

Smart, Safe & Sober

NEWSLETTER



LATE SUMMER/EARLY FALL 2008

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Smart, Safe & Sober NEWSLETTER

The *Smart, Safe & Sober Newsletter* (formerly known as *Badges, Buckles, Belts & Beyond*) is published quarterly for Virginia's transportation safety community by the Smart, Safe & Sober Partnership.

The Smart, Safe & Sober Partnership is comprised of the Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police, the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles, the Virginia State Police, the Virginia Sheriffs' Association, and DRIVE SMART Virginia.

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Articles, announcements of events, short recaps of agency activities with photos, etc. are all accepted on a regular basis for publication in the next scheduled issue.

PREVIOUS ISSUES

Back issues of the newsletter can be found at www.smartsafeandsober.org/news. Click on "SS&S Newsletter" on the left.

ADDRESS CORRECTIONS

Contact Erin Schrad, VACP Communications Manager (see above) with any address corrections or mailing list changes.

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Border to Border 2008

Despite the looming weather, officers from numerous state and local agencies in Virginia and Kentucky organize to conduct their checkpoint at the state line on Route 460 in Buchanan County.

Celebrating twelve years as part of Virginia’s Smart, Safe & Sober Partnership to make our highways safe, law enforcement agencies from Kentucky, West Virginia, Maryland and North Carolina met at their state borders with Virginia law enforcement officers to check traffic prior to the Labor Day weekend. Seventeen locations were slated to check traffic for this project but some locations were canceled because of rain.

The focus of the checking details that were held Thursday, August 28th, from 10:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m., was on seat belts, child restraints, equipment violations, speeding and driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Counties that were able to hold checkpoints at their border with their neighboring state were Lee, Pittsylvania, Grayson, Patrick, Buchanan, Wise, Accomack, Henry, Carroll and Chesapeake.

Locations unable to complete the project checkpoints were King George, Bland, Alleghany, Bath, Rockingham and Giles.

Officers trained to assist with the proper installation of child safety seats were available at most of the locations to assist parents or care providers with proper child safety seat installations. Commercial Motor Vehicle Enforcement Officers were also at many of the locations and checked large trucks for authority to operate, overweight and overall safety equipment violations.

Needless to say, with the rain lowering their numbers and checking locations at our borders around Virginia officers were

still able to make contact with hundreds of drivers and their occupants during this project concerning highway safety issues prior to the upcoming holiday weekend. These officers, concerned with the high volume of traffic and preventable injuries and deaths during the Labor Day weekend came together with our bordering states police offices in this high profile manner to remind motorists to drive safe, smart and sober and obey the laws.

Reported information from the agencies participating indicates that 168 police officers from 39 different agencies from Virginia and our bordering states participated issuing 268 traffic violations and making one criminal arrest. Officers also issued 27 adult seat belt tickets and found 5 child safety seat violations.

2008 Border to Border By the Numbers

Officers participating	168
Agencies participating	39
Adult seat belt citations	27
Child safety seat violations	5
Traffic violation citations issued	268
Criminal arrests	1



Governor Kaine Announces Crackdown on Drunk Drivers Taking the “Scenic Way Home”

2008 Checkpoint Strikeforce campaign kicks off across Virginia



2008 FACT SHEET

Virginia Drunk Driving Facts

- In 2007, 378 persons were killed in alcohol-related crashes, a one-percent increase from 2006.
- 37% of Virginia traffic fatalities were alcohol-related.
- 7,130 persons were injured in alcohol-related crashes in 2007, a small decrease from 2006 (7,543 persons), representing a 16-percent decrease since 2002 (8,465).²
- 25,243 persons were tested with blood alcohol content (BAC) of .08 percent or greater in 2007. The average BAC of tested drinking drivers now averages .1407 BAC.

Results

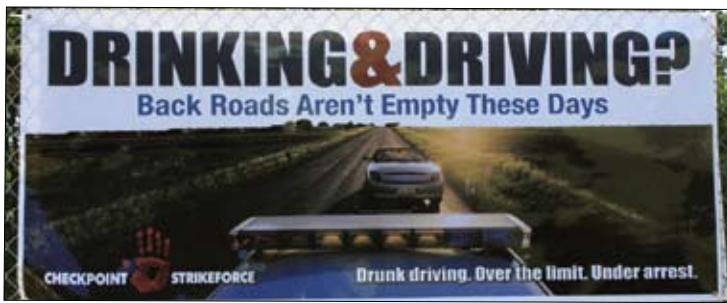
- From October 1, 2007 through June 1, 2008, Checkpoint Strikeforce's local law enforcement activities resulted in 1,116 DUI arrests; 1,229 safety belt citations; and, 256 child restraint citations. Thirty-six juveniles were cited for underage drinking and there were 14,665 other arrests, citations and warnings. These figures do not include results from the Virginia State Police's enforcement activities.
- 28,787 people are convicted annually of DUI in Virginia.
- Of those convicted for driving under the influence (DUI) in 2007, 81 percent were male.

Public Opinion

- A July 2008 public opinion survey of Virginia drivers found:
 - Sixty-eight percent of Virginia drivers perceive drunk driving as one of the most serious dangers faced on the road.
 - The poll indicated that drivers perceive two lane rural highways as the most difficult type of road to drive on after having a few drinks, and it is one of the most likely areas to be stopped by law enforcement.
 - More than any other consequence, including arrest or death, 80 percent of Virginia drivers fear killing or injuring someone else as a result of drunk driving.
 - Sobriety checkpoints are strongly supported. More than 9 out of 10 (93%) of Virginia drivers support the use of sobriety checkpoints.

Public Awareness Component

- This year, one million dollars has been dedicated to the ad campaign and educational outreach efforts in Virginia. The ads utilize the findings of the campaign's opinion poll and focus groups to create messages that hit home with the target audience of males, ages 21 to 35. The ads will run in Virginia over 4 ½ months.



(August 21, 2008) MECHANICSVILLE, Va.—Virginia Governor Timothy M. Kaine today launched the Checkpoint Strikeforce campaign — a statewide initiative combining enforcement and education efforts to raise public awareness of drunk driving. The 2008 campaign, launches on the eve of a regional initiative targeting impaired driving on rural roadways. Virginia is represented in the initiative with more than 92 state and local law enforcement agencies participating across the state. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, over half (55-percent) of the nation's 2006 traffic fatalities occurred on rural roads. Last year in Virginia, 51-percent of the alcohol-related fatalities occurred on rural roads, according to Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles data.

"Virginia will continue its tough stance against drunk drivers and we will not allow back road escapes for people driving under the influence," Governor Kaine said. "We must remain vigilant to decrease these preventable traffic fatalities throughout the state."

In 2007, there were 378 alcohol-related traffic fatalities in Virginia. State data indicates that the number of alcohol-related traffic fatalities in Virginia has remained steady over recent years, a finding that is alarming and troubling to law enforcement officials across the state. In addition to this weekend's enhanced enforcement on Virginia's rural roadways and with Labor Day weekend — historically one of the deadliest drunk driving holiday weekends of the year — right around the corner, Checkpoint Strikeforce has begun a five-month, statewide campaign to reduce the incidence of drunken driving. This statewide campaign combines proactive public education and enforcement efforts in order to raise public awareness of drunk driving.

A public opinion survey of 800 Virginia drivers conducted in July 2008 for Checkpoint Strikeforce by the Richmond-based polling firm MWR Strategies, found that drivers continue to strongly support the use of sobriety checkpoints. Among those surveyed, the majority not only perceived drunk driving as one of most serious dangers facing drivers but also that the behavior of drunk driving is one of the most dangerous, more so even than an unprotected one-night stand, sleeping with your best friend's significant other, sky diving or telling off your boss. The majority of respondents also identified two lane rural highways

as the most difficult to navigate under the influence and one of the most likely places to be stopped by law enforcement.

For the remainder of 2008, law enforcement agencies in Virginia will hold at least one sobriety checkpoint or saturation patrol each week throughout the region. Through the use of these law enforcement efforts, the Checkpoint Strikeforce campaign works to keep impaired drivers off the road. Deploying sobriety checkpoints and patrols when and where drunk driving is most likely to occur deters motorists from driving under the influence and arrests those who do.

