



DORIS C. AIKEN

JULY 31, 1926 – MARCH 15, 2107

By William S. Aiken Jr.



The world lost a heroic figure in the anti-drunken driving movement when RID President, Doris Aiken, 90 passed away at her home surrounded by family members, following a hospitalization. Doris will be remembered for being a trailblazing pioneer and activist, who was the forerunner in getting society to treat drunken driving seriously as a matter of life and death in this country.

Doris found her calling at the age of 51 when she founded Remove Intoxicated Drivers, immediately making a profound impact on a stubborn decade's old problem

that had caused tremendous heartache for millions of families. Her contributions to reforming the criminal justice system in the area of DWI will be felt long after her passing.

She was born in 1926 to Adam Hastings Crouthamel and Eva Brown Crouthamel in Souderton, PA. She graduated from Souderton High School in 1944, and then she worked for an insurance company in Philadelphia for seven years. She moved to Los Angeles to attend UCLA where she graduated in with a BA in sociology. While attending UCLA, she met the love of her life, William Aiken Sr. and on November 4, 1956 they married in Santa Monica, CA.

In 1964, Doris got her start in activism as a trainer of job skills for poor minority women working for the legendary former Congresswoman, Barbara Jordan in Houston, TX. She continued to pursue her interest in social issues working for the charity Save the Children in Westport, CT. In 1972, she moved to Niskayuna and ran as a Democrat for the 107th Assembly District seat and lost in November of 1974.

While Doris was hosting a TV show for at Channel 6 WRGB, she learned of a local case where a teenaged brother and sister were killed by a drunken driver. This event inspired her to start RID (Remove Intoxicated Drivers) in 1978. RID was the first anti-drunken driving organization in the nation. Through Doris's appearances on Phil Donahue, 60 Minutes and the Today Show, RID quickly expanded to over a 160 chapters in 41 States.

In 1982, Doris successfully fought to pass the nation's first law that prevented the common practice of DWI offenders' plea bargaining out of alcohol charges. In 1984, she worked with Congressional Democrats

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Looking Down The Road:

By William S. Aiken Jr.

Looking Down the Road is a new column which examines issues that intersect with drunken driving, technology and the law.

Women and Younger Generation Resist Driverless Cars

Industry analysts claim that driverless cars becoming mainstream is inevitable as the leading corporations are making huge investments in this technology. However, there might be several key groups of drivers that could hinder this game-changing transition to a hands-free society; women and millennials.

Automakers will have to focus on women if they hope to make driverless cars mainstream, according to a NerdWallet survey that shows men are far more likely to express interest in the new technology. The survey of more than 1,000 Americans nationwide also exposes a sharp divide in views on self-driving vehicles between millennials and older Americans.

Only 37% of women surveyed by NerdWallet expressed any interest in owning a self-driving car, whereas half of men expressed interest.

The survey also found that 53% of respondents ages 18 to 29 were "very interested" or "somewhat interested" in owning a self-driving car, compared with just 41% of those 30 and older.

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NYC Mayor de Blasio blasted over drunk-driving comment

New York City's Mayor Bill de Blasio said in an interview Monday that he would categorize drunk driving "that doesn't lead to any other negative outcome" a minor offense.

DeBlasio was asked on CNN about New York's stance as a sanctuary city and its refusal to turn over illegal immigrants who commit minor offenses. He said that he did not want to "see families torn apart" over something very minor. He was asked if he considered grand larceny and drunk driving a "very minor offense." he responded, "Drunk driving that doesn't lead to any other negative outcome, I could define as that,"(1)

Mayor de Blasio's quote here shows a politician who has more allegiance to his uber left views on immigration than concerns about drunken drivers. The Mayor has his priorities backwards. The safety of American citizens should be at the forefront of his agenda. The fact that the mayor never corrected or amended his statement says a lot about how tone deaf he is to all of the heartbreak caused by drunken drivers.

Since RID's inception in 1978, we have spent decades trying to change the attitude toward drunken driving. The resistance from politicians was usually based in a culture that considered the act an accident, not a crime. Mayor de Blasio's commented that he doesn't want to see families torn apart. What about the families that are torn apart when they lose a loved one to drunk driving by an illegal alien? Don't they matter Mayor de Blasio?

