



Illinois Traffic Safety Leaders

SAFETY LEADS

a publication for safety leaders

“Since 1967 . . . an organization of concerned citizens”

SPRING 2009

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



President's Message

First and foremost, congratulations to all involved in Traffic Safety! Through your continued efforts of enforcing DUI's and occupant protection laws, fatalities for 2008 were 1044 compared to 1248 in 2007! (Information obtained from IDOT's crash reporting website.)

If you were not able to attend the September 2008 ITSL Conference, you missed out on a great deal of information and networking opportunities. Topics covered included the following: (1) Williamson County Sheriff's Traffic Program, (2) Latest GDL information, (3) Impaired Driving problem in Illinois, (4) Think First Program (injury prevention), (5) Motorcycle Safety, (6) Illinois State Police Motorcycle Program, (7) upcoming BAID program and (8) the Illinois Traffic Safety Challenge. (If you would like to request a topic for a future ITSL conference, please submit it to itsl_roads@yahoo.com.)

Now, onto 2009! For those of you who may not have heard, I retired from the Lake Zurich Police Department in December 2008. In addition to continuing my role as ITSL President, I accepted a position as Regional Occupant Protection Coordinator for Cook and Collar Counties. But, enough about me ... ITSL has a busy schedule coming up.

First of all, the ITSL Traffic Safety Conference is scheduled for Wednesday, May 6, 2009 at the Heron Point Conference Center in Lombard. For registration information, forms and updates, check out the ITSL website at www.itsl.us. The new 2009 Membership Form is also available on the website, or for additional information, you may contact Judi Keippel at (773) 278-8476.

Next, the 2009 “Click It or Ticket” Mobilization Participation Verification Form for May 18-31, 2009 is now available on the www.buckleupillinois.org website. Completing this form will entitle agencies to become eligible for incentive awards.

You may also want to keep in mind that Child Passenger Safety Week is September 20-26, 2009 with Seat Check Saturday scheduled for September 19th. Now is a great time to start planning your events!

Distracted driving continues to be an ongoing problem, especially with cell phone use. The National Safety Council reports that cell phone use is the most common form of distraction for drivers and that the slower reaction time caused by their use is comparable to a person who is legally drunk at .08.! Do you think it is a good idea to ban cell phone use in a vehicle? If you have created or become aware of a safety program to address this or any other issue, please submit it to Illinois Traffic Safety Leaders at itsl_roads@yahoo.com so we can include it on the website. Don't forget to send pictures too!

Keep up the great efforts! We look forward to your participation!

Robert Brasky
President, ITSL

DISTRACTED DRIVING A GROWING PROBLEM

E*Driveline: January 2009 Edition

Edited by Jack Weaver Ph.D

*The December issue of E*Driveline highlighted the Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company study which reported that nearly half of Americans consider cell phones the most dangerous driver distraction, and that 81.3% admitted to routinely talking on cell phones while driving. Clearly, the Nationwide study is further evidence of the critical role cell phone related driver distractions play in motor vehicle crash causation. In fact, recent studies suggest that drivers talking on a cell phone while driving may be causing as many motor vehicle crashes as intoxicated drivers. Although cell phone driver distraction research data are scientifically impressive, testimonials from drivers we know are more convincing. The following letter was shared from a professional realtor who drives hundreds of miles each year.*

Dear Friends, Family and Customers:

I know that you receive forwarded emails about something someone was told or heard about. This story is true and it happened to Jan and I last week. I hope that you take a few minutes to read what happened to us, and pray that it will impact the way you govern your actions in the car.

On Thursday, December 18, 2008, Jan and I had a great and productive day. We'd been working and on the road since 8:30. We'd driven from West Tampa to Wesley Chapel to Valrico to very rural Plant City. At the end of this great day we were exhilarated and exhausted. We were driving home around 5:30, headed South of Valrico Road. For some reason I was NOT on my cell phone. I had both hands on the wheel and my fatigue had me staring intently at the road ahead of me as Jan chatted on to me about our day and what we needed to do next, in the passenger's seat. In my peripheral vision I noticed a small boy riding his bicycle, on the sidewalk, alone, and simply riding. Then, I noticed his left foot falter ever-so-slightly. I don't know why that foot moved and I don't know why I noticed it. However, I subconsciously took my foot off the gas and moved it toward the brake. I was going 45 MPH. The next instant the child lost total control of his bike and catapulted into Valrico Road right in front of my 6000 lb. S.U.V. We came to a stop about 12 feet from the sprawled out and terrified child. The car behind me came within inches of hitting our rear and the truck behind her, hauling a landscape trailer, pulled left into oncoming traffic to avoid hitting her as the child scrambled frantically to get out of the busy street back onto the sidewalk. He was visibly shaken and shocked. When we checked on him, he said he was ok and thanked us. Jan and I cried, prayed and thanked God for protecting that child and us. It truly took us a great deal of time to recover from this near miss. The terrified child was embarrassed and oh, so grateful that we did not run over him at 45 MPH.

