



LOOKING DOWN THE ROAD Persuading Legislators to Do the Right Thing

By William S. Aiken Jr.



Back in December of 2018, I first met Tom Louizou at a meeting with New York State Senator James Tedisco. We were urging the Senator to co-sponsor a bill to lower the BAC. Louizou has worked with legislators on DWI bills for decades. Bella Dinh-Zarr was also part of that meeting. I was impressed with both their in-depth knowledge of statistics and persuasion skill set. A short time after that meeting, Louizou and Dinh-Zarr decided to form a coalition with several of their colleagues to advocate on behalf of states trying to pass .05 bills.

The Coalition is a diverse, independent group of non-affiliated organizations supporting a .05% (blood alcohol concentration) per se law to prevent deaths and injuries caused by drinking and driving.

.05 Saves Lives Coalition Founders:

- Hon. T. Bella Dinh-Zarr, PhD, MPH, Former NTSB Vice Chairman
- Thomas M. Louizou, Former NHTSA Regional Administrator
- Marilena Amoni, Former NHTSA Associate Administrator
- David A. Sleet, PhD, Professor Emeritus, San Diego State University College of Health and Human Services



Thomas M. Louizou

Being persuasive is imperative to getting laws passed. A single tragic, heartfelt story can be more persuasive than a thousand statistics. In 1982, six anti-DWI laws were passed in New York State that changed our criminal justice system and set the stage for the rest of the nation to follow suit.

In the midst of that debate, Doris Aiken contacted the Assembly speaker's Rabbi. She made a moral argument why the bills needed to be enacted. She didn't quote the Rabbi statistics. Her tactic was quite shrewd and effective. Yet while her tactic would be frowned upon today, Doris understood she had to connect with the Speaker's Rabbi on an emotional level. In today's world where communication is done via E-mails and Texts, making that connection can be quite challenging.

Louizou understands the psychology of this dynamic better than most. Its one of the reasons he's been so effective all these years as an anti-DWI advocate. In this interview, Louizou talks about what inspired a life long commitment to improve road safety, elaborates on the legislative process from the persuasion angle, and explains why some DWI myths remain in the public consciousness and how you can make a difference.

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Looking Down The Road...

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1. Recently, I interviewed Schenectady District Attorney Robert Carney, who cited some 1980 DWI statistics that shocked me. RID got started after a local tragedy forced Doris Aiken to realize our legal system for handling DWI cases was corrupt. She hadn't given much thought about the issue until this case drew her ire. Was there an event that inspired you to get involved?

It was not one unbearable tragedy. My career involved working with State and local highway safety offices and their partner agencies and organizations. It was quickly evident that traffic crashes were a leading cause of death and injury for all age groups. And it was easy to see that crashes were a major public health problem that created huge social and economic burdens for our nation.

But it wasn't until I was exposed to citizen and grass roots advocacy groups like RID, SADD and MADD that the victims, their families and communities had a human face. In 1981, New York's groundbreaking STOP-DWI general deterrence program provided a remedy. I've since spent my working life, advocating for better laws that are vigorously enforced, swiftly adjudicated and adequately publicized and funded.

I first learned about lowering the BAC in 1982 when Surgeon General C. Everett Koop announced this idea at an anti-DWI conference. When did you first become aware of lowering the BAC as a policy issue?

About the same time, I started working for NHTSA in the late 70s. As it is today, a major focus was on alcohol related fatalities which back then accounted for a shocking 48% of all traffic fatalities. NHTSA and other orgs promoted better laws like .08 BAC (OR and UT were the first to lower their BAC limit from .10 to .08 in 1983; by 2005, all states had .08 BAC laws).

National legislation eventually made both .08 and Age 21 MDA mandatory. These laws along with better enforcement and adjudication programs helped reduce alcohol related fatalities by half; they now account for approximately 30% of all fatalities. But progress has now stagnated for decades.

3. Some people view lowering the BAC as an infringement to their right to be able to have a drink, then drive. How do you go about persuading lawmakers when this notion is so ingrained in our culture?

Be relentless in presenting the facts. Per capita alcohol consumption in countries with a .05BAC is the same or higher than in the US, but deaths are lower. For example, Sweden has a .02% BAC and Netherlands .05%. Alcohol related crash deaths in those countries account for 19% of fatalities. In the US, alcohol related crash deaths make up 31% of all crash deaths.

Average alcohol consumption is identical in the US and Sweden and slightly higher in the Netherlands. Lower limits do not necessarily increase arrests. They simply separate drinking and driving while reducing fatal alcohol crashes significantly. A majority of Americans and public health and safety organizations support .05% BAC laws.

For decades, the alcohol industry has attempted to make the case that a lower BAC will hurt the restaurant business. The data has proven this claim to be completely false. So why does this argument continue to resonate with the public?

Incomplete information is used to deflect the public's attention from the larger truths. The opposition will point out that the average BAC of arrest is approximately .15 and that lower BACs don't address the high BAC problem drinking driver.

