

AMBER ADVOCATE

IN THIS ISSUE:

REPORT:
TRAFFICKING IN
PERSONS SYMPOSIUM



FRONT LINES:
S. DAKOTA OFFICERS RISK
IT ALL TO SAVE A CHILD



PROFILE:
BROADCASTER TEACHES
NY TO LOVE AMBER ALERT



SPRING/SUMMER 2012

AMBER[®]
ALERT

WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE OF **AMBERADVOCATE**:

REPORT: TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS SYMPOSIUM

..... PAGE 3

PROFILE: DICK NOVIK

..... PAGE 7

AMBER ALERT INTERNATIONAL

..... PAGE 8

AMBER ALERT IN INDIAN COUNTRY

..... PAGE 11

FRONT LINES: SOUTH DAKOTA

..... PAGE 12

ODDS & ENDS

..... PAGE 14

.....

This publication was prepared under Cooperative Agreement number 2010-MC-CX-K050 from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), U.S. Department of Justice. Points of view or opinions expressed in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of OJJDP or the U.S. Department of Justice.

.....

Your story ideas and pictures are welcome.

AMBER Alert INFO:
For AMBER Alert Training
& Technical Assistance,
contact:

Phil Keith, Program Director
AMBER Alert Training &
Technical Assistance Program

877-71-AMBER
askamber@fvtc.edu

Training & Class registration:
www.amber-net.org

EDITOR:
Paul Murphy
murphyp@fvtc.edu

GRAPHIC LAYOUT:
Scott Troxel
scotrox@gmail.com

THE CONNECTION BETWEEN CHILD ABDUCTIONS AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

SYMPOSIUM OFFERS INSIGHT FOR AMBER ALERT PARTNERS

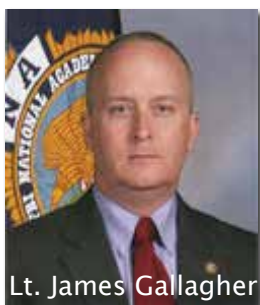
Editors' Note: This special Spring/Summer Edition of The AMBER Advocate contains extensive coverage of the Trafficking in Persons Symposium held April 10-13 in Salt Lake City, Utah. The Department of Justice's AMBER Alert Training and Technical Assistance Program (AATTAP) conducted the symposium, which brought together more than 100 subject matter experts from a variety of disciplines including law enforcement, medical and legal representatives, social services, non-government organizations (NGO's), educators, faith-based organizations and researchers to gather valuable insights and lessons surrounding the topic of trafficking. The symposium included collaboration from Harvard University, Johns Hopkins University, University of Texas at El Paso and Southern Methodist University.

CHANGE IN PERSPECTIVE

A 15-year-old Phoenix girl was invited on MySpace to meet up with a friend she knew from school. When she showed up to see her friend, four men grabbed her, wrapped her in duct tape, and took her to an apartment where they gang raped her.

For the next 43 days, the men forced the girl to live in a dog cage and trafficked her. The men fed her dog biscuits and threatened to kill her every day. No AMBER Alert was issued. Even though the girl was a model student and did not have a history of problems, the police and parents thought she had run away.

The incident happened in 2005 and at that time detectives thought any girl who offered sex for money had made a lifestyle choice.



"We did not understand that a prostitute is not a criminal, rather a prostitute is a trafficking victim," said Phoenix Police Lt. James Gallagher. "We thought we knew everything, and we would solve everything. Our mind set changed when we found a girl in a dog crate."

The Trafficking in Persons Symposium included horrifying stories of children who were abducted and forced into slavery. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), which is a component of U.S. Department of Justice, hosted the symposium.

"We realized it was important to focus on human trafficking because the AMBER Alert did not address the problems we were seeing with endangered, runaway, and throwaway children," said Phil Keith,



AMBER Alert Training and Technical Assistance Program Director. "It is difficult to separate child abductions from human trafficking because the research shows a strong connection between endangered and abducted children and trafficking."

Keith said lessons learned from developing the AMBER Alert program could inform the development of a national response to human trafficking. Likewise, learning more about human trafficking will give AMBER Alert partners more insight into their response to child abductions.

THE NUMBERS

Estimating the number of people trafficked into or out of the United States is inherently difficult because of the secretive nature of sex and labor trafficking. Using different methodologies, populations (adults versus children), units of analysis (states, counties, continents), researchers have produced wildly disparate estimates of the problem. Lacking consistency, estimates for trafficking within the United States range from two million to 14,000 annually; and international figures reach as high as 27 million victims per year.

Without methodologically sound techniques for determining the number of trafficking victims, some studies have turned to at-risk populations; a logical approach given the link between at-risk youth and adults, and exploitation. For instance, the second National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway and Throwaway Children (NISMA-2) published by OJJDP in 2002 estimated that 1,315,600 children were missing from their caretakers for at least

Continued on page 4

REPORT: TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS SYMPOSIUM

Continued from page 3

an hour in 1999. The annual total includes nearly 800,000 runaway, throwaway, injured or endangered children and 150,200 child abductions.

