

Drunk Driving hits Pedestrian

TOOELE — A Utah woman, badly broken after a hit-and-run crash, is taking a stand against drunk driving this week.

Kari Reynolds was in the best shape of her life, training for a half-marathon, when her world was turned upside down. Now, she's using her blog to rally support online against drunk drivers and the preventable crashes they can cause.

"There are so many people that don't make it," said Reynolds. "I'm the lucky one, in a sense. I walked away from this."

Last year in Utah, 41 deaths were chalked up to drunk driving. Reynolds says those deaths were preventable deaths, as long as those who drink do not drive.

She aims to spread that message.

Reynolds can walk today, but seven months ago she laid on the curb on 2200 North in Tooele, her body badly battered and broken.

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—Kari Reynolds

"If I had been hit head on, they said I would have died instantly," she said. "I got hit and pushed (away) a little bit."

On June 30, 2012, Reynolds was finishing up a nine-mile run around 8 a.m. She was only a half-mile away from her home when she crossed the road and was struck by a car driven by a man who was drunk.

The car tossed her body into the air.

"I rolled off the car and landed on my right leg," she said.

It was 10 minutes before a passing motorist spotted Reynolds and called 911, all the while trying to comfort her. Minutes later, the accused drunk driver drove back to the scene, stopped and got out of the car.

"He stopped because of all the people, was what he told the police officer," Reynolds said.

As he left, a bystander spotted damage on his car.

"The windshield was shattered and the hood was dented, and she started screaming, 'That's the guy! That's the guy that hit her!'" said Reynolds.

Police followed the man, questioned him and arrested him.

Reynolds was flown to a Salt Lake hospital where doctors went to work on her many injuries. She had a compound fracture of her left femur and a shattered right knee and left elbow. She suffered a broken collarbone, broken nose, fractured pelvis, broken neck, two cracked vertebrae in her back, and a concussion.

Stand Up for Sobering Up:

Let the world know where you stand. Take a minute on Friday to show your support for sober driving on social media (Instagram, Twitter, blogs, Facebook). Use the hashtags #standupforsoberingup or #B.A.D.D.

"I was really angry that first few weeks in the hospital," she said.

Reynolds's husband posted about her ordeal on her blog, "Newlyweds on a Budget."

"I just had this outpouring of support and love," she said.

Friends and strangers rallied around her. They posted messages on her blog, sent her emails and shared their own stories about the impacts of drunk driving on their loved ones or themselves.

"I realized that I was kind of a walking miracle," Reynolds said.

After a couple of months, Reynolds found a way to forgive.

"I feel like it's made it so my recovery is faster, because it's not holding me back."

So has her blog. This week, culminating Friday, she's highlighting people's stories about drunk driving in a series called "Bloggers Against Drunk Driving: Stand Up for Sobering Up."

Reynolds is asking that people write a message on Facebook, send out a tweet or post a picture on Instagram in support of the cause.

"We want you to use that and get the word out there," she said. "Just say to the world, 'I'm not OK with drunk driving.'"

Reynolds is recovering well ahead of pace. She expects to run again in the next few months and get back on track for a half-marathon.