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ROCKFORD LEADS IN DUI ARRESTS FOR FIFTH YEAR

FAIRVIEW HEIGHTS HAS REMARKABLE INCREASE OF 140 %

Schaumburg, June 26, 2012: DUI arrests and law enforcement efforts are the most significant deterrents to impaired driving. The Alliance Against Intoxicated Motorists (AAIM) is pleased to release the results of our 22nd Annual DUI Arrest Survey for Illinois.

Since 1990, AAIM has conducted an annual survey of Illinois police departments to determine how many DUI arrests they make and to give recognition to the most productive departments and police officers. This year through a grant from the Illinois Department of Transportation, nearly 700 police agencies were surveyed with 76% responding. AAIM not only praises these departments and individual officers, but we also continue to encourage them to keep up the fight against drunk driving.

For the fifth consecutive year, the Rockford Police Department is first in the state in DUI arrests among municipal departments with 686 arrests for 2011. (Because of its size, Chicago is in its own category.)

In 2011, Naperville was second with 622 arrests, followed by Springfield (553), Rock Island (465), Decatur (448), Elmhurst (367), Elgin (352), Carol Stream (349), Peoria (306) and

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Normal (296). “More DUI arrests in a municipality or county do not necessarily mean there are more drunk drivers in these locations than in other Illinois communities,” said Charlene Chapman, Executive Director of AAIM. “It does indicate a more active enforcement effort targeting DUI by those police departments compared to other departments.”

The biggest increase in arrests among the top departments was in Fairview Heights where DUI arrests jumped by 141.7% in 2011 compared to 2010. Other municipalities with large increases from 2011 to 2010 are Itasca (45.1%), Oak Lawn (40.0%), Rock Island (38.0%) and Downers Grove (28.3%).

The highest DUI arrest rate in the state among departments making at least 200 arrests was Itasca which had 11.48 arrests per sworn officer. The second highest rate of 5.63 was in Carol Stream. Arrests per officer are an indicator of a department’s emphasis on DUI enforcement and are a measure that can be used to compare smaller departments.

Chicago police made 17.8% fewer arrests in 2011 (3,037) than in 2010 (3,695), Illinois State Police arrests also decreased by 9.5% in 2011 (9,719) compared to 2010 (10,734). The sheriff’s department reporting the most DUI arrests was Cook County (475), while Lake (368), Winnebago (303), Will (279) and DeKalb (273) Counties round out the top five sheriff departments.

Rockford Investigator Rosemary Mathews was Illinois’ Top Cop with 181 DUI arrests. AAIM also commends the life-saving efforts of Chicago Police Officers Timothy Walter, who arrested 174 drunk drivers, and Mariellen Balcar, who arrested 157 drunk drivers. “When police chiefs make it a priority to get impaired drivers off the roads, lots of arrests are made. There are several individual officers making more DUI arrests per year than some entire police departments in Illinois. These officers deserve recognition and thanks for their diligence in promoting public safety,” said Chapman.

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In a familiar pattern, the regions of the state with the strongest DUI enforcement are Cook County, which accounts for eight of the state's top departments, and DuPage County, which accounts for six departments.

"AAIM continues to survey and report the number of impaired driving arrests throughout Illinois because traffic safety advocates believe that drunk drivers who are arrested are the fortunate ones. In our impaired driving prevention programs, we always remind people that if they are driving drunk they are lucky if it is a cop that stops them, rather than a tree, another car or a small child," according to AAIM Board Vice-President and crash survivor, Marti Belluschi.

AAIM is an Illinois-only citizen activist group founded in 1982 by victims of drunk driving. Prevention, victim advocacy, and legislation encompass the mission of AAIM, a recognized Illinois expert on these issues. The survey provides a valuable service by encouraging citizens to compare the DUI enforcement record of their local police department with that of other communities. As a result, public pressure can be applied, where needed, to encourage DUI enforcement as a priority.

A detailed listing of survey results and participating departments is available at:

www.aaim1.org

Questions? – email: anita@aaim1.org

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