



SAFETY MATTERS!

Fall 2008



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Governor

David J. Swarts
GTSC Chair

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Dear Safety Partner:

As another summer comes to an end, the traffic safety community in New York State has so much to celebrate. We're happy to see statewide seatbelt compliance reach an all time high of 89% and we are equally happy to report that our preliminary 2007 data shows fewer motor vehicle related fatalities and injuries as compared to 2006. Although we need to take time to celebrate our successes, we all recognize that so much more needs to be done to achieve our vision of zero fatalities on New York's highways.

I'm proud and excited to share some of this year's initiatives, such as: the creation of a statewide impaired driving task force; increased law enforcement, prosecution, and judicial training; expanded *Click It or Ticket* enforcement details that will offer police agencies increased flexibility; and increased motorcycle enforcement and educational opportunities to help mitigate the increasing rise in motorcycle injuries and fatalities.

I want to thank all of you who have submitted articles for the newsletter. Not only are you able to highlight the great programs in your area, but the newsletter allows the rest of our traffic safety community to learn about new initiatives.

I look forward to seeing many of you at the annual Highway Safety Conference in Syracuse and I am excited about the new initiatives that our partners in safety are implementing. I am confident we are on our way to eliminating injuries and fatalities on our state's roadways.

Sincerely,

Chuck DeWeese

Assistant Commissioner for GTSC



GONE4EVER Onondaga County

2005 was a tragic year on the roads of Onondaga County. A number of teenage lives were taken in motor vehicle crashes and as a result, Town of Dewitt Police Chief Eugene J. Conway feared the possibility of future teenage deaths. With this thought, he formed a committee to develop a different approach to reaching the teenagers of Central New York. The committee came up with the idea to construct an exhibit that would educate young people about the dangers of drunk and reckless driving.

GONE4EVER sets out to change minds. It is not a lecture, it is not a program, and it is not a class. It is a display that was designed to save lives through education.

The exhibit shows the once lively faces of five teenage victims who were killed in automobile crashes. Five teenagers whose lives tragically ended without warning, without goodbyes and without reason. Even college acceptance letters will "forever" remain unanswered. Accompanying these images, the exhibit shows pictures of grieving family members and friends, to convey the impact that drunk and reckless driving has on others.

GONE4EVER was created in hope of deterring teenagers and young drivers from drinking and driving or getting into a vehicle with someone who has been drinking or driving recklessly.

Most importantly the GONE4EVER committee wanted the exhibit to be seen at as many schools as possible. Since money can be a deterrent for some schools, the committee raised enough money so that cost would not be a factor. To allow the exhibit to be viewed to its

maximum potential it was decided that the exhibit would stay at each location for one week. Many schools scheduled the exhibit during open houses or other times when the community at large has an opportunity to visit the exhibit.

To expand awareness for the exhibit the GONE4EVER committee created a website, www.gone4ever.org, which explains the exhibit as well as displays a schedule of the exhibit.

The GONE4EVER exhibit was unveiled in June 2006. As it gained popularity, the following year the exhibit traveled to 38 venues in Central New York. The exhibit also became the focus of an hour long television special titled, "License to Live". The program aired twice on WSYR Channel 9 Syracuse and is also available for viewing through the stations web site at www.9wsyr.com.

The exhibit continues to be in high demand as many schools have scheduled to have it for a second time. The exhibit continues to remain cost free as a result of the funding that the committee has been able to sustain through both private and public donors.

GONE4EVER was made possible by the efforts and resources of the following: Skyline North; Kahncepts Design; Eric Mower and Associates; Quartier Printing; Green & Seifter LLC; Seneca Data; Eagle Newspapers; NewsChannel 9 Television; Heart to Heart Foundation; New York State Governors Traffic Safety Committee; K&A Radiologic Service; Gifford Foundation; CNY Community Foundation and the Onondaga County STOP DWI Program.

Article and photo provided by Barry Weiss, Onondaga County STOP-DWI Program Coordinator.





TECHNOLOGY FOR SAFER SCHOOL BUS TRIPS

The License Plate Reader (LPR) system is one of the most recent pieces of technology to be used in traffic safety. The LPR was created in 2004 by Remington Law Enforcement Systems. It is a device mounted on the roof of a vehicle that can "see" vehicles and their license plates. It reads the license plates and compares what it reads against a data file of registrations downloaded from the Department of Motor Vehicles. The LPR can store the images of the vehicles, including GPS coordinates of their location, on its computer.

