

## 2005 Herman Goldstein Award for Excellence in Problem Oriented Policing



## Most Wanted Project

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STATE OF WASHINGTON  
WASHINGTON STATE PATROL

General Administration Building, PO Box 42600 • Olympia, WA 98504-2600 • (360) 753-6540

June 24, 2005

Mr. Rob Guerette, Goldstein Award Coordinator  
Herman Goldstein Award Selection Committee  
School of Criminal Justice  
Rutgers University-Newark  
123 Washington St  
Newark NJ 07102-3094

Dear Mr. Guerette:

It is with great pleasure that I submit a Washington State Patrol Exemplary Problem Oriented Public Safety (POPS) project for consideration for the 2005 Herman Goldstein Award for Excellence:

Washington State Patrol – Most Wanted Project

As outlined in the submission instructions, nine copies of the completed application package are enclosed. In addition, an electronic copy (Adobe Acrobat document on CD) is also enclosed in a sleeve within each hard copy.

By this letter, I attest to the project's methodology and verify that the project's results are accurate and directly attributable to the project.

In addition to nominating this project for award consideration, I also ask that it be considered for panel presentation at the 2005 POP Conference.

If you have any questions about the Most Wanted Project, please contact Acting Captain Gregory E. Miller, commander of our Criminal Investigation Division, at (360) 753-0315, extension 169.

Sincerely,

CHIEF JOHN R. BATISTE

JRB:tlu

Enclosures

cc: Assistant Chief David J. Karnitz, Investigative Services Bureau  
Acting Captain Gregory E. Miller, Criminal Investigation Division  
Assistant Chief Brian A. Ursino, Field Operations Bureau



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## **Addendum A**

*Washington State Patrol/Criminal Investigation Division  
Mission Statement, Core Mission Areas, Values, and Goals*

## **Addendum B**

*Seattle Post-Intelligencer Newspaper Article*

## **Addendum C1 to C4**

*Screen Shots of WSP Most Wanted Web Site*

## **Addendum D**

*Interoffice Communication from Lieutenant Miller to Detectives*

## **Addendum E**

*WSP Media Release*

## **Addendum F**

*Article announcing Web Site in WSP's "Inside-Out" Monthly Newsletter*

## **Addendum G**

*VHS Video Cassette of Media announcing WSP Most Wanted*

**ON THE COVER:**

**This logo is imprinted on a coin-sized medallion that is presented to each detective who locates a Most Wanted suspect which results in an arrest.**

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## ★ Project Title ★

### *Washington State Patrol's Most Wanted*

#### Scanning

##### *Pre-Project Problem Definition*

Felony collision suspects fail to appear in court and no significant effort is made to find them. Their continued freedom results not only in the substantial delay in justice and closure for victims, but also provides these suspects the opportunity to repeat offend and create new victims.

#### Analysis

Research determined there were 31 suspects wanted for WSP-investigated felony collision warrants as of September 9, 2003, that dated back to 1992, and that there was no meaningful effort to locate and arrest them. The average amount of time that these suspects were free prior to this project was 1,099 days.

#### Response

The following GOALS were established:

- Apprehend all current felony collision suspects.
- Apprehend all future felony collision suspects as quickly as possible.

#### Action Plan

- Direct all detectives to find out how many suspects in their area have open warrants for felony collision crimes, then...
  - ◆ Forward a photograph and suspect information to Lieutenant Greg Miller, WSP Criminal Investigation Division (CID), for all current and future warrants.
  - ◆ Actively search for these suspects as part of their open case work.
  - ◆ Be prepared to explain their efforts each month in locating each suspect assigned to them.
- Create a Web Site to enlist the assistance of the public in locating the suspects.
- Hold a press conference and maintain media communications to assist the WSP in this effort.

- Make ongoing and meaningful effort to locate, arrest, and return the suspect to court for trial and book as many new suspects at the time of an arrest as possible to help ensure their appearance at trial and ensure proper identification.

### Assessment

- Between September 2003 and December 31, 2004, a total of 29 individuals with felony collision warrants from CID-investigated collisions were arrested. Only 45% of the suspects from the original warrant list (that were pre-Most Wanted program and dated back to 1992) have been captured; however, 75% of the suspects who have fled since the program's inception have been captured.
- The average time that a suspect was free prior to the program beginning was 1,099 days. The average time a suspect is now free is only 70 days. This is a decrease of 1,029 days (nearly 3 years) that these suspects are eluding justice.



## RESULTS

**★ 29 Suspects Apprehended ★**

**★ Suspects now free an average of 70 days compared to 1,099 days ★**

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## **Nature of the Problem**

Washington State Patrol (WSP) Criminal Investigation Division (CID) detectives investigate all felony collisions that occur on state routes in Washington and felony collisions on some county roads. Historically, detectives considered our cases complete when the investigation was forwarded to the prosecutor for the filing of charges, and we did not follow the case through adjudication. A “gap” occurred when a person was charged but failed to appear in court as ordered and, at this point, it was left to happenstance as to whether or not the suspect would ever be brought to justice (that happenstance being future contact with a law enforcement officer resulting in the discovery of the warrant for that person’s arrest). This resulted in the suspect remaining free to re-offend and a substantial delay in justice and closure for the victims and their families.

## **Problem Identification**

On June 4, 2001, Fred Russell was driving under the influence on SR 270 in Whitman County when he struck two other vehicles, killing three people and severely injuring three others. Russell failed to appear for trial on three counts of Vehicular Homicide and three counts of Vehicular Assault. This was a CID investigation due to the felony nature; however, Sergeant Greg Miller, the local detachment supervisor at the time, was the on-scene supervisor at this horrific collision scene.

In August of 2003, Sergeant Miller was promoted to lieutenant and assigned to CID in charge of the collision investigation program. Aware that Fred Russell was still at-large, Lieutenant Miller wondered how many other felony collision suspects had fled.

In September of 2003, as CID detectives were still searching for Russell, we realized that this one case was an indicator of a larger problem—a “gap in the system.” We historically considered our cases completed when the investigation was forwarded to the prosecutor for the filing of charges, but did not follow the case through adjudication. The “gap” occurred when a person was charged, but failed to appear in court as ordered. At this point, it was left to happenstance as to whether the suspect would ever be brought to justice (that happenstance being future contact with a law enforcement officer resulting in the discovery of the warrant for that person’s arrest).

