

# Media strategies to get the DUI Task Force message to its target audience

Darla Tyler-McSherry, Yellowstone County DUI Task Force Coordinator

When addressing the complex issue of DUI, it can be challenging to broadcast the message of prevention and responsibility in our media-saturated world. The Yellowstone County DUI Task Force ([www.co.yellowstone.mt.us/dui](http://www.co.yellowstone.mt.us/dui)) utilizes positive, healthy partnerships and several different media channels to educate the community about DUI and related issues.

We are fortunate to have media experts on our board who are well-versed in navigating unfamiliar waters when it comes to deciding which radio stations and television channels are the best choices to spend our advertising dollars. For Task Forces that have either limited budgets and/or not physically close to production agencies or television stations, other options exist. One example is [www.animoto.com](http://www.animoto.com). For a reasonable fee, subscribers can enter their own photos, language/text and choose music to produce brief videos.

**How to make a video**  
Simple and fun, three steps and you're done!

- 1 INSERT PHOTOS & VIDEOS**  
Upload from your computer or grab from Facebook, Instagram, Picasa, Flickr and elsewhere.
- 2 CUSTOMIZE YOUR STYLE**  
Select a video style, choose some music, add a few words of your own... and you're done!
- 3 SHARE & ENJOY**  
Download, embed, or share your video via Facebook, YouTube, Vimeo, Twitter, and more.

[www.animoto.com](http://www.animoto.com)



Click [here](#) for an example—this was produced by the MSU Billings HEROES peer health education program (“Health Educators Reaching Others & Encouraging Success”). These videos then can be placed onto websites, YouTube and Facebook.

YouTube is another inexpensive route to broadcast your message. Our Public Service Announcements, which were produced in collaboration with the Montana Crime Prevention Association (<http://mtcrimeprevention.org>) are available on our website and YouTube as well. Type in “yelctydui” in the search box when on YouTube to see interviews of women currently incarcerated in the Montana Women’s Prison for DUI-related crimes.



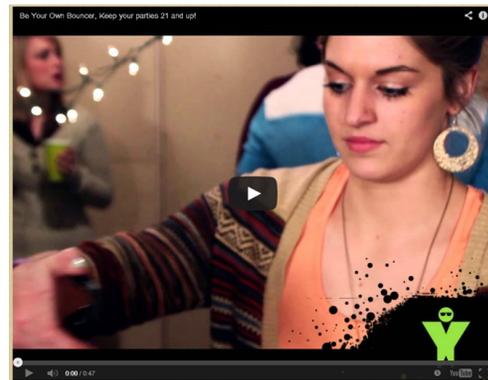
Another inexpensive option for broadcasting your message it to utilize the technology of smart phones.



By creating your own Quick Response (QR) code, you can direct people to a particular website, video or flyer. Many different choices exist, some are free and some have subscription offers. One free site for creating QR codes is <http://www.qrstuff.com/>. Follow the instructions and in a matter of moments you’ll be creating new ways for your Task Force to reach large markets.

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Our Task Force has a positive, productive partnership with the local [Substance Abuse Prevention Partnership](#), which is a coalition based in Yellowstone County that works on prevention of substance abuse issues in the community. This Coalition hosts several strategies, including “Be Your Own Bouncer, Keep your parties 21 and up”! Evaluating data from social host violations, it was determined that the average age of social host offenders is only 23. They retooled their marketing strategies to target the 21-25 year old audience. Check out their internet "[meme](#)" which is defined as an idea, behavior, or style that spreads from person to person within a culture.



“Be your own bouncer” campaign

Finally, we are also exploring different, perhaps more “traditional” methods of message delivery. We are currently investigating options including billboards, bathroom stall signage, and taxi cab top signs. We are interested in learning how other task forces share their messages.

Thank you!

Darla Tyler-McSherry, Coordinator  
Yellowstone County DUI Task Force

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## MDT announces new media strategy

The Montana Department of Transportation is developing a new media strategy to focus on the summer months – Memorial Day to Labor Day – as this is the time frame Montana crash data shows the highest concentration of traffic crashes are occurring.

