LAFAYETTE JAILS DRUNK DRIVERS

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In Lafayette droht betrunkenen Autofahrern Gefängnisstrafe!

Lafayette's warning to motorists speaks in five languages

Lafayette Drunk Drivers
Better Get The Message

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No matter how you say it, "Lafayette Jails Drunk Drivers."
That's the message the Alcohol Traffic Action Campaign wishes to relay to foreign visitors and international students alike during the World's Fair.

Although the fair is more than two hours away, officials estimate that 20 percent of the 11 million visitors expected in New Orleans will pass through Lafayette Parish during the next six months. Four billboards per month will be visible throughout the parish reading "Lafayette Jails Drunk Drivers" in French, Spanish, German, Japanese and English.

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Drunk Drivers
Get The Message

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of visitors and international students to the laws concerning alcohol use in Louisiana and strict enforcement of laws against drinking and driving in Lafayette Parish."
ATAC is working closely with the international student office at USL.
More than 2,000 fliers were sent to foreign students explaining the consequences of an OWI arrest, and officers from the Lafayette Police Department attended foreign student orientations to discuss OWI laws and enforcement.

"One of the major health problems for college-age students is alcohol abuse, and this just fits in with our ongoing program of counseling, workshops and programs to help raise students' awareness of this growing problem," said Raymond Blanco, dean of students at the University of Southwestern Louisiana.

"The United States is undergoing a massive attitude change among citizens about the responsible use of alcohol and the dangers of drinking and driving," said Bordelon. "As American citizens, we've all become aware of this through the media, and now we want to educate our foreign guests about the laws concerning drinking and driving."

The billboards, along with other efforts by ATAC, are an attempt to be responsible hosts, he said.
Of the 1,151 persons arrested in the city limits last year, only one-half of them were residents of Lafayette.

Lamar Advertising is donating the billboard space. A total of 24 billboards will appear around the parish during the next six months - four per month. The billboards are funded in part by the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission.

"The billboards and our effort calling attention to tourist safety take on added significance now because President Reagan has declared May 27-June 2 as National Tourism Week," said Gary Taylor of the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission.

The billboards are not only targeted for visitors on their way to and from New Orleans, but also foreign students at the University of Southwestern Louisiana.

"The very essence of being a good host to people from other cultures is to inform guests of the customs and laws in the host country," said Phil Bordelon, ATAC project director.
"We in Lafayette consider ourselves to be good hosts, and want to spare our visitors possible embarrassment and pain," Bordelon said. "The purpose of the billboards is to raise the awareness."