



# The MADDvisor

December 2008

Volume 1

## *Tis' the Season. . .*

During the month of December 3,235 people were killed in crashes on America's roadways in 2007. Of these, 992 people were killed in crashes that involved a driver or motorcycle operator with a blood alcohol concentration of .08 or higher. During the Christmas and New Year holiday periods, the number of fatalities per day increases significantly and are higher than the total number of fatalities per day for the rest of December. On average, from 2001-2005, 40% of all fatalities occurred during the Christmas and New Year holidays compared to 28% during the rest of December (Table 1).

**Table 1. Fatalities per day in drunk driving crashes by Holiday Period from 2001-2005**

Holiday Period	Fatalities Per Day	% Total Fatalities
New Year's	54	41%
Christmas	45	38%
Rest of December	33	28%
Whole Year	36	31%

This holiday season, whether you have had one too many or way too many, it's not worth risking your life or someone else's life. Follow these general safe driving tips to ensure that you and your loved ones get where you're going this holiday season safe and sound. If you are planning to drink alcohol, designate a sober driver before going out.

- If impaired, call a taxi, use mass transit, or call a sober friend or family member.
- Wear your seat belt while in a car or use a helmet and protective gear when on a motorcycle as these are your best defenses against an impaired driver.
- Travel during daylight hours if possible.
- If planning a road trip over the holidays, make sure your vehicle is serviced and checked out to allow for repairs.
- When driving, keep doors and windows locked and maintain at least a half a tank of fuel.
- If traveling out of state, check to see what the road conditions are before leaving.
- Keep your cell phone with you and charged in case of emergencies.

**MADD Nebraska would like to wish you and your family a safe and healthy holiday season. HAPPY HOLIDAYS!**



## Spotlight on SOC

This month, MADD Nebraska highlights SOC member Gene Cotter. While Gene is a new member of the SOC he has, through his work with the State Probation Office, helped drunken driving offenders see the effects of drunken and impaired driving through his staffing of, and referrals to Victim Impact Panels. Gene attended the 2008 Lifesavers Conference in Portland, Oregon and brought what he learned back to his office and a committee on which he serves which focuses its attention on reducing recidivism in drunken driving. Gene holds a Bachelors degree in Criminal Justice from UNL and is a supervisor in the District #6. Probation Office in Lincoln. He has worked in probation since 1990.

## Holiday of Trees

On December 4 and 5, the 36th Annual Holiday of Trees was held at the Westminster Presbyterian Church. A total of 25 trees were displayed. MADD Nebraska participated in the event this year with a tree representing "The Key to Happy Holiday- Celebrating Safe and Sober." Ninety-one keys hung from the MADD Nebraska tree, which celebrated the life of 91 individuals who died in 2007 as a result of an alcohol related crash. MADD encourages our community members to drive safe, sober, and buckled up this season so we all arrive home for the holidays. MADD would like to thank Westlake Hardware for donating keys for the tree.



## State Farm Mocktail Reception

MADD partnered with State Farm on December 9 at the Lincoln Regional Office to host a "Mocktail Reception" for State Farm employees. During the reception MADD spoke about the annual "Tie One On For Safety" Campaign, asking those in attendance to make a pledge to drive safe, sober and buckled up this holiday season and throughout the year. To bring the message close to home, the White family spoke about how a drunk driver impacted their lives on December 23, 2007, forever changing their lives. Susan and Bob White talked candidly about the seriousness of drunk driving and how one person's disregard for the law can lead to a lifetime of change. The White's son and daughter-in-law work for State Farm - the message was well received and MADD appreciated the White's commitment to change community attitudes so others will not have to face a holiday in the hospital as they did - drunk driving is 100% preventable.



Susan & Bob White

## Nebraska Happenings



High Visibility Checkpoints, Lancaster County Sheriff's Office, Mid-December

NSP Press Release

Roll Call Briefings, Lincoln Police Department, 3rd Shift, December 19 & 21.

Release of MADD Court Monitoring Report, December 30

LB736, Mandatory ignition interlock device for first-time offenders becomes law, January 1

Victim Impact Panel: Douglas County, Metropolitan Community College Industrial Training Center,

### From the Executive Director....

### Tis' The Season to Remember our Victims/Survivors

MADD's lifesaving work is possible because of caring members like you. Your gift to MADD Nebraska is a gift of life and love, hope and healing, and will support our work here in Nebraska. I cannot tell you enough how much your financial support means to us here at the state office. To those that already gave, thank you. To those who are considering if they can give, just \$10.00 will help ensure victims/survivors get the support they need after the impact. It is the season to give thanks and my gratitude goes out to all who help MADD Nebraska meet our mission daily. Your gifts today will Make A Difference Daily! <http://www.maddnebraska.org/donate>. Simera Reynolds. . .

