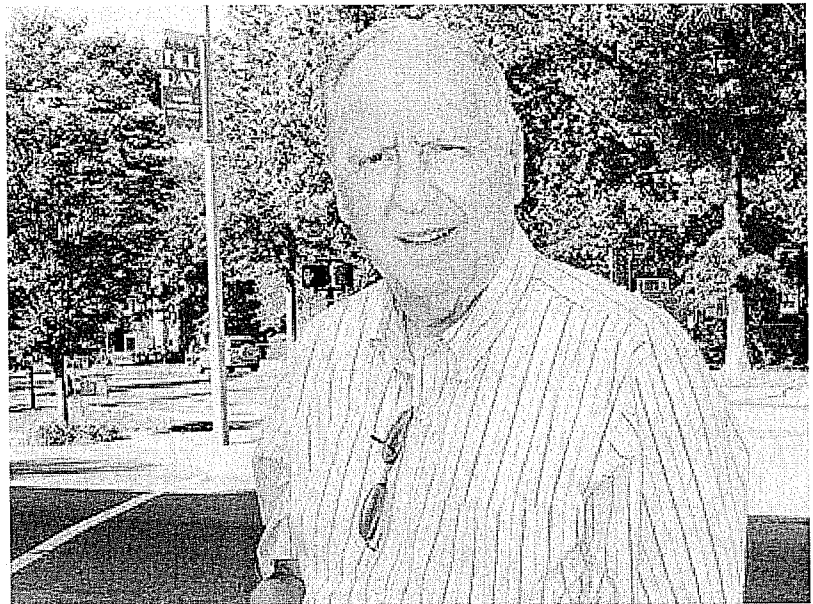
Find My Killer - Crime Stoppers: Unsolved Homicides, a 326-page paperback, highlights cases from both Canada and the U.S. Rewards for the cases total \$5.5 million.

"One of the things that relatives and friends of murder victims want is for an arrest," said Millar. "And interestingly enough they never ever get closure."

Police had said they don't have a motive in the Santos case and the killer was likely familiar with the victim and where he lived.

"Someone out there knows what happened. I need to know what happened," Santos' mom Juliet told The Scarborough Mirror in a 2007 interview. "He had so many dreams: to have his own auto shop, to move in with his girlfriend."

Another case featured in the book is of Mohamed Adbi Warsame. The 16-year-old North York boy told his mom he was going with friends to a movie theatre to see Iron Man the night of May 3, 2008. He never returned home. At 2 a.m. the next day, his mother Ayan Dahir called police to report the teen missing. He was found murdered 12 hours later in the stairwell of an apartment building on Cougar Court in Scarborough.



Book about unsolved murders just released. Author and former police reporter Cal Millar does some research for his book at the scene of a homicide in Alexandria, Virginia.

Courtesy photo

"He didn't have any friends that we know of at the building or that area. That's not the area where he used to hang out," family friend Faisa Mahamud said at the time. "We don't know what happened. We need answers."

Three other Toronto cases are featured in the book: the fatal shooting on May 21, 2007 of Mark Smith, 40, on Weston Road at Imogene Avenue; the June 23, 2001 shooting of Justin Shephard, 19, on the Howard Street foot bridge across Rosedale Valley and the Feb. 15, 2003 slaying of Edwardo Daley at the Etobicoke apartment building where he lived with his parents and sister.

Daley, 24, was a religious Christian and a Humber College student.

"He was a very friendly, caring, intelligent person. He was an achiever," Daley's pastor Rev. S. A. Morrison told The Etobicoke Guardian prior to the funeral. "We would like to see the perpetrator caught."

Other cases in Find My Killer include the shooting death of a federal prosecutor in Seattle, Washington; the killing of the sheriff's wife in Alexandria, Virginia; the homicidal beating of a homeless woman in Rochester, Minnesota; the murder of a clown in Canada and the slaying of a young girl in Arlington, Texas that led to the establishment of the Amber Alert system.

Millar spent nearly two years combing through newspaper articles, public records and computer files to get information about the crimes.

In some cases, police have the unidentified murderer's DNA. "And they've checked all the known criminals," Millar said. "But if they had somebody who would suggest who it might be, they would then be able to do a DNA sample and that would confirm yea or nay."

Millar, who is vice-chair of Halton Crime Stoppers, hopes his book will be put in prison libraries so inmates can read it. "The co-ordinator at Halton (Crime Stoppers) is going to see if he can get it up to the jail in Maplehurst. But that hasn't been done yet," he said.

Find My Killer is available at www.amazon.com

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SUBMIT

1 Tip of a flat belly:

Cut down 3 lbs of your belly every week by using this 1 weird old tip ➤

Hot on cold cases

Veteran crime reporter Cal Millar hopes his new book Find My Killer does just that

By IAN ROBERTSON, SUN MEDIA

Last Updated: 2nd November 2009, 3:54am

In the 27 years since Della Adriano vanished from Oakville, police have never closed her casebook.

The attractive 5-foot-5, slender secretary was only months from marriage when she was seen struggling with a man near her parent's home, escorted there earlier by fiancé Danny Dutra.

Despite appeals, hundreds of hours Halton detectives spent seeking clues to who left her naked in woods at nearby Campbellville, Adriano's murderer and a motive remain unknown.

An autopsy failed to determine what killed her and police have not disclosed results of recent scientific tests.

The 25-year-old's photo opens a chapter on 38 Canadian homicides in a new book about 264 North American unsolved cases.

Veteran crime reporter Cal Millar of Burlington hopes revisiting the slayings will spark memories or consciences to provide answers.

Friends and neighbours may forget, based on human nature, "but families and police never do," he said in an interview.

