

WISCONSIN TRAFFIC SAFETY REPORTER

Vol. 16, No. 3
2013



Thank you!

Major Sandra Huxtable
Retired Director
WisDOT Bureau of
Transportation Safety

I want to thank each of you for your ongoing commitment to highway safety. I am retiring from the Wisconsin State Patrol after serving more than 29 years. It has been my honor to serve as director of the Bureau of Transportation Safety for the past two years and work with you in highway safety efforts. Everything you do in this area makes a huge difference. I encourage each of you to keep doing your good work in this area to continue moving toward Zero in Wisconsin. Take care and stay safe!
— Sandy



Responsible Charge

David Pabst, Director
WisDOT Bureau of
Transportation Safety

Hi, I'm David Pabst. As of September 8, I took over as director of BOTS. I've been warmly welcomed by staff, safety professionals, and volunteers from throughout the state.

For over a decade, I've worked with Major Sandy Huxtable in various capacities, and I wish her the best in her retirement. She is a great champion of traffic safety and has been a credit to the law enforcement profession. She will be missed.

What does *responsible charge* mean to you? It may depend greatly on what you do for a living. If you are a land surveyor or a professional engineer, it has a very specific meaning. Simply put, the Federal Highway Administration describes someone in *responsible charge* as a public employee who is accountable for a project. This person is expected to be able to perform

continued on page 2

Coping with rising heroin use

Marinette OWI Task Force

Launched in July 2012, the Marinette OWI Task Force is helping reduce impaired driving in Marinette County. Using the proven methods of high-visibility enforcement, the task force, a cooperative effort of the Marinette Police Department and the Marinette County Sheriff's Department, is achieving promising results. Mike Panosh, WisDOT Bureau of Transportation Safety (BOTS) regional program manager for northeast Wisconsin, says, "It's amazing what they're achieving," and Sgt. Scott Ries, Marinette PD, who has

continued on page 3

Restoring the balance on Wisconsin's roads

The growing challenge of oversize and overweight agricultural equipment

Agriculture is one of the cornerstones of Wisconsin's history and is a key driver of today's economy.

- It contributes about \$60 billion annually to our state's economy, about 12.5% of total sales
- It provides about 10% of the state's employment
- Every job in agriculture supports one more related job

Agricultural equipment, also known as implements of husbandry (IoH), is gradually getting larger and heavier.

continued on page 2

Deaths from heroin use in Wisconsin



Heroin use has jumped sharply in many parts of the U.S., especially in small towns and rural areas. Often, young people start out abusing prescription painkillers such as OxyContin or Vicodin and then move on quickly to become addicted to heroin. All too often, addicts drive to meet their dealer, snort the heroin, and then drive away greatly impaired. The Wisconsin Department of Justice is helping law enforcement agencies learn how to recognize the signs of heroin use and develop ways to combat this trend.

Tillage equipment being towed on State Highway 23 near Fond du Lac. Equipment size and slow travel speeds are factors contributing to crashes with motor vehicles.



Responsible Charge from page 1

many duties and functions that require deep, continuous involvement in all aspects of a project, including a commitment to safety.

And so it is with all of us. Each and every one of us is in *responsible charge* of our lives. The decisions we make must show a commitment to traffic safety. We need to continue to strive to create a traffic safety culture so all road users make safety-driven decisions, whether they ride, walk or drive.

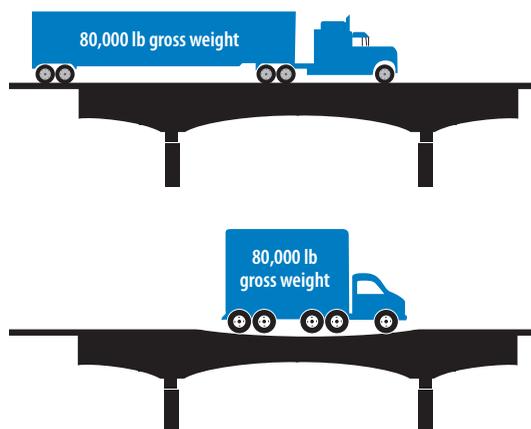
This is a big challenge, and I look forward to working with all of you as we strive to move our great state toward *Zero in Wisconsin* traffic deaths.