## **Who Identified the Problem?**

Lieutenant Greg E. Miller, Assistant Division Commander of the WSP Criminal Investigation Division.

### **Why This Problem Was Selected**

In the WSP CID, POPS (Problem Oriented Public Safety) project ideas are reviewed by the division commander for approval before a project can be opened. After Lieutenant Miller brought the problem forward, Captain Brian A. Ursino (CID Commander) recognized the profound impact this project could have for the victims and victim families that were not seeing justice served or gaining any semblance of closure to their life-altering ordeals.

We embarked upon this project because people who had caused death and/or grievous bodily injury were not being held accountable for their actions. Moreover, the project was in alignment with the CID Strategic Plan (see WSP CID Mission Statement, Core Mission Areas, and Values<sup>1</sup>).

### **Initial Level of Diagnosis**

Initial diagnosis proved that there were 31 suspects wanted for vehicular homicides, vehicular assaults, and felony (severe injury or death) hit-and-run collisions that were free after having failed to appear in court on cases dating back to 1992, and there was no existing process for follow-up.

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<sup>1</sup> Addendum A – CID Strategic Plan



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## Data/Sources Used to Analyze the Problem

- WSP Criminal Investigation Division felony collision case files.
- SCOMIS (Superior Court Database) to check for outstanding warrants.

## How Long Has It Been a Problem?

One current warrant dated back to 1992, which indicates the problem has existed for at least 12 years. There is no information available prior to 1992, indicating that the gap in the system permitting felony collision suspects to remain free has never been identified or addressed.

## Who Was Involved In the Problem?

- *Suspects* wanted for felony collision crimes who attempt to evade justice by failing to appear in court. By remaining free, they are able to re-offend and avoid paying their debt to society.
- *Victims and the families of victims.* These citizens suffer incalculably every day that a person accused of these crimes remains free to re-offend. Oftentimes the grief of loss is compounded with the frustration of knowing that the person who caused the injury or death is not being held accountable<sup>2</sup>.
- *WSP detectives* who dedicate significant effort into the preparation of felony collision cases—only to see their suspect flee without seeing justice for the victims and their families.

## What Harms Resulted From the Problem?

The harms are immeasurable to the victims of these crimes and to their families. There is a tremendous emotional impact when they learn that the suspect that maimed them, their loved one, or caused the death of their loved one has fled from justice. Additionally, the suspect is free to commit additional crimes while they are not being held accountable for their previous crimes.

Although we have no hard data indicating that delays in getting a suspect into court affect the ability to convict, it is common knowledge among law enforcement officers

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<sup>2</sup> Addendum B – Seattle Post-Intelligencer article entitled “Bereaved dad seeks suspect – and justice”

(and suspects) that getting to trial while witnesses are available and their memories are relatively fresh provide the best opportunity for a successful prosecution.

### **How Was the Problem Addressed Before?**

This problem has not previously been addressed by the Washington State Patrol.

### **What Did the Analysis Reveal About the Causes and Underlying Conditions That Precipitated the Problem?**

The analysis indicated that there was no existing method of tracking those suspects who failed to appear on felony collision cases, no protocol established for detectives regarding how they should respond to information indicating that a suspect fled, and no indication of support from the department for the fiscal and workload impact associated with aggressively pursuing these suspects.

### **Analysis of Nature and Extent of the Problem**

The analysis revealed that any suspect wanted for a felony collision case would only be apprehended by happenstance contact with law enforcement.

### **Communication With the Community**

In order to enlist the assistance of as many citizens of the state of Washington as possible to help find wanted felony collision suspects, a Web site was developed for public access that shows the face of each suspect along with the description of the crime that they are accused of<sup>3</sup>. A second page consists of the photograph of each suspect who has been arrested<sup>4</sup>, and a third page consists of state<sup>5</sup> and national maps<sup>6</sup> showing that the suspects have been arrested from all over the state and all over the country. The Web site was created within the preexisting WSP home page.

A media campaign announcing the new “WSP Most Wanted” Web site was coordinated by the WSP’s Office of Government and Media Relations (GMR) and a press conference was held on February 9, 2004, in Bellevue, announcing the creation of the new Web site. Two crime victim families (one from a captured suspect, Ms. Barbara

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<sup>3</sup> Addendum C1 – WSP Most Wanted Web Site (Wanted Suspects)

<sup>4</sup> Addendum C2 – WSP Most Wanted Suspects Arrested

<sup>5</sup> Addendum C3 – WSP Most Wanted Suspects Arrested State Map

<sup>6</sup> Addendum C4 – WSP Most Wanted Suspects Arrested National Map

Holden; and one from a suspect who remains at large, Mr. Rich Morrow) attended the conference, which received extensive statewide coverage.

A week before the press conference, the WSP home page received 38,372 hits and 786 visits. On the day of the press conference, the hits climbed to 692,412 and there were 7,009 visits.

The night after the Web page was announced, one of the wanted suspects called the WSP to tell us where he was.

## Range of Possible Responses

Some of the ideas brainstormed by stakeholders included:

- Direct detectives to try to find the suspects and convey departmental support.
- Construct a “Most Wanted” Web site to enlist the aid of the public.
- Hold a press conference with victims’ families to gain public awareness and support.

## Responses Used to Address the Problem

Detectives were directed to make the apprehension of these fugitives a priority and were told that their effort in this regard was supported by the Executive Staff of the Washington State Patrol. A “WSP Most Wanted” Web site was developed so citizens could assist in the search and other police officers would have ready access to suspect photographs. A press conference was held and there are ongoing press releases with each WSP Most Wanted arrest.

## Response Development

- Initiate a core team of cross-divisional WSP stakeholders. *This team consisted of Field Operations (Troopers), CID (Detectives), Information Technology Division (Web site), and Government and Media Relations (press conference and releases).*
- Initiate a partnership with the United States Marshals Service and prosecutors offices from 39 counties.