The Office of Immigration Statistics reported that of the 188,382 deportations of illegal aliens in 2011, 23 percent had committed criminal traffic offenses (primarily driving under the influence). This figure is only part of the overall picture.

In 2011, the Department of Homeland Security reported the deportation of 35,927 illegal immigrants convicted of driving under the influence. Congressman Steve King (R-IA) asserts that illegal alien drunk drivers kill over 4,700 Americans a year — 13 U.S. citizens die every 24 hours. (2)

In San Francisco on July 1, 2015, Kate Steinle was allegedly murdered by an illegal alien who had been deported seven times and was able to keep coming back into America. This event resulted in a bill for a tougher immigration policy, Kate's Law. Of the many documented cases where illegal aliens have murdered US citizens, those charged had a long criminal record that includes arrests for drunken driving. With Mayor de Blasio's lax stance on illegal aliens and drunken driving, there is a great risk that another Kate Steinle could happen in New York City. It's a possibility lawmakers shouldn't ignore.

Immigration advocates say such noncooperation policies protect people who may not have exhausted their rights to apply for U.S. residency. They also say that crime victims and witnesses are more likely to cooperate with police if they are not afraid of being deported.

Mayor de Blasio's poo pooing of drunken driving by illegal aliens, you have a recipe for a disaster. The Mayor shouldn't have to be threatened with federal funds being withheld to realize that his comments were hurtful and irresponsible.

1) Foxnews Jan. 27, 2017 2) The Social Contract Journal Issue: Fall 201

UTAH PASSES .05 BAC

By William S. Aiken Jr.

For years, during the 1980s and 1990s, RID President Doris Aiken would tout the fact that New York State ranked only behind Utah when it came to many positive drunken driving statistics. She would quickly add that Utah was full of teetotalers while New York State had one of highest rate of bars per capita in the nation. Utah's high population of Mormons was a factor in its passage of .05.

Lawmakers in the state of Utah passed a measure last week to lower the legal blood-alcohol concentration for driving from .08% to .05%. Currently, all 50 states have a .08% cap. Utah would become the first state in the nation to adopt a more stringent standard and, traffic safety advocates hope, encourage other states to do the same.

The National Transportation Safety Board has called on states for years to redefine what constitutes drunk driving. The legislation is expected to be signed by Republican Gov. Gary R. Herbert.

"The time was long overdue for this," said state Rep. Norman Thurston, a Republican from Provo, who championed the legislation. "This is about behavior and we hope that other states take a close look and move in a similar direction." (1)

In Utah, which has long held a tense relationship with alcohol — Mormons make up 60% of the state population and are not supposed to drink booze — lawmakers this session addressed a handful of proposals focused on regulation. They include, among other things, the new blood-alcohol level and how beers and cocktails are prepared at restaurants.

For Thurston, lowering the blood-alcohol limit is about public safety.

The NTSB push to lower the threshold for drunk driving was highlighted in a 2013 report that noted that fatal crashes decreased 18% in Queensland and 8% in New South Wales after those Australian states changed their blood-alcohol limits.

In New York State, Brooklyn Assemblyman, Felix Ortiz introduced a bill, NYAB04369 to lower the BAC to .05% that has sat idle since 2013. RID has unsuccessfully lobbied to gain legislative support for Ortiz's bill. Bars and restaurants in New York State are well represented in the Capital. A point, which Aiken often spoke about while promoting the bill.

The NTSB study released in 2013 inspired Assembly Ortiz to sponsor the bill. At the time of its release there was immediate push back from MADD and the alcohol industry. Any momentum that was garnered by the NTSB study was quickly diminished and the media moved on.

Deaths related to drunk driving nearly doubled in Utah between 2013 and 2014, increasing from 23 to 45. Conversely, drunk driving fatalities nationally have fallen by a third in the last three decades, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Nationally, 28 people die every day in motor vehicle crashes involving an alcohol-impaired driver, according to the agency.

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Utah Passes .05 Bac

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Still, some critics of the Utah legislation say it could harm the state's tourism industry; they say other measures could better promote public safety.