Taking even the lowest estimate of human trafficking within the United States reveals that more than 10,000 people face labor or sexual exploitation each year in this country. Turning to at-risk populations reveals an even larger issue with at least 100,000 in danger of sexual or forced labor situations.

People who work with human trafficking agree that even one case of a child being forced to work as a sex slave, or forced to work in agricultural fields for pennies is reason enough to take this issue seriously.



Holly Smith

A SURVIVOR'S STORY

Holly Smith was 14 years old when an older man approached her at a mall. After that, he started calling her frequently and buying her gifts. "He talked to me like an adult, which was important to me," said Smith. "Most boys and girls were sarcastic, and I did not feel like I was being heard."

The man told her they could run away to Hollywood so she could be a songwriter or a model. Smith said running away seemed like a good idea because she had been abused as a child and had a bad relationship with her parents.

Smith said she knew something was wrong when the man took her to a hotel and raped her to "test his goods." He then told her about the rules regarding having sex with men for money. After weeks as a domestic minor sex trafficking victim a police officer approached her and asked if she was underage.

"I asked 'What if I was not 18?'" said Smith. "The officer arrested me, searched me, and threatened

me with juvenile detention and that I would get beat up. My family members did not understand what happened to me." She said the officer's treatment convinced her that she could not trust law enforcement.

Eventually, Smith received the help she needed and now works as a microbiologist. She speaks to audiences across the nation to convince people to treat girls like her as a trafficking victim instead of a child prostitute or sex worker. "My main point is: These girls are worth saving."

A NEW APPROACH

Detectives at the Dallas Police Department found they started making a dent against human trafficking when they began treating women and girls as victims instead of prostitutes. Between 2005 and 2010, they recovered 994 high risk runaways; 506 identified themselves as trafficking victims, and detectives had evidence that many of the others were also victims.

"It is truly not that difficult to find trafficking victims," said Dallas Detective Cathy De La Paz. "It is important to know what to do once they are contacted. The interviewer must help the victim find services and get help. If your sole purpose is to win a case, you are doomed to fail."



Sgt. Byron Fassett

Dallas Police soon realized these victims are different than other crime victims. "Our system is set up for compliant victims," said Dallas Police Sgt. Byron Fassett. "It is not set up for foul-mouthed, angry, mean and scared victims who will fight you tooth and nail. We need to change the system to help them."

Fassett said most trafficking victims do not contact police and so a community-wide approach is needed to make it safe to seek help. Law enforcement must team up with juvenile probation, state and federal prosecutors, social service agencies, and non-profit groups to make a real difference.

The Dallas Police Department is now rescuing about 90 girls each year from sexual exploitation compared to about 12 girls a year when they were simply making vice arrests.

The Phoenix Police followed the Dallas model and started partnering with federal agencies and national and local organizations that could offer help to trafficking victims. The department also started targeting pimps instead of prostitutes.

“We tried to arrest our way out of the problem and had no understanding of victimization,” said Phoenix Police Sgt. George Sutherlin. “We did not focus on the pimp or john and had no partnerships with service providers. Our partnerships are now the most important resources in trafficking cases.”

Phoenix police have partnered with Arizona State University’s Project Rose, a program that provides an alternative to incarceration for women charged with prostitution. The project offers services and restores dignity to victims so they will not return to prostitution. Not everyone finishes the program, but none of the women who have finished it has been re-arrested. “Arrest alternatives do work and partnerships can help save victims,” said Associate Professor Dominique Roe-Sepowitz.

LESSONS FOR AMBER ALERT PARTNERS

When the AMBER Alert Program began to grow across the country, many believed communities would use the alert only for stereotypical child abductions. AMBER Alert partners quickly realized that family members and people who know the victim commit most abductions. They also realized that family and acquaintance abductions can be extremely dangerous for the child.

The symposium provided an eye-opening look at the alarming numbers of child abductions that occur for the sole purpose of sex trafficking. Pimps and gangs physically abduct some of the victims. Many victims are missing children or runaways who have been lured to leave their homes without knowing the full consequences. Findings from the symposium will be essential for AMBER Alert partners to develop a comprehensive child abduction response plan that can provide for the safe recovery of all victims. ☺

LETTERS TO

ADVOCATE

I am going through all of my Trafficking in Persons Symposium notes and just wanted to say thanks for inviting me. I have lots of information that will really help our program. I learned a lot during the conference and felt that it was very well done. We are now working on putting together a task force on human trafficking.