**Lieutenant Greg Miller, CID:** On September 2, 2003, Lieutenant Miller conducted a survey of all CID detectives who investigate felony collisions (vehicular homicide, vehicular assault, and felony hit-and-run). The detectives were asked to determine how many warrants were outstanding for CID-investigated felony collisions. The detectives accessed court and other databases to find this information. This research revealed that there were 31 persons wanted on felony collision warrants dating as far back as 1992.

On November 13, 2003, Lieutenant Miller sent an Interoffice Communication to all CID detectives articulating the expectation of CID command that these suspects be located and arrested, and providing operational parameters<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> See Addendum D – Interoffice Communication from Lieutenant Miller to all detectives.

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**Ms. Nancy Davis and Mr. Kent Hernandez (WSP Information Technology Division):** Attended a planning meeting for the WSP Most Wanted Web Page on December 16, 2003. Ms. Davis began work on a sample Web page and devoted a significant amount of time toward converting 31 Most Wanted profiles into a format that could be easily viewed and quickly updated. The design and production of the Web page and its associated “WSP Most Wanted” logo on the home page are eye-catching, logical, and easy to view. The “WSP Most Wanted” page went “live” on February 9, 2004. Ms. Davis devotes time to this project on an ongoing basis by updating the page, adding new suspects, and putting arrested suspects on an “Arrested” page. See Addendum C1 (picture of the WSP “Most Wanted” page), Addendum C2 (WSP “Arrested” page), and Addendums C3 and C4. (In September 2004, WSP “Site Maps” of locations where fugitives have been located and arrested was added to the Web site – see <http://www.wsp.wa.gov/crime/wanted.htm>).

**Ms. Nelsa Brodie (WSP Government and Media Relations):** Ms. Brodie was contacted about the WSP Most Wanted project in December of 2003. She began to plan a press conference announcing the creation of the program and the associated Web site<sup>8</sup>. In planning the conference, she arranged to have two crime victim families attend and speak to the media<sup>9</sup>.

The press conference announcing the program was conducted on February 9, 2004, in Bellevue and received statewide coverage (see Addendum G, video clips of media coverage). On the day of the press conference, there were 7,009 visits to the Web site. The dramatic use of our site was a direct result of the extensive planning and public relations work surrounding the press conference.

It is estimated that Ms. Brodie and GMR staff spent approximately twenty hours on the media release, pre-press work, press conference set-up, media fact sheet, victim family contacts, and other associated tasks. Ms. Brodie continues to be involved in the public relations end of this project. She helped address concerns of over-representation by a minority race with minority members of the community and continues to support the program with media releases.

**All CID detectives assigned to the 8 WSP Criminal Investigation Units:** See the action steps previously detailed under Lieutenant Miller’s expectation Interoffice Communication.

**Detective Jason Watson and the U.S. Marshal’s Fugitive Task Force:** Investigative assistance in tracking, arresting, and transporting of fugitives that CID detectives have determined have fled the state.

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<sup>8</sup> See Addendum E – Copy of WSP Press Release Announcing the WSP Most Wanted Web Site

<sup>9</sup> See Addendum F – Article in the WSP Monthly Newsletter “Inside-Out” Announcing the Most Wanted Web Site

**WSP Field Operations Bureau:** Arrest and transporting assistance on a case-by-case basis.

**All 39 County Prosecutors Offices in Washington State:** Amending warrants as needed and handling extradition proceedings.

### **What Evaluation Criteria Were Most Important to the Department Before Implementation of the Response Alternatives?**

- Effect of apprehension (or non-apprehension) on the victims and their families and the safety of our citizens.
- Taking time away from detectives' current case load to search for the suspects.
- Financial impact involved in extradition proceedings.
- Support from prosecuting attorney's offices.
- Successful prosecution of suspects.

### **Intended Response Plan Results**

#### ***Goals***

- Apprehend all current felony collision suspects.
- Apprehend all future felony collision suspects who fail to appear in court as quickly as possible.

#### ***Performance Measures***

- Number of suspects currently warranted on felony collision crime (baseline: 31 suspects).
- Average time that a warranted felony collision suspect remains free (baseline: 1,099 days).

### **Resources Made Available**

The support of the Chief of the Washington State Patrol, the Deputy Chief of the Investigative Services Bureau, and the Commander of the Criminal Investigation Division was crucial to this effort by committing to expend the resources to go wherever the suspects were found to bring them back to trial. The detectives of CID were crucial to impacting this problem by finding the suspects. The CID Commander (Captain Brian Ursino) supported the project owner (Greg Miller) throughout the project.

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The WSP Information Technology Division developed the WSP Most Wanted Web site and the Office of Government and Media Relations coordinated the press conference and media support. The United States Marshals Service provided investigative expertise in tracking, arresting, and transporting prisoners. Field Operations Bureau troopers provided local public information officer support, arrest, and transportation on a case-by-case basis. Prosecuting attorneys reviewed cases and amended warrants as necessary.

### **Difficulties Encountered**

Some warrants were issued up to 12 years ago. Investigators, witnesses, and sometimes victims have long since moved away, making locating suspects difficult and prosecuting them challenging.

Suspects were located as far away as Hawaii, providing logistical difficulties in transportation and creating a fiscal impact in which local jurisdictions were sometimes unwilling to provide support.

Detectives' case loads sometimes made it difficult to concentrate on finding the suspect in an old case when they continuously receive new cases.

There are a large number of Latino suspects on the most wanted list, which generated concern from the Latino community. Detectives had difficulty tracking these suspects because of migratory work patterns and language difficulties. Although every single warranted suspect appears on the list, the Caucasian suspects tend to be apprehended much more rapidly than the Latino suspects, leaving the Latinos over-represented proportional to the number of Caucasians who commit these crimes.

### **Who Was Involved in the Response?**

#### ***Primary Stakeholders***

- WSP detectives
- WSP troopers
- WSP Information Technology Division
- WSP Government and Media Relations
- All 39 County Prosecutors
- United States Marshals Service

## Results

**Performance Measure #1:** In the 16-month period between the project's inception in September 2003 and December 31, 2004, a total of 29 individuals with felony collision warrants from CID-investigated collisions were arrested from proactive investigative efforts. Only 45% of the suspects from the original warrant list (that were pre-Most Wanted program and dated back to 1992) have been captured. However, 75% of the suspects who fled since the program have been captured. This proves that proactive pursuit is 30% more effective in capturing fugitives than relying on happenstance law enforcement encounters.