"The message from law enforcement is as simple as it is clear, if you choose to drink and drive, we will catch you no matter what roadway you take," said Colonel W. Steven Flaherty, Superintendent, Virginia State Police.

In addition to sobriety checkpoints and patrols, Virginia's Checkpoint Strikeforce campaign is employing earned media and ads in combination with other statewide outreach efforts in a robust \$1,000,000 effort to remind citizens of the many dangers and consequences of impaired driving. Throughout the next several months, nearly 25,000 radio and television spots will run throughout the Commonwealth and will target the most feared result of impaired driving amongst the targeted 21-to-35-year old male audience: the killing or injuring of someone else. The campaign is supported by a grant from the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles.

Today the Virginia Highway Safety Office also launched the state's latest effort to encourage the use of designated drivers as a means of deterring impaired driving. The **HERO Campaign for Designated Drivers** is modeled after a New Jersey based designated driver effort stemming from the death of John Elliott, a young U.S. Naval Ensign, who, in 2000, was killed by a drunk driver. (See page 7.) Along with the Virginia Highway Safety Office, the HERO Campaign will be partnering with DRIVE SMART Virginia (www.drivesmartva.org) and the Virginia Hospitality and Travel Association to establish this designated driver program in establishments serving alcohol throughout the Commonwealth.

Listen to the ads and get more information at <http://www.checkpointstrikeforce.net/educate.html>

Governor Kaine Announces Launch of “Think!... Don’t Drink” Initiative

Prevention program will utilize existing resources from 13 state agencies to aid localities in addressing underage drinking

(August 21, 2008) RICHMOND— Governor Timothy M. Kaine today announced the launch of the *Think!... Don’t Drink* initiative, a campaign to reduce underage drinking in Virginia. The program will enable community civic organizations and parents to address the issue by providing them with monetary and informational resources.

“Underage drinking is a serious threat to the health and safety of our young people,” Governor Kaine said. “The *Think!... Don’t Drink* initiative will give these young people the information they need to avoid underage drinking and make responsible and healthy decisions.”

Think!... Don’t Drink, presented by the Governor’s Office for Substance Abuse Prevention (GOSAP) Collaborative, is part of the Governor’s *Prevention Comes First* initiative. Since its inception in June 2006, *Prevention Comes First* has cultivated collaboration, provided opportunities for youth, increased public awareness and training, and offered tools for community planning in localities throughout the Commonwealth.

The program advances the mission of GOSAP and *Prevention Comes First* by increasing the awareness of negative consequences associated with underage drinking, sharing evidence-based strategies reducing underage drinking with localities and developing a common grant format to solicit proposals from localities and service agencies/organizations to identify and address underage drinking in their communities.

Think!... Don’t Drink’s Community Guide for Preventing and Reducing Underage Drinking provides civic organizations and community prevention specialists assistance in designing and implementing a multi-strategy approach using evidence-based programs and activities tailored to their communities. A Parent Guide for Preventing Underage Drinking will assist parents with factual information on risks and consequences of underage drinking and provide strategies they can use to protect their own children.

The program offers grants of up to \$10,000 through initiatives, such as the Governor’s Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Grants, to various communities in order to establish positive alternatives to deter youth from consuming alcohol at an early age.

The GOSAP Collaborative, organized in 2002, is made up of representatives of 13 agencies across four secretariats. GOSAP and the Collaborative have provided leadership for numerous components of the Governor’s *Prevention Comes First* initiative, which include the Virginia Inter-agency Gang Workgroup. In 2007, Governor Kaine assigned the development of his statewide underage drinking prevention initiative to the Collaborative.



For more information on *Think!... Don’t Drink* publications or to apply for The Governor’s Underage Drinking Prevention Grant Program, go to www.gosap.virginia.gov

Harrisonburg Police Conduct 4th of July Road Checks

Over the course of four hours on the night of Friday, July 4, the Harrisonburg Police Department, in conjunction with the Rockingham County Sheriffs Office, conducted two separate safety checkpoints in the city.

Shortly after 7 p.m., officers set up at Hawkins Street and Norwood Street, battling frequent rain. Two hours later at 9 p.m., the operation moved to University Boulevard and Drivers Drive, near the campus of James Madison University.

A total of 218 cars were checked at the two locations and dozens of citations were issued. In addition, 18 cars were impounded and several arrests were made.

The checkpoints were intended to remind drivers to remain “smart, safe and sober.”



PHOTO COURTESY EVAN DYSON PHOTOGRAPHY



Campaign creators Bill and Muriel Elliott, Virginia Governor Tim Kaine, and Deputy Commissioner David Mitchell, Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles.

Virginia Becomes Third HERO State

Governor Kaine joins Elliotts to Introduce the HERO Campaign for Designated Drivers®

(August 21, 2008) MECHANICSVILLE, Va.—Virginia became the third state to officially adopt the HERO Campaign for Designated Drivers® in kickoff ceremonies held today in Richmond. Governor Tim Kaine joined Bill and Muriel Elliott at the news conference, held at Wayside Park in Hanover County. The HERO Campaign promotes the use of sober designated drivers to prevent drunken driving tragedies nationwide.

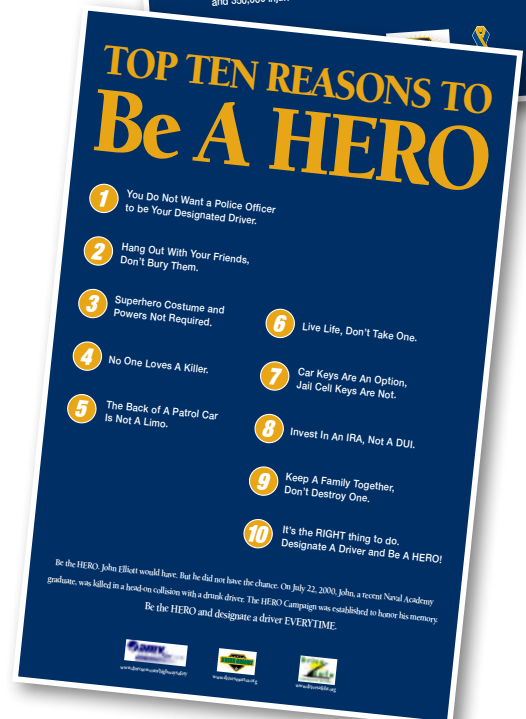
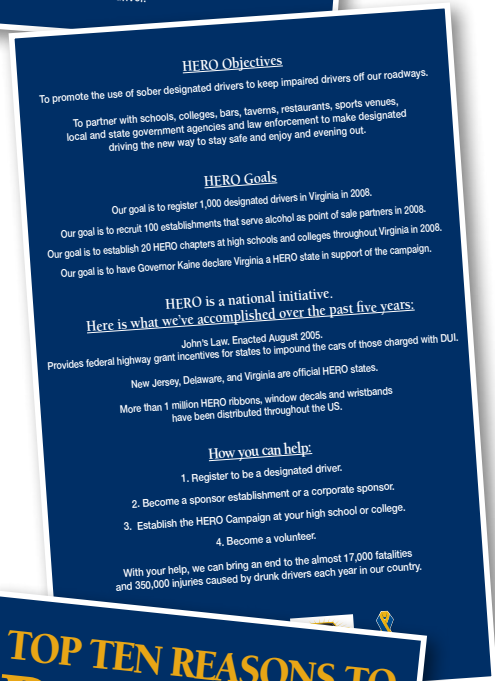
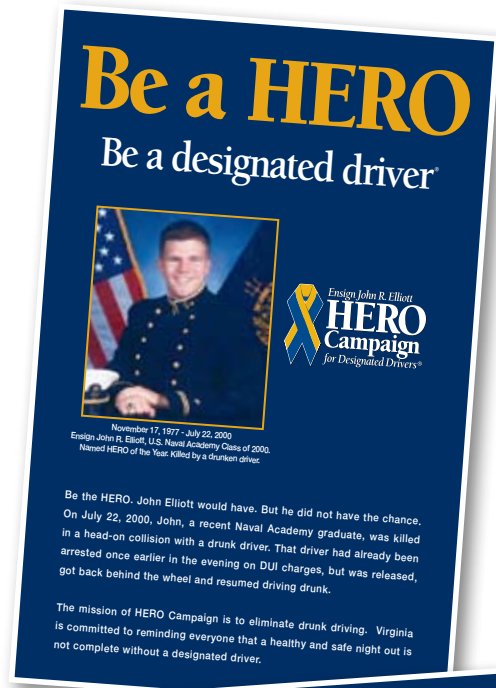
The Elliott's son, Navy Ensign John Elliott, was the inspiration for the HERO Campaign. He was killed by a drunken driver as he was traveling home from Annapolis, MD to southern New Jersey for his mother's birthday in July, 2000. He had recently graduated with merit from the United States Naval Academy, where he was named the Outstanding HERO of his graduating class. Ensign Elliott was preparing to enter Naval Flight Officer School in the fall.

