

WISCONSIN TRAFFIC SAFETY REPORTER

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Welcome

by Major Sandra Huxtable, Director
WisDOT Bureau of
Transportation Safety

My name is Sandy Huxtable and I am the new director of the Bureau of Transportation Safety. I began my responsibilities on July 17, 2011 and have been very busy learning the various facets of improving highway safety.

The last several years have seen a significant reduction in fatal and injury crashes when compared to 2005 and earlier. This is great news, but we cannot relax our efforts to continue to improve safety on our highways. Preliminary data shows that last year, 569 people lost their lives as a result of traffic crashes in Wisconsin. That means that more than 500 families have had to learn how to cope and move forward with a significant person or persons missing from their lives. We need to continue to do everything we can to eliminate preventable crashes.

All of us play a role in improving highway safety. Whether it is giving ourselves a little extra time so we don't speed to get to our destination on time, making sure we have a designated driver to take us home after drinking, making sure everyone in the vehicle is buckled up, or making sure we wear the appropriate safety gear when we are out on our motorcycles or bicycles, we all have to do our part.

With so much electronic equipment available today, many things can distract a driver, making operating the vehicle secondary. We are trying to multitask to make the best use of our commute time — making phone calls, searching for directions on smart phones, eating, conducting meetings, shaving, putting on makeup, etc. Drivers need to make a conscious effort to avoid distractions in the vehicle. Driving involves enough multiple tasks that we cannot afford to add others to it. Our first priority needs to be our safety and the safety of others on our highways and streets. I urge you to do your part in helping to improve highway safety and encouraging others to do so as well.

As we strive to improve traffic safety in Wisconsin, many of our agencies, already short-staffed, are facing tight budgets. So now it's all the more important to find ways

teamwork expertise & commitment

to do our work as well as possible with limited resources, to work more efficiently and effectively.

The main purpose of the WisDOT Bureau of Transportation Safety is to use federal highway safety

funds to foster pilot projects that have the potential to achieve such improvements. **Two such projects that are showing promise, in Dane County and Brown County, are featured here.** They demonstrate what can be done with enhanced teamwork.

Dane County team includes dedicated prosecutor for serious crashes

At a press conference on May 19, 2010, Dane County District Attorney Brian Blanchard announced that the WisDOT Bureau of Transportation Safety was providing a \$141,500 grant—the first of its kind in Wisconsin—to foster collaboration in the investigation and prosecution of serious traffic crashes in the county. In such cases, he said “the collection of evidence can be challenging. We need to be able to handle these as criminal investigations and to be able to explain to the families of loved ones that we’re doing that.”

continued on page 2

Brown County OWI Task Force succeeding with new approach

Since starting out in February 2011, this task force has been achieving promising results. Now, law enforcement agencies in other parts of the state are considering using this innovative approach. “It’s definitely been a success,” says Captain Bill Galvin of the Green Bay Police Department. “We’ve had

continued on page 6



Andrea Rose Garcia 4/7/90 – 5/15/09



On May 15, 2009, Andrea was killed in a crash on USH 51 south of McFarland in Dane County.



The driver of the car, Richard Nelson, age 22 from Stoughton, was convicted of homicide by negligent operation of a motor vehicle. See Dane County article.



With this powerful surveying instrument (Total Station), crash reconstructionists can accurately map crash scenes. It maps the site by measuring distances and angles. One model is accurate to a half inch over a half mile, enabling reconstructionists to stay clear of the road. Back at the office, this raw data is used to generate scaled 3-D diagrams (see examples on page 3).

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The *Wisconsin Traffic Safety Reporter* is published by the Bureau of Transportation Safety, Wisconsin Department of Transportation. Its purpose is to promote transportation safety, recognize worthwhile programs, and to educate and share ideas with safety professionals.