**Performance Measure #2:** The average time that a suspect was free prior to the program beginning was 1,099 days. The average time a suspect is free since is only 70 days. This is a decrease of 1,029 days (nearly 3 years) that these suspects are eluding justice.

Detectives are now booking as many felony collision suspects as they can in lieu of releasing them while waiting for prosecutorial review. Booking these suspects helps to ensure that they appear at trial, and ensures that they are identifiable if they do not appear. If a suspect is in a hospital and cannot be booked, detectives are trained to fingerprint and photograph them so that it will be easier to identify and locate them if they run.

Although we have no hard data indicating this project has resulted in a higher conviction rate, any prosecutor will tell you that getting suspects to trial quickly is essential to successful prosecution (while witnesses are still available and their memories relatively fresh). Moreover, the improvement in the quality of life for the victims (of vehicular assaults) and victim families (of vehicular assaults and homicides) is immeasurable. There is no doubt as to the ongoing benefit and impact that this POPS Project will have on improving public safety and the quality of life for the citizens of Washington State.

## Methods of Evaluation

Tracking of warranted felony collision suspects is an ongoing institutionalized process.

Evaluation of the program consisted of counting the number of suspects wanted for warranting on felony collision crimes and comparing this number to suspects apprehended. The length of time original list suspects were free before the program started was compared to the length of time that new suspects remain at large.

Subjective evaluation criteria includes interest by the media in press releases, interest by victim families in progress related to the search for suspects, and interest (visits) to the WSP Most Wanted web site.



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## **Who Was Involved in the Evaluation Process?**

Lieutenant Miller maintains the WSP Most Wanted list and keeps it updated. Progress was reported to Captain Ursino with each arrest and Detective Sergeants were required to report their number of outstanding warrants each month as part of the Department's Strategic Advancement Forum (SAF) process.

## **Problems With Implementation**

There were no problems implementing the project statewide within the department. Some local agencies had concerns about the fiscal impact of apprehending and transporting the suspects back to their jurisdiction.

## **Response Goals Accomplished**

### ***Goals***

- Apprehend all current felony collision suspects  
***29 suspects were arrested and 45% of them were from the original list.***
- Apprehend all future felony collision suspects that fail to appear in court as quickly as possible  
***75% of new suspects added to the list during this period were apprehended.***

***The average time that a Felony Collision Suspect remains free after warranting has been reduced by 1,029 days (almost 3 years) since the program began.***

## **How Did You Measure Your Results?**

By counting the number of suspects apprehended, the number of suspects remaining, and the number of days suspects were free prior to the inception of the program as compared to the number of days a suspect remained free after the program started.

## **What Data Supported Your Conclusions?**

Date of warrant compared to date of arrest for suspects warranted prior to the project beginning, and for suspects that warranted after the project was initiated.

**How Could You Have Made the Response More Effective?**

Further effort to enlist the aid of the Latino community would be helpful in locating the Latino suspects remaining on the WSP Most Wanted List.

**Displacement Issues**

The project is specific to the WSP Criminal Investigation Unit, therefore there are no displacement issues, however, as a result of the success of the WSP Most Wanted web site, several other units and agencies have inquired about our web site in order to develop their own including Washington State Department of Corrections.

**Continued Effort to Maintain Results**

The WSP Most Wanted program is institutionalized. Detectives understand that an immediate, meaningful, and significant effort to locate newly warranted suspects is required of them, and that continuous efforts are expected regarding locating existing suspects on the list.

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- The WSP Most Wanted Project was adopted agency-wide.
  - All officers have received basic training in the WSP philosophy we call Problem Oriented Public Safety (POPS). In addition, Captain Brian Ursino, the CID Commander who oversaw this project, was the past POPS coordinator for the entire agency and has provided instruction at every one of the six 40-hour advanced POPS training classes sponsored by the agency since 1999.
  - There are no incentives offered to officers/employees who participate in this or any other WSP POPS project, however, each WSP detective that locates and causes the arrest of a WSP Most Wanted suspect is recognized for their effort with a WSP Most Wanted "Rabbit" coin engraved with the suspect's name.
  - Lieutenant Greg Miller utilized the WSP SARA (Scanning, Analysis, Response, Assessment) form to guide him through this process.
  - Issues and problems discovered through the SARA process included the lack of any tracking device for felony collision suspects that fail to appear in court, a lack of direction in this regard, and lack of a follow-up process.
  - There were hard dollar costs to the WSP in implementing this program associated with transportation and extradition of apprehended suspects. There were significant ancillary soft dollar costs in hours spent by detectives searching for suspects, Information Technology Division in designing and maintaining the Web Site, and Government and Media Relations for press conferences and press releases.
  - Project Contacts:

Gregory E. Miller  
Acting Captain/Commander of the Criminal Investigation Division  
PO Box 42637  
Olympia, WA 98504-2637  
Office Phone: (360) 753-0315, extension 169  
Fax: (360) 586-0582  
[Greg.miller@wsp.wa.gov](mailto:Greg.miller@wsp.wa.gov)



# WASHINGTON STATE PATROL



## CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION DIVISION

2003 – 2007 Strategic Plan

## **CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION DIVISION – MISSION STATEMENT**

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**The Criminal Investigation Division provides investigative services to the Washington State Patrol and other agencies to improve the quality of life in Washington State.**

## **CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION DIVISION – CORE MISSION AREAS**

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- **Felony Collision Investigations**
- **Auto Theft Investigations**
- **Criminal Investigations**

## **CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION DIVISION – VALUES**

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**Every employee of the Criminal Investigation Division is a valued member of a team committed to:**

- **Excellence in criminal investigations**
- **Compassion toward crime victims and their families**
- **Bringing criminals to justice**

Monday, August 18, 2003

**Bereaved dad seeks suspect -- and justice**  
His foundation offers reward for man accused in fatal crash

By SAM SKOLNIK  
SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER REPORTER

Stacy Morrow, a prodigy with animals, was just 5 when she started collecting them.