The complete truth is that a lower BAC law changes behavior at all BAC levels by reducing driving after drinking, so it is an effective intervention for preventing driving even at higher BAC levels. And drivers with BACs between .05 and .08 have a seven times higher risk of being in a fatal crash than drivers with no alcohol in their system.

We must do a better job of getting this information to the public. The same anti-business argument was used when states began to lower the limit from .10 to .08. Their worst fears never materialized. Preliminary data from Utah which lowered their limit on December 30, 2018 has shown steady alcohol sales and consumption. Arrests haven't increased and restaurants haven't closed.

5. How did the success of Utah becoming the first state to pass .05 inspire your movement to lower the BAC in other states?

Lower limits had been a NTSB Most Wanted law for several years. While Vice Chairman at the NTSB, Bella Dinh-Zarr, who you recently interviewed, was a high profile advocate for .05 BAC laws. She was invited to testify in Utah which helped get the law passed. When her term ended in 2019, she vowed to continue the fight and asked me to join her as a co-founder of the .05 Saves Lives Coalition.

Also joining were Marilena Amoni, former NHTSA Associate Administrator and David A. Sleet, PhD, Professor Emeritus, San Diego State University College of Health and Human Services. Currently there are bills in several states including California and Michigan, as well as New York.

6. Can you elaborate on the agenda for the .05 Saves Lives Coalition in 2020?

The .05 Saves Lives Coalition will continue to work closely with its partners in New York and other states with pending bills. We hope to strengthen our collaboration with our public health, research, safety and advocacy organizations including the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety, FIA Foundation, Liam's Life Foundation, National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, World Health Organization, Safe States Alliance, American Public Health Association, National Safety Council, National Road Safety Foundation, Remove Intoxicated Drivers, and Society for Public Health Education.

7.) Is there a lot of debate among the .05 coalition when determining your strategy to pass .05 legislation? Or is there a general consensus on the path forward?

We are a small, collegial group that agrees on strategy. Differences are quickly resolved. We listen to each other.

How can people who want to make a difference get involved with .05 Saves Lives?

Political permission for better laws follows public permission for change. Like RID and MADD did in the late 70s, make your voice known and demand action. Raise the profile of the lower limits conversation. There is strength in numbers. Write to your State senators, assemblymen, Transportation Committee chairs, the leaders of the Senate and the Assembly and the Governor. Do your homework and use the resources found on our and our partners' websites to support the pending bills in the NYS legislature (AB2308, SB5117).

The .05 Saves Lives Coalition website is, www.05saveslives Links to partner organizations working for lower limits like the NTSB and the Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety are found there.

2019 STOP DWI SYMPOSIUM COMES TO ALBANY

By William Aiken



Jane and William Aiken at the STOP DWI Symposium at the Desmond Hotel



Kim Overton Spahos, Chief Resource Prosecutor of North Carolina DAs

STOP DWI hosted its Symposium at the Desmond Hotel in Albany, NY. The keynote speaker, Kim Overton Spahos kicked off the event with an energetic and interactive speech on leadership. She posed questions to the audience, engaging them to think through their answers. With most keynote speakers, the wall that separates the audience is present and noticeable. Overton Spahos's approach was a breath of fresh air.

She shared personal stories where she made misjudgments in her career and owned up to them. She showed great humility and insight the way she highlighted these examples. Her direct eye contact with the audience showcased confidence, charisma and empathy.

When Doris Aiken passed away and I could no longer had the benefit of her wisdom, RID went through a rough time. I made missteps that hurt the organization. Overton Spahos addressed many of the issues I dealt with upon stepping into a leadership role. She came across as an experienced, credible expert, articulating what effective leadership entails and how a successful leader deals with adversity. STOP DWI made an excellent choice for this year's keynote speaker. It set the tone for the Symposium. Good Job!

The second morning presentation by Maureen McCormick, Chief, Nassau Vehicular Crimes Bureau, tackled some tough issues; police suicides and dealing with a more scrutinizing public. While this presentation was geared toward law enforcement, everyone present appreciated a moment to acknowledge those officers, who put their lives at risk for the public's safety. The two afternoon sessions I attended gave an analysis of the needs of rural areas in New York State and explored the benefits of partnering with non-traditional organizations. I was impressed with the level of detail NYS traffic safety engages in to address issues that affect our rural communities. The session on non-traditional partners had people share their experience of working with businesses that may be considered political adversaries such as beer distributors or wine associations. I learn there's value in partnering where you can find common ground.

ALERT: A Symposium attendee reminded me that as part of the cash bail reform in Governor Cuomo's budget, 30 serious crimes including 2nd degree manslaughter will no longer require cash bail. Recidivism of certain crimes will no longer mandate cash bail either. This "reform" ties the hands of judges and creates a revolving door for chronic repeat DWI offenders. This change is effective Jan. 1, 2020. Please call the Assembly Speaker, Carl Heastie: (518) 455-3791 to voice your opposition.