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Dane County team from page 1

This grant:

- **Provides salary for an assistant district attorney**, Emily Thompson, who now focuses exclusively on investigations and prosecutions involving serious crashes
- **Enhances teamwork between law enforcement and the Dane County DA's Office.** This includes the Dane County Sheriff's Office (DCSO), Madison Police Department (MPD), other local law enforcement agencies, Dane County Coroner's Office and the Wisconsin State Patrol, including its Technical Reconstruction Unit. Along with Thompson, the district attorney's office also provides staff from its Victim Witness Unit and Crime Response Program
- **Supports specialized training:** e.g., Thompson and patrol officers have been able to learn the basics of crash reconstruction, and to present at conferences and trainings. The team also provided a workshop at the Governor's Conference on Highway Safety in August 2011 to share what they're learning with other communities statewide

Team member Sergeant R.J. Lurquin of the DCSO says that these agencies have of course always worked together, but now their teamwork has been greatly enhanced. Suzanne Beaudoin, director of the Victim Witness Unit says, "We're now doing better at sharing resources, and we're benefiting more from each other's expertise. Our team is better than the sum of our parts, and we can all do our jobs better. It's very important to us to know that we're providing the best possible investigation and victim and witness support, and this enhanced teamwork is helping our morale." MPD Officer Deanna Reilly says, "What Emily does is priceless. Working with her, benefiting from her expertise, is helping my investigations come to successful conclusions."

Enhanced collaboration is yielding promising results, so their BOTS grant has been renewed. This article features the team's investigation and prosecution of a May 2009 crash south of McFarland that resulted in serious injuries and one fatality. Expert investigation, including crash reconstruction, much-needed victim support, and skilled prosecution—Thompson working with Assistant Attorney General Tara Jenswold-Schipper—led to a conviction for homicide by negligent operation of a motor vehicle.

How the team came together

Each year, all too many crashes in Dane County result in serious injuries or fatalities. Some cases can immediately be considered criminal offenses, but others fall into a gray area. While there might be reason to believe that a crash was preventable, the conduct of the suspect might not rise to a level that can be successfully adjudicated as a crime.

Whether or not criminal charges are issued, victims and their families, potential defendants, and the public all deserve to know that each serious crash is thoroughly investigated and that any decision not to prosecute was made only after a complete review of the evidence.

Assistant DA Thompson feels there is no question that the criminal justice system often doesn't treat the case of a person killed as a result of a vehicular crime with the same attention as it does the case of a person killed in another criminal context. The notion that crash cases are "just terrible accidents" and "not really homicides" permeates the system. But the stark reality is that many of these cases are preventable crimes committed by people engaged in wildly reckless conduct, and those responsible must be criminally adjudicated. To promptly determine if anyone should be held criminally responsible, serious crash cases must be considered a priority for law enforcement personnel and prosecutors, and they must be afforded the same attention and resources as other serious crimes. A consistent, coordinated and comprehensive response is needed for all serious crashes. She notes that while this coordinated response exists for other serious crimes in Dane County, it wasn't as strong—before the BOTS grant—for serious crash cases.

After meeting for more than two years to identify why a coordinated response was lacking, the Dane County Critical Traffic Incident Committee, composed of representatives from the agencies noted above, decided that one of the primary reasons was that there was no dedicated, specialized prosecutor responsible for review, consultation and prosecution of all fatal and serious injury crashes in the county.

"To provide optimum support, we felt there was a huge need for better coordinated and more consistent community response," says Suzanne Beaudoin of the Victim Witness Unit. Sergeant Lurquin notes that many specialists were involved in serious crash cases but their efforts needed to be better coordinated and they needed a dedicated prosecutor who could focus exclusively on these cases.

How the team works

The team meets monthly to discuss progress with all serious crash cases in Dane County. This includes investigation, victim and witness support, and prosecution.

"One of this team's greatest strengths is communication," says Trooper Ryan Zukowski, accredited reconstruction specialist with the Wisconsin State Patrol's Technical Reconstruction Unit. He works on cases in several counties and can compare how cases are handled regarding the problems of crash reconstruction, along with prosecution strengths and weaknesses. He says "our meetings include updates on every case, and investigative strategies are discussed, along with reconstruction-related issues to improve prosecution. And as law enforcement juggles a growing workload, victim support services help keep each case alive at our meetings."

Thompson, the dedicated prosecutor, is involved from the very beginning in each crash case involving serious injury or fatality. Tara Jenswold-Schipper, assistant attorney general and Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor at the Wisconsin Department of Justice, was involved in creating this new position and works closely with her.