She raised goats, chickens, turkeys, rabbits, ducks, a ferret and even pigeons with broken wings - - sometimes with many of them corralled in the same 20-foot-by-20-foot pen in her back yard in Milton.

"Not only did she have them all getting along, she could talk to them -- and sometimes they'd talk back," said her father, Rich Morrow, laughing. "We'd call her 'Dr. Stoolittle.' "

Morrow doesn't laugh or smile as much these days when thinking of Stacy. But the Seattle man thinks just as often of his daughter, who was crushed to death in a brutal June 4, 2001, accident outside Pullman in Eastern Washington.



Morrow

And every day, he thinks of Fred Russell, a Washington State University student who police say was drunk when he slammed his Chevy Blazer into the old Cadillac that Morrow, also a WSU student, was riding in. She and two others died instantly. She was 21.

Four months later, Russell skipped bail while awaiting trial. He's been missing, and hunted, ever since.

No one wants him found more than Morrow.

"Finding Fred is not my whole life, but it's a huge part of it," said Morrow. "It's about justice getting done."

Morrow, 53, is the pricing manager for Horizon Lines of Alaska, a container shipping company in Renton. Divorced, with his 21-year-old son attending the University of Washington, Morrow lives alone in a West Seattle condominium.

The mild-mannered man with a middle-aged paunch and a head of prematurely white hair has made a mission of capturing Russell, as well as educating about the perils of drunken driving.

He speaks several times a month to groups of convicted drunken drivers seeking to get their records expunged. He serves as spokesman for the families of the crash victims. And recently, he announced the formation of a non-profit foundation called The Gecko Fund to raise reward money for information leading to Russell's capture.

The accident occurred on state Route 270 between the college towns of Pullman and Moscow, Idaho. It was 10:45 p.m., and Stacy and six of her friends were returning from seeing the movie "Shrek."

For at least part of the day, Russell, now 24, reportedly had been drinking heavily. A police report said that after buying a half-gallon of vodka and some mixers, he stopped at the My Tavern Bar in Pullman to have some beers with a friend.



Returning to Moscow, Russell allegedly was attempting to pass in a no-passing zone when the accident occurred. Russell's Blazer sideswiped a Geo Metro, then smashed into a white 1972 Cadillac DeVille.

The front end of the Cadillac caved in. Passengers Morrow and her boyfriend, Ryan Sorensen, as well as the driver, Brandon Clements, died at the scene. The four other car occupants were treated for injuries, many of them serious. Russell was treated for minor wounds at a nearby hospital and was released soon after.

Prosecutors charged Russell -- who has had other scrapes with the law including an earlier DUI arrest as well as a charge of statutory rape -- with three counts of vehicular homicide. His blood-alcohol level was 0.12 percent, well above the legal limit of 0.08 percent, two hours after the accident, prosecutors said.

Russell knew the fate he could face in the criminal justice system. He was a criminal justice major -- studying in a department headed by his father, professor Gregory Russell, a former county prosecutor.



zoom

Karen Ducey / P-I

Rich Morrow has made it his mission to find the fugitive charged with vehicular homicide in his daughter's death.

After attending one of several pre-trial court hearings, Russell vanished. At the time, he was out on \$5,000 bail.

The story of the crash and Russell's subsequent flight has been on "America's Most Wanted" and "Unsolved Mysteries," with each airing resulting in leads about his possible whereabouts.

Several local and federal agencies have handled parts of the investigation over the last two years. For almost a year, the U.S. Marshals Service in Spokane has been leading the hunt.

Theories about Russell's whereabouts abound. Tips about his location and possible sightings have been made in spots ranging from Yakima to Fairbanks, Alaska, to Carson City, Nev. But none has panned out.

"I assure you, the case is very active," said Michael Kline, U.S. marshal for Eastern Washington. "But I don't know that we've received any good tips at this time in terms of his location."

The conventional wisdom is that Russell has been receiving steady financial and other assistance; that he wouldn't have been able to avoid capture this long without it. He has red hair and blue eyes, is 6 feet 2 inches tall and sports an Irish Cross tattoo on his upper left arm.

Kline said Russell's relatives and friends are being watched.

Russell's father moved from Eastern Washington to Arkansas about a year ago. In previous interviews, the senior Russell said rumors about the case may have affected his position at WSU.

Greg Russell, who in the past has cooperated in the investigation, could not be reached for comment.

Mark Moorer, Fred Russell's Moscow-based attorney, said he thinks his client bolted because of "a lack of maturity, a lack of understanding."

Moorer said Russell, who faces up to 12 years in prison if convicted, has a solid defense if he returns: His blood-alcohol level was legal at the time of the crash, he said. Further, Moorer said, there was something blocking Russell's lane, requiring him to move into the other lane at the time of the crash.

At a recent DUI victims panel held at Kenmore Community Church, Morrow held up the black plastic box with Stacy's remains. This is one of several local meetings held in the area monthly for drunken drivers, under court order, to listen to stories of damaged and sometimes wrecked lives.

"Stacy's body was so badly mangled, we had to have her cremated," Morrow said. "I don't say this to elicit sympathy but to show you just how brutal, instant and final it can be."

Morrow also showed an enlarged photo of Stacy and him, taken at a flower bulb farm in Sumner. The nearly perfect father-daughter portrait elicited a few sniffles from the audience.

In the photo, Stacy is 9, wearing a light-blue sweat shirt and an impish grin. Her father has his arm around her. He is wearing a tweed coat and appears trim, his hair dusty brown. He is smiling confidently.

"Of course you'd expect me to say I miss my daughter," Morrow said. "But this world lost a terrific person."

## **HOW TO HELP**

Contributions to The Gecko Fund can be made by deposit at any Bank of America branch to "The Gecko Fund -- 76966415" or can be mailed to The Gecko Fund, c/o R. Morrow, 2421 S.W. Trenton Street, #311, Seattle, WA 98106. Checks can be made out to "The Gecko Fund -- 76966415."