"Why not just make it a 0.00% limit? I'm not sure this does much in terms of keeping the public safe," said state Sen. Luz Escamilla, a Democrat from Salt Lake City. "We should be creating laws that have real impact — not just ones that are symbolic." (1)

Escamilla said effective measures include a mandatory seat-belt law, which she helped sponsor for seven years and finally was able to get her colleagues to pass this legislative session.

About Thurston's measure, she added, "If anything, it just keeps Utah in line with having a weird image toward alcohol."

Escamilla's view is shared by groups such as the Salt Lake Area Restaurant Assn., which represents more than 100 establishments.

"It's a terrible law," said Michele T. Corigliano, the group's executive director, who is lobbying Herbert to veto the measure. "We feel that because .05% is so low it's going to put a lot of people in jail that should not be in jail. It's an extremely low-level ... people who use too much mouthwash could be targeted." (1)

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention estimates a blood-alcohol concentration of .05% — about three drinks in one hour for a 160-pound man — causes, among other things, altered coordination, reduced ability to track moving objects and difficulty steering a motor vehicle. Several European countries — such as France and Germany — have blood-alcohol limits of .05.

After struggling for years to get .05 on the books, Doris Aiken would have been pleased to see that it has finally passed in this country. She stood in support of .05 despite the powerful entities that aligned against her on this issue. It's still going to be a hard sell in the other 49 states. However, as the data rolls in that shows lives were saved; the case for .05 will have another example of its benefits, only this time the lives saved will be in America.

(1) Los Angeles Times

John Morse Reminds Us All There Still Is A Long Way To Go

by William S. Aiken Jr.

For years, RID member John Morse has sent RID newspaper clippings detailing the tragic stories concerning DWI arrests, convictions, deaths and heartache. The constant stream of these stories is often given scant coverage in the media. These never-ending stories of despair have caused the public to become numb to the problem. The fact that drunken driving is so ubiquitous can be discouraging to those of us who view this action as a serious crime.

Recent laws such as Leandra's Law, which focuses on underage passengers of drunken drivers have lengthened the penalty for that particular circumstance. However, there haven't been any significant changes in the law that would strongly deter someone

from getting behind the wheel intoxicated. The data of DWI deaths remains stubbornly high. What can be done to curtail this carnage?

I believe you have to implement laws that will impact the decision making of the person who gets behind the wheel. Having the fear of getting their vehicle confiscated would be a huge deterrent. To those who would argue such a law is unconstitutional, I would point out that asset forfeiture is widely used in drug cases and routinely deny due process yet they remain the law of the land.

So if asset forfeiture laws were applied in certain DWI cases where someone was injured or killed or if the driver was a multiple-offender, those cases would be powerful arguments to counter the constitutional challenges. The safety of the public has to be strongly considered in crafting a fair and just policy.

There currently is a bill, A2598, sponsored by Assemblyman J. Gary Pretlow for confiscation of an automobile used in a drunken driving crime. Pretlow's bill allows for constitutional protections of due process that drug forfeiture laws currently don't. While Bill A2598 has many conditions for a convicted drunken driver to qualify for this penalty, this bill is a good first step to introduce this concept. Confiscating the car of a driver who is prone to drive drunk can save lives, by denying access to a potential weapon of death and destruction.

In 2013, the National Traffic Safety Board, (NTSB) released a comprehensive seven year study projecting that over 800 lives would be saved if the Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) were lowered from .08 to .05 nationally.

Shortly after this study was published, New York State Assemblyman Felix Ortiz sponsored a bill, AO 4369, to lower the BAC level to .06. Bill AO4369 also lowers the aggravated threshold from .18 to .14. This provision will help law enforcement to identify alcoholics who may require treatments as part of their sentence. Under the current system, alcoholics constantly slip through the cracks until they end up killing someone.

Utah took action that will have widespread effect on DWI by lowering the BAC to .05. The NTSB study offers solid evidence that lowering the BAC will significantly deter the public from getting behind the wheel impaired.

Utah is in a class by itself in that the opposition represented by the restaurant and bar industry isn't as powerful as it is in the other 49 States. 60% of Utah residents belong to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, a faith that prohibits the use of alcohol. This population obviously played a huge role in making .05 the law of the land in Utah.