Thompson is available 24/7 to respond to crash scenes, so her legal expertise can benefit officers as their investigations begin. MPD Officer Reilly, a Drug Recognition Expert, recalls one instance when she and Thompson drove to the scene of a fatal crash where the issue arose whether the surviving driver could be obliged to provide a blood sample to check for the presence of alcohol or other drugs. Thompson provided a response about the legality of a blood draw under these circumstances. Blood was drawn from the surviving driver, and it returned a positive result for a restricted controlled substance.

Before the BOTS grant, when a serious crash occurred in Dane County, the case would be assigned on a rotating basis to one of the many prosecutors in the DA's office. But sometimes their expertise was in another area, such as domestic violence, and the case might later have to be transferred to someone more suitable.

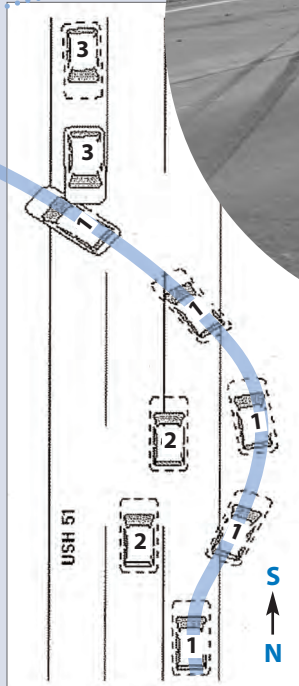
The team is able to identify opportunities to benefit from each other's expertise. For example, in the vehicular homicide case featured below, a Dane County sheriff's deputy did the initial crash reconstruction, finding that the defendant's speed was in the 85 to 95 miles per hour range before he slammed on his brakes and lost control of his car. (See diagrams.) Then, three weeks before the trial, the defense attorney reported that he had his own expert who estimated that the defendant's speed was in the 69 to 84 mph range. At this stage, the Wisconsin State Patrol was asked to perform an independent speed analysis, and Trooper Zukowski's study found the speed was between 97 and 103 mph. Andrew Garcia, father of the young woman killed in this crash, later said he felt that Zukowski's expert testimony helped remove any reasonable doubt from the jurors' minds about the driver's recklessness and culpability.

Thompson is working with colleagues to write a best practices protocol for how to investigate and prosecute such cases. For example, she advises officers investigating serious crashes that involve cell phone use to promptly send a preservation letter to the cell phone service provider; if this is done early enough, cell phone records can be

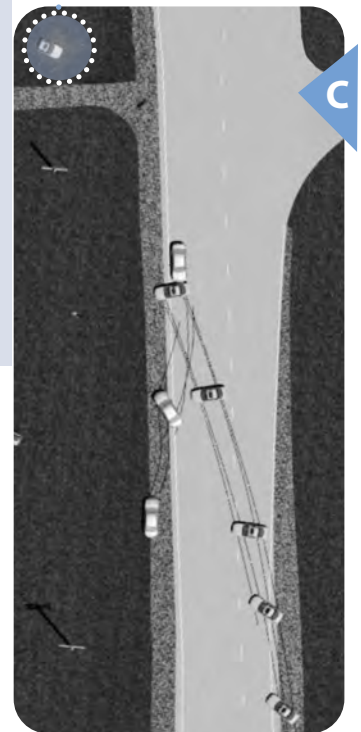
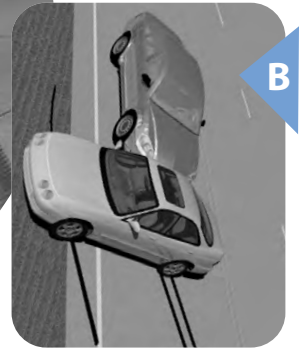
From: Wisconsin Motor Vehicle Accident Report (MV4000)

Vehicle 3 (Chevrolet Impala) was traveling northbound on US 51. Vehicle 1 (Acura driven by Richard Nelson) was traveling southbound on US 51 in

front half of Acura



outside/#2 lane. Vehicle 2 (SUV) was traveling south on US 51 in inside/#1 lane. Vehicle 2 changed lanes from inside to outside. Vehicle 1 then swerved onto gravel shoulder and attempted to pass vehicle 2. Driver of vehicle 1 (Nelson) lost control, swerved in front of vehicle 2, crossed center line into the path of vehicle 3. The front end of vehicle 3 struck the passenger side of vehicle 1 causing damage to both vehicles.



