

It's so hard to have

*Happy
Holidays*

when you're
arrested
for drunken driving.



KOHS Executive Director Bill Bell with KSP Sgt. Steve Walker, the overall winner with 277 impaired driving arrests.

Law enforcement officers, agencies honored for impaired driving enforcement

The Kentucky Office of Highway Safety (KOHS) honored 197 law enforcement officers from 164 agencies across the Commonwealth for their efforts to target impaired drivers.

The 2012 Governor's Impaired Driving Enforcement Awards ceremony was held Dec. 5 at the Galt House Hotel and Suites in Louisville. Awards were presented to officers with the most impaired driving arrests in each agency and division.

"Impaired driving is not an accident — it's an epidemic of careless disregard for human life," said KOHS Director Bill Bell, who presented the awards at the ceremony. "These officers, their departments and agencies render a great service for public

safety by removing drunken and drugged drivers from our roads."

Last year, Kentucky recorded more than 5,600 crashes related to drugs and alcohol, resulting in 170 deaths and more than 3,000 injuries.

The officers on hand to be honored were to have included Marion County Sheriff's Deputy Anthony Rakes, who tied for highest number of impaired driving arrests within his agency. But Rakes died from gunshot wounds sustained during a Nov. 14 traffic stop. After a moment of silence, Rakes' award was accepted by Sheriff Jimmy Clements.

A list of individual and division award recipients and photos can be viewed [here](#).

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Director's Message

— Bill Bell



A day with a 'legend'

It was 5 a.m. Dec. 5, 2012, when I pulled into the parking lot of Kaden Tower in Louisville and saw a group near the side overlooking the Watterson Expressway. The WHAS-TV mobile van was there with a large pole light. I was there to see and work with a "living legend" and so was the television crew.

I pulled in next to a rental car which carried the entourage to this event. It was a brisk morning, and everyone was huddled around the reporter, Johnny Archer, listening to the game plan. Former University of Louisville football coach Howard Schnellenberger – a legend in his own right – was in the middle, flanked by two friends and associates, Joe Riano and Henry Westendarp.

The first interview segment was over at 5:45 a.m., so we went to a local restaurant for coffee. We practically had the place to ourselves since the shop didn't officially open until 6 a.m. As we got ready to shoot the second segment, the producer wanted the coach's comments on the U of L football coaching situation.

"We came from Florida to talk about texting and driving," coach said in the most recognizably deep bass voice in college football lore. I soon realized how he has built three successful college football programs.

This was the first of five events the coach had scheduled that day to talk about the problem of texting and driving and a possible solution. His friend, Mr. Riano, created a free app

– [FreeSafeText](#) -- to block all incoming texts and phone calls while driving. Coach Schnellenberger is the spokesperson for the app and has been on TV and radio from Birmingham to Louisville to Los Angeles promoting it.

Coach and friends went on to record with the Red and Blue Review television sports show and then made a surprise appearance at our Impaired Driving Enforcement Awards ceremony. They then went on to another appearance at Papa John's Stadium and we reunited for an interview on the Afternoon Underdogs, a radio sports show on 790 WKRD. At all of these events, he talked about the state of college football, but also was given ample time to discuss the new cell phone app.

Finally, at 9 a.m. on Dec. 6, we recorded a distracted driving PSA along with former U of L quarterback Brian Brohm at the CW Network studio (WBKI) in Louisville. This will begin airing in the Louisville market this week.

Having grown up watching a marginal Louisville football program and then watching Coach Schnellenberger build it into a relevant program was great. Working with him on our distracted driving program was, frankly, surreal.

In these 24 plus hours, I saw Mr. Schnellenberger as the coach, but he was merely playing the part of a concerned father and grandfather trying to use technology to stop an increasing problem in our nation.

Did you know?

2011 traffic fatalities decline nationwide from 2010

An [analysis by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#) indicates highway deaths fell to 32,367 in 2011, marking the lowest level since 1949 and a 1.9 percent decrease from the previous year.

NSC celebrates 100 years of safety

The [National Safety Council estimates nearly 6 million lives have been saved](#) through the collaborative efforts of people working to save lives and prevent injuries for the past 100 years.

GHSA praises report calling for motorcycle safety changes

The [Governor's Highway Safety Association](#) praised an [evaluation from the Government Accountability Office](#) of federal and state efforts to address motorcycle safety.

Industry study looks at driver distraction

A [study by the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers](#) aims to give the industry a glimpse at where consumers stand on certain auto-related issues.