P-I reporter Sam Skolnik can be reached at 206-448-8176 or [samskolnik@seattlepi.com](mailto:samskolnik@seattlepi.com)




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## WSP's Most Wanted

**Last updated: Jun 2 , 2005**

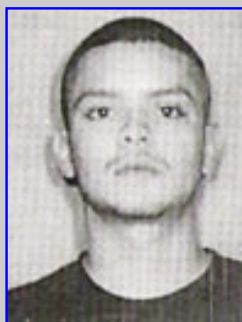
### [Photos of arrested suspects.](#)

“The Washington State Patrol continues to actively search for the suspects on this page. The crimes they committed affected individuals and families across our state and forever changed lives. Yet, they have not been held accountable for what they did because they fled justice. Our thoughts are with the victims each day. For these victims, we want justice. No matter how long it takes or where they may be, we will find these suspects and hold them accountable for their actions. – Chief Lowell M. Porter”

If you have any information on the whereabouts of any these wanted persons, WSP contact information is listed at the bottom of each poster.



[Frederick David  
Russell](#)



[Juan Avila](#)



[Ernesto  
Palomera Carillo](#)



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## WSP's Most Wanted

### - ARRESTS

**Last updated: Jun 2 , 2005**

[U.S. Arrest Locations](#)

[WA State Arrest Locations](#)

The individuals below are previous fugitives that have been arrested.



Kelly W. Shields  
**Arrested 5-15-2005**  
 Vehicular Assault  
 Taking Motor Vehicle without  
 Permission



Rebecca C. Solomon  
**Arrested 4-21-2005**  
 Vehicular Assault



Clarence Charles  
**Arrested 4-28-2005**  
 Felony (fatality) Hit & Run



Sharon Kay Cook  
**Arrested 5-02-2005**  
 Vehicular Assault



Emily J. Holloway  
**Arrested 4-14-2005**  
 Felony Vehicular Assault



Clifton J. Cornelius  
**Arrested 3-17-2005**  
 Auto Theft

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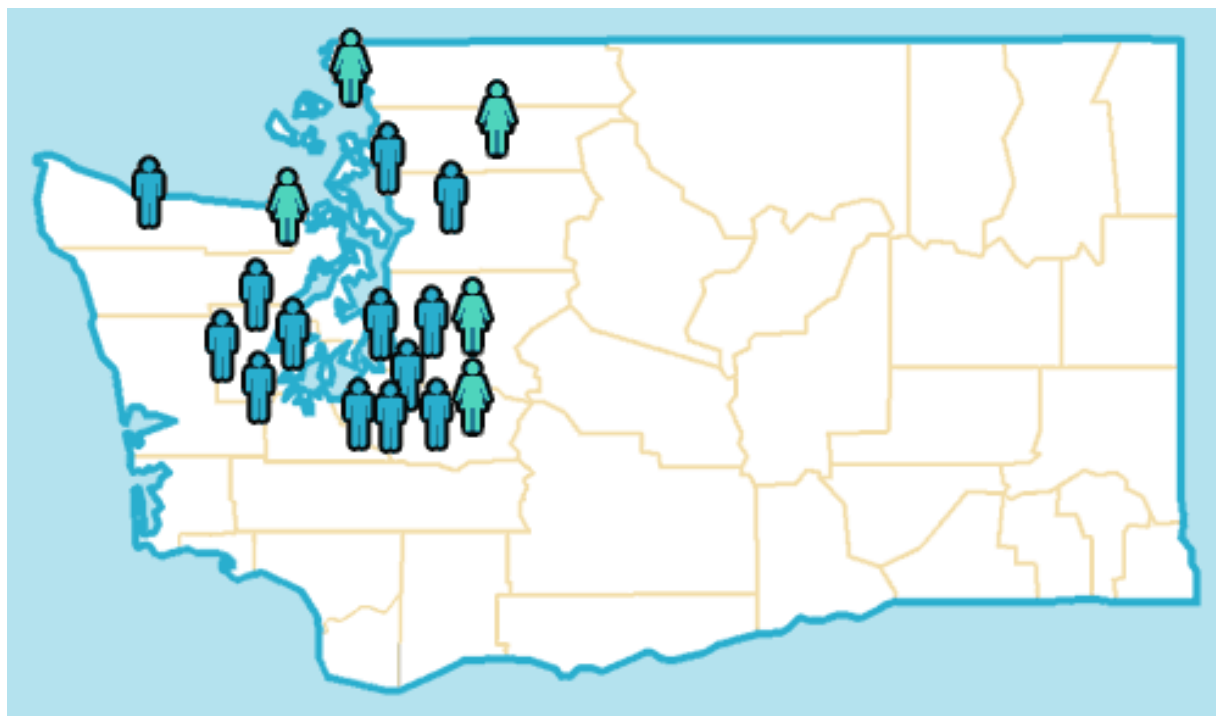
# WASHINGTON STATE PATROL

## WSP's Most Wanted

### Arrest Locations in Washington State

**Last updated: Jun 2 , 2005**

Click on any of the male or female icons to view the arrested subject



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## WSP's Most Wanted Arrest Locations in the United States

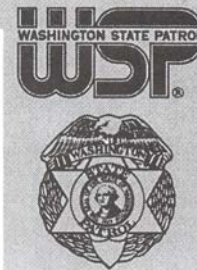
Updated: **October 6, 2004**





# INTEROFFICE COMMUNICATION

## WASHINGTON STATE PATROL



TO: All Collision Investigation and MAIT Detectives

FROM: Lieutenant Gregory E. Miller, Criminal Investigation Division

SUBJECT: Open Warrant and Hit and Run Expectations

DATE: November 13, 2003

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The Washington State Patrol's Criminal Investigation Division has a reputation within the department and with the courts, prosecutors and the citizens of our state for our professionalism and the quality of our investigations. When our detectives work a case, people know that the investigation will most likely result in a conviction.

I know from experience the enormous amount of time and energy that it takes to investigate a complex collision and to prepare a case for trial. By the time we get to trial we have usually been through numerous court dates and interviews with prosecutors and defense attorneys.