Amy Thurston

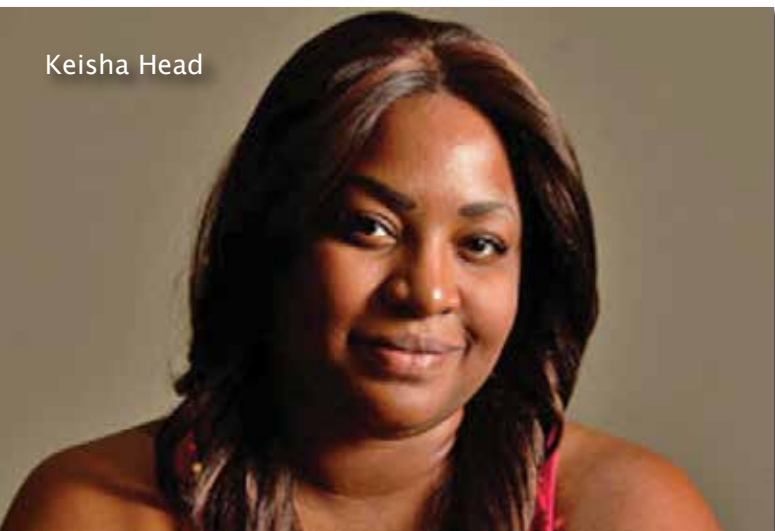
Trafficking in Persons Program Coordinator

Asian Association of Utah Refugee and Immigrant Center

SURVIVORS OFFER SOLUTIONS TO GET TRAFFICKED VICTIMS OFF THE STREETS

One of the most valuable lessons that the AMBER Alert Training and Technical Assistance Program has taught is the value of listening to victims and their

and Technical Assistance Program Director. “When you have the face of a child—it deals with our values and our heart.”



Keisha Head

The 12 women who now call themselves “sister survivors” offered practical ways to help human trafficking victims. “We know what it takes to bring victims into becoming survivors,” said Keisha Head. She and the other survivors provided examples of what is needed to help trafficking victims, including:

- Be careful with the language and labels used during the first contact.
- Be prepared to provide shelter, food, education, and long-term support.
- Consider the trauma the victim experiences.
- Coordinate services and use survivors to help victims.

families when seeking solutions to child abductions. The Trafficking in Persons Symposium brought 12 survivors of child sex trafficking to offer a real world perspective on what will and will not work to help victims.

Head said her experience with law enforcement was not positive after she was forced into trafficking. She said one police officer even gave her advice on where the “pretty girls” sell themselves. Later, she went to the police after she was raped. “The officer said, ‘You were not raped, you are a prostitute.’”

“We thought it was very important to have a face on this mission,” said Phil Keith, AMBER Alert Training

In conclusion, she said, the one word all of the survivors could relate to is slavery. “This is modern-day slavery, and this is taking place under our eyes, and we need to take a stand and stop this from happening.”

LESSONS FROM HUMAN TRAFFICKING SYMPOSIUM OFFERED ONLINE

On May 16, nearly 400 people participated in an online training course about the connection between missing children and sex trafficking. The hour-long Webinar, “Missing to Trafficking,” identified the correlation between the unknown missing child, chronic runaway, repeat victims of sexual abuse, abducted children, and the child victimized through sex trafficking.

are often approached by a pimp and forced into trafficking.”

“Child sex trafficking victims are missing kids,” said Dallas Police Sergeant Byron Fassett. “A child on the street has the highest risk of victimization. They

AMBER Alert Liaison Jim Walters offered this advice from the Trafficking in Persons Symposium when assisting victims: offer help unconditionally, learn to be culturally appropriate, provide basic needs, and use a survivor advocate to assist. “It is our responsibility to give victims control and let them take charge of their own lives,” said Walters.

PROFILE: AMBER ALERT BROADCASTER OF THE YEAR TEACHES NEW YORK TO LOVE AMBER ALERTS

Dick Novik's career in broadcasting began humbly in 1963 when he was hired to hold cue cards at a New York TV station. He went on to become a salesman, general manager, and radio station owner. For the past decade, he has been the senior vice president of the New York Broadcasters Association, which represents 400 radio stations and 45 TV stations in the state.

During his time with the broadcasters association, Novik learned about AMBER Alerts. It was his experience as a father that motivated him to help create the New York AMBER Alert Plan, he said.

"When I first heard of the AMBER Alert concept, I thought, of course, broadcasters will participate because they are all parents," said Novik. "I pitched it to the broadcasters, and they all gave me their home numbers and cell numbers so they could participate. I have gotten nothing but enthusiasm from broadcasters."

New York AMBER Alert Coordinator Gary Kelly said the state's program works because Novik participates in every AMBER Alert review and is constantly educating broadcasters about the alert.

"He has a 100 per cent buy-in from broadcasters in New York state," said Kelly. "He continues to have strong relationships with broadcasters, which allows us to focus on new technology. I cannot say enough about Dick Novik because I do not know where our program would be without him."

Even though his background is in broadcasting, Novik has had a role in developing new technology for AMBER Alerts, as well. For example, the taxi and limousine commissioner told him four years ago that every vehicle in New York City has an LED screen for drivers to learn about traffic conditions as well as a TV screen for customers.

"That triggered an idea, and I said it would be great if a taxi driver could help save an abducted child," said Novik. The commissioner said he would make it happen, and now more than 30,000 taxis and limousines in New York City receive AMBER Alerts. Novik is now working to get the alerts in private rented cars.