.05 NOT ONLY SAVES LIVES, IT LETS BUSINESSES THRIVE

By William S. Aiken Jr.

During a contentious year that Utah debated the pros and cons of lowering its legal BAC (Blood Alcohol Content) threshold, the Alcohol industry spent thousands of dollars resisting the proposed legislation. They ran a ubiquitous TV campaign, "Go on Vacation, Return on Probation". However, this scare tactic failed as Utah became the nation's first state to pass .05.

Now we have results that show the .05 law is a stunning success. In a comparative analysis of data from the Utah Highway Patrol, the first quarters of 2017 and 2019, DWI fatalities and crashes were reduced by 70% and 30%. These figures are remarkable. The premise that .05 BAC would serve as a proactive deterrent has been born out by the numbers.

The claim that lowering the BAC would have an adverse effect on the restaurant business is debunked as well. Remove Intoxicated Drivers has been fighting an uphill battle on this argument since the Surgeon General first supported lowering the BAC in 1984. While the data in other countries consistently show that alcohol consumption never decreased after lowering their BAC, those facts were dismissed out of hand. Those cultures have differences like greater access to public transportation and less concentration of bars and restaurants than the US.

So it was important to examine any change in revenue for tourism and restaurants, specifically walk in business. A comparative analysis of those indexes in Utah from 2017 to 2019 shows a 12% increase in tourism and an 8% increase in walk in revenue. While this measure covers a short time period, it's very encouraging for those of us who are advocating for .05 in our own state.

The news out of Utah will be at the center of debate in hearings at the state level to move the legislation forward to the Governor's desk. I am expecting the other side to argue you can't compare Utah to New York. But that's just a case of moving the goalposts. For years, they claimed you can't compare the US to other countries when it comes to lowering the BAC.

Yet, lowering the BAC laws is a difficult task. It can't be done with data alone. You have to make a personal and emotional connection. The alcohol industry has been very successful in using emotional arguments to retain the status quo. The difference is they have no studies or facts to back them up.

So it's essential to connect the life saving data with the personal stories of tragedy from survivors who have lost loved ones.

Another factor that will help the public get acclimated to .05, and this can't be overlooked, is the tremendous resource of the media. News programs and Public Service Announcements would get out the message that the BAC threshold is now .05. Public awareness would be raised like we haven't seen since the law required its citizens to buckle up. At the moment, people just aren't paying attention.

There are a lot of people who view lowering the BAC as taking away their rights and giving the government too much power. I would point out to those who believe the right to drink and drive shall not be infringed upon, these points: Driving is not a privilege. More importantly, over 10,000 deaths occur in the US annually. Lowering the BAC threshold would reduce that number by 10%. Both of the major studies that have been done on .05 by the National Traffic Safety Board (2103) and the Academics of Engineering, Science and Medicine (2018) came to the same conclusion, confirming this hypothesis.

Here's the latest proof from the Utah Highway Patrol:

Statewide numbers, in Quarter 1, January 1st to March 31st, 2019:
Total DUI arrests: 2,713 Total arrests between .05-.079 BAC*: 135
*59 were under 21-years old and 27 were Alcohol restricted drivers.
2018 Alcohol related crashes: 416 (10 deaths) 2019 Alcohol related crashes: 236 (3 deaths)

When the New York State legislature was debating whether to allow Uber and Lyft to do business here, those ride sharing services, it was argued, would help reduce drunken driving. A .05 BAC gives the public an incentive to utilize these services, by providing them a way to avoid getting behind the wheel after drinking. Drinking and driving should be a binary choice. People who wish to go out and drink need to follow that example. If they choose to ignore the law, regardless, a tougher standard is warranted.

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RID

Not Only Does .05 Save Lives...

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The availability of Uber and Lyft allow people to enjoy an evening out in a safe and responsible manner. Restaurants and bars benefit as well. The fact is that .05 doesn't have a negative impact on the restaurant industry as demonstrated in the table below:

SALES BY CUSTOMER TYPE: THIRD QTR FISCAL YEAR 2017-2019					
CUSTOMER TYPE	Jan-17	Feb-17	Mar-17	TOTAL	% SALES
WALK-IN	\$23,830,493	\$26,510,375	\$31,803,582	\$82,144,450	79.7%
LICENSEE (on premise)	\$6,381,781	\$6,544,621	\$8,058,754	\$20,985,156	20.3%
TOTAL - FY 17 QTR 3	\$30,212,274	\$33,054,996	\$39,862,336	\$103,129,606	
SALES BY CUSTOMER TYPE: THIRD QTR FISCAL YEAR 2018-2019					
CUSTOMER TYPE	Jan-18	Feb-18	Mar-18	TOTAL	% SALES
WALK-IN	\$24,620,458	\$27,586,328	\$34,492,775	\$86,699,561	80.3%
LICENSEE (on-premise)	\$6,342,723	\$6,773,541	\$8,171,604	\$21,287,868	19.7%
TOTAL - FY 18 QTR 3	\$30,963,181	\$34,359,869	\$42,664,379	\$107,987,429	
SALES BY CUSTOMER TYPE: THIRD QTR FISCAL YEAR 2019-2020					
CUSTOMER TYPE	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	TOTAL	% SALES
WALK-IN	\$35,255,828	\$29,220,227	\$29,043,413	\$93,519,468	80.3%
LICENSEE (on premise)	\$8,421,122	\$7,209,809	\$7,382,326	\$23,013,257	19.7%
TOTAL - FY 19 QTR 3	\$43,676,950	\$36,430,036	\$36,425,739	\$116,532,725	