More details coming soon as we prepare to launch the campaign!

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# Empty Dinner Table Campaign held in Missoula

Lonie Hutchison, Missoula County DUI Task Force Coordinator

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There are more alcohol-related traffic fatalities during the holiday season between Thanksgiving and New Year's than any other time of year in the United States. To raise awareness of this problem, a multi-county/multi-faceted holiday campaign was launched in early November and continued through New Year's Day. The campaign was organized, funded and sponsored by the Mineral, Missoula & Ravalli County Buckle Up Montana Coalitions and DUI Task Forces.

The shared leadership approach to this campaign proved effective and beneficial in terms of time and dollars invested, access to resources, and building a degree of connectedness among coalition members and community stakeholders.

The unified message heard in Mineral, Missoula & Ravalli Counties during the holidays season was:

**“Never, Ever Drink & Drive...  
Buckle Up Every Trip, Every Time.”**

The message was delivered via radio and TV spots, posters and empty dinner table displays at a variety of venues including hospitals, store windows, and high schools in each of the three counties.

## *Empty Dinner Table Displays*

There are so many Montana families with empty chairs at their holiday dinner tables—sorrowful reminders of absent loved ones who lost their lives in traffic crashes. The poignant Empty Dinner Table displays conveyed the message that empty chairs can be prevented by buckling up and driving sober.

## *Empty Dinner Table Luncheon & Recognition Ceremony*

For several years the Missoula County DUI Task Force has hosted an Empty Dinner Table luncheon and recognition ceremony during the month of December to recognize and celebrate the year's work to reduce impaired driving crashes, injuries, and fatalities in Missoula County. This year's event was expanded to include DUI Task Force and Buckle Up Montana Coalition members, government leaders, and other community stakeholders from Mineral and Ravalli Counties.

On December 5, “Going the Extra Mile Award” plaques were presented to 33 individuals in recognition of their contribution to traffic safety in Mineral, Missoula, and Ravalli Counties. Reporters from KECI-TV and KPAX-TV covered the event.



Store window—Higgins Avenue



St. Patrick Hospital Cafeteria



Sentinel High School—Missoula

### **Missoula County Award Recipients**

Sheriff Carl Ibsen, Missoula County Sheriff's Department - Support for Alcohol Compliance Checks

Dave Strohmeier, Missoula City Councilperson, Ward 1 - Support for Local Traffic Safety Ordinances

Don Whalen, Missoula Emergency Services, Inc. - Support for Missoula County DUI Task Force

Mark Bryant, Bryant Photographics - Support for the "Going out tonight? We are." campaign

Jace Olson, LaMar Outdoor Advertising - Support for the "Going out tonight? We are." campaign

Linda Green, UM Curry Health Center - Support for the Missoula Designated Driver Program

Noon's - Support for the Missoula Designated Driver Program

Robyn Barker, Westside Lanes - Support for Responsible Alcohol Sales & Service Training

Missoula Rural Fire District, Support for Child Passenger Safety/Site of Child Safety Seat Fitting Station

AAA Mountain West, Support for Child Passenger Safety/Site of Child Safety Seat Fitting Station

Karl Tyler Chevrolet, Support for Child Passenger Safety/Site of Annual Child Passenger Safety Technician Certification Training

Sgt. Tony Rio, Missoula County Sheriff's Department - Support for Occupant Protection

Virginia Braun - Community Advocate for Young Drivers



### **Mineral County Award Recipients**

Trooper Darlene Lee, MHP District 1 Lead for "Alive at 25" Program - Traffic Safety Education for Youth in Mineral & Sanders Counties

Town of Superior Volunteer Fire Department - Support for Child Passenger Safety/Site of Child Safety Seat Fitting Station

### **Ravalli County Award Recipients**

Heather Oster, Program Assistant - Administrative Support for Ravalli County Buckle Up Montana Coalition

Trooper Tamra Winchell, Montana Highway Patrol - Seat Belt Safety Work with Ravalli County Youth

Trooper Rocky Bailey, Montana Highway Patrol - Traffic Safety Education for Ravalli County Youth