New York Missing & Exploited Children Center Manager Ken Buniak described Novik this way when presenting him with the Hope Award in 2009: "I would characterize Dick as an ordinary person who does

extraordinary things. His integrity, commitment, kindness, and ability to generate collaboration between so many people and groups are always evident and are always making a difference."

Novik also facilitated a 30-minute Web-cast in 2009 to train broadcasters on AMBER Alerts. The interactive Webcasts are now used for other AMBER Alert partners.

"I think it is important that we are called AMBER Alert partners," said Novik. "There cannot be any competition. Logic says it has to be done as quickly as possible with as little red tape as possible so we make sure we focus on the child."

So far, every AMBER Alert in the state of New York has ended with the safe recovery of a child. Novik said the one alert that stands out for him involved a woman watching an AMBER Alert on TV, who then looked out her window and saw the suspect's car. The police arrived immediately and found a little girl inside the car trunk.

"If there was no AMBER Alert that little girl could have been dead," said Novik. "The thrill of saving a child helps us keep going to make sure the next AMBER Alert works."

Most recently, Novik's passion for the AMBER Alert program earned him recognition as the 2011 AMBER Alert Broadcaster of the Year. "It is thrilling to know you have something that works," said Novik. "Broadcasters are licensed to serve the public and I cannot think of any way we can do it better than with an AMBER Alert." ☺



Dick Novik & wife Eugenia Zukerman

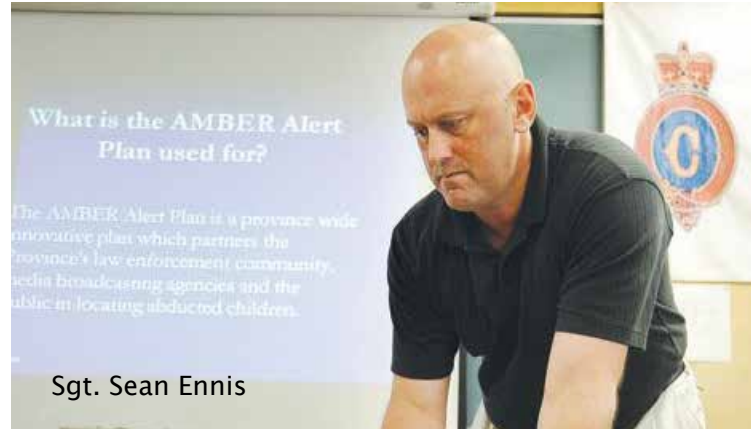
AMBER ALERT INTERNATIONAL

NEWFOUNDLAND AMBER ALERT COORDINATOR SAYS WE MUST BE PREPARED

Newfoundland AMBER Alert Coordinator Sgt. Sean Ennis shared his perspective on child abduction alerts for “The Notebook,” a publication for women law enforcement officers working in Atlantic Canada, the four provinces on the Atlantic coast. Here are some highlights:

“In Atlantic Canada we have been truly fortunate that we have not had to utilize the AMBER Alert program to assist in the safe recovery of an abducted child. Despite this statistic, we cannot fail to plan for such an event. If we are to gain knowledge from the hard lessons learned by others, we as police officers must remain ever vigilant in our preparations to ensure that if such a case does occur that we are ready to respond.

“Spreading the message in Atlantic Canada of an ongoing abducted child can pose significant logistical challenges. It must first be stated that our local media stand ready to assist us in the event of abduction. It is equally true that for those of us who live in a rural set-



ting, or reside in a province with a population density which does not make the use of overhead neon road signs feasible, we are challenged to find new and innovative ways to spread the message further.

“As one of the longest serving AMBER Alert Coordinators in Canada, I can honestly say there have been

Continued on page 10

QUEBEC NOW SENDS OUT AMBER ALERTS ON TWITTER



Quebec hopes a tweet will save a child. The Quebec Provincial Police now use Twitter to send out AMBER Alerts to more than 10,000 followers. Twitters have a 140-character limit, so messages include a link to additional information and photographs. ☺

IRELAND LAUNCHES CHILD ABDUCTION ALERT



After 3 years of preparation, Ireland officially launched Child Rescue Ireland, a child abduction alert similar to the AMBER Alert, on May 25, International Missing Children’s Day. Child advocates have pushed for an alert and a recent report indicated Ireland had 114 children go missing during the past 5 years. ☺

U.S. AMBASSADOR HONORS MEXICO FOR SAVING LIVES WITH AMBER ALERT

U.S. Ambassador to Mexico Anthony Wayne formally recognized Mexican citizens who used the AMBER Alert to safely recover 2 children. The honors were held in Mexico City on November 28, 2011, during an AMBER Alert training session for emergency call takers. The state of San Luis Potosi used the AMBER Alert to find a 16-year-old boy last September, and the states of Morelos and Sonora worked together on an alert which led to the recovery of a 14-year-old girl last August. Last spring, law enforcement officials launched the new National AMBER Alert Protocol of Mexico, which is modeled after the U.S. AMBER Alert System. ☺