The HERO Campaign is partnering with the Virginia Highway Office at the Department of Motor Vehicles, DRIVE SMART, and the Virginia Hospitality and Travel Association. To launch the program, 15 highway billboards in and around Richmond with the message, "Be a HERO. Be a Designated Driver®," have been donated by Lamar Outdoor Advertising.

Business, including bars, taverns, restaurants, hotels and motels and are being invited to join the campaign by displaying posters and window decals, and serving free soft drinks to sober designated drivers. Colleges and law enforcement agencies are also being asked to participate and sponsor HERO Campaign educational and promotional activities.

New Jersey and Delaware were the first HERO States. The HERO Campaign is also active on a number of college campuses, along with the Philadelphia Phillies and New York Giants. The Campaign received the 2008 Public Service Award by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. National legislation, modeled after New Jersey's John's Law, passed in 2005, provides federal highway safety grant incentives for states adopting John's Law, which requires police to impound the cars of those arrested for drunk driving.

For more information and campaign materials, go to <http://www.herocampaign.org> and <http://www.drivesmartva.org>.



“The hills are alive with the sound of...” ENFORCEMENT

Shenandoah Valley law enforcement join forces with Northern Virginia agencies along major byways to ensure Virginians are buckling-up

by **Bob Wall, Law Enforcement Liaison**
Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police

Agencies from Northern Virginia down to the Blue Ridge Mountains and through the Shenandoah Valley joined forces this past May during the 2008 *Click It or Ticket* Mobilization to ensure motorists were buckled up.

The coordinated effort on Friday, May 23 along the major roadways of Route 7 and Route 11 — dubbed the “Route 7|11 Taskforce” — spanned from Arlington County west to Winchester (Route 7), and from the Virginia-West Virginia line south through the Shenandoah Valley to Augusta County (Route 11). These agencies joined numerous other law enforcement agencies across the state also conducting intensive enforcement blitzes to save lives — coordinated efforts have been conducted along Virginia’s Route 60 and Route 460 for several years.

“I have gone through three of these today,” said one unidentified motorist, referring to the safety check run at the exchange between the Route 7 bypass and Route 7 Business by the Clark County Sheriff’s Office and the Berryville Police Department. He went on to thank the officers for their time and effort to ensure that everyone was safe.

Driving up Route 7 through Loudoun County, the Loudoun County Sheriff’s Office motor officers were buzzing like yellow jackets. “They were everywhere,” said one motorist.

These two examples are just the tip of the enforcement efforts that took place that day. Officers from over 20 different agencies had Routes 7 and 11 covered like a blanket.

“With many Virginians failing to buckle up regularly, it’s clear that far too many people still don’t take belt laws seriously,” said Route 7|11 Taskforce Coordinator and New Market Police Officer Chris Rinker.

The Route 7|11 Taskforce grew out of a combined enforcement effort that Officer Rinker had previously coordinated known as the “11/211 Connection”. Recognizing that more needed to be done to get people to buckle up in the Upper Shenandoah area, the 11/211 Connection reached out to

include as many of the agencies along Route 11 as possible, and then it expanded along Route 7 through Northern Virginia.

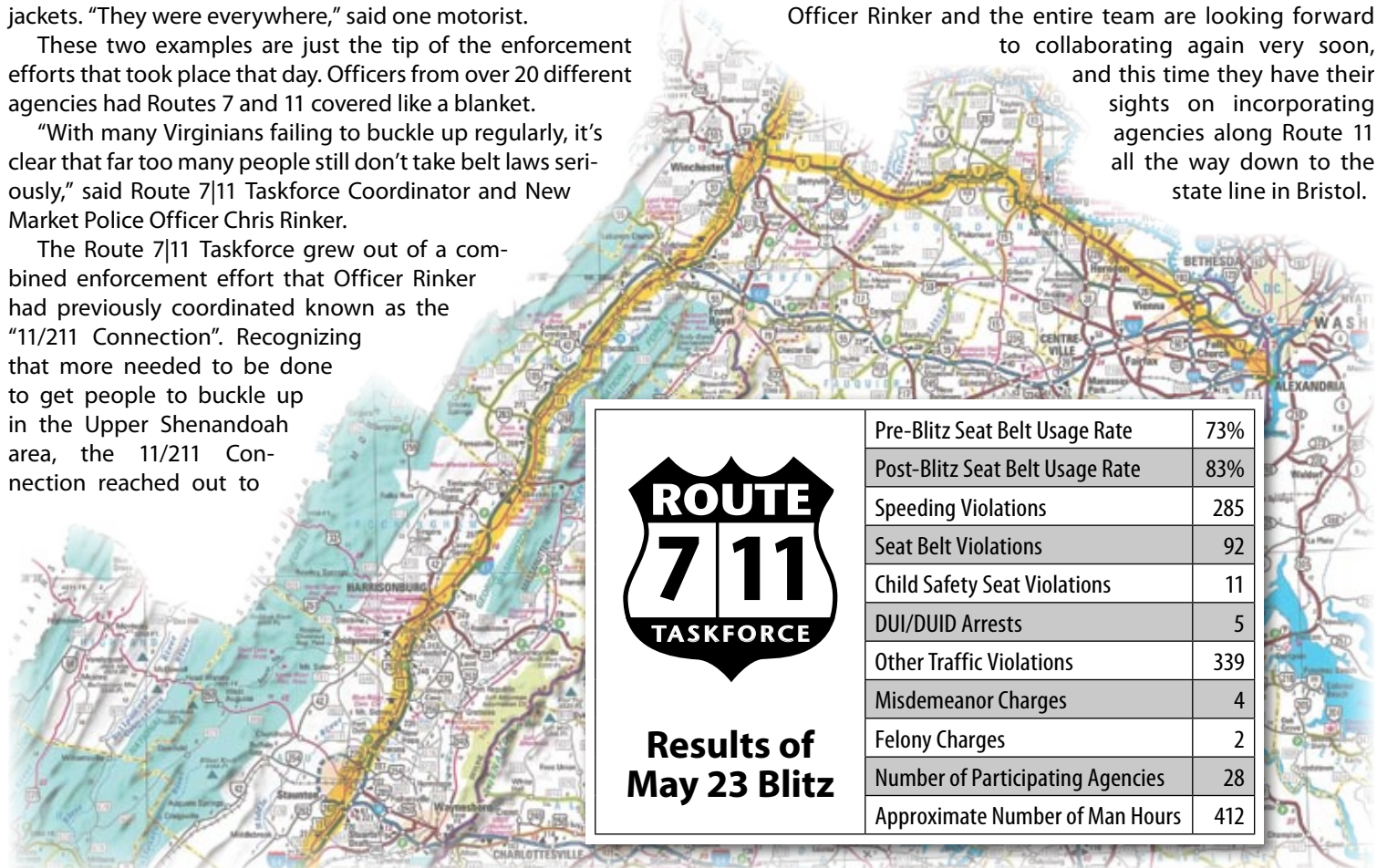
“This coordinated effort is a lot [of work] for a smaller agency like New Market to take on,” said Officer Rinker. “But we needed to maximize our resources and give the impression that enforcement efforts were everywhere.”