Restoring the balance from page 1

These changes can help farming become more efficient and productive, but they can also cause hazards on public roadways for all motorists. Drivers of some large farm equipment, for instance, have limited rear visibility, and motorists wanting to pass these slow-moving vehicles can have difficulty seeing oncoming traffic. Heavy IoH can also damage pavement and road structures such as bridges.

This is why WisDOT, in partnership with the state Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, convened the IoH Study Group, bringing together more than 20 representatives of transportation and farm organizations, equipment manufacturers, law enforcement, local officials and UW-Extension. This group produced [reports](#)⁽¹⁾ in January and July that provide engineering analysis recommendations regarding IoH size and weight limits, information on best practices, and a plan for public education and outreach. During August and September, a series of town hall meetings was held statewide to explain the proposed limits and to welcome feedback.

“We recognize that agriculture is a vital element of our state’s economy,” says Rory Rhinesmith, deputy administrator of WisDOT’s Division of Transportation System Development and chair of the study group, “but there are limits for our roadway infrastructure that are defined by physics and safety. Our approach was to bring together a knowledgeable group of people committed to finding a balanced solution based on science and the needs of the agricultural community.”



Traditional bridge designs and ratings are based on highway-type trucks. But agricultural vehicles often have atypical axle spacing, and axle spacing is as important as axle weight in designing bridges. These two trucks weigh the same, but the weight of the shorter truck is concentrated on a smaller area, placing more stress on the bridge.



Two of the most challenging issues for the study group were establishing limits for:

- maximum size
- gross vehicle and axle weight

Safety, the capacity of roads and bridges, and consideration of commonly used IoH equipment guided the recommendations. Road width, overhead wires, bridge standards and the ability to safely maneuver through turns determined the new size parameters. Recommendations include:

- Maximum IoH equipment width of 15 feet. Equipment up to 17 feet wide may be operated without written authorization when it meets requirements to ensure safe passage by other road users
- Maximum IoH commercial motor vehicle width of 10 feet
- Recommendations on weight allowance are based on engineering analysis and research on road damage caused by increased weight. They include expanding the weight allowance for IoH up to 15% over the limits established by the Federal Bridge Formula, except where posted or during spring thaw.

The IoH Study Group’s goal is to help restore a balance between preserving efficient farming operations and protecting road infrastructure that has gradually become tilted. Back in 2011, for instance, some counties, spurred by citizen complaints and shrinking budgets for road repair, boosted enforcement of weight limits. One vehicle in

continued on page 6



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.

WisDOT SECRETARY
Mark Gottlieb, P.E.

DIRECTOR-BOTS
David Pabst

TSR COORDINATOR
Steve Olson

Comments/questions
invited: (608) 261-5896
steve.olson@dot.state.wi.us

Bureau of
Transportation Safety
P.O. Box 7936
Madison, WI 53707

Funded by WisDOT and
the National Highway Traffic
Safety Administration.

www.dot.wisconsin.gov

Marinette OWI Task Force *from page 1*

led the effort, says he has seen “a big change in public attitudes and behavior.”

But, along with the familiar problem of alcohol-impaired driving, the county is dealing with a rapidly rising new scourge, heroin use. In recent years, heroin use in the United States has been climbing amid ample supply and a shift away from costlier prescription narcotics, such as OxyContin, that are becoming harder to acquire.

Now more of the heroin use is in smaller towns and rural areas. Marinette County, on the shores of Green Bay bordering the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, with a population of about 41,000 in 2010, has been hit hard by this recent trend. For example, state crime laboratories analyzed 7.5 times more cases per capita in the county last year than in Milwaukee County (see map). Along with the harm done to addicts and their loved ones, rising heroin use is associated with related criminal activity, including retail and vending machine theft. A sharp rise in heroin-related crime over the last two years has contributed to a 31% increase in the local jail’s inmate population.

And heroin use can lead to potentially deadly impaired driving. Dave Spakowicz, director of field operations with the Division of Criminal Investigations in the Wisconsin Department of Justice, explains why this is an increasingly common hazard. In the past, he says, “the only way to use heroin, because of low purity, was to inject it. But from about the mid-90s, there’s been such an increase in the quality of heroin that it’s snortable. So there’s not the stigma associated with needles.” Now addicts frequently drive to meet their dealer, snort the heroin and drive away seriously impaired.