Utah Winter Visits Info 2017-2019

Winter 2018/2019:

Record season for Utah:

Visits up nearly 24% to 5.125M visits (close to 1M add'l visits this season)

Up nearly 12% from previous record of 4.58M visits in 16/17 (over 500,000 add'l visits from record)

~8.4% Nat'l share (up from 7.8%) prior season

Doris Aiken had an exceptional gift for giving a voice to those survivors of drunken driving. She provided a platform, in which thousands were able to share their story. The culture changed as a result. What Doris lacked at the time, were the studies that solidified her argument. Also the option of car services, such as Lyft and Uber weren't around, either.

Now that we have both of those elements, the momentum to pass a .05 BAC in New York and other states has never been stronger.

AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES WILL CAUSE SOME CRASHES. THAT'S JUST PART OF THE EVOLUTION TO THE FUTURE.

By William S. Aiken Jr.

In my last "Looking Down the Road" column, I interviewed New York State Trooper Sargent Terrence McDonnell, an expert on Autonomous vehicles. He stated in that interview that driverless cars would be a game changer for road safety. He cited the statistic that over 96% of car crashes are due to human error. Autonomous vehicles would remove that element from the equation. Yet, how do we get there?

The sentiment that America will soon transition away from vehicles driven by humans to adapting to autonomous vehicles seems inevitable. However, whenever I ask people if they would feel safe being driven in an unmanned car, most say they would be very uncomfortable and would avoid being a passenger or a human guinea pig.

There are so many companies investing in self-driving technology that it's hard to keep track of them all. The Brookings Institute tried anyway with their latest report on the industry.

After tracking deals and investments, they estimate that ~\$80 billion has been invested in the race to bring the technology to market.(1) So while Tesla might be considered to be the leader in the driverless vehicle technology, the forerunner has yet to be determined. The competition is fueling massive investment and resources to bear. The accelerated pace of this technology makes it difficult to predict a timeline for the transition to driverless cars.

When we look back at the first experiments with autonomous vehicles during the Iraq war, the military vehicles were limited to carrying supplies in short distances. They could barely navigate terrain where no other vehicles were present, and were constantly malfunctioning. Fast forward to the present, Artificial Intelligence has emerged as the dominant factor in autonomous vehicle development. There is a consensus amongst most technological players in the world that artificial intelligence, AI, is going to have a major impact on the economy in the near future, roughly 5 to 10 years from now.

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Autonomous Vehicles...

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Companies like Toyota and Ford have dedicated billions of dollars in Research and Development for autonomous vehicle technology.(1) Services like Uber and Lyft, who currently pay humans to drive, would soon deploy an entire fleet of self driving cars. In a few years, we would see self driving cars being sold to regular consumers.

If we look at services that offer mobility on demand, such as Uber, Lyft, etc., and analyze the cost per kilometer, the driver makes up for 50% of the cost. If you remove the driver out of the loop and if you move to electric fuel as well, the cost per kilometer reduces significantly.

Another issue autonomous vehicles will address is the underutilization of human driven cars. Owning a car is expensive. It's estimated that we drive cars 4% of the time and they sit idle 96% the rest of the time. A system that employed a robust fleet of driverless cars providing an Uber like-service to the general public would resolve this inefficiency issue. It would reduce the number of cars and lower the cost of transportation for millions. It will also give the consumer the option of owning a vehicle without the need to store it in a garage.

During the period from 2015 to 2017, Driving Assist has been used. Driving Assist is a technology used to prevent accidents. This technology has been used to help a hands-free vehicle stay in lane. With this technology, the driver still needs to stay alert. It is not really autonomous driving because the system can make mistakes. It doesn't have 360 degree awareness. It doesn't see everything. It is not designed to address all possible crash situations, which is why the driver needs to stay alert. (2)

Since 2018, we have been talking about Highly Autonomous Driving. These are real hands-free driving scenarios, which only work on major highways. Highly autonomous driving means that the driver does not have to have his or her eyes on the road. The system will provide a grace period, between 10 to 30 seconds, for the driver to take over – if the driver doesn't, the system will know how to safely move the car aside and stop it. (2)

The real action starts in 2021. What we'll be seeing is the so called Fully Autonomous Driving. It is also known as "level 4 autonomy," where cars can drive in cities and provide mobility on demand, kind of like Uber without a human driver.

