

# THE AMBER ADVOCATE

## NATIONAL AMBER ALERT SYMPOSIUM EDITION



**SYMPOSIUM HIGHLIGHTS, pg. 3**

**AMBER ALERT INTERNATIONAL, pg. 8**

**DIFFERENCE MAKERS, pg. 10**

# AMBER<sup>®</sup> ALERT



WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE OF **THE AMBERADVOCATE**:

2009 SYMPOSIUM HIGHLIGHTS	.....	PAGE 3
WHY VICTIMS DON'T ALWAYS FLEE	.....	PAGE 6
<b>PROFILE:</b> MARGIE QUIN	.....	PAGE 7
DIFFERENCE MAKERS	.....	PAGE 8
AMBER IN INDIAN COUNTRY	.....	PAGE 9
AMBER INTERNATIONAL	.....	PAGE 10
<b>FRONT LINES:</b> Sanford, Maine	.....	PAGE 11
ODDS & ENDS	.....	PAGES 12

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Your story ideas and pictures are welcome.

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## SURVIVORS ASK AMBER ALERT PARTNERS TO NEVER GIVE UP

### 2009 NATIONAL AMBER ALERT SYMPOSIUM OFFERS LESSONS FROM CHILD ABDUCTION VICTIMS

The sight of an eight-year-old girl's pink and green Punky Brewster shoes will likely be an image no one will forget from the 2009 National AMBER Alert Symposium. The shoes were worn by Sayeh Rivazfar on September 21, 1988, the night she and her six-year-old sister Sara were abducted by a family friend.

"I'm going to give you the path that these shoes walked in," Rivazfar told the symposium audience. "I loved those shoes. They were brand new to me. What those shoes went through is an eye opener."

Rivazfar showed the shoes she wore and described in detail how Ray Wike took the two sisters out into the woods, repeatedly raped her and then slit the throats of both girls. "He told me to say my prayers and took out a knife and began to cut my throat over and over again," said Rivazfar. Her sister's screams eventually stopped and Rivazfar realized Sara did not survive the attack.

Wike was convicted of the horrific crimes and died in prison. Rivazfar went on to become a New York State Trooper and continues to share her story so more will be done to hold dangerous criminals accountable and protect children. "We can be part of the change, a positive direction in saving our children and turning that criminal system into a justice system that works for us---and not the criminals," said Rivazfar.

Ron Laney, Associate Administrator at the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, thanked Rivazfar for sharing her story with nearly 350 participants at the Tampa symposium on October 27-29. "We are about bringing criminals to justice," said Laney. "We need to keep everyone informed and do a better job working together."

### AMBER ALERT: A FIVE-YEAR REVIEW

Much work has been done since the first National AMBER Alert gathering in Dallas in 2004. Phil Keith, AMBER Alert Training and Technical Assistance Program Director, offered the highlights of the past five years:

- 495 children have been saved directly from AMBER Alerts-most during the past five years.
- Every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands have adopted AMBER Alert programs and more than 70 local, regional and tribal plans have been developed.
- More than 8,200 people have been trained at 159 programs or regional and national conferences.
- Nearly all of the people trained said they learned something significant and 75% changed their behavior and their policies in missing and abducted children cases.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

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"The AMBER Alert Program is working," concluded Keith.

"When you consider that even one child harmed in an abduction is too many, you can appreciate the magnitude of what you have accomplished working together," said Mary Lou Leary, Deputy Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Justice Programs. Ms. Leary was serving as the Acting Assistant Attorney General and National AMBER Alert Coordinator at the time the symposium was held.

## TECHNOLOGY & AMBER ALERTS

Technology is rapidly changing the way AMBER Alerts are delivered and received. Bob Hoever, Associate Director of Special Projects in the Missing Children's Division for the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC), shared some of the new methods being used, including:

- More alerts are being automatically placed on commercial electronic signs. Hoever said it is important to have a good template for alerts and use actual phone numbers because some cell phones do not list letters on the keypad.
- Social networking websites like Facebook and Twitter are being used to get out AMBER Alerts. Hoever encouraged AMBER Alert Coordinators to develop their own sites and to discourage the public from distributing what may be phony or outdated AMBER Alerts.
- The Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) and the Commercial Mobile Alert System (CMAS) are being developed to transmit emergency messages—including AMBER Alerts.
- Some AMBER Alert partners are using computer pop-up messages, video screens in taxis and restaurants, and automated phone notification plans like "A Child is Missing" to help notify the public.

