



Montana Trooper

On the Road

On October 31, 2011, Trooper Andrew Novak was en route to accompany an oversize load when he overheard reports of a commercial vehicle spewing diesel fuel and driving westbound in the eastbound lanes of Interstate 90, near milepost 70. Trooper Novak encountered the vehicle at approximately milepost 84.5. Trooper Novak was able to order the driver to stop, and with the help of another motorist, the driver was taken into custody. He exhibited indicators that he may be under the influence of a controlled substance, with bloodshot eyes, halitosis, rapid breath, and profuse sweat. He made several comments that he didn't want to die, and he said he was driving the wrong way because someone was after him, but he didn't know who. The commercial vehicle showed sideswipe crash damage (the location of which was subsequently located near milepost 73.4) and was continuing to spew diesel fuel from underneath. The driver continued to speak in a loud, incoherent, and confused manner, hallucinating and addressing people and images that weren't there. He asked Trooper Novak why he had asked for "a casket man" and why he had to die. Medical personnel subsequently indicated the driver was not suffering from a medical ailment, and a blood sample was taken to determine what controlled substance he may have taken. Following overnight medical treatment, he was booked into the Missoula County jail on numerous charges.



☆☆☆

MONTANA TROOPER

On July 21, 2011, at 1030 hours, this Cessna 182 made an emergency landing on U.S. Highway 93 South, just north of Darby. The pilot and passenger were en route from Denver to the Bitterroot Valley for a vacation when their engine died. After turning the fuel tank selector valve from the "left wing" position to the "both wings" position, the pilot was able to restart the engine. Troopers Chris Hamilton and Scott Bennett stopped traffic for take-off.



☆☆☆

On November 7, 2011, this 2001 GMC pickup experienced an engine explosion/fire that quickly entered the cab. The 78 year old driver received burns to his feet and legs before he was able to get the truck stopped. He experienced burns to his arms and chest getting his small dog out of the pickup. The driver was found walking an hour or more afterward by his family and taken to an area emergency room before being flown to Harborview Medical Center. His dog suffered only singed hair to one side of its body. The pickup was obviously a complete loss, including the hunting rifle and shotgun that were inside. This incident was investigated by Trooper Rocky Bailey (MHP 261).



☆☆☆

On October 27, 2011, in Missoula County, Trooper Sean Finley stopped a vehicle bound for Washington for a registration violation. The vehicle occupants exhibited indicators of possible drug trafficking, and Trooper Finley applied for a search warrant, after which he located 1/2 pound of methamphetamine and \$175,600 in cash in a hidden compartment.



☆☆☆

In September of 2011, a DUI driver lost control on a gravel road north of Madoc. While both vehicle occupants were wearing seatbelts, the passenger was the most injured. This crash was investigated by Trooper Ross Tuggle. □