So while there are laws to pursue that lower DWI deaths, the opposing side has been entrenched with law makers for a very long time. These two areas of confiscating cars and lowering the

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John Morse Reminds Us

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BAC could have significant impact on RID's mission of making the roads and highways safer.

Now that Utah has taken action, we will be paying close attention to that state's DWI rates. The confiscation of cars for those who are convicted of driving drunk will have a tough time with so many attorneys sitting on the committees that decide which laws are passed.

I urge RID members to take action and contact the offices of Assemblymen Pretlow, (518) 455-5291 and Ortiz, (518) 455-3821. We encourage you to e-mail them as well; Assemblyman Pretlow at PretloJ@nyassembly.gov and Assemblyman Ortiz at OrtizF@nyassembly.gov. It's also important to contact your own representatives to advocate supporting A2598 and A4369. You can obtain the numbers of your own assembly and senate offices by contacting the Capital Operator at (518) 455-4100.

It's vital to coordinate our energy to support these bills that address these two key areas. The powerful opposition is well funded and organized to ensure these bills never see the light of day. If you have any suggestions to help pass these legislative bills, please E-mail me at ridusa@verizon.net.

I would like to thank John Morse for his committed efforts in documenting the pervasive and persistent danger drunken drivers pose to the rest of us who share the roads.

Looking Down The Road Women and Younger Generation...

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Among key findings of the survey:

- Most women expressed concern about the safety of self-driving cars, with 55% citing safety as among the biggest drawbacks of the new technology. Only 37% of men were worried about safety.
- 44% of men were concerned that driverless cars will take the fun out of driving; only 23% of women felt that way.
- Consumers have a limited amount of trust in autonomous car technology. When asked whether they would put a child alone in a driverless car to go to school or a friend's house, only 6% of those surveyed would close the door and wave goodbye.
- While consumers are not yet ready to embrace a driverless world, they are interested in safety technologies that are paving the way for fully autonomous vehicles. Blind-spot detection was by far the most popular new technology, with 42% citing it as the most appealing feature of semi-autonomous cars, followed by emergency braking to prevent crashes, favored by 30%.

It's not just women who will have to be won over; more than 60 percent of American youths say they would prefer to do the driving themselves rather than turning the wheel over to a self-driving car, according to a new report from Nielsen.

"This research shows that the older the youth, the stronger the preference is to do the driving," said the report, which was released on Monday. "Nearly three in four high school-age youths prefer to man the wheel while only just over half of elementary-age youths feel the same way."

Nielsen surveyed more than 1,000 youths about their awareness and attitudes toward self-driving cars.

In another surprising twist, young consumers told researchers that they don't have any favorites when it comes to which brands they'd prefer to make tomorrow's self-driving cars.

"In fact, young consumers overall interest in owning a self-driving vehicle made by a technology company is nearly as high as their interest in buying such a car from a traditional automaker," the report said. "When we look at the opinions of different ages, however, we see that middle- and high-schoolers actually favor traditional vehicle makers."

Tech giant Google has been at the forefront in the development of self-driving cars.

It has been testing its self-driving vehicles on California's public roads for over seven years and recently expanded testing to parts of Austin, Texas and Kirkland, Washington.

Automakers from Ford to Nissan are testing self-driving vehicles.

Google and General Motors last week provided a detailed look at the challenges involved in getting consumers to accept self-driving cars during a Congressional hearing.

Mike Ableson, GM's vice president of strategy and global portfolio planning, said the biggest challenge is getting "the technology exposed to consumers".

The Auto manufacturers will put forth the capital investment needed to fund a campaign to educate its consumers. The product will be brought to market. It's only a matter of when.

A question that arises for RID is how will this technology impact our current DWI laws? Will a drunken driver legally be able to sit in the passenger seat while being driven home from a bar after a night of drinking? That would be a huge selling point and a terrible idea.

There still has to be a sober driver in the event (and you know this is going to happen) that the driverless car miscalculates or malfunctions. Technology can only go so far in keeping the roads and highways safe. Human beings can't completely be substituted with technology in this setting. We can't outsource common sense to computer software. When it comes to driverless cars, we can't abandon the principal of having a sober driver whether they're behind the wheel or in the passenger's seat.