Find My Killer – Crime Stoppers: Unsolved Homicides offers riveting, gritty stories, though Millar attempted to avoid sensationalism and unhelpful details.

Some murders had multiple victims.

High-profile slayings include "hits" such as those on Markham massage parlour workers Yan Jan Liu, Yan Walter Xiao Chen Zhang and Zhu Xia Lin in 2004 and the 2007 shooting of Randy "Koo Koo the Clown" Rankin, 46, in his Morewood home southeast of Ottawa while preparing to tip police about racehorse dopers.

There are also cop slayings such as the execution-style shooting in 1984 of undercover OPP Corporal William McIntyre, 32, in Oakville.

Other top cases include robbery-homicides, arsons and child murders such as that of Mahamed Adbi Warsame, 16, savagely beaten in a Scarborough stairwell 12 hours after being reported missing in 2008.

Millar focused on cases since 1976, the year Greg MacAleese launched Crime Stoppers when the Picton, Ont. native was an Albuquerque, New Mexico detective, deliberately choosing ones that "escaped national media attention."

SPARKED AMBER ALERT

Unusual slayings include the beatings in 2007 of retired federal Judge Alban Garon, wife Raymonde and friend Marie-Clair Beniskos in a high-security Ottawa condominium, the girl who sparked Amber Alerts, two children whose kidnapping was overlooked after a major San Francisco earthquake, and 16 U.S. murders in retaliation for the terrorist plane attacks in 2001.

Drive-by urban shooting victims are sadly more common, including innocents like Veronica Gonzales, 13, in Bell, Calif. in 2004, and robberies such as the failed holdup stabbing of Shon Hart, 31, in Oshawa three years ago.

Home invasions are also too regular, such as the shooting and stabbing of Toronto hostel worker and aspiring cop Eduardo Daley, 24, in his Willowridge Rd. flat in 2003 – where no one will admit knowing the men involved.

Many cases soon vanish from public attention, said Millar, whose career included the Peterborough Examiner, Windsor Star, Toronto Telegram, the Toronto Sun and Toronto Star, until retiring in 2004.

Working almost two years in his book- and papers-piled den, he sometimes visited crime scenes, including retracing David Keffe's last movements from his Sayres, Penn. office to the family hilltop wooded estate where the wealthy, high-profile lawyer and wife Carol were gunned down in 2006.

Millar balanced research from newspapers and police interviews with knowledge from 40 years of talking with victims, families, criminals, witnesses, and countless investigative contacts.

Few people remember details, even that North America's highest-profile kidnapping remains an unsolved murder, he found.

Amber Renee Hagerman was nine when a mystery man dragged her into a pickup in 1996 while bicycling in Arlington, Texas. Found in a ditch four days later, her throat was slashed.

Donna and Richard Hagerman worked with local police and media on what became the template for the well-known alert system.

Theresa Allore's case took 24 years to be labelled a homicide.

The now-retired lead detective still believes the New Brunswicker's death in 1978 in Lennoxville, Quebec, was suicide.

Five months after vanishing en route from school to her temporary residence, the 19-year-old's almost-nude, decomposing body lay in a creek.

A death cause couldn't be determined. Drugs, initially suspected, weren't detected. Nor was sexual assault.

Her younger brother later convinced authorities to consider murder after describing investigation inconsistencies, Millar notes. John Allore also "remembers the frustration his parents went through as they struggled to get assistance from law enforcement agencies and others who were reluctant to consider the disappearance of their daughter anything more than a runaway situation."

Sadly, police discarded all her possible DNA material and that of Manon Dube, 10, whose body was dumped almost 10 months earlier in a stream 2.5 km from where Theresa's was found.

Hope for old cases to be solved prompted Millar to seek a new approach for Crime Stoppers, which he has been involved with for 25 years, in Toronto and now Halton.

"Crime Stoppers and police do a tremendous job to get the word out, but media only goes as far as its circulation reach or broadcast signal," he said.

People today are very mobile and, within hours, killers can cross continents or escape to another country. They may also still live next door.

Police exchange information via the Internet, but Millar said a national Crime Stoppers database is still being designed, with Toronto Police school program Const. Scott Mills

heavily involved.

Meanwhile, Millar hopes his book will rekindle interest and tips, especially if read in prisons, where inmates may have learned key information and share either as a bargaining tool for their sentences or cash rewards.

After the book's publication in late September, he learned police had solved one U.S. case. Other officers "are sending me information about homicide cases they would like profiled."

Millar is working on a sequel. Published by Createspace.com, his print-to-order book is available at amazon.com for \$21.95 U.S.

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Cal Millar

Have served as a volunteer on the board of directors of Halton Crime Stoppers since mid 2007 and currently hold the position of vice chair.

Also serve on the board of the Burlington Conservative Association and chair of the Advisory Board for the CorpCom program at Seneca College in Toronto.

Retired from the Toronto Star in 2004 after a lengthy career as a newspaper writer in Toronto.

Moved with my wife to Burlington in 2007 after living in Mississauga since 1971.

Served on the steering committee in 1983 to establish Crime Stoppers in Toronto and a board member with that program until 2006.

At various times served as a director on the Crime Stoppers International board, the Canadian Association of Crime Stoppers and the Ontario Association of Crime Stoppers. Was editor of the Caller for Crime Stoppers International for a number of years and also served as chair of the award's committee and chair of the public relations committee.

Authored a book in 2009 entitled "Find My Killer – Crime Stoppers: Unsolved Homicides" which features more than 250 murder cases across North America where investigators need public assistance to help make arrests. The book which also promotes the Crime Stoppers concept is available at Amazon.com and selected book stores in the United States.

Currently working on another book which will feature missing individuals which will be published in May 2010.

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