Trooper Pat Heaney, Montana Highway Patrol - Tenacity in DUI Enforcement

Officer Sam Fawcett, Stevensville Police Department - Impaired Driving Education for Ravalli County Youth

Janet Bierer, Teen Focus Lead for Ravalli County Buckle Up Montana Coalition - Promotion of Seat Belts via America's Super Ms. Pageant

Nancy Huus, Infant/Child Focus Lead for Ravalli County Buckle Up Montana Coalition - Seat Belt/Child Passenger Safety Outreach

Nick Hooper, Child Passenger Safety Technician - Support for Child Passenger Safety/Safety Seat Fitting Station at Mildenerger Motors in Hamilton

Heidi Kestrel, Child Passenger Safety Technician Instructor - Support for Child Passenger Safety/Safety Seat Fitting Station at Florence Volunteer Fire Department

Mildenerger Motors - Support for Child Passenger Safety/Site of Ravalli County's Child Safety Seat Fitting Station

## AJ.'s Story

Arthur (AJ) Weatherwax, a Practicum Student working with the Missoula County DUI Task Force and Buckle Up Montana Coalition, was a featured speaker at the December 5 event. Arthur was a passenger in an alcohol-related rollover crash 13 years ago when he was 17 years old. He was in a coma for three months, and the doctors said that he had a 3 percent chance of survival. A seat belt saved his life.

Arthur's goal upon earning a Native American Studies Bachelor's Degree with an emphasis in Licensed Addiction Counseling, is to return to the Blackfeet Reservation and begin counseling and support a DUI Task Force. He also plans to become a Nationally Certified Child Passenger Safety Technician Instructor.



Arthur's uncles performed an Honor Song as the opening ceremony for the award presentations.



Arthur (AJ) Weatherwax

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# Uncollected fines can add up!

## (And have a big impact on your DUI Task Force's budget)

Juli Balenger, former DUI Court Coordinator for Mineral County

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Driver license reinstatement fees are the life-blood of Montana's county-level DUI Task Forces. But not everyone who loses his or her driver's license chooses to follow the process that will allow the person to request a reinstatement of driving privileges (which may include a \$100 or \$200 fine, of which half is returned to the county DUI Task Force).

More than likely, there are numerous uncollected fines "just sitting" in your local justice court or city court office. The defendant that chooses not to pay his/her fine may not even pay the fine if the citation goes to warrant; most courts have a drawer full of cases that have gone to warrant for unpaid fines. Is there a solution to help bring these cases to closure? Yes...and the answer may surprise you.

Accountability is a foundational principle of *Montana's Correctional and Sentencing Policy* as described in § 46-18-101, MCA. Sections 46-17-303 and 25-30-102, MCA authorizes Montana's courts to use collection agencies. These have proven to be a valuable resource that often yield almost instantaneous results because individuals wish to avoid negative impacts to their credit ratings.

The various collection agencies operate differently, but there are those that do not charge the courts a collection fee. If a fee is charged, it is passed on to the defendant and it is usually a percentage of the unpaid balance. The driver license reinstatement fee would still need to be paid to the Motor Vehicle Division at the Montana Department of Justice, but the collection agency would handle the original amount. Your court would only remove the account from the agency when the fine and the reinstatement fees have been paid.

Another benefit to having the collection agency handle the court's unpaid fines is time savings. Depending on the size of the jurisdiction, the number of defendants coming in each month to make partial payments can add up. When an account is placed with a collection agency, the court stops all financial transactions with the defendants for that case. The warrant process also stops.

*FullCourt* reports indicate when a citation should be placed in a warrant status; this can be overridden and instead transferred to a collection agency.

Violation of several different Montana laws (not just DUI laws) can result in the suspension or revocation of a person's driving privilege or driver's license, for example:

[§ 61-5-205, MCA](#)

[§ 61-5-214, MCA](#)

[§ 61-5-218, MCA](#)

A collection agency that is licensed in all 50 states would be beneficial to a court that has heavy commercial traffic, but is not necessary due to the fact the Montana DUI Task Forces are only funded by Montana driver's reinstatement fees. Many local collection agencies could accomplish this for the court. The referral process is quite simple: provide the defendant's pertinent information (including make and type of vehicle, license plate number of said vehicle), violation, date of violation, and amount due. Then sit back and prepare to be amazed.

