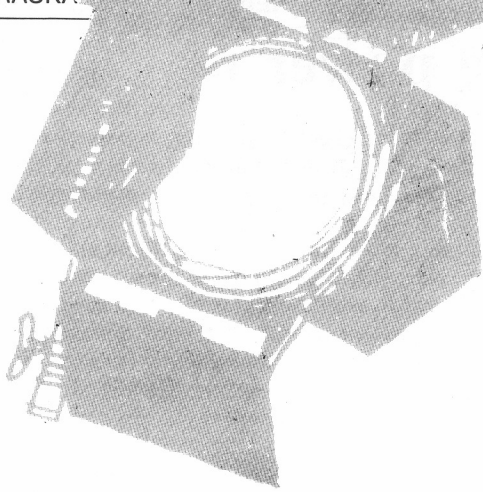


THE NEBRASKA POLICE OFFICER Spotlights VALLEY POLICE DEPARTMENT



By Randal R. Schulze
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Valley, Nebr., is the third largest populated city in Douglas County, after Omaha and Ralston with the population listed by the Crime Commission at 1,819 inhabitants.

There has been some growth since 1980 due to the annexation of territory. Within close proximity to Valley are the unincorporated developments of Ginger Cove, Ginger Woods, Timber Lodge Lake, Sokal Camp and King Lake, each being considered to be part of the Valley Community.

Valley is located three miles from the village of Waterloo, six miles from Elkhorn, 12 miles from Fremont and 11 miles west of Omaha. It is generally considered to be part of the Metro/Suburban Omaha area.

The town site of "Platte

Valley" was platted in 1864, and established as a station on the growing Union Pacific Railroad. The town was incorporated as the Village of Valley in the year 1890. Until Valley was established as a Second Class City in June of 1954, Valley's local law enforcement consisted of a day marshal and night marshal, supplemented from time to time by a special Police officer.

As was the case in many small Nebraska communities, the day marshal's job often included the title and duties of the village street and water commission — a sort of combination cop/public works job.

The night marshal's duties consisted mainly of night watchman's activity, maintaining fire watch, and checking the security of the business establishments at night. The special Police officers worked the nights off



Valley Police Department is located in Valley City Hall.

Photos by Robert Keeler

— About the author:

Randal R. Schulze has been employed as a Police officer for the Valley Police Department for over three years. He has served nearly 10 years of public service in Nebraska including work as chief of Police at Arlington, Police officer for Wood River and reserve officer for the towns of Gibbon and Shelton. He has extensive experience in public safety communications, having served at the 911 Communications Centers of Kearney and Grand Island.

Officer Schulze is a 1977 graduate of Kearney High School at Kearney and has attended Kearney State College and Dana College at Blair. He is a 1982 graduate of the 70th Law Enforcement Basic at the Nebraska Law Enforcement Training Center, and has logged over 780 hours of training in law enforcement and other public safety related fields.

Schulze and his wife, Karla, who is an announcer at radio station KHUB, reside with their two daughters at Arlington.



Valley's old and new Police badges are shown here. Five-point star on the left was presented to Greg J. Kibbie Sr. when he was named Police Chief in 1966. Badge on the right is style worn today. Kibbie is now director of security services for Valmont Industries in Valley.

for the night marshal, and on special occasions where extra manpower was needed.

In May of 1955, one year after reorganization of the local government as a Second Class City, Valley appointed the existing night marshal, Ray J. Osborne, to the position of Chief of Police, a job he held for nearly three years when he retired due to illness. Osborne was the first law enforcement officer at Valley to hold the title of Chief of Police.

The period from 1955 to 1960 was one of extensive growth for the small railroad town. Major street pavement and grade improvements were made, as well as development and improvements to the local water works and sewer system.

On June 12, 1954, the City Council voted to purchase a used 1951 Ford V-8, four-door car to be used as a Police car. The city paid \$705.36 for the auto. This appears to be the first Police car owned by the municipality.

