



Issue 4, October 2009

“Coping With the Holidays” workshop is November 14

Upcoming Events:

**Hope and Healing Workshop:
Coping With the Holidays
November 14, 2009
Shandon Baptist Church, Columbia**



FHF ON THE WEB:

Don't forget to visit the FHF web site at www.scdps.org/fhf and Facebook for regular updates about activities and events.

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FHF will hold its second annual seminar focused on helping families through the holidays after a loss. The seminar will be November 14 at Shandon Baptist Church in Columbia and is open to all members free of charge.

Last year, FHF held “Coping With the Holidays:” a Hope and Healing seminar to give families practical tips to help them navigate the season when it seems that everyone is celebrating.

Linda Gill, from Joy in the Mourning, hosted the workshop.

“We felt this should become an annual event after the feedback we received last year,” FHF Coordinator Faith Turner said. “Reaching those first holidays and milestones can be a struggle for families. We want to provide them with some tools to help them

cope with this time.”

This seminar was created to address the particular bereavement issues that accompany the holiday season, which can stretch from November through January, and offer suggestions for healthy ways to cope.

Additionally, the workshop will address special occasions such as birthdays, date of death anniversaries etc. that come throughout the year.

Geoffrey Williams, of The Counseling Center at Palmetto Health Baptist, will run the seminar. Williams is a Licensed Professional Counselor with a Masters in Rehabilitation Counseling.

He is currently the manager of the Day Treatment Program at The Counseling Center at Palmetto Health Baptist in Columbia where he has provided care to various populations during a 14 year tenure with the hospital.

He will be joined by **Amy Dixon** who facilitates counseling, music therapy and creative arts' group at The Counseling Center.



Members hang ornaments on a “memory” tree at the 2008 workshop.

FHF grant ends: SCHP hires Turner to continue program

The Families of Highway Fatalities' program will continue uninterrupted after the federal grant that funded the program ended in September. The Highway Patrol has hired Faith Turner to continue as coordinator for the program.



Left: Members Jackie Murray, Carol Kiparisus with FHF coordinator Faith Turner.

The South Carolina Highway Patrol was awarded a three-year grant in 2006 for the program. Ms. Turner was hired to coordinate the program on a temporary grant basis. When the grant ended, the Highway Patrol had the option of continuing the program using state funds.

“We have seen so many families benefit from this program and they — in turn — have helped us educate the public about highway safety issues,” said Highway Patrol Col. Kenny Lancaster Jr. “We are pleased to be able to continue this valuable program and are encouraging other state patrols to consider adopting a similar program.”

Ms. Turner has been with the Highway Patrol since 2007. She plans to expand the program by formalizing the regional groups so that more activities are available on a local basis.

“I am amazed by how much the program has grown in the past couple of years,” Ms. Turner said. “I believe new families are drawn to this program because of the wonderful support they get from other families who have ‘been there.’”



"Have a heart for highway safety"

FHF

Support...Fellowship...Safety Education

Member Feature:

Teenager makes little girl's dream to fly come true

By Barbara Weston

FHF Member

"Grandma, I want to fly in a plane and go tell God that I am ready for my Daddy to come home." These words spoken last Thanksgiving by my 5-year-old granddaughter, Tatiana, struck a cord in my heart.

Tatiana's father, Julian Alfred Weston, died in a single-vehicle collision in 2006.

Not long after her words to me, I spoke to a group of young people at a church in Orangeburg about making safety a choice. I shared Tatiana's words and told the teens about how my son, Julian Alfred Weston, was born on his dad's birthday and died on his mom's.

I asked them to remember the words of a mother who had lost her son in a one-car collision because he wasn't wearing a seat belt. I reminded them that those of us left behind still feel the pain of missing him – none so much as his daughter.

After I finished my presentation, a 16-year-old young lady named Courtney asked if Tatiana had been on her first flight. I told her she had not.

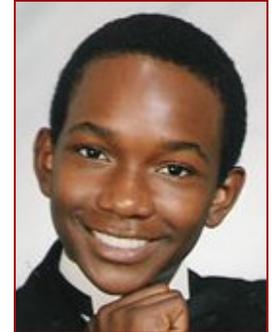
Courtney told me that she and her parents might be able to make that happen. She said that her father had a two seater-plane and that maybe he could take Tatiana on a flight. I felt humbled at such a wonderful, heartfelt gesture.

Before I reached home, Courtney's mother had called and left me a message. She said her daughter was excited about making Tatiana's dream of flight a reality.

A day later when Courtney's mom, Aimee, and I made contact, she told me that Courtney was so touched by my story that she called home from the church parking lot.

Courtney told her that she was putting on her seat belt and wanted them to take Tatiana on her first flight. We made arrangements for the flight to take place on the day after what would have been Tatiana's father's 26th birthday.

Tatiana's first flight lasted about 35 minutes.



Tatiana Lambert-Weston after her first plane ride and father, Julian Weston, right, who died on April 14, 2006.



First row: Courtney Godwin and Tatiana; second row: Tanesha Lambert (Tatiana's mom), Barbara Weston (Tatiana's grandma), and John and Aimee Godwin.

John, Courtney's father, said that she never spoke a word, but that her eyes and facial expressions spoke volumes.

Aimee and John presented Tatiana with a miniature plane and a certificate of her flight. Courtney bought Tatiana a gift, wrapped it, and called to ask us to bring Tatiana back to the airport on Sunday when Santa would deliver her present and call her by name.

