

## State Association's Community Service

By Mike Smith

Most metal detecting associations are internally focused, meaning that all the activities are geared towards the needs of the membership. This aligns with a main objective which is to provide an environment that supports the association's mission with activities to gain new membership and generate member participation. However, a state association is part of the community (city, county, state) and the membership may want to achieve greater community recognition by taking responsibility for some type of community service project.

The traditional way for an association to contribute to the community is to offer a couple of services. These services revolve around assisting local law enforcement authorities by searching for crime scene evidence at a specific crime investigation. Another public service the association can provide, is to locate a lost item for people who have lost a piece of jewelry or some other very important item. This service can be posted on the association's website.

A major reason for an association to assume a boarder community involvement is to capitalize on the members' broad range of skills, talents, capabilities and interest. By choosing to become more involved in the community the association can identify opportunities that may best leverage the members' capabilities.

Once our members have become involved in a community service project the opportunity exist for the association to leverage this community action into strengthening the public opinion of metal detecting. Every effort should be made to gain recognition though a local newspaper, radio or TV station. The association should also advertise its community service projects on their website and newsletters.

Money is always an issue for any activity and some community service projects may take funds away from the treasury. One way to raise additional funds is to hold special events and raffles for each project.

Here is a list of club community service examples practiced by a number of hobby related clubs across the U.S.

[Dayton Diggers](#) This club Adopt A Highway trash removal program. The results are that they get a sign placed on the interstate displaying their club's name.

[Mt. Diablo Metal Detecting Club](#) This club for 17 years has offered support to a blind camp. This involves going to the camp to provide a metal detecting experience for the blind camp participants. All are assisted by a club member during the detecting activity; they get to keep everything found and at the end of the hunt can pick a nice prize from the gift table. The typical number of participants is 40 with about 8-10 club members providing individual assistance to each participant.

[Texas Council of Treasure Clubs, Inc.](#) The council supports the Texas Lions Camp for Disabled Children. Foreign coins are hidden for them to find with metal detectors. They learn there is an outdoor recreational hobby they can enjoy even with their disabilities. Working with the children is great and a life changing experience!

[Three Forks Treasure Hunters Club](#) in conjunction with the [Indian Territory Treasure Hunting Club](#), the Eastern Oklahoma Cemetery Preservation Organization and the Oklahoma Cemetery Preservation Association has been working on cleaning up and preserving the historic Old Cemetery North of Muskogee.

In summary: Each of the club and associations listed in the examples above have their community service projects highlighted on their website and in many cases also in their newsletter. This type of community service can become a valuable asset for the association should the members ever need to work with public authorities about any metal detecting issue. The recommendation is to discuss this topic and give priority to a community service project. There are many other types of projects in which the association could participate; these examples are just a short list of opportunities that are out there to consider.