



Man sentenced for 10th DWI conviction

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By ASSOCIATED PRESS

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AZTEC, N.M. (AP) - A San Juan County man has been sentenced to four years in prison after being convicted of his 10th drunken driving offense.

Harold Harris, 44, told District Judge Thomas Hynes during Monday's sentencing hearing that he was sent to prison twice before but never received treatment for substance abuse.

"You'll have plenty of time now," Hynes told him.

San Juan County authorities arrested Harris on March 12 after he cut off two deputies near a Farmington intersection, a police report states. He told deputies he was distracted by his three passengers.

While being questioned, Harris admitted drinking a six pack, according to a probable cause statement. He was then asked if he was OK to drive, and he answered no.

During a search of the vehicle, deputies found open beer cans.

Comments

By **Rob Knowlton** (Submitted: 04/27/2007 7:39 pm)

Ok Paul. So lets say I do it **10** times....What's enough time then??

By **Jack Rokowski** (Submitted: 04/27/2007 5:54 pm)

..."Jack, I hope you never lose a family member to a drunk driver"...

I lost someone...my daughter has been sold by adoption agency..... did anyone care?? no, police ?? no prosecutors, no, even news refuse to write about it because it would spoil the image....yet nobody makes money for prosecuting child peddlers in NM so who cares let's talk about drunk drivers..they fill the coffers of the state.. You are correct stay in prison is expensive and prisons are privately owned..the more the better... As for real criminals....it's to much hassle ...

<http://www.my-sara.com>

By **Anna Garcia Futrell** (Submitted: 04/27/2007 11:47 am)

DWI/DUI is not a problem unless you or someone you love are a victim or a drunk driver. One drunk on the road is too many--I am an alcoholic who doesn't drink anymore.

By Khalil Spencer (Submitted: 04/27/2007 11:44 am)

James, your story below is indeed an excellent indication of how government shoots itself (and us) in the foot. Thank you.

By David Lopez (Submitted: 04/27/2007 11:43 am)

As we left the show, we thought this would be a great place for a DWI Blitz. It's the same for events at the Journal Pavillion.

They really need to set up park and ride programs for the events where beer is sold, and quit serving 45 minutes before the end of the show. By the time people get to their cars, they will be legal again.

By James Moore (Submitted: 04/27/2007 11:25 am)

"James, that's an interesting view. But how do we deal with this social problem, or do we deal with it?"

One of the things that I do is work part time at the Santa Ana Star Center. The other night when George Lopez was in town (sold out) I had an opportunity to speak with one of the Rio Rancho PD Officers who was working the event. As the 8500 or so made their way to their seats, I made the comment that there would be a lot of folks driving home afterwards under the influence (lots of Bud sold there). He responded that was unfortunately the case and as a matter of fact, the PD had staffed additional officers for after the event for just that reason. It struck me as odd that the city would make sure to increase law enforcement but do nothing to provide additional public transportation. Taking into consideration that the Center is owned by the City, you would think that they would do more to make sure that the folks coming to the event (where alcohol was served) would get home safely. Perhaps that was by design.....

Too much emphasis on apprehension and not enough on prevention. That's why DUI continues to be a big problem nationwide.....

By paul david (Submitted: 04/27/2007 9:46 am)

Gee Paul, I guess I can just go and shoot a gun into a crowd...As long as no one gets hurt its all ok....

If you shoot a gun at a crowd and no one gets hurt, I would call

4years an appropriate sentence.

By paul david (Submitted: 04/27/2007 9:40 am)

Why should this person be rewarded for his behavior ...

Why should we punish ourselves (by taxing ourselves to pay for prisons and police) for someone else's behavior?

By paul david (Submitted: 04/27/2007 9:26 am)

NM Corrections Dept. asserts that it costs the taxpayers \$22,000 (give or take a couple hundred) per inmate per year.

Free taxi service for all! The state could be hiring chauffeurs (sp?) instead of prison guards....

By Rob Knowlton (Submitted: 04/27/2007 9:21 am)

Gee Paul, I guess I can just go and shoot a gun into a crowd...As long as no one gets hurt its all ok....

By Khalil Spencer (Submitted: 04/27/2007 9:21 am)

"...Let them experience the joy of trying to learn at the college level while nursing hangovers. "

I wonder if tuition, fees, and dorm rent is cheaper than jail costs.

By David Lopez (Submitted: 04/27/2007 9:09 am)

That's what we did, Khal. While still sober, we went and bought our beer, underage, but who was checking in those days. We got back to our friend's apartment, drank, and staggered back to the dorm.