Anthony Wayne,
U.S. Ambassador to
Mexico



BRITISH CELEBRITIES TWEET TO FIND MISSING CHILDREN

Celebrities in Great Britain used Twitter to get the word out about missing children on International Missing Children's Day. Actors, musicians, and royalty tweeted a different appeal for a missing child every 30 minutes for 24 hours and encouraged their followers to retweet the messages to as many people as possible. ☺

BRAZIL HOSTS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MISSING CHILDREN



Ernie Allen, Former President &
CEO National Center for Missing &
Exploited Children

The International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children (ICMEC) hosted an international conference in Brasilia Brazil, to address the 8 million children who go missing each year. Participants from 14 countries attended the Global Missing Children's Network (GMCN) conference on February 9 to share best practices in dealing with the global problem of missing children.

"The problem of missing children touches every nation. Yet, most countries lack basic systems to respond," said Ernie Allen, former President and CEO of the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children. "The meeting in Brazil is historic and represents the beginning of a global effort to build effective systems in every country."

ICMEC created GMCN in 1998 to share best practices, information, and strategies on missing children. Nineteen countries are members: Albania, Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Germany, Greece, Italy, Ireland, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Romania, Spain, South Africa, South Korea, the United Kingdom, and the United States. ☺

POLAND CREATES MISSING CHILD ALERT

Poland created a missing child alert in anticipation of the EURO 2012 soccer tournament held in that country this summer. Officials at the NGO ITAKA (Missing Persons Center) worried the tournament would increase child trafficking in Poland and Ukraine. ☺

AMBER ALERT INTERNATIONAL

NEWFOUNDLAND AMBER ALERT COORDINATOR SAYS WE MUST BE PREPARED, *continued from page 8.*

times when moving the message to the community was received with the same response as predicting a tsunami on the prairie. We as humans often are found unprepared because of an 'it has never happened before, therefore it would not happen' mind set. A review of history will reveal many such examples, when we ignore signs that in retrospect seem to be obvious.

"Community awareness and partnerships coupled with the success of the AMBER Alert Program have made it a necessary weapon in the arsenal of police services responding to child abduction cases. It should be said



that the AMBER Alert Program is not designed to replace the investigative process, but it exists to enhance the search so that we might bring another child safely home.

"In Atlantic Canada, like the lighthouses that dot our coastlines, we must continue to remain vigilant, warning all of a potential threat which though unseen may loom just below the surface. We can achieve that goal

by heightening community awareness and empowerment, and by educating our citizens on how they can assist police to ensure the safety of our children." ☺

NETHERLANDS NOW HAS 1 MILLION AMBER ALERT SUBSCRIBERS



More than 1 million people in the Netherlands have signed up to receive AMBER Alerts on their cell phones and computers, a remarkable number for a program that is only 3 years old and in a country with a population of 16.7 million.

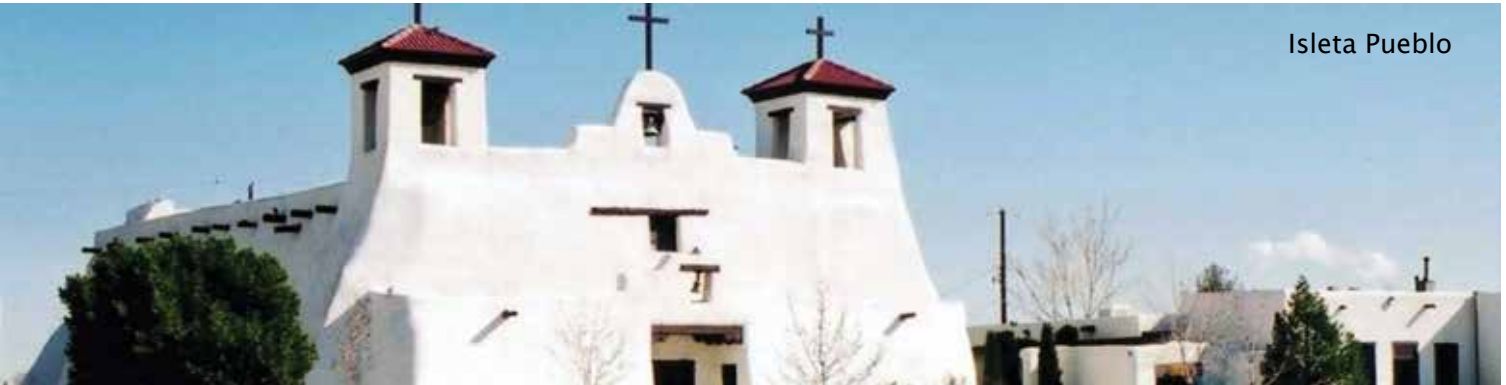
"Since we launched the AMBER Alert in November 2008, we have consistently tried to keep it in the public eye," said Netherlands AMBER Alert Coordinator Carlo Schippers.