My question to each of you is this – What do we do when the suspect(s) avoid the trial that we have spent so much of our time and energy preparing for? How can a suspect(s) be brought to justice if we can't get him/her to court? If we are not able to find our suspect(s) to bring them to trial then who will? New cases come in every month and the cases with warrants and old Hit and Runs move to the back burner. Are those cases waiting idle in hopes that the suspect(s) will get picked up on a traffic stop? What are we able to tell the victim's families when they call us for progress reports?

Across the state there were 31 people warranted on CID cases (as of September 9, 2003). No matter how air-tight of a case we build, our work is useless if we cannot get the suspect(s) to trial. The same applies for Hit and Run drivers that we have not been able to locate.

We all know that the longer a person is warranted, or the more time that goes by on a Hit and Run, the more difficult the trial will be when we catch the suspect(s). Witnesses move away and memories fade. Meanwhile the victim's families wait (see attached article from the Seattle Times).

My expectation of each of you is that you use your investigative expertise to locate the suspect(s) that have warranted on your cases and put them in jail. If the suspect(s) are located and arrested in another state we will go get them. If the suspect(s) are in a foreign country I want you to determine their whereabouts so we can work for extradition.



November 13, 2003

As soon as a suspect(s) fail to appear at trial, the entire unit should work as a team to immediately exhaust every possible lead and avenue available to them, just like we do with Hit and Run fatalities.

Keep the case files for your open warrants and Hit and Runs *on your desks* with your open cases. Although a case is closed when it goes to the prosecutor's office, our work is not finished until we have adjudication. When you have free time, work the case. Keep the case file up to date with leads that you have followed up on, and other attempts to locate the suspect(s). Make these warrants a priority and be prepared to explain your efforts each month on each warrant and Hit and Run to your victim's family(s) and your supervisor.

If at all possible, we should book our suspect(s) at the time of the arrest. We have a better chance of ensuring their appearance at trial if they are booked, they are positively identified when they are booked, and the families of their victims get some measure of comfort from seeing them booked.

I intend to put together a web site of the State Patrol's most wanted persons. My target date is January 31, 2004, for implementation with a media campaign. For the web site I need digital photographs of your suspect(s) with their name attached to the photo, the crime they committed and a copy of the warrant. This information is due no later than December 22, 2003. I also need a synopsis of any open Hit and Run cases listing any information that can be posted on the web site that could help identify your driver, including date of occurrence and location. I will need timely information on any new case/warrant on a continuous basis so they can be added to the site.

I will maintain the web site. I need to be immediately notified of any apprehensions or solved cases so that I can remove them from the site or place "captured" or "solved" banners across the picture or description.

Your division commander fully supports this effort and has committed to sending you anywhere in the United States to pick up one of your located suspect(s).

Let's go get them!!

  
GEM:srb

Attachments

cc: Detective Sergeant Gerald R. Cooper, Major Accident Investigation Team  
Lieutenant Jeffrey K. DeVere, Criminal Investigation Division  
Sergeant Kenneth J. Harkcom, Yakima Criminal Investigation Unit  
Detective Sergeant Michael B. Haw, Vancouver Criminal Investigation Unit  
Lieutenant Grant S. Hulteen, Criminal Investigation Division

COURTESY COPIES CONTINUED – NEXT PAGE

All Collision Investigation and MAIT Detectives

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November 13, 2003

cc: Sergeant Dale A. Lathan, Wenatchee Criminal Investigation Unit  
Sergeant Michael J. Marken, Marysville Criminal Investigation Unit  
Sergeant Kenneth E. Noland, Tacoma Criminal Investigation Unit  
Sergeant Steven W. Penry, Bellevue Criminal Investigation Unit  
Acting Lieutenant Gerald W. Schlessler, Criminal Investigation Unit  
Captain Brian A. Ursino, Criminal Investigation Division  
Detective Sergeant Kenneth P. Wade, Spokane Criminal Investigation Unit



# Washington State Patrol Media Release

*Chief Lowell Porter*

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Government and Media Relations  
(360) 753-5299 – office  
(360) 753-5469 – fax  
<http://www.wsp.wa.gov>

**Contact:** Captain Brian Ursino or Lt. Greg Miller: 360-753-0315 or  
Public Affairs Officer Nelsa Brodic 360-753-5299

February 9, 2004

## WSP Launches “Most Wanted” Website

Today, the Washington State Patrol launched a website with the hope that it will help lead to the capture of those with felony warrants issued for their arrests. The website, [www.wsp.wa.gov/crime/wanted.htm](http://www.wsp.wa.gov/crime/wanted.htm) highlights those persons still being sought for vehicular homicides, hit and runs, or vehicular assaults.

During 2003 State Patrol detectives investigated 178 felony collisions statewide. Of these 178 collisions:

- 45 were Vehicular Homicides where one or more of our citizens died as a result of someone else driving drunk, recklessly, or with a disregard for the safety of others.
- 112 were Vehicular Assaults in which one or more persons were seriously injured by someone else driving drunk, recklessly, or with a disregard for the safety of others, and
- 21 of these collisions were Felony Hit and Runs in which one or more persons were injured and the causing driver fled the scene.

Each of these 178 crimes resulted in death or serious injury. Said WSP Chief Lowell Porter: “To a person that loses a loved one, or has a loved one hospitalized, the pain is no different than if the death or injury were by any other criminal act, because the result is the same.”

“We are seeking help from the public to find these people who have fled police and have left numerous families with pain, loss and grief,” explained Captain Brian Ursino of the WSP Criminal Investigation Division. “We want to call attention to this resource for the public’s use and information. We want the families to know we have not forgotten the pain they are living and to know we are working tirelessly to bring these people to justice,” he said.

In September 2003 there were 31 suspects that were wanted on felony collision charges dating back as far as 1993. The suspects, victims, and the victim’s families have



not had their day in court. The pain to the victims and their families is compounded by the knowledge that the suspect has evaded justice.

Since the WSP began its aggressive warrant apprehension program in September, 11 of these suspects and have been tracked down and arrested:

- We got one extradited from California with the assistance of the U.S. Marshal's Service,
- We have another suspect in jail in Denver right now awaiting transport back to Yakima to answer charges for a Felony Hit and Run collision that occurred in 1997, and
- Just last Thursday another suspect that we wanted for a Vehicular Assault that occurred in Walla Walla County in 2002 was tracked to Idaho by our Detectives. She was persuaded to turn herself in and is currently in the Walla Walla County jail awaiting trial.

