



**December 2002
January 2003**

IN THIS ISSUE:

- 1 **Dealing With Grief During The Holidays**
- 2 **Court Observations**
- 3 **2nd Annual Celebration And Appreciation Luncheon**
- 4 **DWI Arrests And Crashes Stats**

**DWI Victim
Impact Panels**



Christmas Day
December 25

Dealing With Grief During The Holidays

by Betty Wilhelm

Baue Grief Services Coordinator

As the holidays approach, people often find themselves getting more and more stressed. If they've experienced the recent death of a loved one, the void created by that death can be greater at this time of year.

Familiar rituals may not be comfortable and they feel physically and emotionally drained. This is a time when they need help and support from family and friends.

Handling emotions may be the only thing they can manage right now. They should try not to overwhelm themselves and do only as much as they feel comfortable doing. They should let family and friends know they may need some help. Some people do not know how they feel. Asking will make life a little easier for the person grieving and it will be rewarding for the helper.

"Grievers have three choices: celebrate as usual, avoid the holidays or do something brand new," wrote Judy Tatelbaum, M.S.W.

It is difficult to choose which is best. If children and grandchildren are in the family, not celebrating would disappoint and deprive them.

Many families choose to keep their family traditions. These traditions can represent security at a time when life is out of control. Doing something new and different is fine, maybe getting away for a few days, going to a restaurant, etc. This is no guarantee it will take away the pain, but they may find it helpful.

"What about Christmas cards?" people ask.

Those who are grieving should do what works well for them. Maybe it's enough to send to out-of-town relatives and friends. Some find their energy levels too low to deal with Christmas cards at all, and sometimes it is too painful signing one less name. It's OK to choose to send no holiday greetings; family and friends will understand.

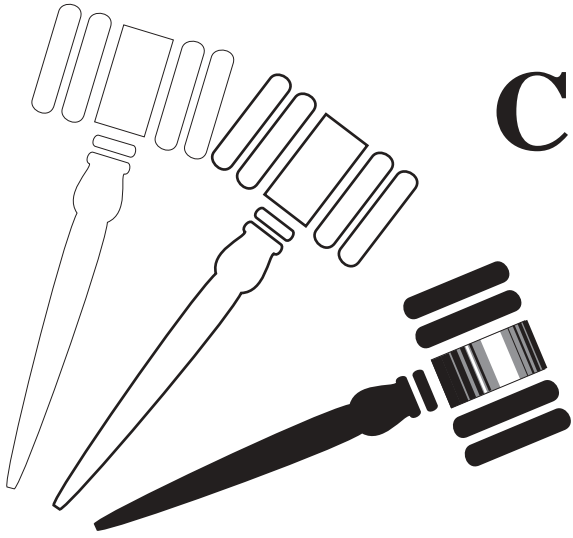
This can be a good time to gather catalogs and make a dent in the Christmas list. Shop by mail. Health and well-being (which we never think about) are extremely important now. This is an area where a person can make some choices and assume some control in their life.

It can be helpful to focus on learning new ways to relax, maybe a big overstuffed chair, listening to a relaxation tape or CD, sounds of nature, flute or the gentle sound of waves.

Continued on page 4

*This newsletter funded in part by the New Mexico Crime Victims Reparations Commission
with funds from the Office for Victims of Crime, U. S. Department of Justice*

Court Observations



JUSTICE?

COURT DATE: December 7, 2001

DATE OF ARREST/CRASH: August 18, 2001

BLOOD ALCOHOL CONTENT (BAC): Refusal

VICTIM: Damage to vehicle.

CHARGES: Aggravated DWI, reckless driving, leaving the scene of an accident and no insurance.

RESULTS: Offender pled to DWI 1st, all other charges dismissed.

SENTENCE: First Offender Program ordered. This includes 90 days supervised probation, \$328 in court costs and fees, alcohol screening, DWI school, no driving without a valid driver's license, and attend two Victim Impact Panels.

COMMENTS: Male relatives accompanied victims because they had been intimidated by the offender's actions towards them the night of crash and in court. At one point, the prosecutor was considering amending the charge to "harassment" but didn't when the plea agreement was reached. Victims and relatives were relieved when case was over.

COURT DATE: July 24, 2002

DATE OF ARREST/CRASH: February 26, 2002

BLOOD ALCOHOL CONTENT (BAC): .22/.21

VICTIM: Property damage.

CHARGES: DWI, no driver's license, open container and no insurance.

RESULTS: Offender pled to DWI, all other charges dismissed.

SENTENCE: 48 hours of community service, DWI school, probation officer to monitor restitution to victim, alcohol screening and counseling, pay court costs and fees of \$150, unsupervised probation, attend a Victim Impact Panel.

COMMENTS: Victims were notified of the sentencing date but chose not to attend.

COURT DATE: October 2, 2002

DATE OF ARREST: November 28, 2001

BLOOD ALCOHOL CONTENT: .14/.13

VICTIM: Slight damage to vehicle.

CHARGES: DWI 3, careless driving and failure to carry proof of financial responsibility.

RESULTS: This case was dismissed 13 months after the crash!

COMMENTS: Five months after the crash, the offender's defense attorney filed a motion stating that his client was incompetent to stand trial in Metro Court. It took an additional eight "Competency Hearing" settings before the offender finally had his mental evaluation completed and was found to be "incompetent." Because of this, his two other pending DWI cases and his "unlawfully carrying a deadly weapon" case was all dismissed! Interestingly enough is the fact that while this offender is incompetent to stand trial for his crimes, he is considered competent to drive his vehicle! If he commits any crimes within a year of his evaluation, he is still considered incompetent and the charges will again be dismissed.