Friends, if I had been on my cell phone (as I usually am), had I not had my FULL attention on the road, had I looked down for ½ second; I would not have been able to avoid hitting that child. If I had not noticed that foot moving irregularly, I would not have been in a physical position to stop in time. I only saw the moving foot, because I was paying FULL ATTENTION to the road and surroundings ahead of me. Never would I have thought that a bicyclist would leave the safety of the sidewalk and fall into the street. I know that Jan and I are changed forever. We are very busy, and returning calls while in the car had always seemed like a great use of time. Not anymore. I have regretfully driven thousands of miles making calls, answering calls, and being distracted with intent negotiations while driving. That would have been a fatal activity on that day.

We hear about accidents and things that happen while drivers are not concentrating on the road and somehow believe it will not happen to us. It happened to me last week and, only by the

Grace of God, were we all spared. Please take a deep breath and know that you cannot do it all; all of the time. Just because we have all of these great tools that keep us in touch with everyone at all times, does not mean that we have to be. Just because it rings, does not mean you have to take your eyes off the road to answer it. Let your voicemail work and return the call from a safely parked car.

It is our hope that you will be more conscious while driving this year. Do not dial, text or read emails while driving. Only talk on your phone, while driving, if you have a speakerphone. And PLEASE do not look down, for even one second to answer your phone or write a note ... wait until you can pull over and can be safe.

Please take a few extra moments before heading out on the road each day. Prepare before leaving; give yourself an extra ten minutes, so that you are not in a hurry, so that you do not have to use the phone while driving. This is advice that I need to take, more than give.

*Stacy Dillard, REALTOR®
Professional Real Estate Consultant*



AAA Chicago Introduces I.C.E.

Emergency Cards enable first responders to save time and lives
Nick Jarmusz, AAA Chicago

AURORA, Ill., Jan. 12, 2009 – Sirens blare, emergency lights flash. First responders search the injured victim and his car for identification, anything they can use to notify his loved ones that he’s been hurt.

Scenarios like this can be avoided if people take the time to identify an emergency contact in their cell phone and fill out an AAA I.C.E. (In Case of Emergency) card. Sized to fit in a wallet or a purse, these identification cards contain valuable information such as the driver’s name, phone numbers for family and friends, physician names and information about allergies and other medical conditions.

As a leader in traffic safety advocacy, AAA is helping spread the program throughout the Midwest. I.C.E. cards are available at AAA branch locations throughout Illinois and northern Indiana or by logging onto www.AAA.com/ICE to download their own cards.

“No one plans to be in a traffic crash, but it is an unfortunate occurrence,” says Nick Jarmusz, AAA Chicago’s community outreach and safety representative. “Anything motorists can do to help responders quickly locate emergency contact information will help save precious time in getting victims the help they need and notifying their loved ones.”

Law enforcement and emergency response agencies may request a supply to distribute in their community. Orders are subject to availability of sufficient quantities to meet all requests received.

AAA Chicago has represented roadway interests for motorists and pedestrians and serves as a leading advocate for various traffic safety and travel-related issues for more than a century. For more information on any aspect of AAA Chicago’s breadth of service including AAA’s home, auto and life insurance products; travel-related services, AAA’s Show Your Card & Save program; and/or any AAA membership service including emergency roadside assistance, please visit our Web site at www.AAA.com or call us toll-free at 1-866-YOUR-AAA (968-7222).



FACES4 New Member Update

FACES4.org (Families Against Chronic Excessive Speed 4) would like to welcome Shelly Hansen from the Illinois State Police to the FACES4 organization.

