

Montana Trooper

Bozeman Wet Lab

By Trooper Glen Barcus

A Wet Lab is a training event where subjects are dosed to a prescribed BAC level in a clinical environment. This allows law enforcement officers to direct an intoxicated person to perform standardized field sobriety tests (SFSTs) in front of an SFST instructor.

On June 4, 2013, the Gallatin County DUI Task Force funded a Wet Lab for Bozeman area law enforcement officers at Montana State University. While Sergeant Kurt Sager played bartender to ten willing subjects, Sergeant Derek Brown and Trooper Jason Grover instructed the one hour classroom portion regarding SFSTs to twenty-nine officers, deputies, and troopers. Deputy Gallatin County Attorney Erin Murphy instructed a short legal update to cover the many positive changes in DUI laws after the 2013 legislative session.



Trooper Justin Braun (MHP 277) administers the Horizontal Gaze Nystagmus (HGN) maneuver on volunteer Ashley Kloster, wife of Trooper Adam Kloster (MHP 341).

PHOTO TAKEN BY GALLATIN COUNTY
DUI TASK FORCE MEMBER KEN SPENCER.

The drinkers were then brought in and set up at stations with an SFST instructor. Each officer was able to administer SFSTs on at least three drinkers. Several members of the community, Gallatin County DUI Task Force, Senator Larry Jent, members of the media, judges, and prosecutors roamed about, observing and learning.

The Gallatin County DUI Task Force provided food and beverages for all, prepared by member K.C. McLaughlin. A portion of the alcohol was donated by Montana Spirits and Wine, while Karst Stage designated a driver and bus at no cost to shuttle the drinkers home safely.

In addition, thank you to the following SFST instructors: Sergeants Kurt Sager, Derek Brown, and Drew Knapp, Troopers Joe Wyant and Jason Grover, Ennis Police Chief Scott Newell, and Park County Deputy Jason Hopkin.