Mike McWilliams, Chief Deputy of the Clarke County Sheriff’s Office agrees. “We believe that the *Click It or Ticket* program is very important to the officers and the public and the Route 7|11 Taskforce helped us put a local spin on the safety message.”

Also joining the enforcement effort were Front Royal Police Department and Warren County Sheriff’s Office. These two agencies technically are not along the Route 7 or Route 11 corridors, but as they are located in the vicinity of where Routes 7 and 11 intersect, they wanted to join the effort. To do so, they organized their own “Route 340 Connection” and conducted aggressive enforcement along Route 340, which crosses Route 7 and runs parallel with Route 11 for a short distance. Both the Route 7|11 Taskforce and the 340 Connection were featured on the local ABC affiliates in Winchester and Harrisonburg, and live interviews were conducted that evening on the 11 o’clock news.

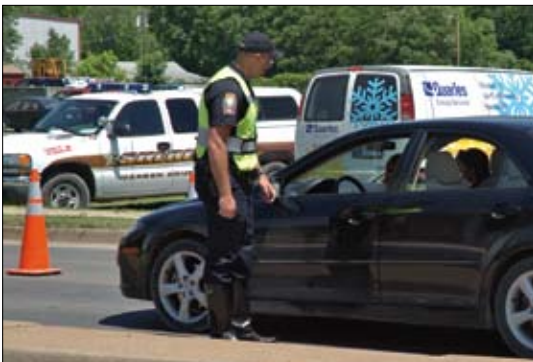
“Along Route 11 alone, we made a great impact on the public’s perception,” said Officer Rinker. “We wrote over 800 summonses and made four criminal arrests — two being felonies.”

Officer Rinker and the entire team are looking forward to collaborating again very soon, and this time they have their sights on incorporating agencies along Route 11 all the way down to the state line in Bristol.



Results of May 23 Blitz

Pre-Blitz Seat Belt Usage Rate	73%
Post-Blitz Seat Belt Usage Rate	83%
Speeding Violations	285
Seat Belt Violations	92
Child Safety Seat Violations	11
DUI/DUID Arrests	5
Other Traffic Violations	339
Misdemeanor Charges	4
Felony Charges	2
Number of Participating Agencies	28
Approximate Number of Man Hours	412



*Our thanks to
all the agencies
who participated
in the May
Click It or Ticket
Mobilization!*



Twelve Officers Graduate from Car Seat Class

A dozen more law enforcement officers from the upper Shenandoah area are now nationally certified car seat experts.

Officers from Berryville Police Department, Culpeper Police Department, Frederick County Sheriff's Office, Front Royal Police Department, Middletown Police Department, and Warren County Sheriff's Office participated in a 4-day class to learn the "ins and outs" of installing child safety seats in vehicles.

The course ended with a community seat check in the parking lot of the Tot Spot in Middletown. Fifteen seats were checked by the students, none of which were found to be correctly installed. Additionally, booster seats were determined to be needed in many of the cars that came through the check. Four booster seats were given away to needy parents. (Due to the success of this check and the apparent need in the community, three of the officers from the class conducted another check the next week.)

Local parents were appreciative of the information shared at the event.

"I'm leaving tomorrow for a trip and it's a couple hour drive, with the kids, so I'm glad [I came]," said Leslie Manili who par-

ticipated in the safety check.

Keeping children properly restrained in vehicles is not only the safest thing to do — it's the law.

"Even though we are out here checking car seats, protecting our most precious cargo — our children, we're also fighting crime," said Bob Wall of the Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police.

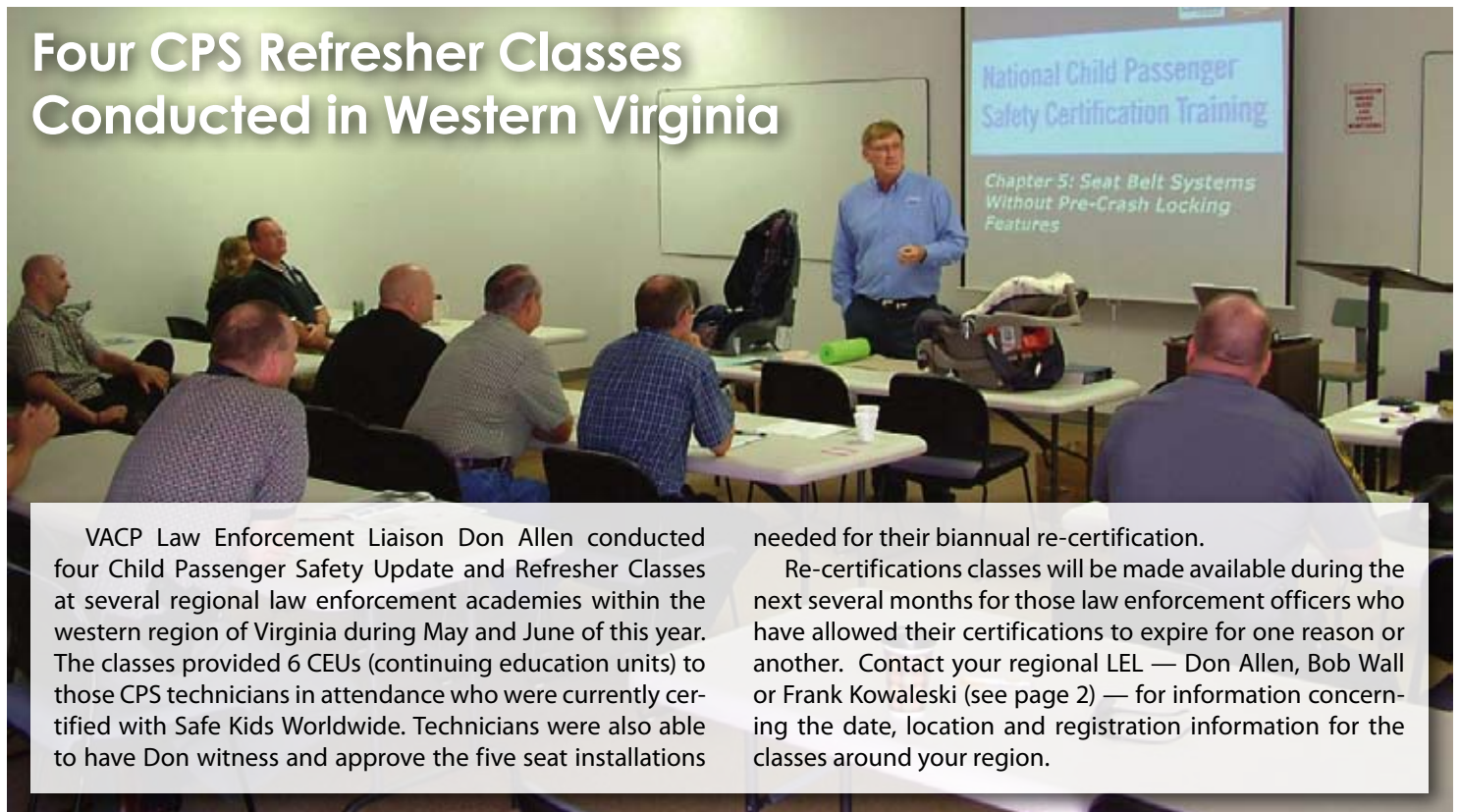
"It is a law. They have to be in a child seat correctly and it has to be installed correctly. They have to be in the proper

child seat up to age eight, whether it be a child restraint or a booster. We are teaching the officers how to enforce that law, we are teaching them how to check car seats, and we are doing both sides of the house — traffic and criminal," Wall added.

One of the most common mistakes parents make is moving children out of child restraints before they are big enough to be protected properly by the vehicle's safety belt.



Four CPS Refresher Classes Conducted in Western Virginia



VACP Law Enforcement Liaison Don Allen conducted four Child Passenger Safety Update and Refresher Classes at several regional law enforcement academies within the western region of Virginia during May and June of this year. The classes provided 6 CEUs (continuing education units) to those CPS technicians in attendance who were currently certified with Safe Kids Worldwide. Technicians were also able to have Don witness and approve the five seat installations

needed for their biannual re-certification.