Raise the Age?

By Rene Barchitta

The goal of this article is to provide information on two major legislative issues regarding the consequences of intoxicated and impaired driving to both provide information and encourage activism by the readers.

In the New York State Penal law, Vehicular Homicide, Manslaughter and Vehicular Assault by intoxicated and impaired other drugged drivers are considered to be non-violent offenses. As a non-violent offense, prosecution of these crimes becomes more difficult.

In Governor Cuomo's NYS Budget Bill there is an attached bill entitled "Raise the Age" (S4121 one of 4 bills) which if passed as drafted will allow those charged with alcohol and other drug related Vehicular Assaults and Manslaughter/Homicides under age 18 to be heard in Family Court with all of the other non-violent offenses. These serious crimes would no longer be heard in criminal court.

"Raise the Age" So Called Justification

Some of the justification for this legislation is because those under 18 years of age have a lower level of understanding of their actions as compared to adults. Our brain weighs the risks and tells us whether a certain behavior or choice is a good idea. Our (prefrontal cortex) brains aren't fully developed until the mid-20s. Does this mean that those 16 and 17 are allowed by our laws to make adult decisions without fully mature brains?

Justification Against "Raise the Age"

If those under the age of 18 do not have the same level of understanding of their actions as adults, the question should not be whether to "Raise the Age" in the budget bill so that serious crimes like alcohol or other drug related Vehicular Manslaughter, or Assault crimes are heard in Family Court, but rather should we Raise the Age of Driving. Should those who are unable to assess what is risky behavior be behind the wheel of a car?

It is vital to avoid the abuse of alcohol and other drugs while the brain is still developing to prevent the interference with the formation of the brain. By allowing those who are under the age of 18 who are intoxicated or impaired by alcohol or/and other drugs charged with Vehicular Assault, Manslaughter or Homicide, to be heard in Family Court only enables this behavior and is detrimental to their brain development.

"Raise the Age" Impact on Education and Behavior

Educating students regarding the dangers of drinking and other drugged driving when reducing the consequences gives a double message about impaired driving as a serious crime. 18 year olds (or older) could encourage their 16 and 17 year old friends to drive, or to switch seats and get behind the wheel after a crash for a driver who was over 18 and impaired. This provision would also encourage and support consumption and future addiction.

"Raise the Age" Impact on Victims

Victims of impaired/intoxicated drivers will no longer have their voices heard

- No Victim Services will be available
- Victims and the public are not entitled to access the proceedings as they occur
- Victims will no longer have notification of outcomes
- Victim impact Statements would no longer be allowed in the proceedings
- Orders of protection are not the same as a criminal offense
- Victims are not notified when the defendant is released from custody in the Family Court system, as they currently are available through VINE in the criminal court system.
- Records will be sealed making civil suits difficult

"Raise the Age" Impact on Consequences

- Family Court rules allow these offenders to never see a judge. Instead, probation officers will be allowed to "adjust" the case away from referring the offender to a program or have no consequence at all.
- Cases processed in Family Court do not leave a footprint because of sealed records.
- If the defendant continues their criminal career into their adult years the prosecutor has no way of knowing what types of programs they have been sentenced to, their success in those programs, their criminal history, or any other information that is important for bail, diversion decisions, decisions about orders of protection, and other critical matters.
- NYSDMV will be unaware of these vehicular crimes, which means potentially dangerous drivers could be licensed at age 18.
- Cases would be handled by the County Attorney's Office, not the DA's Office.
- No money will be slated to assist County Attorney's Offices to give them more manpower or to handle serious vehicular crimes.

RID Board member Linda Campion and I have been advocating to take Vehicular Homicides and Manslaughters and Vehicular Assaults by intoxicated and impaired other drugged drivers out of the "Raise the Age" bill. Whether it is removed from the budget bill or not, our next project will be to find a sponsor to make these serious offenses deemed as violent offenses in both New York State and Federal law.

We hope this article will be helpful in questions raised in your own State. Join us in helping to get Vehicular Homicide and Manslaughter and Vehicular Assault by intoxicated and impaired other drugged drivers classified as violent offenses in your State and in our Country.