Addicts gradually need more of the drug to reach the euphoric high, and their attempts to quit lead to the intense body aches, nausea and diarrhea that accompany withdrawal. One addict told her [story](#) to Wisconsin Public Radio during its six-part series in July. “I was doing it (using heroin) just to not go through the withdrawals and the sickness. There were so many times I tried quitting, and I would get 24 hours in and be so sick. You would literally crawl to your car so you could use so you wouldn’t be so sick.”

In the past, heroin use was associated with needles (and the associated risk of transmittable diseases such as hepatitis and HIV) and with meeting dealers in back-alleys. But now addicts can meet their dealer in a mall parking lot and snort the purer heroin. This setting is more appealing, for instance, to middle class and affluent teens. But Spakowicz notes that the purity of illegal drugs is highly unpredictable. “They’re playing Russian roulette with this drug,” he says, “because they don’t know the quality. One week it might be 20% heroin that they’re using, but the next week it might be 50% and they can overdose.”

WisDOT BOTS is providing funding for the task force, and, says Sgt. Ries, the size of Marinette’s heroin problem prompted staff at the Wisconsin DOJ to ask how they could help. This led to specialized training to help officers learn to recognize the signs of heroin use. The Marinette PD is now using a Draeger Drug Test 5000 machine for saliva-based testing of subjects, similar to the PBT (preliminary breath test) device for checking alcohol use.

Cultivation of opium poppies dates back to at least the Neolithic Age. For many centuries, opium and the morphine and heroin derived from it were the most potent painkillers available. Opiates, which include both street drugs like heroin and pharmaceutical painkillers such as morphine and codeine, act on the body’s central nervous system by stimulating the brain’s “reward center” which controls pleasurable feelings. Opiates mimic the effects of healthy feel-good activities, like eating. But in high doses, opiates can cause some of the brain’s critical functions, like controlling breathing, to slow down or stop altogether.

In 1996, OxyContin was introduced as a powerful narcotic meant for cancer patients and others enduring intense pain. Drug abusers quickly discovered that chewing an OxyContin tablet, or crushing one and snorting the

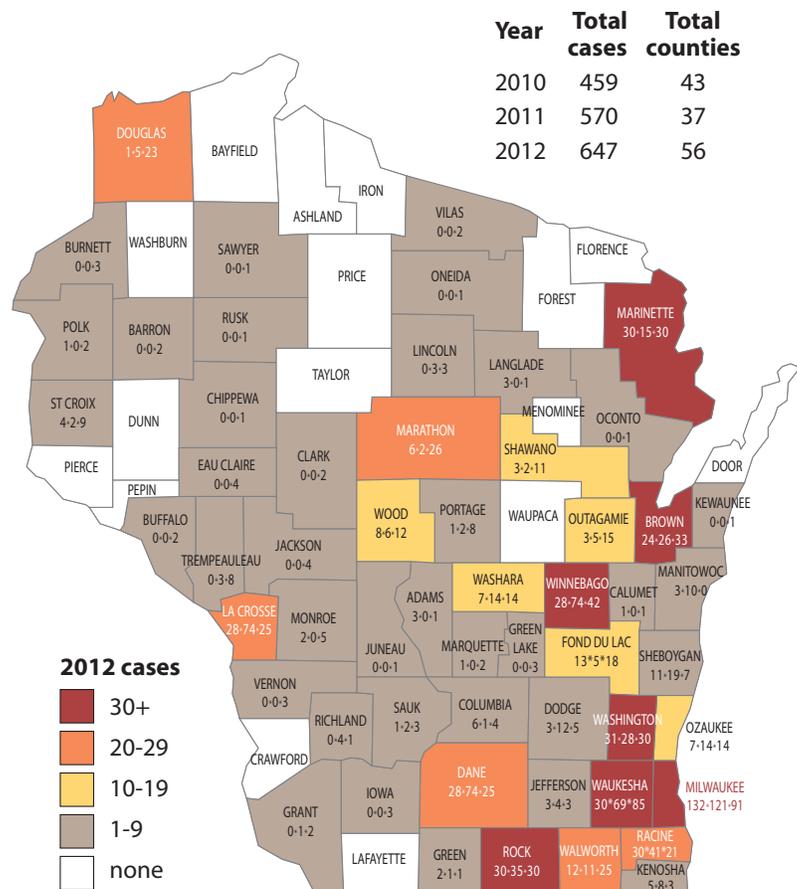
continued on page 4



Opium exuding from incision in poppy plant, the source of morphine and its derivative heroin.