A brand new Chevrolet Police car was purchased in January of 1956 at a cost of \$1408.60. A later entry of February, 1957, shows a bill for \$541.78 from an Omaha body shop for repairs to the Police car. This indicated the first (but not the last) crash involving a local Police car.

Other activity involving

the Valley Police Department during this period included passage of several new ordinances involving prohibition of fireworks and throwing of snowballs, control of dogs, the establishment of local liquor laws and a concern for traffic and pedestrian safety.

In December of 1955, mention of the transfer of funds in the amount of \$255 from the city's account of fines to School District 33 is mentioned. It appears that for the first time recorded, that the local Police force was enforcing many of the new local laws.

Local arrests and citations were settled before a Justice of the Peace or Police judge, who was appointed by the City Council to serve at a rate of \$15 per month.

After the retirement of Chief Osborne, the brief stay of another chief of Police who moved to California, the city was left with only the part-time, special Police officers to serve for local protection. On Dec. 17, 1957, the City Council developed a contract for a new chief of Police. The contract reads:

"The title of the Senior Officer will be 'chief of Police'. The chief of Police will be the night man.

"Hours will be from 8 p.m. to 2 a.m., six days weekly. The chief of Police shall engage and hire all special Police with the approval of the Council.



Valley is at the junction of US 275 and NE 64.



The Douglas County Sheriff's Communications Center at Omaha provides dispatching and other resources for the Valley Police Department.

Starting monthly salary will be \$325. No payment for overtime. Reasonable and

occasional over-time is expected with this job, and allowance is made for this in monthly wage. Salary is to increase at the rate of \$5 per month increase for each successive year of employ-

ment; with the fifth year reaching maximum salary of \$350. Officer is to purchase his own uniform, shells, pistol, belt, cap, etc.

"No riders will be allowed in the Police car with the exception of the Mayor and

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— About the photographer

Robert Keeler is a life-long resident of Valley. Photography has been one of Bob's interests since high school. Bob, following in the footsteps of his father, is a member of the Valley Volunteer Fire Department where, in addition to his other duties, he serves as the department's photographer. He has taken

photographs for the Valley Police Department on several occasions.

While doing the research for this article, it was learned that Bob's father, the late Dale Keeler, had served regularly as a special Police officer for the City of Valley in the 1950s.

Keeler is a 1984 graduate of Valley Senior High School, and he has attended Wayne State College. He resides at Valley.



A new computer has eased record keeping considerably.

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Councilmen.
"One week vacation with pay after one year of service and two weeks vacation with pay after two full years of service. From then on two weeks vacation with pay each year."

"Sick leave of twelve days a year, accumulative for and up to five years maximum; with a Doctor's certificate required, or continued hospitalization for sickness or accident. Maximum sick leave shall not be over sixty days. Any and all benefits shall immediately stop upon termination of employment."

At a special meeting of the Council, about two weeks later, the new chief of Police was hired according to the conditions of the new Police contract.

It is interesting to note, that during this period, records indicate an extensive budget for fire protection, public works, library and even a municipal band. There is no separate entry of a Police budget, indicating that the Law Enforcement Program was operated out of the General Fund.

Today, the Valley Police Department consists of five Police officers, each of whom are fully certified by the State of Nebraska. The Department is organized under a chief of Police, a sergeant, and a patrol officer all working a full-time work week of 45 hours. Two part-time patrol officers, a carry over of the special Policeman from days of old, are also on the department.

A.G. "Gene" Brummet is the chief of Police at Valley with experience from the Sheriff's office of Gosper County and the Lexington Police Department in his background. Sgt. Richard "Rick" Hallan has also worked with the Lexington Police Department, and adds his investigative talents to the department with

great success. Officer Randal R. "Randy" Schulze became a member of the Valley Police Department from Arlington, Nebr., where he served as chief of Police. Also with the Valley Police Department are Donald P. Shelton with past experience at Waterloo, Nebr., and Dale E. Bessey with past experience at Arlington, Cozad, and other Nebraska agencies.