It is a little bit of work at the beginning to set up the process, but well worth it!

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# Impaired Driving Is Not Just Drunk Driving

Donna Peterson, Montana Prescription Drug Registry Program Manager

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Most people think of impaired driving or driving under the influence (DUI) as being the same as drinking and driving. While alcohol is a common factor in many instances of impaired driving, it is not the only reason why a driver should not be behind the wheel of a car. Prescription medications may also cause driving impairment.



Warning label on prescription bottle

Prescriptions that may cause driving impairment typically come with a warning label on the prescription bottle that patients receive from their pharmacy. The warning generally states that the medication may cause drowsiness, alcohol may intensify the effects of the medication, and/or that until the patient experiences how the medication will affect him or her, to not drive a car or operate potentially dangerous machinery.

Prescription medications that are classified as controlled substances by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) because of their varying abuse potential may cause driving impairment. Prescriptions for controlled substance medications can only be written by an authorized healthcare provider registered with the DEA, and the DEA keeps track of the manufacturing and distribution of these medications.

Some examples of common controlled substance prescription medications that may cause driving impairment include, but are not limited to: opioid pain medications [i.e., Oxycontin (oxycodone), Vicodin (hydrocodone), and methadone]; muscle relaxants [i.e., Soma (carisoprodol), cyclobenzaprine]; and sedatives/anti-anxiety medications [i.e. Ambien (zolpidem), Xanax (alprazolam)]. Other nonprescription, or over-the-counter (OTC), medications that may also cause driving impairment include, but are not limited to, OTC sleep aids and OTC cough and cold medications.

## *How often does prescription medication result in impaired driving?*

No one knows the exact number of instances. However, we do know that in 2012, 49 percent of fatal vehicle crashes in Montana involved drugs or drugs combined with alcohol (this includes prescription drugs and illicit street drugs).<sup>1</sup> Nationwide, 10.3 million people reported driving under the influence of illicit drugs in 2012, including illegally obtained prescription medications.<sup>2</sup> We also know that the number of overdose deaths due to prescription abuse or misuse has risen dramatically in the last 10 to 15 years, and that Montana currently ranks 17th among the 50 states in our per-capita number of deaths by prescription overdose.<sup>3</sup> It is reasonable to presume that some of these individuals may have been driving under the influence of prescription medications.

In general, most prescription drugs are obtained legally and are used as intended. However, studies indicate that there has been a marked increase in the use of prescription medications for recreational purposes among teens and adults<sup>2</sup>, which further fuels the market for illicitly-obtained prescription drugs. Stealing prescription drugs and selling them on the street is big business for some individuals since these pills can sell for as much as \$60 to \$90 apiece. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) calls prescription drug abuse/misuse an epidemic in this country.<sup>4</sup> In some states, the rate of death by prescription overdose exceeds the combined number of automobile and gunshot fatalities<sup>5</sup> (Montana is not one of those states, although, as mentioned above, Montana's per capita rate of death by drug overdose is high).

## *What can we do about the prescription drug misuse/abuse and the related impact on highway safety?*

**Educate the public about the safe disposal of unused medications.** AwareRx, a program sponsored by the National Association of Board of Pharmacy, is an online resource that provides helpful awareness information and assists users in locating disposal drop boxes. Check [www.awarerx.org](http://www.awarerx.org) for more information. Also, check your local law enforcement facility to see if they have a medication drop box. Proper medication disposal is one way to help prevent potential diversion of unused medications.

**Participate in DEA's Prescription Drug Take-Back Initiative.** DEA works with local law enforcement to host medication disposal events for all medications, including controlled substances. Check the DEA's website at [http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug\\_disposal/](http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/) for more information about disposing of controlled substances, dates, locations, and opportunities to partner with DEA.

**Educate the public** about how prescription medications may impair someone's ability to drive and that her or she can be cited for DUI if pulled over and are determined to be impaired.