Heroin cases analyzed by state crime laboratories



CREDIT: EAGLE HERALD/RICK GEBHARD



Marinette OWI Task Force sign set up at Stephenson Island next to US 41 on the Interstate Bridge.

Contact Sgt. Scott Ries, Marinette PD, at (715) 732-5153 or sries@marinette.wi.us.

KEY TO WEB ADDRESSES

- [1] www.dot.wisconsin.gov/business/ag/index.htm
- [2] www.dot.wisconsin.gov/statepatrol/enforcement/motor-carrier.htm
- [3] www.dot.wisconsin.gov/business/
- [4] <http://news.wpr.org/post/deaths-heroin-overdoses-are-increasing-wisconsin>
- [5] <http://www.itcanwait.com/>

Marinette OWI Task Force from page 3

powder, produced an instant high as powerful as heroin. It was blamed for waves of addiction that ravaged some regions of the country and was a factor in many overdose deaths.

So, in 2010, the maker of OxyContin reformulated it to make it harder—but not impossible—to snort. But this boosted the demand for other narcotics, and heroin use jumped. It soon became a much bigger problem in small cities and towns across Wisconsin. Marathon County Sheriff's Lt. Gary Schenck can pinpoint the week this happened. "In 2010, they did a reformulation," he recalls. "Within a week or two, we started seeing an influx of heroin come into the community."

DOJ's Spakowicz says many teenage drug abusers are quickly advancing from marijuana and prescription painkillers—often from their parents' or friends' medicine cabinets—to heroin use. "It used to take years to progress to a high level of opiate addiction. Now it's done sometimes within a year."

As with alcohol abuse, heroin addiction is a complex problem that can't be solved just with law enforcement. Broad community involvement is needed, and business and other community leaders in Marinette County are making encouraging progress. Some local employers have been having difficulty filling positions because so many applicants are testing positive for heroin, says state Representative John Nygren (Marinette). So in April, the chamber of commerce began assembling a consortium of community organizations to address the problem.

And the Marinette OWI Task Force has been receiving positive community support, though some tourist-related businesses are concerned about the effect of targeted OWI enforcement.

High-visibility enforcement has helped raise community awareness; high percentages of drivers stopped are aware of task force deployments. "Drinking and driving is not the norm," says Sgt. Ries. "A lot of people in the community are not accepting this anymore." He notes with pride, for example, a deployment in June at a Lions Club picnic in Niagara, with club members and area taverns arranging to provide free limo service and bus rides home to anyone who wanted. This, he notes, had never happened before.

High-visibility enforcement is helping reduce impaired driving, and now there are six OWI Task Forces in north-east Wisconsin alone. Wisconsin DOJ has announced a new initiative and grants to help law enforcement fight heroin. But Spakowicz says police can't arrest their way out of the heroin epidemic. He says it will take more treatment and community support, even though budgets are tight.

This broader approach is already working with drug courts in Wisconsin. If addicts are accepted into the program, they have to plead guilty to a felony, attend weekly court appearances and treatment sessions, and stay clean for four months. If they do that, the felony is wiped off their record. Nationwide, 75% of drug court graduates don't commit any new crimes in the two years following their completion of the program.

We want you to help us achieve
zero deaths on Wisconsin roadways



NEW! Citation holders available
Order your free citation holders (HS322)
from WisDOT Maps and Publications Sales
www.dot.wisconsin.gov/business/publications/safetymaterials.htm

Last year in Wisconsin, hundreds of people died in traffic crashes.