Renee' Barchitta, RID National Board member

Tyler Pascuzzi, driver in fatal 2014 crash, found guilty



Tyler S. Pascuzzi, 24, of Coxsackie is escorted for his arraignment at the Guilderland Town Court on Tuesday afternoon, July 8, 2014 in Guilderland N.Y. (Selby Smith / Special to the Times Union)
By William Aiken Jr.

GUILTY

31 months after Cody Ververka, 23 and Alicia Tomboia, 24 were killed in a high speed chase on the New York State Thruway, the driver, Tyler Pascuzzi was found guilty of causing their deaths in a jury trial.

Pascuzzi was found guilty of two counts of second-degree manslaughter and one count of aggravated vehicular homicide. The vehicular homicide charge alone could mean eight and a half to 25 years in prison for Pascuzzi, who will be sentenced April 5.

Defense argues DNA evidence

The defense attorneys for Tyler Pascuzzi argued that their client wasn't the driver that fateful night. The toll ticket used by the driver wasn't tested for DNA evidence. This specific lack of DNA evidence lends credibility to the defense's argument. The prosecution countered with other factors that pointed to Pascuzzi's guilt. Witnesses testified that Pascuzzi was planning to sell his GTI VW the next day and it was unlikely he'd allow his friend, Ververka to drive it. Also, there was testimony by paramedics at the crime scene that Ververka's body was 30 feet from the point of impact while Pascuzzi was laying 5 feet from the VW, which was split in half when it was struck a tractor-trailer. Prosecutors argued that the steering wheel prevented Pascuzzi from being hurled away from the VW and helped him to survive the horrific crash.

A key part of the defense's case was that the DNA of Ververka was present on the keys and stickshift of Pascuzzi's VW. Thus proof that Ververka, not Pascuzzi was the driver that fateful night. The prosecution countered the Ververka's DNA was present in other parts of the VW as he had rode in the vehicle many times before the crash. In the end, the jury determined the DNA evidence presented by the defense didn't raise reasonable doubt of Pascuzzi's guilt.

Prosecution did their homework

I sat in on the beginning of the trial and ADAs, MaryTanner-Ritcher and Michael Shanley did a thorough job of conducting witness testimony that painted a vivid picture of the crime scene. Slides of the crime scene were projected on the wall opposite the jury. Witnesses who were at the crash site used an electronic pointer to illuminate their testimony. Giving the jury this visual allowed the prosecution to make its arguments in a precise manner.

Both Tanner-Ritcher and Shanley deserve a lot of credit for their diligence and perseverance in prosecuting this case. The attorneys for the defense, Steve Coffey and Michael McDermott put on a formidable defense of their client, focusing on Ververka's DNA on the VW and the toll ticket not being tested by investigators.

The prosecutors addressed and challenged each time Coffey and McDermott put forth evidence that suggested their client was not the driver that night. The failure to test the toll ticket for DNA could have sunk this case for the prosecution. However, they worked around that negative by piecing together other factors to prove what happened. Through witnesses' testimony and physical evidence at the crime scene they illustrated to the jury that there was no doubt as to who was the driver of the VW.

Friends Don't Let Friends Could Be Applicable in this Case

Trials and tragedies such as this are played out all the time in courtrooms across the country. When a driver is intoxicated (Pascuzzi's BAC that night was recorded at .18), they are often unable to think rationally.

The Friends Don't Friends Drive Drunk campaign was effective in recruiting millions of friends to intervene on situations before they become irreversible tragedies. Situations such as the 4th of July party that led up to the crash that killed Cody Ververka and Alicia Tombia.

Peer pressure is a tool that should be utilized to combat drunken driving. Tyler Pascuzzi wasn't thinking about whether buzzed driving is drunk driving when he got behind the wheel. However, if either of his passengers had been empowered with the message of the Friends Campaign, there might have been a different outcome that night.

This point here is not to blame the victims, Cody Ververka and Alicia Tamboia, who were nine and ten years old at the time when the Friends campaign was pulled off the airwaves. So in no way is it their fault they weren't aware of that important message. My hope is to put pressure on NHTSA to bring back the Friends campaign, which resulted in lowering DWI fatalities among young people.