"Your program should utilize technology but technology should not run the program," said Hoever.

## ENDANGERED MISSING ADVISORY

Numerous states are also adopting plans to notify the public in cases that do not meet the AMBER Alert criteria. Utah AMBER Alert Coordinator Paul Murphy gave an update on the Endangered Missing Advisory (EMA), an alert that is sent to law enforcement, the media and the public when a person is missing and believed to be in danger. Today 31 states have non-AMBER Alert notification plans, expanding from only five states with plans in 2005.

"The public needs to know law enforcement officers are actively looking for a child even though an AMBER Alert is not issued," said Murphy. He encouraged AMBER Alert partners to develop a single alert plan that includes all ages before legislators or other government officials create multiple alerts for different ages and circumstances. A Best Practice Guide for EMA's has been written and will be released to AMBER Alert partners after a review has been completed by the Department of Justice.

## CHILD ABDUCTION RESPONSE TEAMS

The Child Abduction Response Team (CART) is fast becoming the best program to make sure every AMBER Alert plan includes a comprehensive recovery plan for child abduction victims. So far more than 200 teams from 43 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Bahamas and Canada have received CART training.

Citrus County Florida Sheriff Jeff Dawsy shared how the CART helped bring every resource possible for the Jessica Lunsford case in 2005. The small agency called out the CART the day after the team had finished its training. CART helped handle more than 3,000 leads and provided search teams in the air, water and ground.

Despite the massive effort, John Coey, a registered sex offender had taken the nine-year-old girl from her bedroom and killed her. "If a Coey can live in Citrus County then there is one in every area and they are just waiting to abduct a child," warned Dawsy.

During a CART workshop, Utah CART Commander Jessica Farnsworth shared how an activation for a child abduction convinced her that 36 members were not enough for a team. She developed a new organizational chart and began recruiting between 160-200 members from numerous agencies for the Utah CART. "It is better to split up the team into two so half the team can trade off every 12 hours and keep everyone fresh," said Farnsworth.

## THE ROLE OF BROADCASTERS

The symposium also highlighted the roles of broadcasters and the media in bringing abducted children home. Andy Hill, Media Relations Sergeant for the Phoenix Police Department said that it is important to keep the focus on the child during an AMBER Alert. "While the media is required to report on an AMBER Alert, focus is often fixated on how the case is handled rather than the case itself," said Hill.

Lucy Caldwell, Public Information Officer for the Fairfax County, Virginia Police Department said one of the most important things to do during an AMBER Alert is to express empathy. “The community must know the agency cares before they begin to care what the agency has to say,” said Caldwell.

Caldwell offered these tips for public information officers during alerts:

- Acknowledge uncertainty and do not oversell what your agency can accomplish.
- Explain that a system is in place to find information when answers are not immediately available.
- Acknowledge people’s fears and give the public a way to help.

“Ultimately, the public wants to know how they can protect themselves and their family,” added Caldwell.

**BEST PRACTICES**

The symposium also offered best practices to be considered for every AMBER Alert plan. The AM-

BER Alert Coordinator has to make sure all partners are on board before, during and after an alert. Here are some of the tips offered to AMBER Alert Coordinators during an AMBER Alert activation:

- Give a heads up to media that an alert is going to be initiated.
- Call for a CART as quickly as possible.
- Make yourself available to answer AMBER Alert questions.
- Do not second guess an activation or cave to pressure from the media or public.
- Keep the focus on finding the child and let the public know you are doing everything possible to bring the child home.

After the alert, formal reviews should be held with the initiating law enforcement agency and key AMBER Alert partners to find areas of strength and places for improvement in each plan. “One of the reasons you’ve been so successful is that you are constantly looking for ways to improve your response to children in danger,” noted Deputy Assistant Attorney General Mary Lou Leary. “You’ve made America a safer place for our children.”

**PARTNERS AGAINST CRIME: NCMEC & 9-1-1 CALL CENTERS**

NCMEC has created the new program to help telecommunicators respond better to cases involving missing and sexually exploited children. The “9-1-1 Call Center Partner Program” allows call centers to become partners by making a commitment to following best practices in training and policy.