Re-certifications classes will be made available during the next several months for those law enforcement officers who have allowed their certifications to expire for one reason or another. Contact your regional LEL — Don Allen, Bob Wall or Frank Kowaleski (see page 2) — for information concerning the date, location and registration information for the classes around your region.



First of Her Kind

Cathy Stewart serves Harrisonburg as first full-time child seat technician in Virginia

By MPO Greg Deeds
Harrisonburg Police Department

National statistics show eight of ten seats are improperly installed. Child safety seats reduce the risk of death in passenger cars by 71 percent for infants and 54 percent for toddlers one- to four-years old, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

The City of Harrisonburg in conjunction with Rockingham Memorial Hospital and TV-3 (local ABC affiliate) has hired Mrs. Cathy Stewart to become Harrisonburg's first full-time civilian child safety seat technician. All three organizations contribute financially to Mrs. Stewart's operating budget, salary and supplies.

For individuals who meet financial qualifications, Cathy administers the Virginia Low Income Safety Seat Distribution Program. The program gives away free safety seats to residents who meet certain qualifications.

Cathy works out of one of Harrison-

burg's four fire stations, where Harrisonburg Fire Chief Larry Shifflett has provided her with office space, a fire station bay for installations, a fire department minivan and cell phone.

VACP Law Enforcement Liaison Don Allen, who trained and certified Cathy in 2007, thinks her position is unique and is the first of its kind in the Commonwealth and possibly the entire country.

"I would like to see other jurisdictions within the Commonwealth, especially larger ones, follow suit and establish positions for their own full-time child safety seat technicians," said Allen.

In additions to doing daily inspections and installations, Cathy reaches out to area day care centers and car dealerships and schedules about six to ten child safety events a year throughout the city.

Harrisonburg Police Chief Donald Harper said Cathy's position has freed up his officers from leaving patrol duties to perform child seat installations at police headquarters. Cathy is also available on a

24-hour basis to respond to officers' questions or respond to traffic stops at their request to provide assistance on the installations and the education of child restraint devices such as child seats and boosters.

Harrisonburg Fire Chief Larry Shifflett said training the roughly 80 city firefighters and keeping them certified was too costly and time-consuming not to mention that installing seats became a priority over responding to fire incidents because of the amount of walk-in requests for installations at city fire stations. Chief Shifflett was the driving force to get a full-time child safety seat technician position approved with Harrisonburg's City Council.

"We don't want to become an installation center; we want to be an educational resource. We want parents, grandparents and child care providers to understand their seats and installation," said Stewart.

For more information about the City of Harrisonburg full-time Child Safety Seat Technician's position, you may call Cathy Stewart at (540) 810-0527.



Put Off Driver Licensure to Save Lives

ARLINGTON, VA—Most US states allow driving at age 16, 16½, or somewhere in between. A new Insurance Institute for Highway Safety report focuses on the costs in terms of lives of allowing licensure sooner rather than later. The message is that licensing at later ages would substantially reduce crashes involving teen drivers. The same conclusion has been reached in other countries. Teens in Great Britain and most Australian states can't get their licenses until they turn 17, for example. In most EU countries it's 18. The Institute's new report is being released at the annual meeting of the Governors Highway Safety Association.

Legislation was introduced during the most recent sessions of lawmakers in Delaware, Florida, and Georgia to adopt 17 as the minimum age to get a driver's license. One bill in Massachusetts also proposed 17, while another one argued for 18. Yet none of these measures, nor one that would have raised the licensing age in Illi-

nois to 18, met with any success.

"This is a tough sell," says Anne McCartt, Institute senior vice president for research, "but it's an important enough issue to challenge the silence and at least consider changing the age at which we allow teenagers to get their licenses to drive. After all, graduated licensing has been successful ever since states began to adopt these programs more than a decade ago, and raising the licensing age is a logical next step to reduce driving by the riskiest motorists on the road, the youngest ones." The graduated systems in most US states include permit periods and then limit when and with whom young beginners may drive. The result has been to lower the crash rates in state after state.

New Jersey example

Among US states, only New Jersey holds off licensure until age 17, and a recent analysis of the crash experience of young drivers indicates the benefits. A rate of 4.4 16-year-

old drivers per 100,000 population were in fatal crashes during the study years, compared with 20.7 per 100,000 in neighboring Connecticut, where 16 year-olds could get licenses. The lower death rate in New Jersey was offset by a slightly higher rate at age 17 (32.3 versus 31.1 per 100,000), but the combined rate for 16 and 17 year-olds still was much lower than in Connecticut. These comparisons don't reflect the benefits of graduated licensing in either state because the study years, 1992-96, were before graduated systems began to be adopted in New Jersey (2001) or Connecticut (1997).

Two previous Institute studies also compared the effects of the licensing policies in New Jersey versus Connecticut. During 1975-80, there were 4 crash deaths of 16-year-old drivers per 100,000 in New Jersey compared with 26 per 100,000 in Connecticut. The authors estimated that Connecticut could achieve a 66 percent reduction in fatal crashes among 16- and 17-year-old drivers by changing the licens-



When Teenagers Can Get Licenses

UNITED STATES	
South Dakota	14¼
Idaho	15
Montana	15
Mississippi	15½
New Mexico	15½
South Carolina	15½
Indiana	16½
Maryland	16¼
Virginia	16¼
Connecticut	16⅓
Delaware	16½
District of Columbia	16½
Kentucky	16½
Massachusetts	16½
New York	16½
Pennsylvania	16½
Rhode Island	16½
New Jersey	17
Other US states	16

NOTE: Ages at which US states permit unsupervised driving, in most cases with restrictions on night driving and passengers, but none on where beginners may drive.

CANADA	
Alberta, NW Territories, Saskatchewan, Yukon	16
Nanavut	16½
Manitoba, Nova Scotia	16¼
New Brunswick	16⅓
Labrador, Newfoundland	16⅔
Ontario, Quebec	16⅔
Prince Edward Island	16¾
British Columbia	17

NEW ZEALAND	15
AUSTRALIA	17
except Northern Territory	16½
except Victoria	18

UNITED KINGDOM	17
MOST EU COUNTRIES	18

BRAZIL	18
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CHINA	18
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JAPAN	18
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RUSSIA	18
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SOUTH AFRICA	18
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ing age to 17. Similar differences in these states' rates of all kinds of crashes, not just fatal ones, were reported a decade later.

Australian state thwarted earlier licenses

When an attempt got under way in the 1980s to lower the licensing age in Victoria, Australia, from 18 years old to 17 or 16, researchers studied the potential effects and estimated that changing to 17 would result in 650 to 700 more injury crashes per year and 30 to 50 more crashes involving deaths. Lowering the licensing age to 16 would worsen this jurisdiction's annual toll even more. Subsequent study indicated that restricting the driving privileges of Victoria's newly licensed 17 year-olds under a graduated system wouldn't make up for the added risk associated with lowering the licensing age.

Allan Williams, former Institute chief scientist and author of the new report on the driving age, says "the two policies,

licensing later rather than sooner and restricting beginners' driving under graduated licensing, complement each other." Victoria retains its licensing age of 18.

Driver age versus experience

A basic question is whether the risk associated with beginning drivers stems from their youth and immaturity or their inexperience behind the wheel. If it's mainly immaturity, then it would pay to put off licensure until teenagers get a little older. But if the problem is mostly inexperience, delaying licensure would simply put off the toll of beginners' crashes. It's hard to separate these two factors. Death rates among 16 year-olds are much lower in New Jersey than in Connecticut. This isn't surprising, and it indicates the wisdom of licensing later rather than sooner. However, death rates are slightly higher among 17-year-old drivers in New Jersey, likely because they have less experience behind the wheel than drivers the same age in Connecticut.

Canadian researchers tried to untangle the influence of age and experience on crashes involving beginners by dividing drivers 16, 17, and 18 years old according to whether they had been driving less than a year or more than a year. The main finding, reported in 1992, is that 16 year-olds, especially girls this age, had higher rates of injury crashes than older teenagers who also were new to the road.

A review of 11 studies published since 1990 also separates the relative contributions of driver age and inexperience to beginners' crashes. The upshot of this Institute study is that new drivers who are 16 years old have higher crash rates than older teenagers who also are new drivers.