Around **90%** of traffic deaths are caused by driver error, many of which could be prevented if all motorists **slowed down, drove sober, eliminated distractions and buckled up.**

A new, effective way to reach young males

In March, WisDOT launched its free *Drive Sober* mobile app. It can be downloaded by visiting the *Zero in Wisconsin* website. Its features, including a blood alcohol estimator and a listing of services that provide a safe ride home, are highlighted on this promotional poster.

Young men ages 18-34 have the highest concentration of traffic fatalities, and they are the primary audience for this app. A key challenge is bringing it to their attention so they'll try it and share it with friends. Along with being promoted as part of WisDOT's Summer of Safety campaign and the statewide alcohol crackdown in August, the app is being promoted in the media—traditional and new—that are most widely used by young males. Market research finds that they are very heavy users of the Internet, heavy users of radio, often while driving, and somewhat lighter users of television.

Ads for the app on websites popular with young males are geo-targeted to Wisconsin's major cities. One popular website is HULU, which provides ad-supported on-demand streaming video of TV shows, movies and other new media.

Another popular website that ads are placed on is Pandora Internet Radio which plays music of a certain genre based on the user's preferences.

Commercials promoting the app are also aired on the state's largest male-oriented FM radio stations. Ads on broadcast television and cable are mainly during sports programming.

The key advantage of mobile apps is that people have them readily available on their cell phones. To interest young males, the app includes "Daredevils Dare Not" videos (also available on the ZIW website) featuring stunts and personal stories from skilled Wisconsin extreme sports athletes. Their message: it would be crazy to try the stunts drunk, just as it would be crazy to drive drunk.

During the week of the Labor Day Drive Sober media campaign, about 2,500 people downloaded the app.



Available for special events

Choose Your Ride

Wisconsin State Patrol now has this attention-getting "choose your ride" squad car available to help raise "drive sober" awareness at community events statewide, such as county fairs and special municipal events.

Where did the idea come from? State Patrol Superintendent Stephen Fitzgerald's brother was on vacation in Georgia and saw a similar squad car belonging to the Savannah Police Department. He took photos on his cell phone, emailed them to Stephen, who sent them along to the Bureau of Transportation Safety. BOTS staff liked the idea, so the State Patrol fleet manager arranged for the vinyl "TAXI" covering to be added.

Fitzgerald, who serves on the board of the Dodge County Fair where the vehicle appeared in August, says it is being well received at such events, and requests for future appearances are streaming in. The vehicle is not used for law enforcement but just for raising awareness.

To check on the availability of this vehicle, call Katie Mueller, BOTS, at (608) 266-0094. It must be driven by an authorized state employee.



THE REF and SMARTrainers

In September, THE REF Mobile Classroom and State Patrol Troopers were part of the annual Tomahawk Fall Ride, attended by more than 40,000 motorcycle enthusiasts. The event includes entertainment, the newest motorcycles and accessories from Harley-Davidson, and it's a big fundraiser for the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

For more about THE REF and its schedule, visit www.zeroinwisconsin.gov/TheREF/.

At the Governor's Conference on Highway Safety, this August in Stevens Point, Governor Scott Walker, who rides a motorcycle, visited THE REF, talked with

Wisconsin Motorcycle Safety Program staff, and tried out the video displays and touch-screen monitors that test a rider's knowledge. He also put his skills to the test (see photo) on a new Honda SMARTrainer (Safe Motorcyclist Awareness & Recognition Trainer). This engaging instructional tool combines a personal computer, an advanced safety-training program and a video monitor, plus a handlebar, seat, footrests and all the standard controls found on a motorcycle. Under the

guidance of a qualified instructor, riders respond to a variety of on-screen scenarios as they travel along virtual streets. SMARTrainers are available in two ways:

- WMSP has four units it can ship in special containers to sites wanting to borrow them
- On THE REF



Highway Safety Partners



Lt. Mike Klingenberg
Motor Carrier
Enforcement Section
Wisconsin State Patrol

Contact Mike at
Michael.Klingenberg@dot.wi.gov

Mike, one of two lieutenants in the State Patrol's Motor Carrier Enforcement Section, oversees programs and supervises inspectors in northern Wisconsin. His inspection program areas are:

– size and weight

His experience and expertise in this area led, for example, to his involvement with the Implements of Husbandry (IoH) Study Group, which recently published recommendations (see page 1) regarding IoH size and weight limits. These recommendations aim to restore the balance between implements that are getting larger and heavier, making agriculture more efficient and productive, and the need for safety on public roads and for protecting road surfaces and bridges.

