

A Message from the District Attorney

The holidays are a wonderful time of year. We are reminded of why we are so grateful for the blessings of life in this great nation. We experience the joy of giving and the hope of peace that comes with Christmas and we look forward to new things with a fresh start on New Year's day. Sadly, this is also the time when celebration can turn into tragedy. Driving under the influence of alcohol claims many victims throughout the year, but is especially painful during the holiday season.

This issue of *Ready For the People* highlights the challenges, as well as the efforts being made to combat the problem of those who drive under the influence of alcohol and drugs. We are honored to receive the first **DUI** prosecution grant awarded by the Office of Traffic Safety in California. Although the honor is significant, it pales in contrast to the need to save the lives of our children and loved ones. Death and injury due to driving under the influence is 100% preventable. Those who choose to drink must also choose not to endanger our community by getting behind the wheel. Our program is designed to remind people of this choice.

It is my desire that through these articles you may understand a mother's agony, the trauma of a "street cop" who picks up the pieces at an accident scene or the emotional resolve of a seasoned prosecutor who presents a heart-breaking case to a jury. It is my hope that the information in this issue coupled with our new DUI Prosecution Grant will help our community stop the killing on our roads. And for those who ignore this responsibility and hurt someone, the full resources of this office will work to see that justice is served. I ask all members of our community, young, old and in between, drink responsibly and do the right thing - *don't drink and drive*.

Phil Cline
District Attorney
County of Tulare