Let's explore how insuring an autonomous vehicle would work for the average consumer. Sergeant McDonnell stated that the model being proposed would look like this: the passengers in an autonomous vehicle wouldn't be required to be a licensed driver or have to be registered as the owner of the vehicle. The registered owner would have liability for insuring the vehicle and making sure the vehicle was up-to-date with a valid inspection.

With AI technology, there will be entirely new guidelines for inspection. This process will involve the testing of complex sensors and GPS features. The intervals of these inspections may be shortened to ensure the vehicle's sensors are functioning properly. Driverless car inspections will be more expansive, thorough and expensive than they are now.

In October 2018, a limo with faulty brakes that had twice failed inspection was operated by an unqualified driver. This dangerous combination resulted in a horrific crash in Schoharie, NY, killing 20 people. This tragedy has forced lawmakers to examine the inspection system. There is an ongoing rigorous debate on the inspection guidelines for driverless cars with safety at the forefront of the conversation.

There will no doubt be some resistance to driverless cars. However, technology will march onward and the free market will determine the road to the future. I recall in the early 1970s, my friend's father, who worked in the energy industry, remarked how some companies had transitioned to using computers. These companies went bankrupt as a result.

His point was that these companies made a huge mistake by using new technology. His premise was flawed. Failure is part of human ingenuity and a necessary step toward making progress. The innovators who are leading the path toward driverless cars understand this process better than we ever have in history. What will the end result be? That's nearly impossible to predict. It's the nature of today's perpetual changing technology.

1. *New York Times*, March 2019

2. *Codementor Community*, July 2018



SUPREME COURT DECISION: WHAT IT MEANS ON THE ROAD AND THE IMPORTANCE OF DETECTION

By Renee Barchitta



Supreme Court of the United States, 2019: Seated from left to right in the bottom row are Associate Justice Stephen Breyer, Associate Justice Clarence Thomas, Chief Justice John Roberts, Associate Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Associate Justice Samuel Alito.

Law Enforcement now has a new tool in their fight against impaired drivers menacing our roads. Arresting and prosecuting impaired and intoxicated drivers after a crash has a new tool that gives the ability to speed up the testing of unconscious drivers expected of alcohol-related impaired or intoxicated driving.

The US Supreme Court ruled with a 5-4 decision on June 27, 2019 that police may, order blood drawn from an unconscious person suspected of driving under the influence of alcohol without a warrant from a judge or magistrate. A warrant is usually obtained in person, by phone, electronic warrant, or e-warrant, depending on the State and jurisdiction. Blood must be drawn after a DUI injury or fatal crash.

The Fourth Amendment generally requires police to obtain a warrant to draw blood.

The Supreme Court upheld a Wisconsin law that says people driving on a public road have impliedly consented to having their blood drawn if police suspect them of driving under the influence.

The importance of obtaining blood quickly and accurately will determine the blood alcohol concentration (BAC) in order to arrest and prosecute the impaired driver. The average person will metabolize between 0.15 and .02 reducing the BAC level of impairment per hour depending on sex, weight, food consumption, physical condition, and tolerance built up by how often and much alcohol is consumed.

It is important to quickly determine the level of impairment for arrest and prosecution. Each average alcohol drink of a twelve-ounce regular beer (which usually contains five percent alcohol), or five ounces of wine (which is typically about twelve percent alcohol) or one and a half ounces of liquor, (which is about forty percent alcohol): all cause equal impairment.

The BAC level is always important, possibly even most important in the case of a serious injury or fatal crash for arrest and prosecution. In an injury or fatal crash, it can take up to four hours for a police officer to obtain a BAC. Normally an alcohol-related driving arrest includes a roadside test out of the vehicle. The Standard Field Sobriety Test (SFST) is standardized and most often required in jurisdictions. The SFST includes the following tests on the driver's eye movement with

a pen type instrument. Walk and Turn test, and a One-Leg-Stand and a than a breath test instrument, (Breathalyzer) most often done at a police station. A number of large police departments have a Mobile Van Unit at checkpoints or at the scene during some injury and fatal crashes, that is equipped with a Breathalyzer instrument, which speeds up the time of obtaining a BAC. A small number of police officers are especially trained as phlebotomists who can draw blood for medical testing at a serious or fatal crash.

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIH), in 2016, among people killed in driving crashes, 43.6% of drivers who were drug tested and had positive results and 50.5% were positive for two or more drugs. The increase in impaired drug driving often includes combinations of several drugs sometimes including alcohol. The increase in impaired drugged driving has made it necessary that all police officers can help in the detection of drugged driving. However, a Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) will have the most trained skill at detecting drugs other than alcohol. DREs can be called to the scene and police and can testify in court.