"Being part of this study group has been very satisfying," he says. "I've worked with ag groups for many years, educating and trying to answer their questions about laws that affect agriculture. I have suggested for a long time that they contact their legislators to change state laws that they feel hinder their operations. The

study group is a big step in that direction, and hopefully positive changes will be developed."

– human service vehicles (HSV)

HSV inspections help assure that Wisconsin's elderly and disabled citizens are transported on annually-inspected, safe vehicles. He is currently working with the WisDOT Special Transportation Unit to streamline the HSV inspection process and the method for determining which vehicles need inspection.

– motor buses

Inspections are required annually for all vehicles transporting 16 or more passengers.

– salvage vehicles

He is the liaison between DMV and all the salvage vehicle inspectors statewide, answering questions, coordinating, and sometimes mitigating disputes between DMV, inspectors and customers.

Mike grew up in the Chicago suburbs and then Mesa, Arizona. While earning his associate degree in Police Science from what is now Chippewa Valley Technical College, he was a part-

time reserve deputy for the Dunn County Sheriff's Department and patrolman for the Village of Colfax. In 1984, he joined the State Patrol as an inspector, and he was motor carrier sergeant at the Wausau post until February 2012 when he was promoted to his current position.

He is now also working with the WisDOT Office of General Council to create electronic copies of all equipment-related statutes and administrative codes dating from the early 1920s to the present. When law enforcement officers encounter a vehicle on a traffic stop or during an inspection, they must apply the equipment standards from the year of manufacture.

"One of my major goals," he says, "is to continue to build a partnership with the motor carrier industry. The State Patrol shouldn't be seen as an obstacle to their business, but rather a valuable asset and resource to help them understand—and remain compliant with—the ever-changing rules that affect their day-to-day operations.

Restoring the balance

from page 2



CREDIT: CHERYL SKOJALAAS, UW MADISON/EXTENSION

Self-unloading forage wagon being towed as part of a vehicle train near Elkhart Lake. Farm equipment often takes up the lane of travel and also requires use of the road shoulder. The SMV (slow-moving vehicle) emblem needs to be upgraded.

Marathon County, for example, weighed about 134,000 pounds, more than 50,000 pounds overweight. The double-tank configuration was also over-length, and the operator received a \$7,900 fine.

This increased enforcement has frustrated some farmers and businesses such as manure haulers with big investments in their equipment. At a November 2011 public meeting in Marathon County, State Patrol Lt. Mike Klingenberg reviewed weight limit rules and explained, "Just like a log hauler or any other commodity traveling out here, we have the authority to investigate if something is overweight." Klingenberg (see above) is a member of the State Patrol's [Motor Carrier Enforcement Program](#) [2], which enforces state and federal motor carrier regulations regarding vehicle weight, mechanical safety, and driver safety performance.

Where to from here?

The final recommendations of the IoH Study Group are being considered by some Wisconsin legislators to update size and weight limits. Upon completion of any possible legislative action, the IoH Education and Outreach Work Group will create Wisconsin IoH reference guides for print and electronic distribution, providing educational resources regarding IoH laws, permits and best practices for agricultural producers, local officials and law enforcement.

IoH Study Group's Phase II Report, released in July, describes further engineering research needs, opportunities for collaborative research, both regionally and nationally, and efforts to develop national and international equipment standards. The Phase II Addendum, completed in September, provides final recommendations.

Find out more For details about the IoH Study Group's Phase I and Phase II Reports and Phase II Addendum, visit WisDOT's Doing Business [website](#) [3].



Award winners

2013 Governor's Conference on Highway Safety

August 7-8, Stevens Point

Safety Champion Award

Major Sandra Huxtable
WisDOT BOTS director

Mike Witter, NHTSA Region 5 Administrator, presented the award marking Sandy's many contributions during a stellar 29-year career in the State Patrol. A proven leader, she developed positive collaborative relationships, embodying one of her favorite expressions, that we're all in this together to improve traffic safety. Conference attendees offered enthusiastic congratulations and best wishes on her upcoming retirement.



