

Tavern on the Greys recognized for DUI reduction efforts

By Dahl Erickson on Aug 13, 2010 in Alpine, Featured

Alpine Police Chief, James Phillips, made it a point to recognize the efforts of a local business at the most recent Alpine Town Council meeting.

The Tavern on the Greys received an award from Phillips for their work in taking an assertive posture in terms of trying to reduce the number of instances of Driving Under the Influence (DUI). As a result, Phillips has shown that the number of DUI arrests are down approximately 50 percent from the same period of months from a year ago.

"I feel that it is always best to recognize people when recognition is due," he said. "Most of the credit is due to Tavern on the Greys. They initiated the conversation with me and wanted to discuss what they could do to protect their patrons. Credit should also go to Officer John O' Connor with the Alpine Police Department who was instrumental in this as well."

In 2009, the Town of Alpine compiled 26 DUI arrests, 24 of which were compiled in the final seven months of the year. So far this year the town has had nine DUI arrests including a 50 percent reduction in the number for the months of June, July and August.

Among some of things that were discussed between the Alpine Police Department and the Tavern were the Training for Intervention Procedures (TIPS) program and its ability to help reduce the insurance risks to those businesses and also identifying when people have had too much to drink.

Studies have shown that the TIPS training will help reduce the number of fights within a drinking establishment, DUI arrests in the area and the incidents of death due to drinking and driving. Some of the items during the training focuses on simple changes such as offering food to a customer in an effort to reduce the amount of alcohol in the system.

Phillips singled out the Tavern on the Greys for going above and beyond a typical response to this issue as they printed up designated driver t-shirts, offered free games of pool and utilized a number of other incentives during their events to promote a safer environment.

"They realized that one thing isn't going to work for every person," Phillips added. "They came up with several things to help them address the issue."

Phillips stated that the Tavern requires all of their employees to complete the TIPS training as well as going as far as driving patrons home or to arrange rides for those who require it.

"It's about keeping their patrons safe," he said. The Tavern took it upon themselves to take a look at their business and they are really going the extra mile. They have seen no reduction in their business and that is a wonderful, positive thing. It's a positive thing for the entire town. Sue Atwood is a driving force with what they are doing [there] and they are helping to reduce the number of DUI arrests."

Phillips stated that not only do instances of DUI cost a large chunk of local police budgets, but that it also can tear families apart through accidents. He also believes that the Tavern and other businesses are taking the responsibility seriously.

"I would much rather have cooperation than compliance," he concluded. I would rather work with the businesses to help take care of the most important thing. There's no way we can be everywhere at once. What we really want is that type cooperation from people."