In New York State, police agencies and the Department of Motor Vehicles began to use the LPR to scan for vehicles that had suspended registrations. The technology was found to be useful for law enforcement, and it is now being applied to school bus safety. A pilot program being undertaken by the New York Association for Pupil Transportation (NYAPT) and the Syracuse City School District has placed an LPR on a school bus. This program involves data collection, not enforcement, and focuses on motorist education through the use of an LPR system equipped school bus.

Pupil transportation professionals have been working to educate the motoring public of the dangers involved in passing a stopped school bus (VTL §1174) for the past 15 years. This law requires motorists to stop when a school bus is in the process of loading or unloading passengers with its red lights flashing and stop arm extended.

The most vulnerable part of a student's educational day is the process of entering or exiting their school bus. It is estimated that 50,000 motorists pass stopped school buses each school day. This form of aggressive driving creates 50,000 opportunities of increased student vulnerability, which puts children at risk and has led to numerous student injuries and several student fatalities.

After a motorist has illegally passed a school bus, the driver must be able to identify and remember

the passing vehicle's make, model, color, license plate and description of the driver to file a deposition with law enforcement. If the driver fails to get the license plate number or fails to get it correctly, the law enforcement agency is not able to issue a ticket and the motorist is free to continue their aggressive driving behavior.

The pilot program's educational component provides the owner of the registered vehicle that unlawfully passes a school bus a stern warning letter from the Syracuse Police Department. The letter states the date, time and location of the passing, provides the law which needs to be followed and warns the motorist of the potential tragedy their aggressive driving could produce.

The pilot was operational for 42 days last school year. During that time, the LPR recorded 68 violations. The program's plan was to assign the equipped bus to differing routes throughout the city to spread awareness of the law requiring a vehicle to stop when buses are loading and unloading students. Syracuse City Transportation Director, Patricia Bailey, stated at a June press event that the community is becoming increasingly aware of the bus, resulting in fewer illegal passes each week.

The License Plate Reader (LPR) system, which has been so successful with law enforcement agencies, is now finding that same success in the world of school buses. The application of this technology and others like it will shape our future as we continue to educate the motoring public, enforce motorist compliance with traffic law and enhance school bus safety.

For more information about the LPR on school buses, contact Paul Overbaugh of the GTSC at (518) 474-5111 or Peter Mannella of the New York Association for Pupil Transportation at (518) 463-4937.



State Partnership Addresses Drowsy Driving Crash Issues

Each year in NYS approximately 2,800 people are involved in police reported crashes where "fatigued or fell asleep" was designated as a contributing factor. About fifty percent of the crashes occur between 11:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. Sixteen to twenty-four year old male drivers have the highest fatigue related motor vehicle crash rates. This type of crash often has tragic consequences including serious or fatal injuries.

New York's Partnership Against Drowsy Driving (NYPDD), which was created in 2004 and is facilitated by the New York State Department of Health Bureau of Injury Prevention (BIP) is a joint effort to educate the public and high-risk groups about the dangers of drowsy driving and promote the adoption of preventive strategies. Members of the NYPDD include representatives from the New York State Governor's Traffic Safety Committee (GTSC), New York State Thruway Authority, New York State Police, New York State Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), New York State Motor Truck Association, New York State Association of Traffic Safety Boards, New York State Movers and Warehousemen's Association and New York State Department of Transportation. Partners meet regularly to share traffic data on drowsy driving and work cooperatively to conduct campaigns to raise public awareness of the risks of drowsy driving and encourage the adoption of prevention strategies among the general public and high-risk populations.

The NYPDD has worked collaboratively to conduct press events and produce public awareness campaigns on the local and state level. In 2008, NYPDD members assisted the GTSC and DMV in the development of statewide radio and television ads for a drowsy driving



Front Row, left to right: Susan Hardman (New York State Department of Health), Jennifer Hogan (New York State Governor's Traffic Safety Committee), Suzanne Syzdek (New York State Department of Health) and Debra Douglass (New York State Department of Health)

Back Row, left to right: Lt. Jim Halvorsen (State Police), Bob Motschmann (New York State Department of Transportation), Vinnie Bellino (NYS Association of Traffic Safety Boards), Karin Kennett (New York Motor Truck Association) and Mark Anduze (New York State Thruway Authority)

campaign, "Wake Up! To the Risks of Drowsy Driving", which were aired in conjunction with National Sleep Awareness Week (March 3 – 9, 2008). The BIP developed and distributed drowsy driving resource packets to public health and traffic safety partners to promote participation at the local level. To obtain educational brochures addressing drowsy driving, contact the BIP at injury@health.state.ny.us or Mark Anduze from the NYS Thruway Authority at mark_anduze@thruway.state.ny.us. For more information about the NYPDD contact Debra Douglass at (518) 473-1143 or djd04@health.state.ny.us.

Article and photo provided by Debra Douglass, New York State Department of Health.