Introduced in 1983 by the AD council, the Friends campaign was extremely successful for 15 years. The AD council sites on their Facebook page that 68% of people reported in polling that

they had intervened to stop someone from drinking and driving: <https://www.facebook.com/FriendsDontLetFriendsDriveDrunk/>

Today's youth could benefit from that message as well. With DWI fatalities on the rise, isn't it worth taking another look at something that's worked so well in the past?

Closure for the Families

Hopefully, this verdict will provide the victims' families with some degree of closure in that the person responsible for their grief is being held accountable. Hopefully at his sentencing, Tyler Pascuzzi will articulate a powerful message to those who might be in the same position he was in on that fatal Fourth of July. He could do the right thing by expressing remorse to the victims' families for his actions that night. Unfortunately, there are too many young drivers, who fail to heed the ubiquitous message to drive sober until it's too late for them and their victims.



Alicia Tamboia
February 20, 1990 - July 5, 2014



Cody Ververka
October 15, 1991 - July 5, 2014

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and Republicans passing the nation's 21 year old drinking age and later supported lowering the BAC limit from .10 to .08 in 2000.

Her success came from word of mouth before the age of the internet or social media. Her work won citizen Awards from Presidents Reagan and George H W Bush as well New York State Governor Mario Cuomo. In 1997 in Annecy, France, ICDATS (The International Council on Drugs, Alcohol and Traffic Safety) presented her with the Widmark Award, an international recognition of citizens who have achieved success in improving the areas concerning drugs, alcohol and traffic safety.

In 1987, Doris published a book, "The Media Game and how to play it", a practical guide on crafting your message and how to deliver it effectively. She later published her memoir "My Life as a Pit Bull: Collaring the Drunken Driver". In 2008, UCLA recognized Doris with a Lifetime Community Service Award for her work with RID.

Doris was an inspiration to many, giving a blueprint on how to get involved in the issue of drunken driving. She never allowed disappointments or setbacks deter her focus of getting victims' families justice. She was quick to praise others and give credit where credit was due. Early on in RID, she took on powerful entities such as the alcohol industry and the defense lawyers. Her criticism of alcohol advertising led to RID being banned by the national media, however, thousands were motivated to join RID as a result.

She was an excellent cook with a quick wit. An avid reader, she could engage in politics and culture with anyone. Her infectious smile and sense of humor lit up the room. She adored her 150 lb St. Bernard mascot, Gracie. She truly cared about people and fought vigorously to raise awareness on the importance of driving sober as well as the dangers of alcohol poisoning.

Few would have predicted that Doris who came from such humble beginnings would have a profound impact on such a stubborn problem. Her tough tactics saved thousands of lives. She deserves a lot of credit for changing how society views drunk driving. No longer is it considered to be an accident. It's rightfully viewed as a crime, thanks in large part to her committed efforts.

Her children, Jane and William will continue to operate RID and work to pass along Doris's legacy of making our roads and highways safer for everyone.

Doris was predeceased by her parents, her sister, Jean Stewart and husband, William Aiken Sr. who passed away in 2004. She is survived by her children, Jane, William and Raya Buckley (Tom), her grandchildren, John and Charlotte Buckley, her Brother Dale Crouthamel (Gladys) of Telford, PA along with many nieces and nephews.

The Aiken family would like to extend a special thanks to the staff of doctors, nurses and techs at Ellis Hospital who made it possible for Doris to come home to be surrounded by friends and family in her final days. And a heart-felt appreciation to Jackie Donegan, who brought grace, compassion and comfort when it was, needed most.

Doris Aiken's motto was "You can make a difference". She lived up to those words and beyond. What she started will continue to inspire those of us who want to make a difference by following the example she set. She will be sorely missed by many who had the pleasure of knowing her.

Note: A memorial service for Doris Aiken will be open to the public and held 12:00PM on April 22nd, 2017 at the Unitarian Church, 1221 Wendell Avenue, Schenectady, NY 12308



Cartoon by Bob Emmons / The Daily Gazette

A CITIZEN'S PROJECT TO REMOVE INTOXICATED DRIVERS

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

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