"Apart from the effects of age or experience, delaying driver licensure reduces crash rates by reducing the amount young people drive," McCartt says.

For more information, go to the Insurance Institute's website at <http://www.iihs.org>.

Do You Know YOVASO?

YOVASO — Youth Of Virginia Speak Out (about traffic safety) — is a youth leadership organization focused on saving the lives of teenage drivers. They do this by educating, encouraging and empowering teenagers to be traffic safety advocates in their schools and communities.

YOVASO wants to involve young people in the issue of traffic safety so that together we can develop positive solutions for the serious problem of teenage motor vehicle fatalities. After all, traffic crashes are the leading cause of death for teenagers between the ages of 16 and 20.

To do this, YOVASO helps students and school administrators set up a YOVASO Club or expand an already existing club to include YOVASO initiatives. Trainings, support materials, and safety campaigns are all free.

What are YOVASO's Goals?

YOVASO's ultimate goal is to help save the lives of teenage drivers. They work towards this goal by:

1. EDUCATING teams of high school students about traffic safety.
2. ENCOURAGING these students to take action regarding traffic safety in their schools and communities.
3. EMPOWERING them to speak out and make a difference by giving them the knowledge and resources to be traffic safety advocates in their schools and communities.

How did YOVASO start?

YOVASO was started in Roanoke, Virginia in 2001 in response to the increasing number of teenage-related traffic fatalities in Virginia and the fact that car crashes continue to be the #1 killer of teenagers. Over 1,100 teens have died in traffic crashes in Virginia since 1999. Approximately, 145 teens die annually in motor vehicle crashes in Virginia.

How is YOVASO funded?

- YOVASO is a non-profit organization that is federally funded by a grant from the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles.
- The Virginia State Police Association (VSPA) administers the grant and sponsors YOVASO. Erie Insurance and its "Lookin' Out" program has also partnered with YOVASO and provides grant funds to trained schools.
- All training, resources, and retreats are FREE to YOVASO schools.

How is YOVASO staffed?

- YOVASO is run by an administrative staff based in Roanoke. Other staffing includes:
 - **YOVASO Interns** — These are high school students who want a leadership role in YOVASO in addition to working with their school club. They track teen-related traffic crashes in each school district, organize special campaigns, participate in state and national conferences and fill other vital roles for YOVASO headquarters.
 - **YOVASO Regional Trainers** — These are college students based at universities throughout the state. They enable the program to provide training, ongoing assistance and resources to schools statewide. YOVASO Regional Trainers were members of their high school YOVASO clubs and also worked as YOVASO interns.

How Can My School Become a YOVASO School?

YOVASO's goal is to be a **statewide program** and every high school in Virginia is encouraged to participate. Simply contact YOVASO Headquarters at (540) 345-0003 to set up an informational meeting and a training. You may also visit their website at www.yovaso.net.



The 2008 YOVASO Summer Leadership Retreat was held June 25-27 at Liberty University. Students from 33 schools across the Commonwealth were in attendance to learn how to become traffic safety advocates.

The activities included a DUI checkpoint, a mock crash followed by a mock trial, a YOVASO Idol Competition, and various motivational speakers. Local law enforcement officers, School Resource Officers, and various agencies came together to make this Retreat a huge success.

For further information and to view pictures of the Retreat, please visit www.yovaso.net.

Ride Like a Friend

National Teen Driver Safety Week focuses on passenger safety

As a result of their combined goal of reducing injury and death from teen crashes, State Farm® and the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia teamed up in 2007 to support a Congressional resolution designating **National Teen Driver Safety Week**. Working together with many valued safety organizations, we continue to provide leadership and advocacy around this national tragedy.

National Teen Driver Safety Week is observed the third week of October — **Oct. 19-25, 2008** — to bring attention to the No. 1 killer of American teens: car crashes. During this week, we encourage parents, young drivers, lawmakers and educators to focus on working together to change risky teen driving behaviors and help save lives.

To recognize the need for passenger safety, the theme for this

year's National Teen Driver Safety Week is **"Ride like a friend — Drive like you care."**

With gas prices at an all time high, new teen drivers may be feeling extra pressure these days to give rides to their friends. Unfortunately, many teen motor vehicle crashes injure or kill passengers, many of whom are not buckled up. Passengers ages 12 to 17 are more likely to die in a car crash than younger children, according to a study by State Farm Insurance and the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP). The risk increases with each teenage year.

Information on National Teen Driver Safety Week and campaign recruiting tools are available at <http://www.chop.edu/ntdsw>.

RIDE LIKE A FRIEND

For additional information on how to promote National Teen Driver Safety in your community, contact Tammy Poole, Public Affairs Communications Specialist, at (434) 872-2575.

Roanoke Police Conduct Special School Zone Traffic Operation

The Roanoke Police Department held a special traffic operation during the first week of school. Beginning September 2 (the first day of school) a team of officers patrolled school zones, enforcing all traffic laws with zero tolerance. The operation resulted in a total of 288 summonses written for the following:

- 199 speeding
- 13 suspended operator's license
- 33 other hazardous violations
- 43 other non-hazardous violations

One hundred and thirty five of these summonses were issued in active school zones; the remainder were issued in areas where citizens have contacted the Police Department regarding excessive speeds in their neighborhoods.



Newport News Police Participate in "Stop Red Light Running Campaign"

During the week of August 3-9, 2008, the Newport News Police Department participated in the "2008 National Campaign to Stop Red Light Running." The campaign is dedicated to reducing the incidences of red light running in the United States and the fatalities and injuries it causes.

The Traffic Unit, in conjunction with patrol, conducted a "Stop Red Light Running" operation on Wednesday, August 6th, from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. A total of **73 tickets were issued** during the operation, which was conducted at the intersection of Oyster Point Road and Jefferson Avenue.

A majority of the tickets written were for "Failing to Obey a Traffic Signal"; however, drivers were also cited for additional violations. Members of the media were invited, and encouraged, to cover this zero tolerance traffic enforcement action.

During the week, the following businesses/organizations displayed "Stop on Red Week" safety messages on their marquees:

- Bowditch Ford - 11292 Jefferson Avenue
- Franklin & Franklin Attorneys - 11719 Jefferson Avenue
- Ace Hardware - 12490 Warwick Boulevard
- Dairy Queen - 12999 Warwick Boulevard
- Tidewater AAA - 733 J. Clyde Morris Boulevard

The Newport News Police Department reminded motorists to remember these important rules when approaching intersections where there are traffic lights:

- Yellow lights are an indicator to slow down and prepare to stop.
- Come to a complete stop before turning on red.
- Scan intersections and approach with caution, even if the light is green.
- Yield to pedestrians. They have the right of way.





2007 Law Enforcement Challenge Awards



CATEGORY	PLACE	DEPARTMENT	SPECIAL AWARDS / NATIONAL CHALLENGE
Municipal 1: 1-10 Officers	1	West Point Police Department	<i>NLEC Winner: 1st place, Municipal 2 (9-16 Officers)</i>
	2	Saltville Police Department	
	3	New Market Police Department	
Municipal 2: 11-25 Officers	1 (tie)	Purcellville Police Department	
	1 (tie)	Vinton Police Department	
	2	Ashland Police Department	
	3	Smithfield Police Department	
Municipal 3: 26-50 Officers	1 (tie)	Culpeper Police Department	Child Passenger Safety Award
	1 (tie)	Martinsville Police Department	"Rookie of the Year" (Best of the First-Time Entries)
	2	South Boston Police Department	
	3 (tie)	Bedford Police Department	
	3 (tie)	Christiansburg Police Department	
Municipal 4: 51-75 Officers	1	Salem Police Department	
	2	Herndon Police Department	
Municipal 5: 76-125 Officers	1	Albemarle County Police Department	Speed Awareness Award (VaLEC & NLEC)
	2	Harrisonburg Police Department	Bike/Pedestrian Safety Award
	3	James City County Police Department	
Municipal 6: 126-300 Officers	1	Roanoke City Police Department	<i>NLEC Winner: 2nd place, Municipal 9 (201-500 Officers)</i>
	2	Roanoke County Police Department	
	3	Hampton Police Department	
	--	Portsmouth Police Department	Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Award
Municipal 7: 301-450 Officers	1	Arlington County Police Department	
	2	Chesapeake Police Department	<i>NLEC Winner: 3rd place (tie), Municipal 9 (201-500 Officers)</i>
	3	Newport News Police Department	
Municipal 8: 451-700 Officers	1	Henrico County Division of Police	Underage Alcohol Awareness Award; <i>NLEC Winner: 2nd place, Municipal 10 (501-1250 Officers)</i>
	2	Chesterfield County Police Dept.	<i>NLEC Winner: 3rd place (tie), Municipal 9 (201-500 Officers)</i>
Municipal 9: 701+ Officers	1	Virginia Beach Police Department	Impaired Driving Awareness Award; <i>NLEC Winner: 1st place, Municipal 10 (501-1250 Officers)</i>
	2	Fairfax County Police Department	Occupant Protection Award (VaLEC & NLEC); <i>NLEC Winner: 1st place, Municipal 11 (1251+ Officers)</i>
	3	Norfolk Police Department	

Photos of the awards presentations are available online at <http://www.smartsafeandsober.org>.

