



Upcoming Events:

August: Regional Support Group Meetings: Charleston, Greenville, Columbia Details coming on Facebook/Web Site

FHF teams up with DPS to fight impaired driving

You may have seen some familiar faces and names on billboards, gas pump toppers or on citation holders recently.

Several FHF families agreed to allow the image of their loved one — who was killed by an impaired driver — to be used in different venues to fight drunk driving.

“I was truly touched by



FHF ON THE WEB:

Don't forget to check out the new FHF web site at www.scdps.org/fhf. We make updates weekly.



Follow FHF updates and event announcements

on the Families of Highway Fatalities' Facebook site.



Above: Billboards featuring FHF families are on roadways throughout the state to discourage DUI. Joy Batchelor's three sons were killed in 2002. Left: Col. Lancaster, commander of the Highway Patrol announces plans for a DUI team with FHF members in attendance.

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seeing my daughter's picture on the billboard. She touched the hearts of so many in the short time she was here. Through this campaign, she will touch the hearts of many more," said Jim Waters, whose daughter, Kia,

was killed in 2007.

South Carolina ranks second in the nation for DUI-related fatalities. The department's goal is to lower those fatalities through public education and enforcement efforts.

In addition to the DUI educational campaign, the Highway Patrol announced a team of 31 troopers whose sole duty will be to battle DUI. The team began work over the July 4th weekend.



FHF families enjoyed an outing at Lake Murray on July 18 with a picnic, swimming, games and support activities; 48 people attended the event. The monthly events allow families to meet and enjoy outings as part of their healing process in addition to quarterly Hope and Healing workshops.



"Have a heart for highway safety"

**FHF**

Support...Fellowship...Safety Education

## FAMILIES OF HIGHWAY FATALITIES

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### By Cindy Sease

When my daughter, Kelsey, died on April 15, 2005, I struggled to maintain my familiar life, but nothing felt "familiar" anymore.

I lasted almost two years in my job as an auto claims' adjuster, but dealing daily with accidents no longer felt like the right way to spend my life. Every time someone complained about some minor accident, it made me re-live my own experience as a major tragedy.

After leaving my job, I worked part time while still searching for something fulfilling. I wanted to be creative but didn't yet have an outlet.

Then, my niece got married and I painted champagne glasses for the wedding. The process of painting and making her something special were both rewarding, but I figured it was a one time deal. Weddings don't roll around that often, right?

Shortly after that wedding, I took part in the FHF Peer Team Training taught by Dr. Dee Gullege. In the class, she introduced the concept of using art as a way to process and deal with our grief.



The main lesson I learned is that it is possible to take the shattered pieces of my life and create something positive with them. That experience really touched me and inspired me to pursue my inclination to keep painting, even if it was just for me.

In the following weeks, I painted just for



*Left: Cindy with husband, Mike. Right: Cindy displays some of her artwork in a local store.*

fun and realized it helped make me feel positive and happy. I could start the day gloomy and sad, but as I painted, I could feel my mood changing. Painting was in itself therapeutic, but seeing the finished product made it even better.

I painted a 40th birthday glass for my friend, Sherrie, who loved it and encouraged me to do more. Next thing I knew, she had shown it to many people who loved it and wanted to know where they could get something similar.

Less than a year later, Sherrie and I have a small business making glasses, frames, plaques with inspirational sayings and jewelry. We sell at local festivals, by word of mouth, at a local pet store and will soon have a web site. We specialize in made-to-order gifts.

Dr. Gullege taught me a valuable lesson last summer — that we can take tragedy in our lives and make something positive from it. Using "art as medicine," I feel that's exactly what I've done. Making other people happy is an added bonus.

## Welcome, New Members...

*Dawn Shick of Union;  
William and Theresa Gadsden of Charleston,  
Karen Hughes of Augusta, GA  
Diane Best of Columbia  
Ned and Margaret Blackmon of Lancaster  
Joyce Sullivan of Bethune, SC  
Becky Kopp of Blythewood,  
Denise Gowan of Boiling Springs  
Charles and Linda Dewitt of Orangeburg  
Carolyn Walker of Winnsboro  
Jamie Mae Brown of Charleston  
Alice Doolittle of Wagener  
Elaine Rej of Lexington*

*Elizabeth Livingston of Columbia  
Judy Huggins of Dillon  
Martha Grant of Hollywood  
Dennis Flowers of Hartsville  
Hattie Mae Burton of Saluda  
Martha Wood of Lugoff  
Joy Eubanks of Campobello  
Donna Bishop of Roebuck  
Bridget Musteata of Duncan,  
Tracy Reynolds of Baldwinville, NY  
Richard Smith of Newberry  
Jean Guthrie of Darlington  
Ken and Amy Encinas of Rock Hill  
Courtney Smith, Columbia  
Michael and Tracy Hobbs of Rock Hill*



"Have a heart for highway safety"

# FHF

## FHF holds two summer blood drives, raising 105 units

The Families of Highway Fatalities held two summer blood drives on June 17 and July 2, collecting more than 105 units of blood.

The Families of Highway Fatalities responded to a need in 2006. The group, having just been formed, decided to hold two annual blood drives.

The purpose was twofold — to hold an event in memory of those who had died on the highways and to help address the need for blood donations during the summer months.

Even though traffic collisions rise during the summer — often resulting in the need for blood — donations actually fall off as people travel and get away from their routines.

Live 5 News in Charleston and the Riverdogs' Minor League Baseball Team became partners there. Fuddrucker's Restaurant on Bush River Road agreed to be the host in Columbia.

Each year, a family is chosen

at each location to serve as the representative and the "face" of highway tragedies.