The John R. Elliott HERO campaign for designated drivers

Governor Steve Beshear launched Kentucky's HERO Campaign for Designated Drivers Dec. 18, encouraging people to participate in designated driving programs throughout Kentucky. The national campaign was established by the family of Navy Ensign John Elliott of Atlantic County, N.J., who was killed in 2000 in a head-on collision with a drunken driver.

"The HERO Campaign's mission is to end drunk-driving fatalities, injuries and accidents nationwide by promoting designated driving and reminding the public to drive sober," Gov. Beshear said. "I'm proud that we're bringing attention to this noble cause and encouraging residents to use designated drivers."

The HERO Campaign works in cooperation with schools, businesses, law enforcement agencies and other community-based organizations to promote the use of safe and sober designated drivers to prevent drunken driving tragedies. Businesses, including bars, taverns and restaurants, are invited to display posters and window decals identifying them as HERO sites, and serving free soft drinks to sober designated drivers. Law enforcement agencies are also being asked to participate and display HERO Campaign decals on their cars, and schools are being encouraged to start HERO Campaign chapters and integrate the campaign into their DUI prevention and educational programs.

The HERO campaign was inspired by Navy Ensign John Elliott, who was killed by a drunken driver as he was traveling home from Annapolis, Md., to southern New Jersey for his mother's birthday in July 2000. Elliott had recently graduated with merit from the United States Naval Academy, where he was named the Outstanding HERO of his graduating class, and had been preparing to enter naval flight officer school that fall.

Elliott's parents, Muriel and William Elliott, along with Kentucky State Police, local law enforcement, beverage distributors and retailers and community leaders, joined Gov. Beshear at the Prime Lounge in Louisville as he signed a proclamation designating Dec. 18, 2012, as HERO Campaign Day.

According to William Elliott, the campaign's goal is simple: to bring an end to drunken driving in America, and to spare other families the agony of losing a son or a daughter.

"Today does not mark the end of drunken driving, but let it mark the beginning of the end," Elliott said. "No parent should ever have to lose a son or daughter to a drunken driver. We promised John we would do everything possible to bring an end to drunk driving. With your help we can keep our promise."

The HERO Campaign is partnering with the [Kentucky Office of Highway Safety](#), [Kentucky State Police](#) and the [Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control](#). To launch the program,



HERO posters and billboards will be displayed throughout the state and HERO Campaign radio and television commercials will promote the campaign message, "Be a HERO. Be a Designated Driver®."

KSP Commissioner Rodney Brewer said all partners would promote the project through media and other resources, and will seek to honor Kentucky's top "Heroes."

"The unique concept for this campaign is that throughout the year, local heroes will be identified by retailers as those who serve as designated drivers," Brewer said. "Some of these individuals will receive public recognition for their efforts in saving lives and making responsible choices."

For more information on the HERO Campaign, visit www.herocampaign.org. Kentucky's website, www.kentuckyheroes.org, will be fully functional after Christmas.





Congratulations to the SAFE Patrol for being so efficient and helpful. You have a great program and great people. I was broken down on Interstate 24 and called for help. All of a sudden the person was there. I felt safe and he assured me he would stay until my problem was resolved. A big "hats off" to all of you fine folks.

Ray from Iowa

On Dec. 3, 2012, as I was traveling east on the Western Kentucky Parkway in Ohio County on my way home to northern Kentucky from Paducah, my car broke down. The SAFE Patrol truck stopped to assist me. I want to praise the gentleman who was very professional and provided me with assistance in securing a tow truck and ensuring my safety. It is an invaluable service to the people of Kentucky and the visitors that explore our beautiful state. Thank you!

Edna Lindemann

EventCalendar

An up-to-date and detailed listing will be on our [Events Facebook page](#)

Did you know?

Help your teen stop texting and driving

Texting while driving greatly increases the risk of a crash, yet it is one of the most difficult behaviors to curtail, especially among young, first-time drivers. [Click here](#) for 10 steps parents can take to help their teen be a safer and more responsible driver.

AAA releases holiday travel forecast

According to American Automobile Association's Holiday Travel Forecast, 93.3 million Americans are planning to travel this Christmas or New Year's. Read more [here](#).



Donate to SADD by signing the 'It Can Wait' pledge from AT&T

Each time a person signs AT&T's "It Can Wait" pledge to never text and drive, AT&T will donate \$2 to Students Against Destructive Decisions, plus a bonus of \$5 for every five friends invited who also take the pledge. Click [here](#) to make your pledge today.

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Cooperative Agencies



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