Those who register receive the alerts through text, e-mail, Facebook or Twitter. An agreement was also recently reached with the Dutch Press Agency to automatically broadcast an AMBER Alert on radio and TV without prior approval. "No time is lost before all Dutch news media receive our message that way," noted Schippers.

The Netherlands has issued 11 AMBER Alerts so far, and the alerts have directly resulted in finding the child in more than half of the cases. ☺

AMBER ALERT IN INDIAN COUNTRY

NEW MEXICO TRIBES TRAIN TO PREVENT CHILD ABDUCTIONS



Isleta Pueblo

In conjunction with National Missing Children's Day observances, tribes throughout New Mexico gathered in Isleta, New Mexico, to take part in a 1-day training on how to respond to child abductions. On May 24, federal, state, and local law enforcement officials and tribal members from 19 pueblos in New Mexico, the Jicarilla Apache, and Navajo Nation learned the latest methods for recovering abducted children in Indian Country.

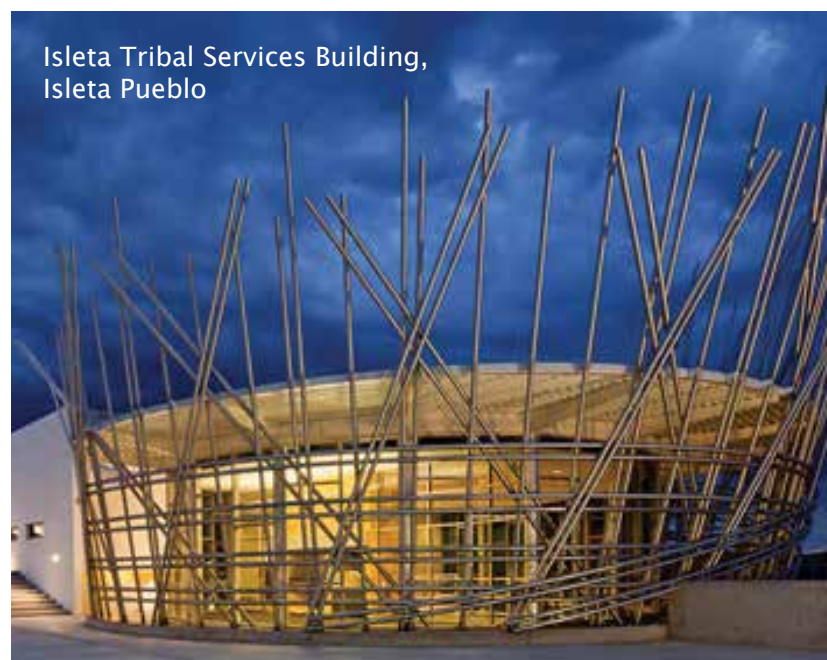
This program, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, provided an overview of missing children in Indian Country and how technology is used to exploit and traffic Native American children. A special recognition ceremony was held to honor two New Mexico officials who have implemented comprehensive child protection programs in tribal communities. ☺

TRIBAL YOUTH TO OFFER INSIGHT ON SAFETY

Researchers hope to learn from Native American teenagers about the dangers they face and seek solutions for their safety. The AMBER Alert Training and Technical Assistance Program and Southern Methodist University interviewed 13- to 18-year-old youth from tribes in Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and Mexico.

The researchers asked the students about their experiences, observations, fears, and even past victimization. They also discussed ways to strengthen child protection programs in Indian Country. An advisory group of tribal elders will ensure the research is consistent with cultural considerations and traditions.

The project began March 10 at the Isleta Pueblo in Dallas and reports will be gathered in Taos, New Mexico, and Window Rock, Arizona. The research findings will then be given to tribal leaders, service providers, and policy makers to help them make long-term strategies. A final symposium will be held October 27th in Dallas. ☺



Isleta Tribal Services Building,
Isleta Pueblo

FRONT LINES

LAW ENFORCEMENT LEADERSHIP AWARD GOES TO OFFICERS WHO RISKED THEIR LIVES TO SAVE A CHILD

On June 4, 2011, Thomas Petersen allegedly stabbed and killed his wife Judy and then fled in a red pickup with their 2-year-old son Jacob. Iowa issued an AMBER Alert and asked South Dakota to issue an alert the next day when detectives learned the suspect was using credit cards near Kodoka, South Dakota.



Peterson raced off at speeds exceeding 120 miles per hour. Meanwhile, Jackson County, South Dakota Sheriff Ray Clements was asleep when he heard the AMBER Alert on the radio. He got up and was checking convenience stores in the area when he heard on the police scanner that a park ranger was following Petersen. The sheriff

joined the park ranger in the high-speed pursuit of the suspect.

The 2011 AMBER Alert Law Enforcement Leadership Award was given to 2 sheriffs and a park ranger who risked their lives trying to bring young Jacob home safely.