Three diagrams from the State Patrol's crash reconstruction

preserved. A prominent example of how this can help is the 2008 train crash in Chatsworth, California that killed 25 people; cell phone records showed that the engineer was texting just before the crash.

This protocol will be available for other communities, that are striving toward the same goal—to make sure that vehicular crimes are investigated as well as possible.

The BOTS grant also helps support training for team members. Officer Reilly, for example, was able to attend a conference in Tennessee on human factors in crash reconstruction. And crash reconstruction training is available at the Wisconsin State Patrol Academy at both the introductory and in-depth levels (see photo). This introduction serves to acquaint non-specialists with key



At the State Patrol Academy, learning about crash reconstruction by measuring skidmarks.

Dane County team *from page 3*

aspects of crash investigation. Officer Reilly notes that when Thompson arrives at a crash scene, she understands how evidence is gathered.

A vehicular homicide case: effective investigation and prosecution

On May 15, 2009, 22-year-old Richard Nelson from Stoughton was driving southbound on US 51 in his 1995 Acura Integra. Brad Anderson, 20, was in the front seat and Andrea Garcia, Nelson's girlfriend, age 19 from Madison, was in the backseat.

The weather was cloudy but pleasant, the pavement was dry. At 3:01 p.m., just south of McFarland, Nelson, who was driving far too fast, tried to pass a vehicle, lost control and crossed the center line. An oncoming 2006 Chevrolet Impala crashed into them at about 60 miles per hour,

tearing the Acura in half. Nelson's shoulder was broken, other passengers in both vehicles suffered serious injuries, and Andrea was thrown from the vehicle and killed.

Just before the crash, Nelson had been behind several vehicles in the right of two southbound lanes. One of those vehicles up ahead was an SUV. Its driver later told officers that he checked his rearview mirror and started changing over to the right lane. But at that moment Nelson was speeding up that right lane, trying to pass the vehicles in the left lane. Witnesses in those vehicles reported that they heard a high-pitched engine sound as Nelson's Acura flew past them "like a flash."

When Nelson saw the SUV changing into the right lane ahead, he swerved further to the right onto the gravel (see crash diagrams, page 3) and lost control. Afterwards, he told officers that the Acura was his "track car." He claimed



CREDIT: CLAY BARBOUR/WISCONSIN STATE JOURNAL

Andrea's mother and aunt at the State Capitol in November 2010. The governor had just signed a victims' rights bill inspired by the Garcia family's experience.

Andrea Garcia and her family

On that day in May 2009, Andrea had just finished her first year at Madison Area Technical College. She was planning to transfer to UW-Milwaukee and, in her letter to the university, she described her dreams for what she hoped to accomplish. She explained that she felt she had good potential because her long struggle with a serious illness, Graves disease (an auto-immune disease in which the thyroid is overactive), had helped her learn how to be strong and work hard. "I want to open up my life to bigger and better challenges," she wrote. "Life is still filled with so much more to come. I want to go far in life and major in psychology. I want to help people who have problems, who need someone to talk to, and help those who feel they can't be strong."

Andrea was a precious member of a loving family. Her parents and other family members have done a tremendous amount to try to make something positive come from this tragic loss. Her father, Andrew, generously provided information for this article. He recalls how proud he and his wife were that their daughter had done well in school and was striving toward a career helping others in need.

Just days before the crash, Andrea told her mother that her only complaint about her boyfriend, Nelson, who had been a state high school wrestling champion, was that he drove too fast and she didn't feel safe riding with him.

The website created by Andrea's family to help spare other families the loss of a child justiceforourchildren.net includes a wrenching account of how they lived through every parent's worst nightmare.