Master Trooper Shelly J. Hansen began her career in law enforcement in January 1988. After four years of active duty with the Army she became a member of the Killeen Texas Police Department. In the 6 ½ years with KPD her primary function was as a patrol officer. Shelly's extra duties were as a Field Training Officer and as a member of the Special Weapons and Tactical team (SWAT). In June of 1994 she accepted a position with the Illinois State Police.

In spring of 2008 Shelly heard Dee and Bob Brant speak at a school in Springfield for the Operation Teen Safe Driving Program. Shelly worked on the Operation Teen Safe Driving Program between FORD Motors, the Illinois Department of Transportation, and the Illinois State Police.

During this time and after hearing the Brants own story of the loss of their son, Shelly began to reflect on her own loss; that of her brother Eldon on the evening before her 9th birthday. He was a passenger in a vehicle that was fleeing the police after a minor traffic infraction. The end result was the death of her brother and another passenger. There was no alcohol involved; only speed and poor decision making skills.

The impact of those factors left her with a life-long scar. She became an officer believing she could make a difference. After fifteen years of working the street in a patrol function, Shelly is combining her traffic enforcement effort with her personal testimonial. Her hope is someone will take the time to think about the long term effect a momentary action can have on not only them but those who love them. If her brother could ask her if she could live without him, she would tell him her life has not been as fulfilling since he has been gone. As Shelly says "SPEED-IT'S NOT A BADGE OF HONOR".

BOB BRASKY

New Occupant Protection Coordinator

Jahari E. Piersol, M.S.Ed.
State Occupant Protection Coordinator
Illinois Department of Transportation
Division of Traffic Safety

Please join me in welcoming Bob Brasky as the new Cook and Collar County Occupant Protection Coordinator! We are very happy that Bob has accepted the position, and based on his stellar history in traffic safety, demonstrated commitment to the field, and enthusiasm for the position we look forward to great achievements.

Bob will replace Tom McQueen who retired after many years of service. Tom is still active in the field and has left a great model for Bob to follow. Bob is 100% up to the task and ready to hit the ground running. Bob officially began in mid-december, already 100% up to the task and ready to hit the ground running.

Thanks again Bob for accepting the position and welcome on board! IDOT/DTS is fully behind you.

Nominating Slate 2009-2011 ITSL Officers

President: Bob Brasky
Vice President: Mike Rompala
Secretary: Dave Perozzi
Treasurer: Gene Richardson

These nominees will be elected at the May 6 Conference. We deeply appreciate the time and expertise these gentlemen are willing to offer to this organization.



OFFICER SEAN D. McGRATH POLICE DEPARTMENT, CRYSTAL LAKE, ILLINOIS

Officer Sean D. McGrath was selected a 2008 recipient of the prestigious J. Stannard Baker Award for Highway Safety for his sustained, continuous, and career-spanning extraordinary initiative and creativity in promoting traffic safety within Crystal Lake, Illinois, and in reducing deaths and injuries, particularly among teenagers. Sponsored by the IACP, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), and the Northwestern University’s Center for Public Safety, this prestigious award annually recognizes individual law enforcement officers and others who have made significant outstanding *lifetime* contributions to highway safety.

A member of the Crystal Lake, Illinois, Police Department since 1991, Officer McGrath has earned certifications as a breathalyzer operator, a Laser Technology radar/lidar instructor, an “Operation Lifesaver” instructor, and a child passenger safety technician and instructor. He has attended courses in truck weight enforcement, in Traffic Occupant Protection Strategies (TOPS), in Traffic Engineering for Police at IPTM, in the investigation of pedestrian and grade crossing collisions, in field sobriety (HGN) testing, and in motorcycle crash investigation. He is a graduate of the following courses at the Northwestern University Center for Public Safety: Traffic Crash Investigation, Traffic Crash Reconstruction, and Managing Police Traffic Services.

Officer McGrath founded “Operation Cool” (now “Operation Click”) in Crystal Lake and has served as its President since its inception in 1998. The program encourages students in three high schools to use seat belts and not receive any traffic citations during the school year. If this is accomplished, the students become eligible for various prizes. In the three schools involved, seat belt usage rose from 65% in 1998 to well over 90% in 2007. Officer McGrath’s program has now expanded to other jurisdictions.