“Petersen looked at me and pointed to his 2-year-old boy to let me know he was in there,” said Clements. “I tried to get him to pull over and he would not stop.”

Badlands National Park Ranger Bryan Warner heard the AMBER Alert and had a hunch that the suspect would travel by an exit on I-90. About 20 minutes later, Warner saw the suspect’s truck, and he pulled Petersen over.

Petersen nicked the park ranger’s car and then rammed and swideswiped the sheriff. “I had a sick feeling this was going to get pretty bad, pretty quickly,” said Warner.



The sheriff’s vehicle was hit 3 times, went into a spin, and rolled over 4 or 5 times. The suspect stopped; Warner pulled his gun. As Petersen drove away, he threw his son from the pickup. Warner grabbed the boy and put him in his car and went to check on Clements.

“I thought the sheriff was dead,” said Warner. “I was worried the suspect threw the kid out as a diversion to come back and kill us.”

The sheriff’s vehicle was upside down, and Clements had three broken ribs. Despite his injuries, he urged Warner to continue the pursuit and leave the boy with him.

“This kid was so nice,” said Clements. “He was scared obviously, but he would not let go of me when the ambulance came. My number one goal was to protect that kid.”

“I thought he was going to comply,” said Warner. “But he was talking really erratic and ran on me.”



Law Enforcement Leadership Award winners:
Mel Smith, Bryan Warner, Ray Clements

Other law enforcement agencies joined the chase, including Haakon County, South Dakota Sheriff Mel Smith. Petersen was driving at more than 90 miles per hour when he tried to crash into Smith's vehicle.

"He was trying to hit me head on," said Smith. "But I think he thought 'This is it!' and closed his eyes and the truck hit me on the side and forced me in a ditch. I thought it was over for me, as well."

The suspect's truck caught fire and Petersen jumped out and tried to come after Smith. "I was ready to shoot him," said Smith. "I lost my glasses in the accident and thought he had a gun on me."

Within moments other law enforcement officers arrived, including Ranger Warren. A standoff ensued, and Petersen begged officers to shoot him.

"Time stood still," said Warner. "He hid a weapon under his shirt while we were talking to him." Another deputy used a taser gun, and Petersen was finally taken into custody.

Sheriff Clements was taken to the hospital, but he returned to work the next day. "I was only doing my job," said Clements. "If I had to do it all over again I would do it again. I was not going to let him hurt somebody."

Clements started in law enforcement in 1994 and has been sheriff of Jackson County for 3 years. The sheriff was also involved with the first AMBER Alert in South Dakota, and he credits this alert for bringing the boy safely home.

Ranger Warner has been with the National Park Service since 2010 and recently relocated to Washington. Prior to that, he was a sheriff's deputy in Grand Traverse, Michigan. He became involved with another AMBER Alert in California, and he is grateful park rangers receive the same child abduction training as other law enforcement officers.

"Next to my marriage, the second happiest day of my life was seeing the sheriff walk out and having the kid safe," said Warner. "It is just part of being a police officer. I was honored to get the award, but I never thought I would get anything more than someone saying, 'Hey good job.'"

Sheriff Smith was a homebuilder and a rancher before he was elected sheriff of Haakon County in January 2011. He was treated for his injuries and also returned to work the next day.

"The award is a great honor. The AMBER Alert made it possible for us to reach the suspect quickly. We should support the AMBER Alert and stay behind it because it works," said Smith.


Petersen has been charged with the attempted murders of the 2 sheriffs in South Dakota and the murder of his wife in Iowa. ☹



Thomas Petersen

ODDS & ENDS


HOUSTON GOLFERS SWING IN \$50,000 FOR AMBER ALERT

A golf tournament raised \$50,000 for the Texas Center for the Missing, Houston's AMBER Alert provider. More than 110 golfers and volunteers—including Houston Astro Larry Dierker and Tampa Bay Buccaneer Ellis Wyms—participated at the May 3 event in Houston. The funds will be used for child Internet Safety classes, AMBER Alert training, and Child ID Kits for local families. 




AMBER ALERT INSTRUCTOR HONORED FOR COMMITMENT TO CHILDREN

At the end of his final presentation on May 1, members of the AMBER Alert Training and Technical Assistance Program gave Arthur “Art” Bohanon a special Citation of Excellence for his dedication to helping children. Bohanon retired after years of training AMBER Alert partners on forensics and missing and abducted children.

“Your untiring efforts and personal commitment have impacted and changed the lives of many children, renewing the ultimate investment for the welfare of future generations,” noted Phil Keith, AMBER Alert Training and Technical Assistance Program Director. 




CALIFORNIA USES HIGHWAY SIGNS FOR BLUE ALERT

California Highway Patrol used emergency freeway signs to warn motorists about 2 suspects involved in shooting and injuring a police officer. The state issued its second Blue Alert on May 7 after the suspects opened fire at a highway patrol officer who tried to pull them over for speeding and driving the wrong way on the highway. California issues a Blue Alert if a suspect poses an imminent threat to the public or other law enforcement personnel. The alerts do not immediately interrupt broadcasting. 