May 15 was Andrea's mother's birthday. By afternoon, her parents were surprised they hadn't heard from her yet. At 3:15, her mother arrived home from work looking worried. On her way home she had seen many police and fire department vehicles with their lights and sirens on, headed toward where Andrea lived. They started calling her cell phone but got no answer. Andrew Garcia was a Madison police officer and they called the department to see if there had been a crash. The latest report: there had been a serious crash involving two cars, with an Acura torn in half. Four people were injured, three seriously, and there was one fatality, a teenage female.

As Andrea's parents wept and prayed it wasn't their daughter, Andrew tried to reassure his wife that it couldn't be her because the crash was south of where she lived and it wasn't her car. Andrea's mother responded that a new friend had picked her up from school, they were going south to Stoughton, and he drove an Acura. Later the phone rang and it was Dane County Sheriff David Mahoney with the news all parents dread.

Garcia explains that no words can convey the endless, nightmarish pain their family experienced. He says that if you haven't lost a child, you can't really understand. Their lives became a long uphill struggle, a struggle to function at all. "We lived one day at a time," he says. "I'd say to my wife: 'I'll take this moment and you take the next.'" But they had to move on, to call other family members, to make preparations for the funeral.

Along with family, friends and the district attorney's office victim support staff, Andrea's parents also found encouragement by attending meetings of the local

chapter of Compassionate Friends, a support group for those who have lost children www.compassionatefriends.org.

And then came the long, complex legal process. Everything moved very slowly, and Andrew feels the district attorney's office and the court system must be seriously underfunded and understaffed.

"The bottom line," Garcia says, "is that as parents we do everything we can to protect our children, and we'll do everything we can so that our daughter's life has a positive influence." Along with the website dedicated to Andrea, they teamed up with Wisconsin Professional Police Association and Adams Outdoor Advertising to develop the billboard (see photo on page 5) that went up on three prominent Dane County roads. They wrote to legislators urging support for the rights of victims. Andrew spoke at the vehicular homicide training and he is helping the Department of Corrections with trainings dealing with how PSI (pre-sentence investigation) reports are prepared.

The Garcia family also played a key role in getting a new Wisconsin victims' rights law passed. After the fatal crash, the family learned that Andrea had two months remaining on her apartment lease, and her landlord expected the family to pay it. The Garcias contacted State Representative Spencer Black, who co-sponsored the bill stipulating that tenancy ends no more than 60 days after the landlord is informed of the tenant's death, and that family members who are not co-signers on the lease cannot be contacted in an attempt to collect rent. "Harassing family members to collect rent that they don't owe" is wrong, Black says, and "you don't need that grief compounded."

he had initially been going 65 mph. As noted above, an expert for the defense later estimated his speed at 69 to 84 mph. The DCSO crash reconstruction estimate was 85 to 95 mph, and the State Patrol expert estimated 97 to 103 mph.

Victim support

As the legal process slowly progressed, Andrea's parents felt everything was a struggle, but they received much appreciated help from the District Attorney's Office victim support staff. "Suzanne was our lifeline," Andrea's father says. "We kept asking tough questions and she got us the answers." They also received help from Julie Foley and other members of the DA office's Crime Response Program that provides help on-scene and in the early stages of investigations. "People need to feel that their case matters. It's hugely important to them," Foley says. Victim support services help minimize further trauma and help people under great stress throughout the legal process, including reliving the trauma during the trial.

Looking back, Andrew says, "During this entire ordeal, the prosecutors—Emily and Tara—and the victim support people—Suzanne, Julie and their colleagues—really cared and gave their hearts and souls. Without their help, this would have been even more of a nightmare."

The trial

When the trial finally began in September 2010, one of the key issues, as noted earlier, was Nelson's initial speed. Along with eyewitness testimony, the prosecution turned to the crash reconstruction done by the DCSO and the speed analysis by State Patrol reconstruction specialist Ryan Zukowski.

Zukowski explained the basic physics underlying the crash reconstruction in this case. For instance, a vehicle's speed before a crash can be determined by analyzing how its initial kinetic energy changes during the crash. In general, the kinetic energy of a moving body is given by:

$$E_{\text{kinetic}} = \frac{1}{2} mv^2$$

where m is the vehicle's mass and v is its velocity

A key principle of physics is that energy is always conserved. It can't be created or destroyed, but it can change forms: e.g., kinetic energy can be converted into heat energy when brakes are applied.