“Time is the enemy in the search for a missing child and 9-1-1 call centers are critical to a fast response because they are often the first to know when a child is in trouble,” said Ernie Allen, president and CEO of NCMEC. “That is why collaborating through our 9-1-1 Call Center Partner Program is a vital step in making sure we are all working together to help protect our children.”

Call centers become NCMEC partners by doing the following:

- Adopt the ANSI-approved Standard for Calltakers when Handling Calls Pertaining to Missing and Sexually Exploited Children.
- Complete NCMEC training and then provide the training to all calltakers.
- Implement formal, measurable, quality-assurance process for all calls involving missing and sexually exploited children.



As a NCMEC Partner, a call center will become part of the NCMEC family and will receive preference for training and participate in development of training and testing new approaches to finding missing children as quickly as possible. More information and partner applications can be found at [www.missingkids.com/911](http://www.missingkids.com/911).

## WHY VICTIMS DON'T ALWAYS FLEE

Lyndsey Ryan was 14 years old when she ran away with a 56-year-old convicted sex offender. She left with him after a long term online relationship and secret meetings in person. The man threatened to kill her family if she tried to leave or disobey him. He also terrorized her by driving by homes and giving graphic details about how he had abused other boys and girls.

"Giving in to him is what I had to do to survive for what I had brought upon myself," said Lyndsey. "I would not have left compliantly if I wasn't in fear."

When Lyndsey finally did leave, she said the justice system treated her like a criminal. The public offered no sympathy because she went with him "willingly." Social

"A person under mind control can't visualize being away from the captor and being fulfilled," said Hassan. "There are tricks that are so slick or subtle that unless you know about it you are a sitting duck."

Hassan uses the BITE model to explain the four areas where a captor will try and control a person: Behavior, Information, Thoughts and Emotion. Hassan recommended building trust, gathering information and strategically planting doubts to help a victim gain back control. "You ultimately want the person to empower themselves to take time away from their captor," said Hassan.

If a child has been abducted, Hassan warned law enforcement and families from attacking



Lyndsey Ryan with her mother Carol Ryan at the 2009 National AMBER Alert Symposium



workers put her in a lock down facility for four and one-half months. "I couldn't tell people what happened without being judged," she said.

"She was hardened, bitter and alienated," said Carol Ryan, Lyndsey's mother. "She was determined to take care of herself because no one else did." The mother and daughter shared their story at the 2009 National AMBER Alert Symposium so other victims can get help without judgment. "It's my hope that you treat the next compliant victim with love and respect," added Carol.

One of the world's foremost experts on mind control also spoke at the conference and explained how child abductors convince victims to stay. Licensed Mental Health Counselor Steve Hassan said captors instill false beliefs and fear to gain control of the victim.

the suspect in public. Instead, he suggested convincing the captor that you want to work with him to help the child. "They (captors) want to believe they are great," said Hassan. "You play to their ego to help bring your child home."

Eventually Lyndsey Ryan was able to get counseling to deal with the issues of running away with a sexual predator. She has reconciled with her family and she is now serving in the military. Lyndsey said Hassan's presentation made a lot of sense with her own experience and hopes others will be less judgmental towards victims who do not flee. "I think predators have the ability to manipulate," said Lyndsey. "More understanding is needed about mind control." ☺

## TENNESSEE'S TRIPLE THREAT

In the entertainment world, a triple-threat is someone who can sing, dance and act. In the world of protecting children, Margie Quin is a triple threat. She is Tennessee's AMBER Alert Coordinator, Child Abduction Response Team Commander and Missing Person's Clearinghouse Director.

"I can't imagine you would ever get tired of searching for missing children," said Quin. "If you can't devote all of your efforts to the search for a missing child you need a new line of work."

### THE RELUCTANT COORDINATOR

Quin was recognized as the 2009 AMBER Alert Coordinator of the Year for her passion for finding children. However, she was a bit reluctant to become the state coordinator two years earlier because she had spent the past 18 years as a "door kicking" kind of police officer. Quin was assigned because of her expertise tracking suspects' cell phones during AMBER Alerts—a skill she picked up as a narcotics agent.

"I was excited but it was a little intimidating because the stakes are so high," said Quin. "The program was running successfully in Tennessee but I'm not interested in the status quo and so I saw what I could do to make it better."