The Godwin family will never know what this gift meant to my granddaughter and to all of us as we struggle with Julian's death.

As we approach the holiday season, I am reminded of how blessed we are to meet people like the Godwins who have raised a daughter with a heart for helping others.



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FHF sponsors teen safety forum in Kershaw County

The Families of Highway Fatalities sponsored a teen safety forum on September 23 in Kershaw County.

As of October 25, 17 people have died on Kershaw County roadways compared to 11 last year.

Several FHF members lost teen drivers on these rural roadways. They decided to address this issue by bringing area parents and teens together to seek solutions to the growing problem.

The forum involved Kershaw

Health Resource Center, Kershaw County Sheriff's Office and the Highway Patrol.

The Highway Patrol used its DUI goggles and obstacle course to illustrate the effect alcohol has on your senses. The parents had a chance to interact with a panel of experts about teen driving behaviors and warning signs.

Below: Cpl. Bryan McDougald, SCHP, works with teens. Right: Teens look at member Becky Kopp's photo collage of her brother, Jonathan Hall, who died in 2009.



New Members:

- Mary Germany, Columbia, SC
- Tarra McCravin, Columbia, SC
- Evelyn Edwards, Leesville, SC
- Dave Nichols, Columbia, SC
- Debra Nichols, Columbia, SC
- Shama Ford, Goose Creek, SC
- John Bowles, Lexington, SC
- Denise Hemingway, Horry, SC

Remember to post a memorial to your family member on the In Memory Of page on the www.scdps.org/fhf site.



FHF Assistance Program Inc. web site is active

The FHF Assistance Program Inc., the nonprofit that funds the programs of the FHF program, now has an active web site. The site is www.scfhfinc.com.

The nonprofit primarily raises funds to help FHF provide bereavement services to families who have lost someone in a motor vehicle collision. The nonprofit is made up of 11 board members who make decisions on which programs to fund for FHF and does the fund-raising for those programs.

"I'm pleased that our site is up and running because it allows people to learn more about us and what we do. It also now has a function for people to make donations to the group through a secure Pay Pal account," said FHF AP President Gert Thompson.

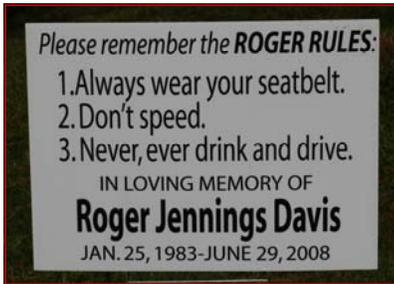


"Have a heart for highway safety"

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Photo Gallery— FHF Activities

FHF Assistance Program Inc. First Golf Tournament



Members had the opportunity to sponsor a hole at the golf tournament with a memorial sign in memory of their loved one.



Above: FHF members teamed up with FHF Assistance Program Inc. board of directors to host the first golf tournament to raise money for the FHF group. The funds raised during the tournament go toward bereavement programs for FHF. Right: Members Treasa Crosland, Carol Kiparisus, Cindy Sease, Sherri Iacobelli (SCHP), Deidre Johnson, Sheri Liberty and Greg Brazel.



State Fair:

The SC Department of Public Safety once again used the faces of FHF members' loved ones to illustrate the tragic toll of drinking and driving, distracted driving and other negative driving behaviors. The department displayed the board (left) at the State Fair, which ran from October 14-25.



For inquiries regarding the non-profit, FHF Assistance Program Inc., or to donate please contact Ms. Gert Thompson at Post Office Box 916, Blythewood, SC, 29016, or FHFINC100@yahoo.com www.scfhfinc.com



"Have a heart for highway safety"

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FAMILIES OF HIGHWAY FATALITIES

SC Department of Public Safety Headquarters
Attn: Faith Turner, Coordinator
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Blythewood, South Carolina 29016

Phone: 803-896-8171

Mobile: 803-608-7664

Fax: 803-896-7922



Save a Life Tour:

Lisa Radvansky, FHF member, recently spoke to the Naval Base personnel in Beaufort about losing her son, Chad. She was there to assist with the national "Save a Life" tour that uses high-tech graphics, driving simulators and personal stories to bring home the effects of poor choices behind the wheel. FHF members regularly participate with the Highway Patrol in presentations to cadets at the Naval Base and other military installations.

Coming Up:

November: Peer Team Members:

FHF needs Peer Team members to assist newer members at the November Hope and Healing Workshop: Coping with the Holidays.

November: Thanksgiving Travel:

The Highway Patrol invites FHF members to join them at Welcome Centers/ Rest Areas around the state to hand out safety literature to members of the motoring public. If you are interested, please contact Faith Turner.

November: FHF Activities Committee:

The FHF Activities' Committee will meet on November 24 to

plan bereavement activities and outings for the upcoming year. Members from the FHF group will join the board of directors for FHF Assistance Program Inc. to plan activities for 2010. Contact Faith if you are interested in helping.

December: Volunteer Luncheon:

FHF Assistance Program Inc. holds luncheon to recognize FHF volunteers who give their time to speak and educate the public about safety issues in partnership with the Highway Patrol.

Ongoing: Pre-Trial Intervention, Speakers Bureau:

Speakers Bureau members are still needed to assist at monthly pre-trial interventions. We will soon begin training speakers for the busy 2010 prom season. Please contact Faith, if you are interested in joining the speakers bureau.

Families of Highway Fatalities (FHF) Newsletter is published six times a year and sponsored by the SC Department of Public Safety.