Lifetime Achievement Award
Vicki (Schwabe) Hagen

A big "thank you" to Vicki, who left state service after 20 years with WisDOT. Since 1996, she smoothly handled Bureau of Transportation Safety office management, and her cheerful and efficient input, including helping organize this conference, will be missed.

Traffic Safety Heroism Award

On April 12, a vehicle was reported 100 feet offshore in Perch Lake, Sparta. With air temp in the low 30's and the water at 34 degrees, Kuehn and Johnson swam out to the sinking vehicle with the female driver trapped inside. Sgt. Ames joined them, they broke the back window and saved her from drowning.

(l-r) Sparta PD Officers Andy Kuen and Corey Johnson and Sgt. Joel Ames



People Who Shine Award

LaVerne E. Herman

LaVerne received this award from Major Huxtable. A Waterloo resident, LaVerne dedicated 50 years to improving traffic safety in Wisconsin. In 1967, her brother was killed by a repeat drunk driver, and ever since then she has been a devoted volunteer, including with the City of Milwaukee Safety Commission and the Governor's Council on Highway Safety. Attendees warmly thanked her for her excellent work. LaVerne is pictured here with WisDOT BOTS section chief Randy Romanski.



The Beth Kindshci Awards

(l-r) Jane Howard, WI CPS Lead Instructor, and Libbe Slavin, WI Safe Kids Coordinator, accepted the CPS Program of the Year award for Children's Hospital of Wisconsin. These awards are in honor of Beth Kindshci (center), retired Green County Health Dept., WI Lead Instructor. Judy Drews, Oconto County Health & Human Services, is CPS Technician of the Year, and Kevin Olin, Janesville PD, is CPS Instructor of the Year.



(l-r) Kelly Goodman and her children, Sawyer, Micah, Calloway and Piper with State Patrol Superintendent Stephen Fitzgerald and Major Huxtable

Saved by the Belt and by the Child Restraint Award

In May 2012, Kelly, who was pregnant with Sawyer at the time, and her three other children were southbound on WIS 57 when an intoxicated driver ran a stop sign and struck her vehicle in the side. The Goodmans were all properly restrained, but all were injured, two of them significantly. All have since recovered. Award presented by State Patrol Superintendent Stephen Fitzgerald and Major Huxtable.



TEXTING & DRIVING ... it can wait



Xzavier coming home from school

As students headed back to school, Governor Scott Walker proclaimed September as “Don’t Text & Drive: It Can Wait” Awareness Month throughout Wisconsin and urged everyone, particularly teens, to never text behind the wheel.

State Patrol Superintendent Stephen Fitzgerald says, “Some people are texting at the worst possible time – while driving. Wisconsin bans texting and driving, and we must continue to raise awareness about the deadly consequences of this practice and urge all drivers to never text and drive.”

The Wisconsin State Patrol, AT&T and

AAA are teaming up once again on a series of high school events around the state to highlight the dangers of texting and driving. Since 2010, they have held events in 25 cities, reaching more than 16,500 students.

AT&T’s *It Can Wait* campaign [5] has released a sobering 35-minute documentary, “From One Second to the Next”, focused on texting and driving tragedies. Directed by acclaimed filmmaker Werner Herzog, it features the story of Xzavier Davis Bilbo, a Milwaukee boy who is paralyzed from the diaphragm down after being hit by a texting driver as he was crossing the street. The documentary, with more than 2 million views in its

first six weeks on YouTube, is being distributed to nearly 40,000 high schools nationwide, along with government and safety organizations.

Those who send text messages while driving are 23 times more likely to be in a crash. Teens are particularly at risk; while 97% of teens say they know it’s dangerous, 75% say the practice is “common” among their friends.

Events at Wisconsin high schools give students a chance to use a distracted driving simulator to test their driving skills and see how easily distractions can lead to crashes.

For details, schools and other organizations should contact Katie Mueller, WisDOT BOTS, at Katie.Mueller@dot.wi.gov or (608) 266-0094.



Edgar High School student tries to drive simulator while texting during event last October, along with WisDOT BOTS Director Major Sandra Huxtable.