Quin saw the CART program as a natural way to improve the AMBER Alert program. She started the first CART for the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI) and oversaw a mock child abduction scenario so the team could receive certification. Quin also heads the TBI Top Ten Most Wanted and Gang Intelligence programs and supervises agents assigned to the FBI Terrorism Task Force.

"We've had gang bangers take children at gunpoint and we've had children taken from some of the domestic extremists. You wouldn't think all these programs would come together but they do," said Quin.

### MOTIVATION

A Will Rogers quote spurs Quin to do even more: "Even if you are on the right track you will get run over if you don't move." Quin added. "That's my philosophy...while the AMBER Alert is the right track, CART is an effort to keep moving."

Quin has been responsible for the safe recovery of more than 22 children and has helped in the recovery of missing children from other states who were believed to have come into Tennessee.

The AMBER Alert that stands out most for Quin happened before she was a coordinator. A woman shot and killed her husband and took off with their three children. Quin tracked the suspect's cell phone for 18 hours before the woman finally turned on her phone for three minutes to check voice mails. Authorities arrested the woman and recovered the children within minutes.

"You recover a child from an AMBER Alert and you have saved a child's life," said Quin. "Nothing is better than that. I've tracked and apprehended bank robbers and murderers, and nothing compares to saving a child."

### FOR THE LOVE OF CHILDREN

TBI Fusion Center Supervisor Jerri Powell nominated Quin for the 2009 award because of her impressive record but also for something hard to quantify. "What is not so easy to explain in writing is Quin's deep love for children, especially children in peril," wrote Powell.

Quin would like to use technology to help children in peril. She wants to push out the alerts quicker and plans to provide online training for AMBER Alert, CART and missing children cases. She also wants other officers to share her concern for missing children.

"Children's issues are the most underfunded and under publicized in my mind," said Quin. "Police departments spend more time looking for stolen weed eaters instead of missing children."

Despite all of the responsibilities, Quin still finds time at home to read, follow sports and spend time with her husband and three-year-old Josie, their adopted daughter from Guatemala. Quin said she would love to figure out a way to put a "low-jack" tracking device on Josie.

Quin described the conversation she has with her daughter whenever she leaves for work. "Where are you going, mama?" Josie will ask. "I'm going out to help children," Quin will answer. "OK," Josie responds. You get the sense from Quin that Josie's word of approval means more than any award. ☺



# DIFFERENCE MAKERS HONORED WITH AMBER ALERT AWARDS

At the 2009 National AMBER Alert Symposium, Deputy Assistant Attorney General Mary Lou Leary presented awards to people who made a significant impact in bringing abducted children home, including:



**Kerry Hammond,** received the "AMBER Alert Citizen Award" for responding to an AMBER Alert while driving a big-rig truck in southern Utah. Hammond called 911 after spotting the suspect's vehicle and police were able to recover a 14-year-old girl.



**Mark Hill,** Gila River Indian Community AMBER Alert Coordinator, received the "AMBER Alert Coordinator of the Year Award." Hill brought the AMBER Alert program to his tribal community in 2006 as a pilot site for the AMBER in Indian Country Initiative. Hill developed protocols and training that reflect Indian culture. He has become a mentor for others developing AMBER Alert plans in tribal communities.

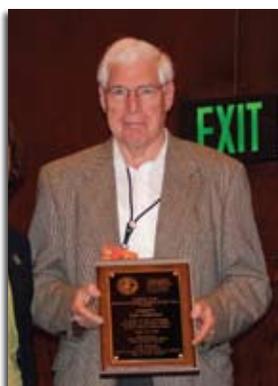


**Sgt. Joe Young,** of the Aurora, Colorado Police received the "AMBER Alert Law Enforcement Award" for his efforts to recover two young girls who were abducted after their mother was murdered by their father. Young brought numerous law enforcement agencies and used a tracking device to locate the

suspect's vehicle which helped in the safe return of Brianna and Alliyah Patterson.



**Margie Quin,** Tennessee Bureau of Investigation Assistant Special Agent in Charge, was also named AMBER Alert Coordinator of the Year (see Profile on page 7).



**Dale Zabriskie,** the Utah Broadcasting Association President, received the "AMBER Alert Broadcast/Media Person Award." Zabriskie helped set up Utah's AMBER Alert Plan in 2002 and has been providing training, materials, time and money to make sure broadcasters are strong AMBER Alert partners.