Theresa and William Gadsden agreed to serve as the host family in Charleston this year. Their son, Jacob Wright, was killed in Colleton County this year.

"The blood drive was such an uplifting experience for us. It gave us a chance to meet many people who knew and loved our son as well as many strangers who offered their support," said Theresa Gadsden.

The Beasleys — Chuck and Judy — were the representative family in Columbia.

Their son, Wesley, was killed in 2005 in Lee County.

"We remember Wesley the most for his smile and positive attitude. I know he would be proud to know we are trying to make some good come from this terrible void in our lives," Judy Beasley said.



Left: The Charleston blood drive was held in memory of Theresa Gadsden's (left) son, Jacob Wright. She stands with Elizabeth Steed who was the host last year. Below: Chuck and Judy Beasley stand with Tony Clyburn, a DJ at B106. Clyburn helped spread the word about the drive in memory of Wesley Beasley.



## Opportunities to get involved with speakers' bureau, safety advocate program...

Members of the FHF Speakers' Bureau had an active Spring between high school proms and pre-trial intervention classes.

The Highway Patrol and SCDPS are again gearing up for a number of safety programs in the Fall where they will be inviting volunteers from FHF to assist with programs.

**Labor Day Welcome Center Events:** Need volunteers to assist troopers giving out safety materials to motorists.

**Back to School Car Pool Lines:** Need volunteers to assist troopers in handing out child safety materials to parents/caregivers in car pool lines.

**State Fair Booth:** Need volunteers to help SCDPS employees staff the booth and talk to the public about safety.

**Sober or Slammer DUI Media Events:** Members will be asked to attend media events and consider doing media interviews.

If you are interested in volunteering for any of these events, please contact us at FamiliesofHwyFatalities@scdps.net. Please remember to wear your FHF shirt when representing the organization in a professional capacity. If you do not have a shirt, please contact Faith.



The Highway Patrol will introduce its Rollover Simulator this Fall. The simulator is meant to teach people about the effects of not buckling up, even at slow speeds. The Highway Patrol will use the simulator first in three counties with a high number of deaths involving lack of safety belt use: Lexington, Berkeley and Florence. It will eventually be used throughout the state.



"Have a heart for highway safety"

# FHF Photo Gallery— FHF Activities

Zoo Outing, May 30, 91 participants



Charleston Blood Drive, June 19

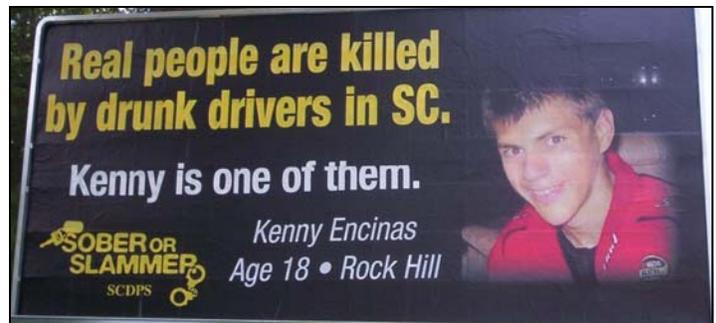


Columbia Blood Drive, July 2

The Charleston Blood Drive was held in memory of JC Wright. His stepfather (left), William Gadsden, talks with family friend, Keith Wright; 50 units were collected.



Left: Member Lisa Chapman donates blood at the Columbia drive held on July 2; 55 units were collected. Right: Another DUI billboard. Kenny is the son of new members, Ken and Amy Encinas.



Lake Murray Outing, July 18



Far left: A group photo at Lake Murray where 48 people attended the most recent peer support event. Left: Myrna Shelley and grandson, Gavin, talk with Theresa Gadsden.



"Have a heart for highway safety"

**FHF**

## FAMILIES OF HIGHWAY FATALITIES

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### What's In the Works: We need your input...

We are busy planning events for the remainder of the year. There are a number of ideas and plans in the works, but we want your feedback.

We try to keep our events child friendly because so many of our members have young children and grand children. When we host workshops, we typically provide on site child care.

In August, several regional coordinators are hosting a support group meeting, including a "guy's night." A support meeting will be held in Greenville, Charleston and Columbia.

If you live in one of those areas, we encourage you to attend. This will be an informal time for families to talk and provide support for each other as well as allowing new families to meet.

We are currently planning a service project(s), which may include making hobby horses to give to children in hospitals or children's homes during the holidays. We are planning a trip to the Corn Maize in Lexington in the Fall.

The next formal workshop will be in November. We are currently working with a counselor at Palmetto Health Baptist who has agreed to facilitate the workshop. This seminar will once again focus on helping families find ways to cope through the holidays.

Members of our Peer Team are asked to consider working at this event to assist our new members. This workshop will be especially helpful to new members or those who are three

years or less from their losses. We will provide child care at this function.

In December, we are considering holding a small, candle-light ceremony to remember your loved ones. If you're interested in such an event, please let us know.

Finally, we have had several families express an interest in holding a scrapbooking workshop. We are trying to gauge interest in this as well.

Our goal through all FHF activities is to provide a safe and welcoming environment where people can find support after facing terrible tragedy.

If you would like to submit ideas for future programs or the newsletter, please contact Faith Turner and Sherri Iacobelli at [FamiliesofHwyFatalities@scdps.net](mailto:FamiliesofHwyFatalities@scdps.net).



*Deb Harding, FHF Member, displays hobby horses she has made as part of other service projects. FHF is considering this for an upcoming service project.*



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 [FHFINCI100@yahoo.com](mailto:FHFINCI100@yahoo.com)