The Acura's initial kinetic energy ($E_{\text{kinetic}}(\text{initial})$) in this crash equals the sum of the energy converted into heat during braking, plus the Acura's kinetic energy as it rotated sideways (diagram A), plus the energy converted into heat upon impact as the Acura was deformed:

$$E_{\text{kinetic}}(\text{initial}) = E_{\text{heat}}(\text{braking}) +$$

$$E_{\text{kinetic}}(\text{rotation sideways}) + E_{\text{heat}}(\text{impact})$$



This equation yields the Acura's initial kinetic energy; its initial velocity can then be found using the first equation.

Nelson claimed that he had accelerated while the Acura was rotating sideways, and the defense's expert, a local engineer, testified that this meant the initial kinetic energy—and therefore Nelson's initial speed—was lower than the prosecution claimed. But Zukowski showed that the skid marks during the Acura's rotation phase didn't support the defense expert's theory.

Another speed-related issue was the \$10,000 Nelson had put into the Acura, his "track car," including adding a turbocharger. A mechanic testified for the prosecution that these modifications greatly boosted the engine's horsepower. He said the engine was "built to scream."

But Nelson testified he had modified his car not to make it faster but rather more reliable and fuel efficient, because he could then use E85 fuel (85% ethanol, 15% gasoline).

Editor's note: the United States EPA, though, reports that vehicles "operating on E85 usually experience a 25-30% drop in miles per gallon due to ethanol's lower energy content." And in Wisconsin during the first half of 2009, before the crash, the price of E85 averaged only about 15% less than gasoline.

On September 10, 2010, Nelson was found guilty of homicide by negligent operation of a motor vehicle and several related charges.

Then, on November 23, Dane County Circuit Judge Nicholas McNamara sentenced Nelson to one and a half years in prison and four and a half years of extended supervision. The judge told Nelson that, leading up to the crash that killed Andrea, he was using his car like a weapon. He said Nelson made a series of decisions, starting with modifying his car to go fast, that made the crash a crime.

Thompson and Jenschold-Schipper both felt the sentence was more substantial than usual for Dane County.

Conclusion

As Andrea's parents waited to hear the judge's sentence, they prayed he would send a message to the community that would help make sure their daughter's death had some positive outcome, a message that would help change people's attitudes about reckless driving. After the sentencing, "There was no joy in the verdict," Andrew says, "but we don't want other parents to go through this hell."

"During this entire ordeal," he says, "we got really close with Suzanne, Julie, Emily and Tara. They really cared about our case. When the jury came back, we told them we knew they had given it their best."

Sergeant Lurquin says, "If we're not providing the best possible investigation and prosecution, then we would be dishonoring the victims and their families. We owe it to them."

Brown County OWI Task Force *from page 1*

some very good numbers come out of it, a lot of good contact with the public, and a lot of public education.”

Task force members are the Green Bay, De Pere and Hobart-Lawrence police departments, the Ashwaubenon Public Safety Department, the Brown County Sheriff's Department and the Wisconsin State Patrol. Green Bay PD is the lead agency.

THEIR GOAL: not just to make more OWI arrests, but rather to deter people from drinking and driving.

THEIR METHOD: a combination of tried-and-proven high-visibility enforcement (HVE) along with unique multi-jurisdictional cooperation. Officers from all the task force agencies are deputized by the sheriff so they can work together in target areas. At high-risk times—such as weekend nights, holidays, and Packer games—10 to 15 officers converge on high-risk target areas in Brown County (see the operations plan/deployment map). Officers in their home jurisdictions write tickets to their municipal court, while others write them to the circuit court.

While officers, working overtime, focus on a target area, all task force agencies continue to provide normal levels of overall law enforcement. The Brown County Public Safety Communications Center provides dedicated dispatch using a unique frequency. Captain Randy

Schultz of the Brown County Sheriff's Department notes that public safety agencies nationwide have learned important lessons about coordination since 9/11, and all task force officers have portable 800MHz radios.

Initially, publicity for task force operations included the deployment area, but by summer they stopped announcing the target community. This “improved operational efficiency,” says Mike Panosh, BOTS regional program manager.