The offices of the Valley Police Department are housed in City Hall, located at 210 North Locust St. City Hall is in the building which was formerly the old Valley High School, erected in 1924. The department operates two, marked Police patrol cars, fully equipped with multi-channel radio and other modern Police equipment. One unmarked, radio-equipped car, privately owned by Sgt. Hallan, is also deployed from time to time as needed.

Recently installed at the offices of the Valley Police Department is a Hewlett-Packard Vectra CS Computer. The computer has been used to store and recall numerous local Police records, as well as other tasks starting to be used daily. The new computer has eased and speeded many of the routine reporting tasks for the chief of Police and the officers. Project Coordinator Sgt. Richard Hallan foresees other computer applications in the future.

According to the 1986 Uniform Crime Reports, Valley's crime rate is 15.4 per 1,000 population. Of the 28 Index Crimes reported, 15 have been cleared. Larceny and burglary were the problem areas during this reporting period. During this same period, the Valley Police Department reported 90 criminal arrests. The majority of the 1986 arrests were for violation of liquor laws, demonstrating Valley's strict policy against driving while intoxicated, and juvenile alcohol and

drug abuse.

The City of Valley has one United States Highway, US-275, and one Nebraska Highway, NE-64, crossing the city. These account for 7.5 miles of hard surface highways crossing the city. This does not include the paved and graveled municipal streets in the city of Valley.

Located in and near Valley are three major employers. The largest is Valmont Industries Inc., located adjacent to Valley on the west side. Valmont employs approximately 1,600 men and women over three shifts, 24 hours a day. Inside of Valley's southeast city limits is 3M Company's Occupational Health and Safety Products Plant which employs about 400 men and women over four shifts around the clock. Northwest of Valley is the plant of the Hydro-Conduit Corp., which employs about 100 people during its day shift. These three employers account for a considerable amount of heavy truck and commuter traffic in and through Valley.

With the large volume of traffic in the city, the Valley Police Department has been very occupied with traffic enforcement. The Valley Police Department initiated over 652 traffic contacts in 1956 and over 489 in 1987. Vigorous traffic enforcement activity, incorporated with engineering studies, and high Police visibility have brought the rate of motor vehicle collisions down noticeably.

The Valley Police Department continues to work toward attaining other goals and successes in the future. Under the leadership of Chief Brummet, and the continued support of the local government, the Valley Police Department will maintain a high standard of service to the community, and a high level of public safety.

The author wishes to acknowledge the assistance and input from Western

Douglas County Historian, Ralph Wilson of Waterloo, who writes for the **Douglas County Post/Gazette**, and Valley Mayor John L. Sullivan and his wife, JoAnn, who assisted by providing documents and information regarding the history of Valley.

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in front of the hospital emergency room and adjusted his headband.

Far from being frightened, the emergency-room staff, who knew Ashely, asked him to stay while they released a potentially violent patient.

The patient, who said he was angry over the way he was treated by Police officers after a traffic accident, ran his index finger across his forehead as he stared intently at Ashley's sweat band.

"You want to fight?" he asked as Ashely watched him closely. Ashley ignored the challenge and said nothing as the man's brother convinced him to leave the hospital peaceably.

As Bassett pedaled down G Street about 4 a.m., he talked in amazement of the carelessness of many Lincoln residents. He pointed to windows left open in garden-level apartments and lamented the number of cars that were not locked.

The bicycle patrol has bolstered the morale of the third-shift officers who work southwest Lincoln, said Hewitt and Bassett.

"It's a change of pace for the officers; it keeps their interest up," Hewitt said. "They enjoy it."

Bassett said it is more effective. "So we can have the officers who are in uniform in cruisers out taking the calls for service, picking up the slack for the officers who are out being on the bicycle patrol, being pro-active, catching the thieves."

— by Val Swinton
Journal County-City Bureau

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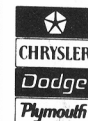
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