There are 25 suspects still at large. In an effort to bring these criminals to justice and some form of closure to the victims and their families, the WSP is seeking the public's help in finding these remaining 25 suspects.

Please visit our site at [www.wsp.wa.gov](http://www.wsp.wa.gov) and click on the "**WSP's Most Wanted**" button on the lower left side of the screen, or go directly to [www.wsp.wa.gov/crime/wanted.htm](http://www.wsp.wa.gov/crime/wanted.htm) .

# # # #

## Victim's Family Meets Their "Guardian Angel"



Heather Holden

In December 2002, Heather Holden tragically lost her life at the hands of a drunk driver in Clallam County. Mary Kniskern was the drunk driver who took Heather from her family at the age of 19. Kniskern was arrested and charged with

three counts of vehicular homicide and two counts of vehicular assault. Before her trial, Kniskern fled the state.

Heather's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Pete Holden, wanted and needed some type of accountability and closure, but without a trial and Kniskern gone, this would not be possible.

Detective Jason Watson - who is currently assigned to the U.S. Marshal's Pacific NW Fugitive Apprehension Team - started to track the whereabouts of Kniskern. He continually kept in touch with the Holden family, giving them updates and a promise that he would apprehend Kniskern. On December 18, 2003, the Holden's prayers were answered with a phone call from Watson telling them that Kniskern was in custody in California. The Holdens would see Mary Kniskern go

to trial and receive a 12-year sentence for killing their daughter and two others. On February 9, 2004,

Mrs. Barbara Holden agreed to speak to the media on the unveiling of the WSP Most Wanted Web Site. She continually praised the WSP and especially Detective Watson. She called Watson her "guardian angel" and explained how he always kept in touch with her and her family, which helped them get through their loss.

On February 27, 2003, Pete and Barbara Holden traveled from their home in Sequim to Olympia to meet Detective Watson at the Investigative Services Bureau Strategic Advancement Forum. This meeting between a victim of a drunk driver and a WSP detective who never gave up and reassured the family that he'd find their daughter's killer was a very emotional moment. Detective Watson truly made a difference in the lives of the Holdens.

*(Inside: See Most Wanted Press Conference)*



*Detective Jason Watson is honored at the Investigative Services Bureau Strategic Advancement Forum by Pete and Barbara Holden, parents of Heather Holden, for his outstanding work.*

### Missing Children

Located/recovered:

Located this month	5
Open cases to date	156
Located year to date	24

Assisted by WSP Missing Children Clearinghouse

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## WSP Launched Most Wanted Web Site



*Rich Morrow, father of Stacy Murrow speaks at the press conference.*

Last month, the Washington State Patrol launched a Web site with the hope that it will help lead to the capture of those with felony warrants

issued for their arrests. Called "WSP's Most Wanted," the Web site, located at [www.wsp.wa.gov/crime/wanted.htm](http://www.wsp.wa.gov/crime/wanted.htm), highlights those persons still being sought for vehicular homicides, hit-and-runs, or vehicular assaults. With the help of the Information Technology Division (ITD), who created the Web site and got it up and running and user friendly, the site has gained a lot of recognition from the public since it went live.

"We are seeking help from the public to find these people who have fled police and have left numerous families with pain, loss, and grief," explained Captain Brian Ursino of the WSP Criminal Investigation Division at the press conference. "We want to call attention to this resource for the public's use and information. We want the families to know we have not forgotten the pain they are living and to know we are working tirelessly to bring these people to justice," he said.

Rich Morrow, who is still hoping the felon who killed his daughter will be located, was a presenter at the press conference, along with Barbara Holden (see front page). Below is an excerpt from Rich Morrow's presentation:

"On June 4, 2001, my daughter Stacy Morrow was murdered in a horrible crash caused by a drunk driver

near Pullman WA. Stacy's boy friend, Ryan Sorenson, and Ryan's best friend Brandon Clements were also killed and three of their close WSU friends suffered critical injuries.

The defendant in this case, Frederick Russell, skipped bail on or about October 23, 2001. He has been missing ever since. We have had assistance from America's Most Wanted, Unsolved Mysteries, and various news and television stations. Despite the diligent efforts of agencies like the Washington State Patrol, Frederick Russell remains at large.

We need the public's assistance. It is our hope that the public can help us by using the Most Wanted site being announced today to help identify and apprehend these defendants. Losing a child in this most needless way was painful in a way that is nearly impossible to describe. Not being able to have the justice that a case like ours deserves adds further injury.

Please go to this Web site, take a good look at those we seek, keep a sharp eye out for these people, and call the appropriate authorities if you see any of them.

On behalf of the many families involved in our situation and others whose defendants are also on this list, I want to thank you in advance for any help you can provide.

Finally, I want to thank the WSP for their renewed efforts in helping us and other families achieve some degree of closure by bringing these people to justice."

Since the Web site was launched, thousands of hits have resulted to the site, including tips and leads which have led to the capture of a few more felons. There are over 20 suspects still at large.



### Letters Letters Letters

**Received by Lieutenant Rich Wiley regarding Sergeant Gary Gasseling:**

Dear Lieutenant Wiley:

I would like to express my appreciation to your office and to Sergeant Gary Gasseling for his assistance during General Military Training on "Methamphetamines" conducted on January 10, 2004. He displayed the highest degree of

professionalism during his lecture. An obvious subject matter expert, his enthusiasm for his job was contagious and kept the audience engaged. His support was greatly appreciated by the Naval Reserve personnel. It's always a pleasure working with people who are so enthusiastic to assist others.

Thanks again for your support!  
Sincerely,  
Robert J. Walzer

Lieutenant Commander  
U.S. Naval Reserve

\*\*\*

**Received by e-mail to the Webmaster regarding WSP's professionalism and excellent performance:**

To whom it may concern:

On February 25, 2004, I was driving southbound I-5 in the Dupont/ Nisqually area at approximately



**The Washington  
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**Making a Difference Every Day**