I like that solution I inferred from your post. Send these DWI offenders to college. Serve drinks to them at their SUB, and let them stagger back to their dorm room. Let them experience the joy of trying to learn at the college level while nursing hangovers.

By Khalil Spencer (Submitted: 04/27/2007 9:00 am)

DWI might be a zoning problem. It would be interesting to see a study of whether drunk driving has gotten worse since we have decentralized our cities and gone to driving greater distances. I know that when we were undergrads (during the years of 18 yr. old drinking age in NYS) we merely teetered

from the Student Union to our dorms and cashed out for the night. Nowadays one has to find ways to travel greater distances if one is drinking somewhere other than home.

As far as the assertions that this guy has not hurt anyone? (or that other drunk drivers don't hurt people) I see nothing in the article about this man's driving or accident record other than that he nearly caused a crash with those police officers. Before one assails other people's logic or the logic of keeping drunks from behind the wheel, it would be nice to see some more persuasive logic from those who assert that DWI is not a problem.

By David Lopez (Submitted: 04/27/2007 8:51 am)

James, that's an interesting view. But how do we deal with this social problem, or do we deal with it?

By James Moore (Submitted: 04/27/2007 8:43 am)

I agree with your view, Paul David. We need to stop wasting our money criminalizing a social problem.

By David Lopez (Submitted: 04/27/2007 8:41 am)

Jack, I hope you never lose a family member to a drunk driver. But if you do, your tune will change.

By joe sonneman (Submitted: 04/27/2007 8:40 am)

I think Alaska has an automatic 3 days in jail for first offense, may also have to attend alcoholism counseling, automatic 30 days for 2nd offense, minimum of one year for a 3rd [may also lose vehicle?]. Not sure.

Sweden is said to have even tougher laws.

Others have suggested DWI is really a zoning problem, because if each residential area had neighborhood bars, people would not need to drive to or from.

Of course, when some areas in a state vote themselves dry, the effect is to make people ride to drink [no requirement that they drive, but probably does make that more likely?]

And drinking rarely if ever improves one's judgment about whether to ride or drive home.

By Jack Rokowski (Submitted: 04/27/2007 8:37 am)

I don't believe drunk driving is really serious problem. I believe propaganda makes it sound so since DUI is a great source of money. Insurance company make money, police can play games with drunk drivers instead of taking care of real criminals, courts and jails stay busy sucking taxpayers money and lawyers get paid for defending people who don't need defense. The whole idea is based on suppose statistic. And statistics are undoubtedly falsified. Not to mention that law based on statistics is never right. After all it's not drunk driving but what drunk driver could have done that is a problem. Here we have a guy getting 4 years in prison for a fact that he has proved that despite of 10 DUI he has never caused any accident. 10 dui's make me believe that he drives drunk all the time 44 years old....for over 20 years and what ??? That is dead sentence for owning a gun, because he could have shot someone..did he??? Nope !! There is a great deal of hysteria about drunk driving caused by propaganda constantly rattling about it, I don't buy it. I don't even drink either.

By Bob Charles (Submitted: 04/27/2007 8:34 am)

Paul David: Why should this person be rewarded for his behavior with a chauffeur service?

By paul david (Submitted: 04/27/2007 8:30 am)

Two years of your life is not nothing. Apparently the guy has never hurt anyone. This hysterical wailing about "justice" does nothing to resolve the so-called problem. Locking people up for life is not realistic. It would be cheaper to provide free taxi service. Think about that.

It would be cheaper And More Effective to provide free taxi service. If you would rather lock people up than provide a low cost, live-and-let-live solution ..., you're just being self-righteous and vindictive.

By Anna Garcia Futrell (Submitted: 04/27/2007 7:19 am)

There was absolutely nothing stopping him from getting help on his own....

By Julian Sanchez (Submitted: 04/27/2007 6:42 am)

It's about time our judicial system wakes up!

By Ed Campbell (Submitted: 04/27/2007 6:33 am)

Overdue.

By Eldon Howell (Submitted: 04/26/2007 8:57 pm)

This is an embarrassment.

This is so New Mexico, Marc.

By Marc Coan (Submitted: 04/26/2007 7:13 pm)

We need mandatory sentencing for repeat offenders. He should have been sentenced to life after the 6th conviction. This is an embarrassment.

By douglas brenner (Submitted: 04/26/2007 10:40 am)

Four years... four years... meaning that with time off for good behavior he's back on the streets in only 2 years. This is our PATHETIC judicial system at work.. yet again.

There's an old saying... "keep on doing what you're doing, and keep on getting what you're getting." And yet somehow New Mexico expects different results !!!!

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