On August 18, 2008, the Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police (VACP) presented the 2007 Virginia Law Enforcement Challenge awards for the best traffic safety programs in the state.

The Challenge program promotes professionalism in traffic safety enforcement and encourages agencies to share best practices and programs with each other. The awards are based on entries prepared by the participating agencies that highlight their traffic safety activities in the past calendar year. The awards luncheon was held in conjunction with the VACP's Annual Conference in Hot Springs, VA. This year's winning agencies are listed here.

The Virginia Law Enforcement Chal-

lenge is the oldest state challenge awards program in the country and 2008 marks our twentieth year. For the 2007 Challenge, we received 52 entries — the most entries in the history of the program. To make our twentieth year the biggest and best yet, we are looking to get 60 or more entries for the 2008 Challenge, so help us achieve that goal by planning now to participate in 2008!

The 2007 National Law Enforcement Challenge Awards also have been announced and Virginia once again has topped all of the other states with 17 agencies winning 19 awards! These agencies will be recognized in front of their peers from across the country at the IACP Annual Conference in San Diego, CA in November.



The Wythe County Sheriff's Office received this year's Commonwealth Award (previously the "President's Award") in the Virginia Law Enforcement Challenge for the best overall traffic safety program in 2007, regardless of agency size or type.

CATEGORY	PLACE	DEPARTMENT	SPECIAL AWARDS / NATIONAL CHALLENGE
Sheriff 1: 1-10 Deputies	--	<i>no entries in this category</i>	
Sheriff 2: 11-25 Deputies	1	King William County Sheriff's Office	<i>NLEC Winner: 1st place, Sheriff 1 (1-20 Deputies)</i>
Sheriff 3: 26-50 Deputies	1	Wythe County Sheriff's Office	<i>Commonwealth Award for Best Overall Program NLEC Winner: 1st place, Sheriff 3 (31-50 Deputies)</i>
	2	New Kent County Sheriff's Office	<i>NLEC Winner: 2nd place, Sheriff 3 (31-50 Deputies)</i>
	3	Wise County Sheriff's Office	
Sheriff 4: 51-75 Deputies	1	Augusta County Sheriff's Office	
Sheriff 5: 76-125 Deputies	1	Montgomery County Sheriff's Office	
	2	Fauquier County Sheriff's Office	
Sheriff 6: 126-300 Deputies	1	Stafford County Sheriff's Office	<i>NLEC Winner: 2nd place, Sheriff 5 (101-200 Deputies)</i>
	2	Hanover County Sheriff's Office	<i>NLEC Winner: 3rd place, Sheriff 5 (101-200 Deputies)</i>
	3	Spotsylvania County Sheriff's Office	
Sheriff 7: 301-450 Deputies	--	<i>no entries in this category</i>	
Sheriff 8: 451-700 Deputies	1	Loudoun County Sheriff's Office	

CATEGORY	PLACE	DEPARTMENT	SPECIAL AWARDS / NATIONAL CHALLENGE
University	1	Virginia Tech Police Department	
	2	University of Richmond Police Dept.	
Military	1	Norfolk Naval Shipyard Police Dept.	<i>NLEC Winner: 1st place, Military</i>
	2	Fort Lee Police	<i>NLEC Winner: 2nd place, Military</i>
	3	Naval Amphibious Base-Little Creek	<i>NLEC Winner: 3rd place, Military</i>

National Law Enforcement Challenge Only

DEPARTMENT	PLACE	CATEGORY
Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police	1	State Associations
Virginia State Police	2	State Police/Highway Patrol 4 (1001-2500 Sworn)

Virginia Highway Safety Office Launches Motorcycle 411

Program promotes that training, helmet use, safety gear make a difference

With warm weather and higher gas prices, riding a motorcycle is more popular than ever. As the number of motorcycles increase, so do the number of crashes. In 2007, there were 126 motorcycle fatalities, a sharp increase from the 70 fatalities recorded in 2006.

In response, DMV: The Virginia Highway Safety Office developed **Motorcycle 411 — Info You Can Live With**. This program works toward increasing training and knowledge of riding a motorcycle. "When reviewing the data, we realized that some level of inexperience was a contributing factor in many motorcycle crashes," said D.B. Smit, DMV Commissioner and the Governor's Highway Safety Representative. "By increasing awareness of training and the importance of safety gear, we hope to prevent more of these tragic deaths."

Other motorists also need to be aware of more motorcycles on the road. Motorcyclists are often hidden in a vehicle's blind spot or missed during a quick look due to their smaller size. Vehicle drivers should always look for motorcycles by checking their mirrors and blind spots thoroughly, and allow more following distance to have enough time to maneuver or stop in an emergency.

While vehicles invading the space of a motorcyclist are sometimes a cause of motorcycle crashes, motorcyclists themselves bear the responsibility of riding safely as well. Riders need to drive within their abilities, obey speed limits, and



never mix alcohol and drugs with riding.

To operate a motorcycle in Virginia, the operator must hold a valid Class M designation on their driver's license or hold a driver's license restricted to motorcycles only. Motorcyclists and their passengers are required by Virginia law to wear an approved motorcycle helmet that meets or exceeds the U.S. Department of Transportation specifications.

The Virginia Rider Training Program offers several different training classes including one for new, intermediate and experienced riders. These classes are offered in many places in Virginia throughout the year.

For more information, visit <http://www.dmvnow.com/motorcycle411>.



Send Us Your 2008 Photos!

We are now collecting photos of traffic safety activities for use in the 2009 Smart, Safe & Sober Calendar!

Photos are needed of checkpoints, traffic stops, educational events, child safety seat checks, young drivers, motorcycle riders, commercial motor vehicle inspections, red-light running enforcement and more! If it is related to traffic safety, send it in!

We do request that photos be high-resolution files (please don't size them down for email!) and that they be taken either in 2007 or 2008. **Email them to Erin Schrad at erin@vachiefs.org or mail a CD (see address, page 2).**





Operation Air, Land & Speed Results in 3,303 Violations, Two Troopers Being Struck and Injured

Two-day traffic safety campaign targeted I-64, I-264, I-464 & I-664

(July 28, 2008) RICHMOND—Two Virginia State Police troopers are still recovering after being struck by vehicles during the Operation Air, Land & Speed traffic safety campaign. Chesapeake Division Senior Troopers J.F. Dennis and W.T. Desper were injured Saturday morning on Interstate 64 in Newport News while participating in the two-day enforcement effort that yielded 3,303 summonses and arrests.

Friday, July 25, and Saturday, July 26, state police troopers stepped up their presence on approximately 200 miles of I-64, from Staunton to the Hampton Roads area, as well as on I-264, I-464 and I-664 in Hampton Roads. The Operation Air, Land & Speed initiative resulted in 1,684 speeders being stopped, 298 reckless drivers being cited, five impaired drivers being arrested and 189 safety belt violations being cited by state police. The enforcement project also resulted in 21 drug and/or felony arrests.