Six Child Abduction Response Teams (CARTs) were also honored for receiving additional training and conducting mock exercises in order to be a certified CART. The six teams in chronological order of achieving certification are:

- North Florida CART certified in October 2007
- South Florida CART certified in October 2008
- Ontario County, New York CART certified in April 2009
- Middle Tennessee CART certified in July 2009
- South Dakota CART certified in September 2009
- Northeast Tarrant and Denton County, Texas CART certified in September 2009

# MORE TRIBES ARE STARTING AMBER ALERT PROGRAMS

The pilot program to bring AMBER Alerts into Indian Country has taken wings. The AMBER Alert in Indian Country initiative began with ten tribal sites but now other tribes are getting training in order to create their own child abduction alert plans.

For the first time the 2009 National AMBER Alert Symposium provided training sessions for tribal representatives who are not part of the pilot program. "It is quite remarkable that the tribes are so far ahead of so many states considering they had to start their programs from scratch," noted AMBER Alert in Indian Country Liaison Jim Walters.

The goal for the pilot sites is to have a working AMBER Alert program by July 2010. Some of the tribes reported that they were running into roadblocks with their plans because of political interference or lack of support from tribal leaders. Walters said educating the public about AMBER Alerts will help. "If the people speak loudly enough that they want a program, the political desire will follow."

Tribal leaders are also taking an active role in the Southern Border Initiative because many of the tribal lands are on the U.S.-Mexico border. More training will be held to create lines of communication between tribal and Mexican law enforcement officials.

The Native American representatives also tackled the issue of runaway and "throwaway" children.



Jim Walters addresses a contingency of tribal representatives at the 2009 National AMBER Alert Symposium

Approximately 40,000 runaways and throw-aways-mostly girls-come from Indian communities each year.

Native American children typically leave their homes for urban areas and are not accustomed to the cultural differences. Jurisdiction issues also present challenges in trying to protect children.

Some of the Indian communities have developed multi-disciplinary teams to prevent and intervene in child abductions and to recover children. The teams include representatives from law enforcement, social services, schools, judges and tribal elders. Many of the children have been helped because of the Indian culture's strong belief in family relationships and extended families. ☺

## THE SOURCE: EXTRANET PROVIDES ONE-STOP FOR AMBER ALERT INFO

Do you have a question about AMBER Alerts? The AMBER Alert Extranet is often the best place to find the answer. Northeast Region AMBER Alert Liaison Bonnie Davis is constantly working to make sure the site is the one-stop place for contacts and documents related to child abduction alerts.

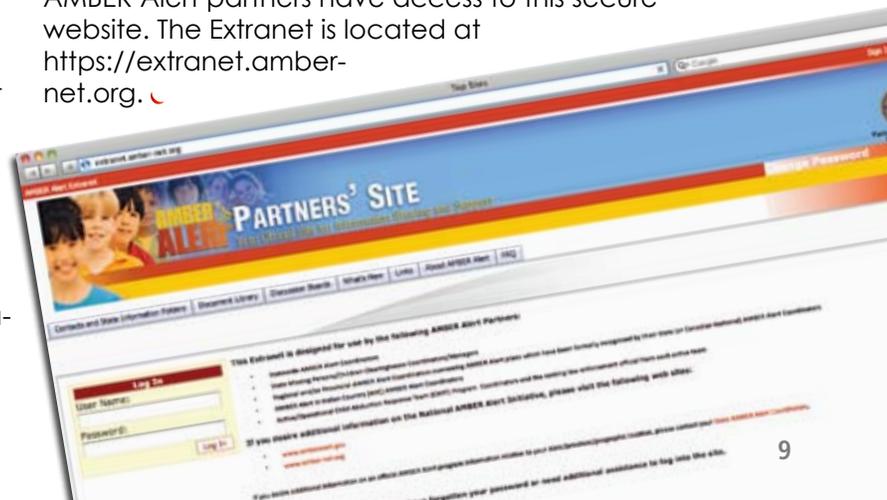
"The Extranet's Document Repository acts as a virtual file cabinet and secure storage location for all things related to AMBER Alerts," shared Davis at the symposium. The site includes:

- The latest AMBER Alert statistics, announcements and message boards for sharing ideas and problems.
- Contact numbers for AMBER Alert Coordinators, Clearinghouse Managers, CART Coordinators and other AMBER Alert partners.
- Training schedules and online training for tele-

communicators.