“We’re trying to stress a culture change,” Panosh says. He emphasizes that the task force’s goal is raising public awareness, changing behavior, and deterring people from drinking and driving. “We’re sending a clear message,” he says. “Drinking and driving won’t be tolerated in Brown County.” An ounce of prevention is often worth a pound of cure, and this is especially true of preventing fatal crashes, for which there is no cure.

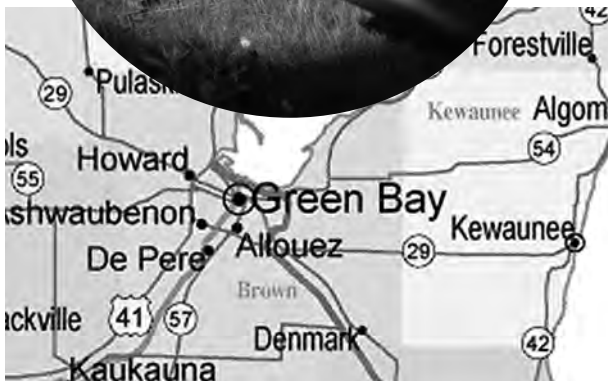
“Officers really like participating in the task force,” says Chief Randall Bani of the Hobart-Lawrence Police Department. “It brings agencies together and provides opportunities to meet face-to-face and work as a team.” He adds that they don’t have a lot of backup in their small community and often have to wait for it, but during the deployments it’s right there.

The task force’s 25th deployment came in early December in De Pere. Officers made 45 traffic stops, handed out 16 citations and 29 warnings, and made three OWI arrests. Total task force OWI arrests since February 2011 reached 135, along with 651 citations and 938 warnings.

BOTS funding pays for overtime enforcement, dedicated dispatch, and equipment: fixed signage, electronic message boards, officer reflective vests and magnetic signage on squad cars—all to foster high visibility.

Over the last decade, the percentage of all fatal crashes in Wisconsin that are alcohol-related has stubbornly remained right around 40%. Alcohol-related crashes killed 220 people and injured nearly 3,500 statewide in 2010.

Sometimes it's not hard to find impaired drivers. During a task force deployment on August 27, a Green Bay PD squad car was parked on the shoulder of the road, with emergency lights on, as the officer helped a motorist. At 2:48 AM a vehicle came speeding and swerving along, and the officer dodged out of the way as it crashed into the rear of the squad. Both vehicles were severely damaged but no one was injured. The driver was arrested for his third OWI offense.



Operations plan/deployment map

Identifies target roads and “escape routes” that suspects are likely to take.



BOTS picked Brown County for this pilot effort because statistics indicated a prominent OWI problem. “Wisconsin, as a state, has a problem with drinking and driving, and our region is even worse than statewide,” says Captain Jim Runge of the Green Bay PD. “I don’t know why. It’s not something we should be proud of, but we have an issue here.” Among the OWI arrests there last year, 38% were repeat offenders.

Sobriety checkpoints—locations where law enforcement officers are stationed to check drivers for signs of intoxication and impairment—are allowed in 38 states but not Wisconsin. Task force operations aren’t checkpoints because officers only stop motorists when they see signs of impaired driving. “Officers just do their normal patrols looking for driver behavior that indicates impairment” (such as weaving and having problems with speed and braking), says Green Bay police Lt. Brad Florence.

At the 2008 Governor’s Conference on Highway Safety, a workshop focused on HVE in non-checkpoint states. NHTSA has been promoting this approach, and its DOT HS 811 039 report concludes that case studies in eight states demonstrated that “states can achieve significant reduction in alcohol-related crashes when they engage in sustained HVE.” One of those states is Minnesota, which in 2007 piloted HVE in Anoka County, a northern suburb of the Twin Cities. It was chosen because it had one of the state’s highest alcohol-related crash rates and also because law enforcement agencies in the county have an exceptional record of working well together. This pilot was so successful that Minnesota now employs HVE in 13 targeted counties (visit the Minnesota Office of Traffic Safety website).

