

## COMMENTARY

# Macomb gets a textbook write-up

A professor at Western Illinois University has used some of his Macomb community service experience to write an article that was accepted for inclusion in a college textbook. Clyde Cronkhite is co-founder and permanent vice-chairman of the Community Quality of Life Advisory Committee and his article describes how the group was created and how it functions.

Cronkhite was one of seven professors nationwide to have an article accepted by Wadsworth Publishing for the 2010 edition of its "Policy in Criminal Justice" textbook. The editors indicated that the articles were chosen to compare both historical approaches and cutting-edge innovations in criminal justice policy.

Subjects covered in the textbook include community



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policing, white collar crime, and specialty courts.

Cronkhite's article was chosen for the community policing section, and he addressed the fostering of community partnerships to help prevent crime and promote quality of life issues.

In an age where the last thing many public officials want is another meeting on their schedule, I have slowly come to understand why 25 of them have committed to the CQLAC sessions.

My understanding is reinforced by Cronkhite's article conclusion, where he stated, "...Preventative activities can inhibit and even preclude many adverse conditions that result in the deterioration of community quality of life and the increase of crime."

In other words, the formation of this committee in 1994 was an attempt to get Macomb and McDonough County ahead of the curve in terms of fighting crime. The inclusion of leaders from various community sectors created a high-profile listening post with members capable of taking action in response to issues raised.

Cronkhite recently told me that the selection of his article for the textbook effectively sets forth the CQLAC experience as a potential model, a prototype, for small and medium-sized commu-

nities.

He reminded me that newspaper articles published locally about an advisory committee discussion held in 2007 stirred up public sentiment in favor of adding more police officers.

Some problems, Cronkhite believes, can become almost unsolvable by the time they've grown to become the focus of public attention. He said CQLAC tries to "detect developing conditions...and resolve them before they become real problems."

In a note sent to me about a month ago, Cronkhite expressed his appreciation for the two dozen community volunteers responsible for the group's effectiveness.

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