- AMBER Alert publications on best practices and all issues of The AMBER Advocate.

Currently, AMBER Alert Coordinators, Clearinghouse Managers, CART Coordinators and key AMBER Alert partners have access to this secure website. The Extranet is located at <https://extranet.amber-net.org>. ☺



## AMBER ALERT BECOMES GLOBAL INITIATIVE

After expanding to every state in the United States, the AMBER Alert Program is becoming a global movement as more countries adopt the child abduction alert plan. The 2009 National AMBER Alert Symposium included international partners from Canada, Mexico and the European Union.

Caroline Humer, the Senior Program Manager for the International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children, provided a dateline of countries that have initiated AMBER Alert programs:

- 2003 Canada and United Kingdom
- 2005 Queensland, Australia
- 2006 France
- 2007 Greece
- 2008 Netherlands
- 2009 Portugal and Baja California, Mexico

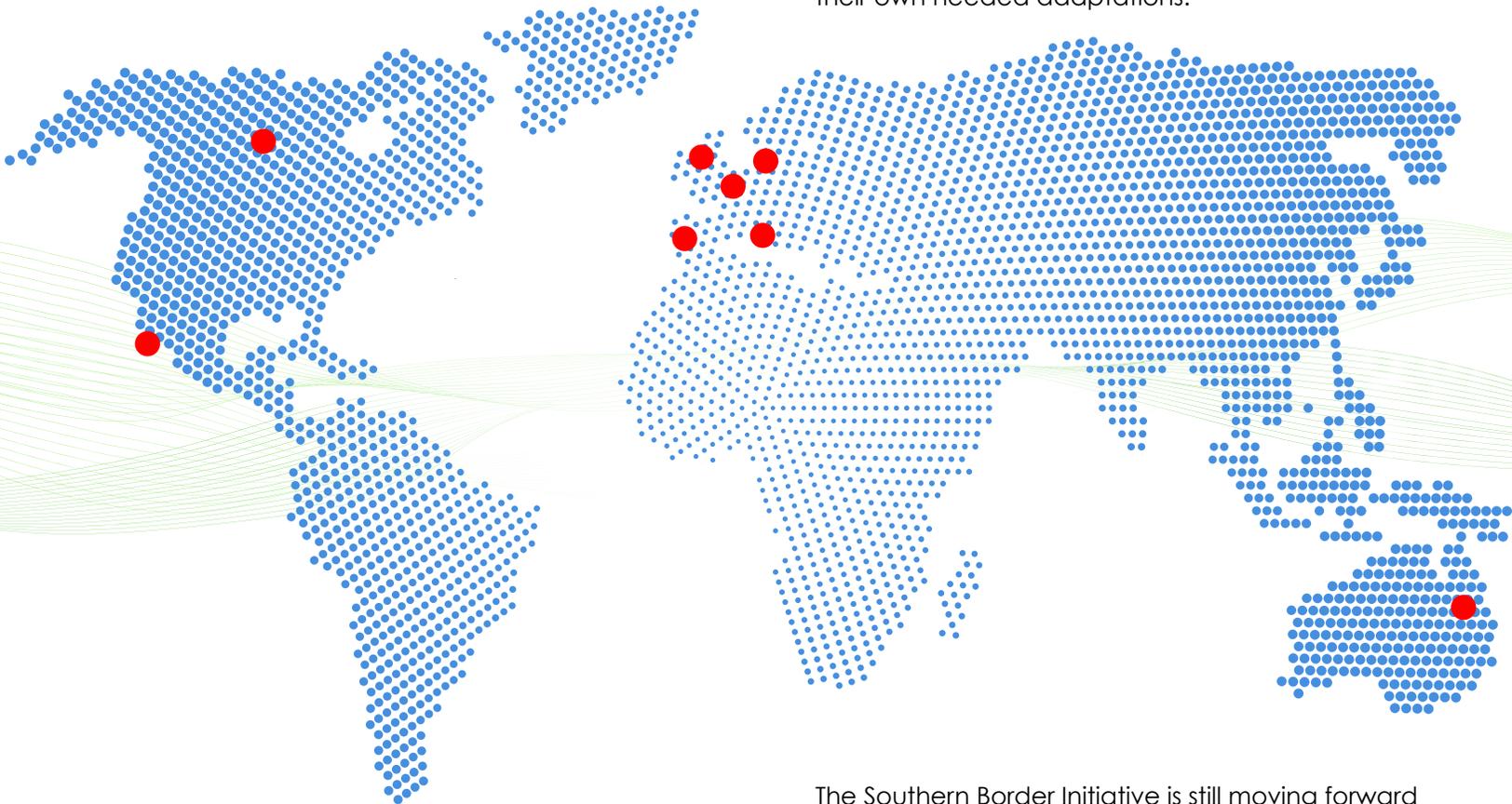
Humer said the Czech Republic, Ireland, Italy, Malaysia, Poland and Switzerland are now developing AMBER Alert plans. Some countries have made changes to the U.S. program including allowing non-government agencies to issue alerts, using different criteria and alerting methods and limiting the amount of information given to the public about the suspect.