A Drug Recognition Expert is a law enforcement officer highly trained to identify people whose driving is impaired by drugs. All DREs follow the same twelve step procedure to determine which category of drugs is causing the driver to be impaired. Not all police officers are trained DREs that requires in depth, long term training. There are seven drug categories of classifications a DRE is looking for, including: central nervous system depressants (benzodiazepines), CNS stimulants (methamphetamine), dissociative anesthetics (PCP), cannabis-THC marijuana, hallucinogens (mushrooms), inhalants (glue), and narcotic analgesics (opiates).

To fill the gap of trained DRE, many more officers on the road are ARIDE trained. The Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement (ARIDE) law enforcement officers are trained to observe, identify, and articulate the signs of impairment related to drugs. In order to reduce the number of impaired drivers and impaired driving related traffic collisions.

SFST training must be completed before officers can take the sixteen-hour training ARIDE course. The ARIDE Course includes instruction SFST Review, The Seven Major Drug Categories, Signs and Symptom logic, Physiology of Drugs, Drug Combinations, Courtroom Testimony, Report Writing (The New York State Governor's Traffic Safety Committee). Obviously, the more law enforcement officers in police departments on the road trained in ARIDE, the better the apprehension of impaired drivers.

Preventing and removing impaired drivers from our roads saves lives and prevents injuries and property damage and all other costs. The US Supreme Court has provided one more enhancement in the arrest and prosecution of the impaired driver by allowing quicker BAC detection needed after serious injuries and fatal crashes.

Renee' Barchitta, MPA

Former Delaware County NY STOP-DWI Educator and Coordinator and NYS Governor's Traffic Safety Highway Representative.

RID member since 1980

JOSEPHINE (JO) JOHNSON



In the late 1970's Jo Johnson was an average housewife with 3 young adult children. She was working in the Insurance Industry and was seeing statistics over and over again that indicated young drivers, age 18–25, had the highest risk for fatal drunk driving crashes. This bothered her on many levels, especially since her three children were all young drivers at that time. Jo became personally concerned and began to look for a way to get involved.

Ironically, on April 21, 1981, Jo herself became a victim and was hit head on by an impaired driver. After many weeks in the hospital and many more months of recuperation she began to look for organizations that would help remove impaired drivers from our roads. She reviewed statistics and researched information from various organizations and came across Remove Intoxicated Drivers (RID). She contacted the New York State RID Chapter in Schenectady, NY, an organization that worked to represent the victims of intoxicated driving and the victims' families. With the help of Mrs. Doris Aiken, the Dutchess County RID Chapter was organized in November of 1981.

The initial premise was to Remove Impaired Drivers but to also be an advocate for the victims since most services were directed at the perpetrators of the accident. In 1983, Jo organized and held the first Victims Memorial Service to remember those killed by impaired drivers in Dutchess County with the motto of "we shall never forget". This memorial service has been held for 36 years in front of the County Office Building in Poughkeepsie, NY prior to the Memorial Day holiday. RID also maintains a plaque in the county office building, with the Names of the Fallen on the wall across from the Motor Vehicle Office, a fitting place for remembering the victims of impaired driving.

As time went on Jo realized that the Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) for identifying impaired drivers needed to be lowered. Jo organized a petition

drive to reduce the BAC for Driving under the Influence (DUI) from .1 to .08. She collected and delivered petitions with over 10,000 signatures to New York State Senator Steve Salad in Albany during the debate. This helped in getting legislation passed lowering the BAC to .08.

Jo was tireless in her efforts to educate young people on the dangers of impaired n driving while simultaneously working to impose stricter legal consequences. She also started a scholarship fund to provide a scholarship to a Dutchess County high school senior who developed the best media piece depicting the theme of "Don't drink and drive".

Jo also served on many victim impact panels and Impaired Driving presentations trying to convince high schoolers not to drink and drive. To back up her efforts, Jo and Dutchess County RID supported the local SADD Chapters and funded many designated drivers to help high school prom goers to get home safely.

Jo worked with the victims of families by counseling them in what to expect, sitting with them during trials, as well as offering words of comfort and solace. As a parent and victim herself, she was a tender heart who could empathize easily. For many years Jo conducted a RED RIBBON campaign at the local mall. This was always held in early December. The Red "R.I.D." Ribbons were to be put on car antennas to remind people not to Drink and Drive.

The County of Dutchess posthumously presented Jo's family with a plaque honoring her efforts and achievements in 2012. This plaque currently is hung in the County Office Building, next to the victims' plaque.

Jo's legacy continued in 2019 with the 36th Annual Victim Memorial Service in which 49 killed are remembered. Jo was a force in the movement to hold drunk drivers accountable. She was a fighter and will be missed. Jo's fervent wish that she often stated was "wouldn't it be nice if we put ourselves out of business."

RID DUTCHESS COUNTY MEMORIALIZES JO JOHNSON

By William S. Aiken Jr.