— Joan Fleetwood, Victim Advocate

You Are Cordially Invited



Request the honor of your presence at our 2nd Annual Celebration and Appreciation Awards Luncheon

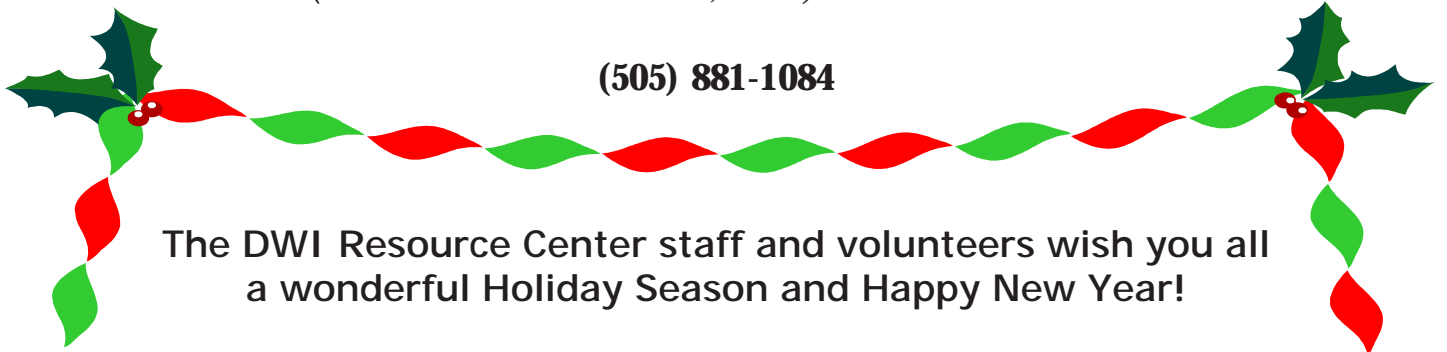
December 6, 2002 - 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM
Rio Grande Inn
1015 Rio Grande Blvd. NW

Join us in thanking the top DWI Law Enforcement Offices, Outstanding Victims' Advocate, Top DWI Prosecutor and Judge, Senator Pete Domenici, Mayor Martin Chavez and others for their dedication to prevent DWI death and injury and assist victims.

\$18 per person

RSVP (No later than December 2, 2002) to DWI Resource Center

(505) 881-1084



The DWI Resource Center staff and volunteers wish you all a wonderful Holiday Season and Happy New Year!

BE A DWI RESOURCE CENTER SUPPORTER

I am enclosing a check for:

\$25 \$50 \$100 \$_____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip _____

Thank you! Your contribution is 100% tax deductible as allowed by law. A copy of our latest financial report may be obtained by calling us at 881-1084. Please mail to return address below.

The DWI Resource Center is a nonprofit, 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization formed to serve as a central clearing-house of information on DWI and related issues. The Center's goals are to educate the public, provide prevention programs, assist victims and thereby reduce DWI injuries and deaths in New Mexico.

Funds are always welcome and needed.

Continued from page 1

It's easy during this time to forget to eat, or binge on unhealthy foods. A person who is grieving should remind himself/herself the body needs nutrients to fight off the many viruses they may come into contact with. They should make an effort to get two balanced meals a day, drink plenty of water (unless they are limited in fluid intake) and check with their doctor about multivitamins.

Something important in our lives is routine. Routine can give a sense of order and control, and many times, is the only "normal" thing in life.

For many, sleep patterns may be interrupted and it is helpful to try to maintain usual waking and bedtime routines. If they are on an exercise program - great! They should try to stick with it.

Researchers have found a brisk walk once or twice a day helps mentally and physically. They should check with their doctor before starting any exercise program.

Talking with people they plan to spend the holidays with can be most helpful in preparing for those days. Some questions they may want to ask:

- What will be the most difficult (other than the whole season!)?
- Who will carve the turkey? Dad always carved the turkey at the table for one family and they decided to carve before being seated.
- Who sits in their loved one's place? Another family decided to take turns.

Writing a list of what needs to be done allows a grieving person to look at ways to make things more manageable. If they feel everything is so overwhelming, try something different. They should leave themselves open for changes and have other tentative plans made. They should do what works well for them.

These are just suggestions for this year. Try to focus on this day only. It does not mean they will want the same for next year. They should enjoy some moments. It's OK not to be sad all the time. While these days may be difficult, it can still be meaningful.

Grieving people do hurt. They just need to allow themselves to express their feelings.

DWI Arrests and Crashes Year To Date

New Mexico Fatalities	October 2001	October 2002
Total Deaths	384	379
Alcohol involved deaths	170	176
Alcohol unknown	10	35
%Alcohol involved	44%	46%

Source: NM Traffic Safety Bureau

DWI Victim Impact Panel

Every second Tuesday of the Month
February 11 and March 11, 2003
7 PM - 8:30 PM

Location for DWI Victim Impact Panel
Lovelace Educational Building
5400 Gibson SE

Simultaneous Spanish Translation Provided

PUBLIC IS WELCOME



P.O. Box 30514
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87190-0514

NONPROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
ALB., NM
PERMIT #1405