Ontario, Canada modified the AMBER Alert criteria to clarify what information is needed before issuing an alert. Ontario law enforcement officers now must "believe" an abduction has taken place rather than being "certain." The criteria were also relaxed on how much information was needed about the victim, suspect and vehicle.

A representative from INTERPOL suggested creating a "Train the Trainer" program so that they can take the training back to their countries and make their own needed adaptations.

The Southern Border Initiative is still moving forward to expand the AMBER Alert program in Mexico. Cecilia Duquela-Fuentes, Program Manager for the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention noted that 381 U.S. children have been recovered in Mexico. "The goal is not to just recover U.S. children," said Duquela-Fuentes. "The AMBER Alert program can help Mexican officials recover their children as well."

Law enforcement officials in California and Baja California are now meeting monthly so they can collaborate on child abduction and other cases.



# MAINE'S FIRST AMBER ALERT BRINGS CHILD HOME

For seven years Maine had an AMBER Alert plan that had never been used. Everything changed on November 9 when a two-year-old girl was abducted after a violent attack on the child's mother in Sanford, Maine.

Lt. Brian McDonough, Maine's AMBER Alert Coordinator and Missing Persons Clearinghouse Director, had the day off and was riding his motorcycle when he got the call. McDonough worried initially how people would react.

"All my apprehension went away because it was working," said McDonough. "The media outlets embraced it. Everyone was excited about Maine's first AMBER Alert."

According to the police affidavit, 38-year-old Gary Traynham broke into his former girlfriend's apartment and then strangled and assaulted her when she got home. The victim attempted to call 911 and Traynham took their two-year-old daughter and left in a green Dodge pickup truck.

Sanford police initially thought they would find the suspect quickly using a BOLO alert because he lived in the area. They also debated whether the case met the criteria for an AMBER Alert because the suspect's parental rights had not been severed. After confirming all the facts, McDonough gave approval for the AMBER Alert to be activated.

"I was very concerned that this child was going to be killed," said McDonough. "We knew it was a risk worth taking."

McDonough also supervises the Southern Division for Major Crimes. He was given the additional duty of AMBER Alert Coordinator after he mentioned that every AMBER Alert is potentially a "homicide in progress." McDonough learned quickly that back-up plans are needed for AMBER Alerts. The software for the Emergency Alert System had a glitch so the media received the alerts by e-mail and transportation officials were notified by phone. "There were a few problems but overall the alert got out very well," said McDonough.

Police began tracking the suspect's cell phone and determined he could be heading to Vermont

or New Hampshire. Both states issued their own alerts and started blanketing the area with officers.