SHERIFF'S OFFICE LAUNCHES MOTORCYCLE SAFETY INITIATIVE Warren County

The Warren County Sheriff's Office, in partnership with the GTSC, launched a motorcycle safety initiative just in time to coincide with the start of the 2008 Americade Motorcycle Touring Rally, held in April each year in Lake George.

With the dramatic rise in motorcycle registrations, New York State has seen an increase in motorcycle accidents and complaints. Warren County is one of the state's largest tourist destinations and the home to Americade, which draws over 50,000 motorcycle enthusiasts annually. Warren County Sheriff's Office was viewed as the perfect fit to participate in a motorcycle safety initiative pilot program.

Warren County's new motorcycle police unit got its first taste of enforcement when the Sheriff's Office and New York State Police held a joint motorcycle safety check point on Interstate 87 in the Town of Queensbury. At the conclusion of the checkpoint 123 motorcycles had been inspected with 43 summonses being issued. Violations included unapproved helmets, illegal exhaust, unlicensed operators and other motorcycle equipment violations. The checkpoint also provided motorcycle units from the Sheriff's Office and State Police the opportunity to work

together. Additional checkpoints in Warren County are planned for other locations throughout the year.

Rally goes at this year's Americade saw, for the first time, police motorcycles cruising the event area and actively enforcing motorcycle safety. The Warren County Sheriff's Office, Glens Falls Police Department and the New York State Police teamed up their motorcycle units and became a proactive presence at Americade. Warren County Sheriff's Office motor officers issued over 60 summonses for motorcycle safety violations over the course of the week long event.

Event organizers added their support for a law enforcement motorcycle presence. They hope a connection between police motorcycle officers and Americaders will be made, a connection not easily made with an officer patrolling in a car. It is felt the motorcycle unit will provide some common ground. The Sheriff's Office has already seen evidence of just that. The safety information booth staffed by the officers received high visibility being located at the Americade Tour Expo building. The safety brochures were a very popular item and the interaction between Americaders and the motor officers was described as "fantastic".

Article and photo provided by Shane L. Ross, Chief Deputy, Warren County Sheriff's Office.





IMPAIRED DRIVING BILLBOARDS Delaware County

They say that a picture is worth a thousand words. If that is true, imagine how much a billboard would be worth!

New York State's STOP-DWI program has a long track record of success. Part of what makes it so successful is its ability to change, adapt and renew itself as often as necessary. In a state where much can change from county to county this little luxury is priceless. If Delaware County had to run its program the same way that another county did, it may be doomed to failure. Not because there's anything wrong with the other county, rather the geography, demographics, socioeconomics, etc. between the counties are vastly different. It would be like trying to cram a size 13 foot into a size 6 shoe!

Delaware County's STOP-DWI Coordinator is thrilled to be able to have the freedom to mold the program to fit Delaware County. If there is a need to change a portion of the program because the data indicates the need to, it can be done. "From the diversity of local needs, comes innovation and creativity". This is what makes STOP-DWI, across the board, work and work well.

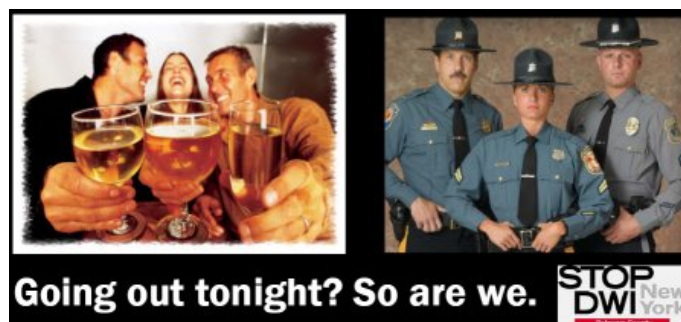
Due to the rural nature of Delaware County most people spend a good deal of time in their cars. Whether it's

traveling to work, grocery shopping or going out for an evening, driving for 30 minutes or more is a way of life here. The decision to make advertising a key feature of the program came easily. Radio has proved an excellent medium for reaching commuters. Whether it's Sammy the Snitch warning listeners of upcoming Crackdowns, or ads stressing the need for designated drivers, the message gets out to those who tune in.

For those who listen to CDs rather than tuning in, a 'Picture is Worth a Thousand Words' swings into action! At a whopping 12 feet by 24 feet, these larger than life size ads can't be missed. Playing off an idea that first came from a similar ad in Delaware State, permission was given to use the ad in any way. The design was tweaked to fit the needs of Delaware County.