*Jo Johnson, Founder of RID Dutchess County
July 7th, 1939 – December 25th, 2011*

This past spring, I drove down to Poughkeepsie to attend RID Dutchess County's tribute to its founder, Jo Johnson, and to victims who lost their lives to drunken drivers. The event was held in front of the Dutchess County Office building in downtown Poughkeepsie on a sunny, mild May afternoon. Dutchess County District Attorney, William V. Grady addressed the audience. Many members of law enforcement were also in attendance.

Alice Riveria, whose 16 year old son was killed by a drunken driver fourteen years ago, was on hand to be part of the ceremony. "I'm here," Riveria addressed the crowd, "because I want to do something positive to remember my son." She added, "We are all here because we don't want any more casualties."

Erin Edgeworth, 20, killed by a drunken driver in 1999, was added to the plaque honoring DWI victims, whose lives were cut short. This tribute serves as an important reminder to everyone that driving sober, despite all the efforts to educate the public, is still a concern that many don't heed. This disregard of the law causes great heartache and the ripple effect is felt all across the community.

Johnson was hit head on by a drunk driver in 1981. She spent weeks in the hospital, then began a month's long journey recovering from her injuries. She was inspired to do something. So in 1983, she formed RID Dutchess

County and worked tirelessly with Stop DWI, elected officials and law enforcement to curb drunken driving. She was extremely effective in giving voice to victims who for too long were taken for granted.

Johnson built RID into one of its strongest, influential chapters, making its presence felt in the Legislature as well as inspiring law enforcement to aggressively crack down on drunken drivers. Her husband, Bill and the RID chapter she started, continues her legacy. RID founder Doris Aiken had a motto: "You can make a difference." Jo Johnson took Doris's motto to heart and delivered that message in ways that will be felt for years to come.



In loving Memory and Honor of
JOSEPHINE "JO" JOHNSON
Founder Dutchess County RID



As well as to the memories of all those lost in
Impaired Driving Crashes in Dutchess County

"We Shall Never Forget"



ALFRED CRANCER, ANTI-DWI ACTIVIST

November 17, 1933- July 22, 2019



Long time RID contributor and California Chapter Head, Alfred Crancer, Jr., 85, of Moraga, CA, passed away July 22, 2019, at La Mesa Healthcare Nursing Facility in La Mesa, CA after a short illness, surrounded by his wife and children. He was born in Crestwood, MO on November 17, 1933.

Noted for his meticulously researched articles, Al fought tirelessly to keep the roads we share safer by holding drunken and impaired drivers accountable for their actions. He also displayed his sense of humor with the cynical cartoon strip, "Bureacat".



Al lived life with a passion for everything that mattered. Whenever I suggested to Al that he write an article for the RID newsletter, he always responded with a well-thought, thorough analysis of the issue, ahead of the deadline. When discussing California's legislation, Al would always come up with zinger that mocked the mindset of the powers that be. Despite his pessimism of our political system, he continued to fight to change and improve it. Through his copious research, he challenged and debunked many harmful myths about drunken driving. There was no one that used their sense of humor to get a point across, the way Al did.

He is survived by his loving wife, Esperanza "Espy", of 49 years, children, Alan Crancer of Little Rock, AR, Stephen (Michelle) Crancer of Rector, AR, Blake (Julie Ann) Crancer of Walnut Creek, CA, Sherman (Catherine) Crancer of San Juan Capistrano, CA, and Richard (Kasey) Crancer of Santee, CA, brothers Donald (Judy) Crancer of St. Louis, MO, Jerry (Gayle) Crancer of St. Louis, MO, Henry (Miriam) Schneiderheinze of St. Louis, MO, sister, Debbie (Larry) Weiss of St. Louis, MO, and half-sister, Susan Wilder, of St. Louis, MO. In addition, Al leaves behind his beloved grandchildren, Cora, Emma, Grace, Gianna, Grayson, Hayden, Landen, Lily, Marla, Nathan, Ryan, Sydney, and one great-grandchild, Tyler.

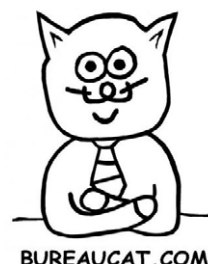
He was preceded in death by his father, Al Crancer Sr. of St. Louis, MO, mother "Mickey" Theresa Schneiderheinze Crancer of St. Louis MO, biological mother, Edna Cranford Forward of St. Louis MO, daughter, Dominique Brooks of Seattle WA, and brother, Dale Crancer of Kansas City, KS.

Al graduated from Kirkwood High School, Kirkwood, Mo and attended Arkansas State University in Jonesboro, AR on a wrestling scholarship where he won several national meets in his weight class. He was a member of ROTC and the A-State Letterman's Club and graduated with a degree in business. He continued his education by earning a Master's degree in Statistics from American University, Washington, DC.

He began his 40+ year career as a captain in the US Army, then worked for the federal government at the Department of Agricultural, Central Intelligent Agency (CIA) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). He has published numerous research articles published in various journals including Science, Journal of the American Medical Association, and the American Journal of Psychiatry and has US Patents. Following his retirement, he started Crancer and Associates, a research firm that conducted statistical research and analyses in traffic safety issues. Additionally, he was well known nationally for his articles on Marijuana and its effect on drivers.