MAINE LAWMAKER WANTS AMBER ALERTS ON TRUCKER TV

Maine State Representative Diane Russell is asking the FCC to approve AMBER Alerts on “Trucker TV.” The proposed low-frequency station would reach thousands of long-haul truck drivers at truck stops and other places truckers gather. “If I had a child missing I would want them keeping an eye out,” said Russell. Trucker TV has not yet been approved by the FCC. 



TENNESSEE MOM CHARGED FOR PROMPTING FALSE AMBER ALERT

A Sevierville, Tennessee, mother has been charged with filing a false police report after she claimed her 3-month-old daughter had been abducted. The Sevier County Sheriff's Office issued an AMBER Alert in March when the woman told detectives a couple posing as social workers took her child. Detectives later found out the baby was staying with extended family members at the request of the mother. ☺



SOUTH CAROLINA LEGISLATOR WANTS PUBLIC TO KNOW ABOUT ENDANGERED PERSON ADVISORY

South Carolina created an Endangered Person Advisory 2 years ago for cases that do not meet the AMBER Alert criteria. Now South Carolina State Representative Rita Allison says more must be done to inform the public about this life-saving tool. Here are some highlights of her February 17 column in the Spartanburg Herald-Journal:

“Like me, I’m sure you know someone who is elderly and suffers from dementia or Alzheimer’s disease. Perhaps it’s even a family member. As these conditions worsen, their effects are devastating to those suffering from them, and also to their loved ones and caregivers.

“We have all heard stories of individuals afflicted with these conditions often wandering off, even driving off, and becoming hopelessly lost, often ending in tragedy because authorities simply don’t have sufficient personnel to adequately search for these unfortunate souls. The Endangered Person Advisory is designed to supplement law enforcement’s eyes when searching for one of these individuals.

“Broadcasting this information will alert the public to be on the lookout for the missing person. Putting thousands of additional eyes on our streets, highways and sidewalks will increase the possibility of a successful recovery and a happier ending to an unfortunate situation.” ☺



WASHINGTON PASSES KIMMIE’S LAW FOR MISSING DISABLED PEOPLE

The state of Washington will now send out an AMBER Alert if a disabled person goes missing more than 6 hours. “Kimmie’s Law” passed in February and expands AMBER Alerts for people with disabilities involving age, health, mental or physical issues. The law was created after the rape and murder of 16-year-old Kimmie Daily. The victim had the mental capacity of a 10-year-old, and police considered her a runaway during the first 24 hours she was missing. ☺



ODDS & ENDS

UTAH BUSINESSWOMEN HOST FAIRS AND FUNDRAISERS FOR AMBER ALERT

More than 900 children learned about the AMBER Alert at a child safety fair held May 5 in Kaysville, Utah. Child advocate Elaine Runyan-Simmons set up an AMBER Alert booth that included a popcorn machine and a “Wheel of Fortune” game with prizes for young visitors. A month earlier, Runyan-Simmons and the Davis County Chamber of Commerce presented a \$10,000 check to the Utah AMBER Alert Program. The organization has now raised more than \$25,000 for the Utah program during the past 4 years. 🍷



AMBER ALERT COORDINATOR OF THE YEAR



LD Maples

A total of 220 children were found safe during the 6 years that Assistant Chief LD Maples oversaw the California AMBER Alert Program. The former State Coordinator created a statewide AMBER Alert training team to teach law enforcement and media. He also created the “California AMBER Alert Criteria Reference Card” to help law enforcement officers make quick decisions during missing or abducted child investigations.

Maples partnered with the National Weather Service to activate the Emergency Alert System and was involved in getting alerts distributed to cell phones, billboards, Internet sites, and tens of thousands of California State Lottery digital terminals. He also developed Endangered Missing Advisories for cases that did not meet the AMBER Alert criteria. On a personal note, the father of 3 recently traveled to Cambodia to help rehabilitate girls rescued from human trafficking. “Maples has demonstrated leadership, innovation, and a personal passion for the AMBER Alert Program,” said California Highway Patrol Officer Janet Lockhart who nominated Maples for this award. 🍷

AMBER ALERT CITIZEN AWARD WINNER

Outside a grocery store in San Francisco, Theresa Shanley saw a man and young girl panhandling. The girl looked vaguely familiar. Shanley had seen an AMBER Alert and recognized the girl’s “big brown eyes.” The girl, 12-year-old Brittany Smith, had disappeared after her mother had been murdered at their home in Roanoke County, Virginia. Shanley ran into the store and asked employees to call police. Officers quickly arrested the suspect and took the young girl into custody. “Because of Shanley’s keen eye and her recollection of the AMBER Alert, Brittany is safe today,” said Roanoke County Police Detective Chris Welch. 🍷



Theresa Shanley & Det. Chris Welch

amber-net.org | askamber@fvtc.edu

AMBER ADVOCATE