All three of these billboards ran to coincide with the Memorial Day Crackdown, Delaware County school proms and graduation. One can only conclude that the saying must be true as enormous amounts of positive feedback on these ads was received. Hopefully a picture that is worth a thousand words will also be the picture that saves a life.

Article and photos provided by Lisa A. Barrows, Coordinator Delaware County STOP-DWI.





NEW SAFETY ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES FOR LOCAL ROADS

New York's MPOs

Within New York State, roughly 85% of roads are under local jurisdiction (county, city, town and village) and roughly 60% of reportable crashes (including half of the state's fatal crashes) occur on them. As a result, local communities are looking for ways to find cost effective, efficient and credible tools to assess the safety of their roadway systems.

In 2007, the NYS Metropolitan Planning Organizations' (NYSMPOs) Safety Working Group was awarded a NYS Planning and Research grant by NYSDOT to develop a standardized road safety audit (RSA) process for non-state owned roadways. It was felt by the MPOs that applying RSA procedures to local transportation projects and facilities would potentially bring about substantive improvements in safety across the state.

The resulting process, completed in the fall of 2008, is known as a Safety Assessment and can be used in urban, suburban and rural settings. As defined, a Safety Assessment (SA) "is a formal safety performance examination of an existing or planned future transportation facility (e.g. road, intersection, sidewalk, multiuse path, or land use development) by an independent, qualified SA Team. The SA Team considers the safety of all users, qualitatively estimates and reports on safety issues, and suggests opportunities for safety improvement. In the SA of existing

facilities proposed improvements may include, but are not limited to, short, medium, or long term engineering solutions, multimodal considerations, enforcement activities, and safety education." In the SA of planned facilities, the proposed improvements can pro-actively improve safety.

The Guidelines for conducting a Safety Assessment place considerable emphasis on expanding the RSA process beyond just roadways. They are designed for use on the local transportation system of New York State both by the MPOs and local agencies. The Guidelines are based on conventional RSA principles as outlined in the FHWA RSA Guidelines, but tailor the process to the conditions experienced by NYSMPOs and local agencies throughout New York State. It is hoped that local communities armed with this proven tool will work with the MPOs and other safety stakeholders to improve the safety of their locally owned transportation systems.

The NYSMPO Safety Working Group will present the Safety Assessment process at the NY Highway Safety Conference in Syracuse, on Monday, October 20, 2008. For more information on the SA Guidelines, the Safety Working Group and other MPO activities, visit www.nysmpos.org.

Article provided by Sandy Misiewicz, Co-Chair of the NYS MPO Safety Working Group.



CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY WEEK September 21 – 27, 2008

For the first time, New York State conducted a statewide child passenger safety awareness campaign, "New York's 4 Steps 4 Kids", during Child Passenger Safety Week, September 21 – 27, 2008. The First Lady, Michelle Paige Paterson, kicked-off the campaign on Seat Check Saturday at a press event held at the Crossgates Mall in Albany. The campaign promotes the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's four-step guidelines to insure children are secured properly in an appropriate child restraint system based on age and size. The four basic steps are rear-facing seats, forward-facing seats, booster seats and seat belts.

According to a recent NHTSA study, 72% of parents don't know how to use child safety restraints properly. Although all child safety seats must meet the same Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards, there are many different makes and models to confuse parents. Reports submitted to the GTSC from car seat checks and fitting stations in 2007 show that the misuse rate is over 90%.

Twenty-one car seat check events were held across the state on Seat Check Saturday. Certified child passenger safety technician volunteers checked child safety seats to ensure that they were properly installed and provided tips to parents on how to transport their children safely in their vehicles.

This campaign was a cooperative effort involving the GTSC, Bureau of Injury Prevention, NYS CPS Advisory Board, NHTSA, NYS Safe Kids Coalitions and Chapters, and numerous local community agencies and sponsors.

As part of Child Passenger Safety Week, the 7th Annual Regional Child Passenger Safety Conference was held in Atlantic City, September 24 – 26th. This year's conference brought together more than 600 child passenger safety advocates and offered a comprehensive agenda featuring 16 technical CEU workshops on various topics.

Article provided by the New York State Governor's Traffic Safety Committee.



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MARK YOUR CALENDARS

October 19-22

NY Highway Safety Conference
Sheraton Syracuse University Hotel &
Conference Center

October 19-25

National Teen Driver Safety Week

October 24 – November 1

NYS Statewide DWI Enforcement and
Public Information Campaign

October 27

Applications must be submitted or
postmarked for the NYS Department
of Civil Service Highway Safety Program
Representative exam to be held
December 6, 2008

November 21 – January 1

NYS Statewide DWI Enforcement and
Public Information Campaign

For a complete list of upcoming traffic
safety events, visit our website noted below.

www.safeny.com