Officer McGrath has used his position as a Police Officer to launch preventive efforts aimed at reducing traffic crashes and the deaths and injuries they produce. In addition to the above, Officer McGrath has also been involved in the following safety programs:

- Establishing a bicycle helmet give-away program for low income residents
- Instructs monthly classes on proper child seat installation for expectant parents at Northern Illinois Medical Center
- Created, secured funding and implemented “MY FIRST ID”, a computer-generated identification card that can be attached to a child safety seat. The card contains critical medication and identification information to aid paramedics and doctors in the event of a collision.
- Implemented the Community Alcohol Resistance for Teens and Students (CARTS) program which utilizes golf carts, traffic cones and fatal vision goggles to teach driver education students the dangers of drinking and driving

THANK YOU OFFICERS

“You helped save my life!”

Marti Mull Belluschi



Davenport, Iowa Police Department Chief Ernie Lester and Lieutenant Don Schroeder (both retired) with gravely injured drunk driving crash victim, Marti Mull Belluschi.

Exactly forty-four years after the crash, on March 21, 2008, I had the opportunity to meet two of the police officers who worked as crash investigators when my father, Gus Mull, and I were hit head-on by a drunk driver. My father was seriously injured and I was gravely injured. One entry on their police report, written an hour after the crash, stated, “Alerted Sgt. Reeves to the fact that one of the injured is in bad condition & may expire.”

Our reunion included a luncheon and presentation of “My Hero” awards attended by other Davenport Police Department officers, members of the Iowa Governor’s Traffic Safety Bureau, Illinois DOT Law Enforcement Liaison Dan Wood and my family. The officers also received letters of appreciation from Illinois state officials including Secretary of State Jesse White who stated, “Your work serves as a constant reminder to law enforcement officers of their important role in our society and how their ac-

tions ultimately have a greater impact than first believed.”

Whether a crash was yesterday, last year, ten years ago or fifty years ago, this story is to honor Police Chief Ernie Lester, Lieutenant Don Schroeder and the many other police officers who work to save lives. **From me and those other crash victims who forgot to say thank you, this is a small expression of our enormous and unending appreciation!**



SEAT BELT MANUAL LAUNCHED BY UNITED NATIONS ROAD SAFETY GROUP

Wearing a seat-belt can reduce the risk of death in a road crash by up to 50% and is one of the most effective measures for preventing injury for vehicle occupants. Yet in many countries seat belt use is still not required or enforced.

Now a new practical guide for policymakers has been published today by the FIA Foundation, the Global Road Safety Partnership, the World Bank and the World Health Organization providing advice to public authorities on introducing laws and improving seat belt compliance.

The technical advice manual 'Seat-belts and Child Restraints' is one of a series including advice on motorcycle helmets, speed management and combating drunk driving published in the context of the UN Road Safety Collaboration, which as well as the FIA Foundation includes the World Health Organization, the World Bank, the Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP), the UN Regional Commissions and many other road safety organizations.

The new seat belt manual was officially launched at an event in Costa Rica with the country's Transport Minister Karla Gonzalez, Michael Schumacher and Make Roads Safe campaign ambassador Michelle Yeoh. Costa Rica ran a national seat belt campaign in 2003-4, introducing new seat belt legislation, and launching a major awareness campaign backed up with police enforcement.

FIA Foundation Chairman Carlos Macaya commented: "It is very fitting that the new seat-belt manual is launched in Costa Rica, because here we are the proof that it is possible to save lives by promoting seat-belt use by combining political will, sensitive policing and effective communication. We hope this manual will be a useful catalyst and tool for many countries, regions and public authorities around the world as they work to increase seat belt and child restraint use."

Michael Schumacher said: "In my racing career my seat-belt certainly saved my life. It would never occur to me to drive anywhere without first putting on my seat belt. I would urge all car drivers and passengers to always wear your seat-belt. There is simply no excuse not to – your lives depend on it."

Costa Rica's Transport Minister Karla Gonzalez, architect of the country's 'Por Amor' (For Love) seat belt campaign, said: "Every step we take, however small it may seem, is gigantic when it comes to protecting our children. Child seats and seat belts are simple devices that offer immense protection for our children."

Make Roads Safe campaign ambassador Michelle Yeoh took a ride on the FIA Foundation's seat-belt crash simulator and commented: "It takes just a few seconds to buckle up in the car, but it is a few seconds that can save your life."

Etienne Krug, Director of Injury Prevention at the World Health Organization, said: "Increasing the use of seat-belts and child restraints is an effective way for countries to reduce deaths and injuries among vehicle occupants. Governments that haven't done so yet should adopt legislation that requires the use of both seat-belts for all car occupants and age-appropriate child restraints. Adopting and enforcing such laws could save tens of thousands of lives each year."