**Offer education about prescription drug abuse and misuse.** Many websites, including <http://TheMedicineAbuseProject.org>, <https://doj.mt.gov/prescriptiondrugabuse/>, and [www.MPDRInfo.mt.gov](http://www.MPDRInfo.mt.gov), provide information and resources for parents, educators, healthcare providers, communities, and law enforcement.

**Encourage healthcare providers to use the Montana Prescription Drug Registry (MPDR).** The MPDR is a powerful online service that allows prescribers and pharmacists to view a history of all the controlled substances their patients have received in the past three years. This tool can help providers identify/confirm a patient's medication treatment plan, or may help identify potential diversion or misuse of medications. Providers can go to [www.MPDRInfo.mt.gov](http://www.MPDRInfo.mt.gov) for instructions on how to access the MPDR, which is overseen by the Montana Board of Pharmacy.



**If you are a law enforcement officer who is conducting an investigation** into someone's use of controlled substance prescriptions, you can submit an investigative subpoena to the MPDR and receive a copy of the individual's controlled substance prescription history. Go to [www.MPDRInfo.mt.gov](http://www.MPDRInfo.mt.gov) for more information.

<sup>1</sup> Montana Impaired Driving Data – 2012 (available online at <http://www.mdt.mt.gov/safety/impaired.shtml>)

<sup>2</sup> Results from the 2012 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Summary of National Findings. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), 2013.

<sup>3</sup> Vital Signs: Overdoses of Prescription Opioid Pain Relievers, United States, 1999 – 2008. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 2011.

<sup>4</sup> Drug Overdose in the United States: Fact Sheet. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 2013.

<sup>5</sup> Prescription Drug Abuse: Recognition, Intervention, and Prevention. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), 2012.

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For more information, please visit [www.MPDR.mt.gov](http://www.MPDR.mt.gov)

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# DUI Task Force plans due June 1, 2014

Lorelle Demont, Montana Department of Transportation—State Highway Traffic Safety

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County DUI Task Force plans for state fiscal year 2015 are due to our office **by June 1, 2014**.

Please submit plans electronically, including a scan of the signatures from your County Commission indicating that they have reviewed and approved the plan. If you can't submit electronically, we will accept a hard copy or fax.

As part of the plan approval process, please confirm that a financial and annual report for SFY 2014 was submitted to the county governing body as required by § [61-2-106](#), MCA, and include a copy of the report.

If you would like technical assistance with your plan, please call or email Lorelle Demont at (406) 444-7411 or [ldemont@mt.gov](mailto:ldemont@mt.gov).

**DUI Task Forces are welcome to apply to MDT for NHTSA funds as a means to add new projects that the task force otherwise couldn't afford.**

**Applications are due by March 1 of each year.**

**Application instructions and materials are available online at**

**[www.mdt.mt.gov/safety.grants.shtml](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/safety.grants.shtml).**

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## CALL FOR ARTICLES

Please enhance the effectiveness of statewide efforts to reduce impaired driving crashes, injuries and fatalities in Montana by sharing your expertise, concerns, opinions, projects, challenges, successes, helpful websites, etc. with other traffic safety advocates in the state.

**Please submit articles for inclusion in future issues of this newsletter to:**

Lorelle Demont  
State Highway Traffic Safety  
Montana Department of Transportation  
PO Box 201001, Helena MT 59620-1001  
Office (406) 444-7411  
[ldemont@mt.gov](mailto:ldemont@mt.gov)

*Thank you for your dedication and hard work!*

**MONTANA'S DUI TASK FORCES**  
**preventing impaired driving and crashes**  
**...AT THE COUNTY LEVEL**

[www.mdt.mt.gov/safety/dui\\_taskforces.shtml](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/safety/dui_taskforces.shtml)



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MDT attempts to provide accommodations for any known disability that may interfere with a person participating in any service, program, or activity of the Department. Alternative accessible formats of this information will be provided upon request. For further information, call (406) 444-7411, TTY (800) 335-7592, or the Montana Relay at 711.

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