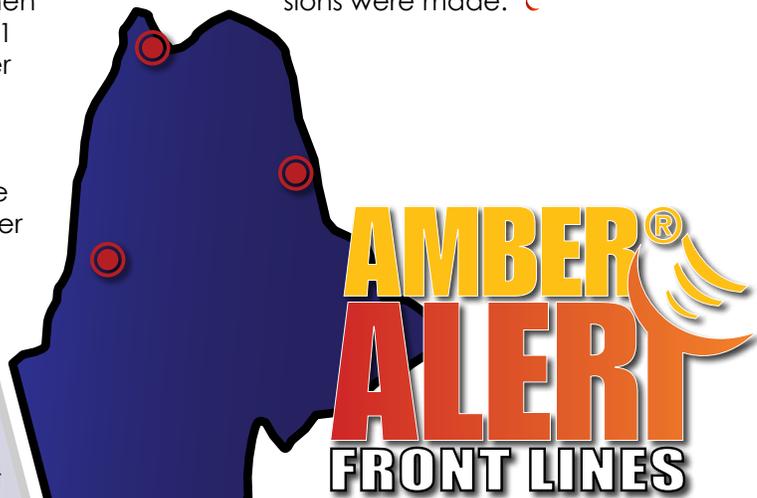
The following day Mike Grant Jr. was hunting with a muzzle loader near a dirt road in Milton, New Hampshire. Grant recognized the suspect's truck and remembered the license plate number from the AMBER Alert. The hunter approached the suspect and convinced him to turn himself in. "This hunter was a hero," said McDonough. "It was a good thing it was hunting season."

Law enforcement officers and broadcasters met to review Maine's first AMBER Alert to see what worked well and

what can be done better. McDonough said all of the training he has received helped for his first AMBER Alert but there is nothing like experiencing it firsthand. "I don't regret it at all," added McDonough. "It was successful and the right decisions were made."



Maine AMBER Alert Coordinator Lt. Brian McDonough



MAINE AMBER ALERT  
HAILEY TRAYNHAM

Left: Suspect Gary Traynham, 38 Right: Hailey Traynham, 2

## MILITARY TO DO MORE ABOUT PARENTAL CHILD ABDUCTIONS

The Department of Defense will now be required to keep reports on troops who have been cut off from their children. New Jersey Rep. Chris Smith sponsored the amendment that aims to assist service members entangled in overseas custody battles. In Japan, more than 100 Japanese-American children are currently being kept away from their American parent. Japanese courts typically award custody to mothers and do not recognize foreign custody orders. ☹



## GEORGIA TRAINS TO STOP CHILD PROSTITUTION

NCMEC held a training in Georgia for police and prosecutors from several states and Canada to try and stop the epidemic of child prostitution. NCMEC estimates that at least 100,000 children each year become victims of child prostitution in the United States. The November training included courses on the violence facing child prostitutes and how to prevent victimization. ☹

## TWO DADS & ONE MOM CHARGED WITH LYING SO POLICE WOULD ISSUE AMBER ALERTS

Parents in three states are facing charges for allegedly lying to police so AMBER Alerts would be issued. Here is a brief summary:

- A Flint, Michigan father who told police his seven-month-old son was inside his car when it was stolen so they would issue an AMBER Alert. Police issued the alert but later learned that the child was safe at home. The father said he made the report so the police would do more to recover his car.
- A Charlotte, North Carolina dad who told authorities his four-year-old girl was in the back seat of his car when it was stolen. He finally admitted there was not a carjacking and he was charged with filing a false police report.
- A Jonesboro, Georgia mother was charged with filing a false police report for telling police her one-year-old daughter had been abducted. The woman told police her ex-boyfriend had abducted the child but police later found out the man had been granted custody of the girl. ☹



## SHERIFF SAYS CAR DECALS MAY BE DANGEROUS FOR CHILDREN

The Spartanburg County Sheriff in South Carolina is warning parents that car stickers that identify the number of children in the family may also lure child predators. Authorities said they may also give sexual predators additional information about family hobbies, sport teams and vacation destinations. ☹

## AMBER ALERT KIOSKS CREATE CONTROVERSY

The inventor of the "AMBER Alert Kiosk" is drawing scrutiny by using the AMBER Alert name for a system that does not follow the alert's criteria. The kiosks feature advertising and have been placed in a Daytona Beach, Florida mall. The advertised alert can be used when a child has been abducted or even if the child wandered to another store for a few minutes. The Florida Department of Law Enforcement issued a statement that "the term 'AMBER Alert' should only be used in conjunction with a state-issued alert in order to minimize potential confusion by the public." ☹



## MEXICAN HOSPITALS REPORT BABIES ARE BEING SOLD

Three doctors and a nurse were arrested in November for allegedly selling newborn babies after telling their mothers the children had died at a private hospital. Police discovered the scheme after a woman learned her baby was alive and had been sold for \$1,130. Authorities have not yet determined how many babies were sold. ☹