The English language version of the seat belt and child restraint manual will be available in printed form from the FIA Foundation and other UN Collaboration partners in March 2009. Other language versions will also be published through 2009.

*For more information go to "Latest News" at: www.fiafoundation.org
Download a copy of the new seat belt and child restraint guide at
<http://www.fiafoundation.org/publications/Pages/PublicationHome.aspx>*

**ILLINOIS' NEW DRUNK DRIVING INITIATIVE
EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2009**

*By: Mary Riseling
Department of Programs & Policies
Office of the Secretary of State*

On January 1, 2009, Secretary of State Jesse White and the State of Illinois took a tough new step to combat drunk driving. Following a first conviction for DUI, drivers will be required to have a Breath Alcohol Ignition Interlock Device (BAIID) installed in their vehicle as well as have a Monitoring Device Driving Permit (MDDP) if they wish to drive during their statutory summary suspension period.

Prior to the passage of this legislation, BAIID devices were required for DUI offenders with two or more DUI convictions. This new legislation is expected to dramatically increase the number of BAIID devices in use on Illinois' roadways.

Under this legislation, drivers convicted of DUI will have the option of installing a BAIID on their vehicle or they may opt to not drive during their statutory summary suspension and not have a BAIID installed. Any offender who declines to obtain a MDDP and a BAIID and is then caught driving during their suspension will be guilty of a Class 4 felony.

Commercial vehicle drivers are not eligible for a MDDP to operate a commercial motor vehicle during their suspension period.

Secretary White, Senator John Cullerton (D-Chicago) and the national organization of Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) worked together to pass this legislation in the Illinois General Assembly in 2007.

"I am pleased to have initiated legislation that requires any first-time DUI offender to have a Breath Alcohol Ignition Interlock Device (BAIID) installed on his or her vehicle," said White. "This is a new and innovative approach to deal with a very serious traffic safety issue. Statistics show breath alcohol ignition interlock devices are very effective in preventing subsequent DUI offenses."

Mothers Against Drunk Driving called this new law one of the most important pieces of DUI legislation passed in Illinois in several years because ignition interlocks stop vehicles from being driven by those who are drunk. Studies show BAIIDs are effective in reducing subsequent offenses by up to 90 percent while on the vehicle.

DUI offenders are responsible for all costs associated with the BAIID device, which includes an installation fee of approximately \$100 and rental and monitoring fees of about \$110 per month.

Secretary White's office has been holding training programs for law enforcement, members of the judiciary and circuit clerks across the state in order to ensure a smooth implementation. If you are interested in more information about the BAIID program, please contact the Secretary of State's BAIID Program at 217-785-4128.

ILLINOIS TRAFFIC SAFETY LEADERS 2009 SPRING CONFERENCE

Wednesday, May 6, 2009
Heron Point Conference Center
665 W. North Avenue Lombard
8:30 A.M. – 3:00 P.M.



Illinois Traffic Safety Leaders Mission Statement

- Create opportunities for the development and evaluation of traffic safety movements in Illinois;
- Establish a channel for the exchange of information on traffic safety activities of state-wide service organizations and advocacy groups;
- Act as a liaison between organizations, the National Safety Council, and other state and national agencies. Maintain affiliation with the National Association of Women Highway Safety Leaders, Inc. and develop education in all phases of highway and traffic safety.
- Networking opportunities with traffic safety leaders throughout the State.
- Provide a quarterly newsletter for its members.

CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

Cook County Sheriff's Office
DUI Prevention Program

Mary K. Briatta

Northwestern University Center for Public Safety

Ted Penesis, Education Manager

Illinois Liquor Control Commission

Investigator John Franklin

Illinois Secretary of State Police

Kevin Doyle

Director, Central States Institute of Addiction

The Joanne Blair Leadership Award will be presented during the luncheon.

Sleeping rooms are available at Fairfield Inn & Suites next door to the conference center. Please call 630/629-1500 for the special conference rate by April 24. Conference information and registration forms are available online at www.itsl.us Or you can contact Judi Keippel at 773-278-8476

Safety Leads

2743N.Albany
Chicago, IL 60647

E-mail:
itsi_roads@yahoo.com

Website:
www.itsl.us

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Advisor: Joanne Blair

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