Tennis was a big part of Al's life and he won numerous tennis tournaments in his age bracket. It was only within the last year after a minor heart attack following a tournament that he retired his racket and quit playing.

The family wishes to thank all the doctors/nurses and staff at Scripps in San Diego and at La Mesa Healthcare Nursing Facility.



Al, you will be sorely missed

SURVIVORS STORY:

ANNA RUSSO

By Anna Russo



Anna Russo lost her daughter, Gabriella and nephew, Nicholas to a Drunken Driver

On October 13, 1989, my sister-in-law, Susan Esposito, was driving home with her son Nicholas — who was in the front seat next to her — her two daughters, Jennifer and Sabrina, and my daughter four-year-old Gabriella — the three of them in the back seat, all wearing seat belts. They were laughing, joking and spending the night together as cousins. Then, it happened. Sue recalled seeing bright lights and then total silence for a second. Then the silence broke, and she could hear Jennifer and Gabriella screaming. She tried to calm them down and reassure them that everything was okay and soon help would come. She recalled saying, “I looked at Nick and saw his beautiful little body lying sideways toward me. I was pinned between the steering wheel and the seat. Unable to move, I stroked Nick’s blonde hair and felt for a pulse. I prayed over and over to the Virgin Mary to help him, but I knew my Nicholas was gone.”

I was called to rush to the hospital where my daughter Gabriella was going through the first of many surgeries, and we were told the devastating news that Nicholas was gone. The first child in our large family — our little blond hair and blue eyed prince — was gone.

My Gabby fought for her life for 19 days. She had a minimum of 4 surgeries and she was in an induced coma all that time. Only once she opened her eyes and a tear came down her beautiful pink cheeks. She desperately fought for her life, not ready to let go of all of us. She had just turned 4 on September 23, 1989 and we were all getting ready for Nicholas’ 6th birthday on October 17, 1989. She wanted to be a ballerina and had so many dreams. But Gabriella could not win the battle and she was pronounced dead on November 1, 1989.

Our children have always been so important to our family. We left our home country of Italy to make a better life in America for them. Since that day in 1989, we have been devastated at the loss of not one, but two children and the pain that tore our family apart. The family that once joined to celebrate the holidays with joy and laughter no longer exists. All gatherings have the shadow of the loss of Gabriella and Nicholas and the sadness of the family.

Two families who worked hard each day, played with kids at night, went to music and dance lessons, were now enduring the emptiness, unable to console each other, each feeling things the other could not understand.

Memories of the past are what’s left of our future. The surviving children now grow with a family in pain.

That night 30 years ago on October 13, 1989 was all caused by a drunk driver. Without respect for his life or that of others, he drove his van and struck my sister-in-law’s car. The irresponsible behavior of that drunk driver and his passenger has taken two beautiful children from our families with virtually no punishment. That drunk driver can never end the life-long sentences that our families have been given. The pain in our hearts cannot be eased and nothing can bring them back.

I have been robbed of my future. I have no daughter to guide through life. I cannot look forward to her first date, planning her wedding or the birth of her children. A mother’s life continues through her daughter, but mine has been destroyed. Memories of the past are what’s left everyday. Today I do not consider myself a victim but I’m a survivor. I had to re-learn the simple tasks of life, how to put one foot in front of another every morning. I carry a hole in heart as big as the universe, and the pain is unbearable at times. But with the love of my family I’m surviving until I see them again.

Memories are important to each one of us. They shape the way we grow as a person. Whether it is of excitement or sadness, our lives tend to change, sooner or later with positive effects. For me, the most important memory I cherish to this day is that of my Gabriella.

Nowadays the hope I have of seeing Gabriella once again is what gets me through the toughest of times, but there will always be that haunting memory of the death of my greatest love. Her memory is what makes me a better person, for it is what pushes me on to excel past things and give my kids and husband the life I always wanted and some day will have .

My life was supposed to be a rainbow with an end of pot of gold: My rainbow started with Gabriella, and colors were added with her brothers, my great daughter-in law, and two beautiful grandchildren, but there is no pot of gold at the end of this rainbow until I see Gabriella and Nicholas again.

Survivor’s Story is a platform for those who have lost a loved one to a drunken driver. If you would like to share your story with our readers, please contact William Aiken at (518) 372-0034 or you can send an e-mail at ridusa@verizon.net



*Gabriella Russo
September 23, 1985 –
November 1, 1989*

**What are the issues related to
drunken driving in your community?**

**If you're interested in submitting an article
for the newsletter, or have a comment or
suggestion, RID is happy to provide this
platform to voice your concerns.**

**William Aiken, Vice President
ridusa@verizon.net
or call (518) 372-0034**



A CITIZEN'S PROJECT TO REMOVE INTOXICATED DRIVERS

P.O. Box 520, Schenectady, New York 12301

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