Inspired by this workshop, the De Forest police department began its first HVE OWI campaign in November 2008. The Southeast Wisconsin Multi-Jurisdictional



Drunk Driving Task Force was launched in 2009, with nine law enforcement agencies, as a model of both HVE and regional cooperation. Led by the Milwaukee County Sheriff’s Office, it has now grown to 15 agencies. By the end of September 2011, it had completed 59 deployments, making 1,624 OWI arrests.

Other agencies have expressed interest in the Brown County approach. Panosh is in touch with nine agencies in the greater metro area in the Fox Valley. But these agencies are in two counties, so jurisdictional and mutual aid issues are being explored.

Looking ahead, Captain Runge says of impaired driving, “I don’t think we’re going to arrest our way out of this or any other problem. Really, society and everybody out there has to make the decision we’re not going to accept this anymore.”

Contact: Mike Panosh at (920)683-4960 or Michael.panosh@dot.wi.gov or Captain Randy Schultz at (920) 448-4220 or Schultz_RS@co.brown.wi.us

Good media coverage has helped raise public awareness. Coverage includes: pre-deployment announcement, conveying that the goal is voluntary compliance with the law, rather than writing tickets or bringing in revenue, and post-deployment results, including “notable” stops (e.g., see crash scene photo).



Pre-deployment meeting

At 10:45 PM before each deployment, task force officers meet to discuss the target area (see operations map), dispatch frequency, location for blood draws, and circuit/municipal court dates.

Wisconsin Department of Transportation

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Recent retirements from WisDOT BOTS ...

Blinda Beason

retired
from
BOTS after
27 years

of state service. She managed the Office of Juvenile Justice youth alcohol grant for Wisconsin, helped boost the CARD (Comprehensive Alcohol Risk Reduction) program, and coordinated the state DRE and SFST programs.



Don Hagen,

supervisor
of the
Grant
Manage-
ment Unit at BOTS, retired after
27 years of state service. Starting
out as EMS occupant protection
program manager, he helped
develop the state's child passenger
safety program and was involved
each year in the [Click It or Ticket](#)
campaigns.



Get to know ...

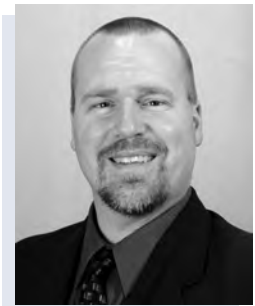
Randy Romanski

Section Chief, Safety Programs Section
WisDOT Bureau of Transportation Safety

Randy grew up in Wisconsin Rapids and earned his way through college working for the city's streets department. Looking back, he recalls, "As I was helping pave roads with asphalt, lay storm pipe and provide traffic control, I had many occasions to consider public policy—including traffic safety issues." Since then, he's become increasingly interested in, and involved with public policy.

He graduated from UW-River Falls, having majored in political science, and he earned a masters degree in public policy and administration at UW-Madison. As a student, he worked for a representative and senator in the Wisconsin legislature, and, after graduating, he continued his work with the legislature doing research and policy analysis. One of the last bills he worked on required flashing strobe lights on the roof of school buses.

He worked at several state agencies and then joined BOTS in January 2011. "I was looking forward to doing work that was fulfilling and also directly beneficial to people," he says. "BOTS has a good team approach, we work closely with our traffic safety partners statewide, and we work cooperatively to promote safety and to try to change dangerous behaviors."



BOTS has two units. One focuses on state-to-local connections and it includes the law enforcement

liaisons and the state program managers, each with a traffic safety focus area. The other is the Program and Policy Unit, which focuses on federal-to-state connections and includes the regional program managers and the policy analysts. Randy supervises the two unit supervisors. His recent efforts included working with BOTS staff to close out grants from the last federal fiscal year and launch new ones, and assisting with the periodic NHTSA management review, aimed at assuring proper management and accounting practices.

He works closely with the WisDOT Office of Public Affairs on public awareness campaigns such as the highly successful *Zero in Wisconsin* (www.zeroinwisconsin.gov).

BOTS has played an important role in safety advances such as Wisconsin's primary safety belt enforcement law and booster seat law, and, looking ahead, Randy sees potential for further strengthening of Wisconsin's safety belt laws.

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