Once again, there were no reported traffic fatalities along any of the targeted

interstates during the operation. This is the third Operation Air, Land & Speed out of 14 to focus on Interstate 64, and the first time for the Hampton Roads region's interstates to be included. The traffic safety effort began in 2006 and has yielded a total of 72,974 on various interstates across the Commonwealth.

"With the recent rash of traffic fatalities in the Hampton Roads region, this operation was a necessary reminder about the importance of making traffic safety a priority," said Colonel W. Steven Flaherty, Virginia State Police Superintendent. "However, as demonstrated Saturday morning on I-64, irresponsible drivers — whether drunk, fatigued or inattentive — still pose a very real and serious threat to everyone sharing the road, law enforcement and motorists alike."

At 7:23 a.m. Saturday, a sport utility vehicle crashed into Sr. Trooper Dennis' marked patrol vehicle with him seated

inside. Sr. Trooper Dennis was stopped with a violator on the eastbound shoulder of I-64, just east of J. Clyde Morris Boulevard. Four hours later at approximately 11:25 a.m., Sr. Trooper Desper was struck by a minivan on I-64 a ½ mile east of Jefferson Avenue. The trooper was on his motorcycle and was slowing down in the far left eastbound lane to pull into a cross-over when he was struck from behind.

All motorists are reminded to comply with Virginia's "Slow Down, Move Over" law. The state code requires drivers to change to another travel lane, or to slow down and cautiously pass emergency personnel stopped on the side of the road. Violation of the law carries a punishment

of up to \$2,500 fine and/or 12 months in jail. For more information regarding the Move Over law, brochures and public service announcements, visit the Virginia State Police web site at <http://www.vsp.virginia.gov>.



Troopers Cite Thousands of Commercial Vehicle Safety Violations During First Statewide Roadcheck 2008

(June 6, 2008) RICHMOND—Through this week's Roadcheck 2008 enforcement blitz, Virginia State Police Motor Carrier Safety personnel cited thousands of commercial vehicle violations and placed several hundred unsafe vehicles and drivers out of service. Motor Carrier Safety troopers and supervisors statewide participated in the Roadcheck 2008 which took place Tuesday, June 3, through Thursday, June 5, 2008.

During the 72-hour blitz, the Motor Carrier Units conducted 1,245 inspections of heavy commercial motor vehicles and drivers. As a result of those in-depth inspections, 381 of the vehicles were placed out of service, along with 63 drivers, for being in violation of regulations governing safety equipment and the transportation of hazardous material.

In addition, the three days of inspections yielded 3,982 total safety violations. Faulty brake systems or brake adjustments accounted for 352 of the violations. Defective lights, tires and wheels were also most common among violations cited. One vehicle can account for multiple violations.

An additional, 15 commercial vehicle drivers were charged with driving on a suspended operator's license. One driver was cited for driving on an expired license. Three drivers failed to

buckle up. There were 56 violations for hours of service by drivers and 11 false log citations issued.

"Defective equipment and unsafe, fatigued commercial vehicle drivers put all motorists at risk on our highways," said Colonel W. Steven Flaherty, Virginia State Police Superintendent. "This enforcement campaign helped save lives by taking these substandard vehicles and operators off the road."

"As fuel prices continue to increase, commercial vehicle drivers and companies are reminded of the necessity to maintain their equipment and comply with regulatory standards," said Colonel Flaherty. "Sacrificing safety to cover additional rising fuel costs is a dangerous and potentially deadly practice."

As part of Roadcheck 2008, all Virginia State Police troopers and supervisors assigned to the Department's Motor Carrier Safety Unit patrolled the roads and weigh stations across the Commonwealth inspecting tractor-trailers and straight trucks. Roadcheck is sponsored by the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA), which dispatches federal, state, provincial and local inspectors to more than 1,000 locations across the continent to conduct comprehensive North American Standard Level 1 Inspections.



All across the Commonwealth, law enforcement agencies recognize individuals from young to old, even some in their own ranks, who were involved in a traffic crash and, because they were wearing a safety belt or were in a child safety restraint, their injuries were reduced or their lives were saved.

Since January, 2008, 25 individuals have been recognized by

On December 5, 2007, **Mrs. Sarah Anne Enquist** was driving her 1999 Jeep Cherokee on Pounding Mill Road in Tazewell County during a major snow storm that sweep through Southwest Virginia. Sarah, who was nine months pregnant at the time, also had her one-year-old son Victor in the backseat of the car, properly installed in his child safety seat.

Sarah lost control of the vehicle on the icy roadway and ran off the road, striking a tree and flipping the vehicle over on its top. Despite the severity of the crash, Sarah was treated and released from the hospital with only minor facial injuries from glass and debris, and without any danger to her unborn child. Her son Victor was uninjured due to his position in the car and the proper restraint installation.

Sarah insists that had it not been for her seat belt system and her son's child safety seat, they would have been seriously injured or killed in the crash.

On June 3, 2008, VACP Law Enforcement Liaison Don Allen, along with Tazewell County Sheriff Henry Caudill and Major Lonnie Howington, presented Sarah with the Saved by the Belt Award during the May meeting of the Tazewell Board of Supervisors. Deputy Tim Stanford, the investigating officer explained, "If it had not been for her seat belt and having her son in the child seat the right way, both would have been killed or seriously injured, no doubt."



Pictured, front: Mrs. Sarah Anne Enquist and VACP LEL Don Allen. Back: Major Lonnie Howington (far left), Sheriff Henry Caudill (second from right), and the five members of the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors.

During the May 2008 meeting of the Harrisonburg City Council, VACP Law Enforcement Liaison Don Allen, Doug Stader from the Virginia Highway Safety Office, and Colonel Harper of the Harrisonburg Police Department, presented two Saved by the Belt Awards.

Ms. Candice Baker, a resident of Harrisonburg, and **Ms. Samantha Jo Earman**, a resident of Rockingham County, received the awards for doing the right thing — obeying the law and bucking up — prior to becoming involved in separate motor vehicle crashes. Both ladies were spared serious injuries in their crashes due to the proper use of the seat belt system and vehicle airbag deployment.



Pictured, L to R: VACP Law Enforcement Liaison Don Allen, Ms. Samantha Jo Earman, Ms. Candice Baker, Harrisonburg Police Chief Don Harper, and Doug Stader of the Virginia Highway Safety Office.

the Saved by the Belt & Bag Awards Program for making the life-saving decision to buckle-up. Fourteen individuals were recognized during the months of April, May and June, and four stories of six of these individuals are shared below.

The Saved by the Belt & Bag Program is open to any law enforcement agency regardless of affiliation with the VACP. Nominations for individuals who were involved in traffic crashes and were wearing safety restraint devices are being accepted. You may download the application from the Smart, Safe & Sober website — www.smartsafeandsober.org/programs/.

On May 21, 2008, VACP Law Enforcement Liaison Don Allen presented **Linda Jean Lucas** and **Donald Fred Mefford** with Saved By the Belt Awards at the Virginia State Police area office in Wise, Virginia.

Ms. Lucas was involved in a collision on March 27, 2008 while driving on Route 23 in Wise County. Ms. Lucas was traveling at the rate of 55 mph when a vehicle traveling on a cross street ran through a stop sign and into the path of her vehicle.

Ms. Lucas and her passenger, Donald Mefford, both escaped serious injury and ejection from their vehicle because they were wearing seat belts.

(Pictured, L. to R.: Senior Trooper G. A. Towers, Don Allen, Ms. Linda Jean Lucas, Mr. Donald Fred Mefford, and 1st Sgt. Jackie Baldrige.



During the early morning hours of May 1, 2008, **Ms. Terry L. McElraff** was traveling north on Worthy Blvd. in Saltville, VA when she was struck by a vehicle that crossed over into her lane. Ms. McElraff was wearing her seat belt and, as a result, suffered only a broken shoulder in the collision. The other vehicle left the scene and was apprehended minutes later by a Chilhowie Police Officer. The driver was charged with DUID and felony hit and run.

Ms. McElraff was presented with the Saved by the Belt Award on July 8, 2008, during the July meeting of Saltville Town Council. Don Allen, Law Enforcement Liaison for the Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police and Monty Mills, Highway Safety Office, presented the award along with Chief Surber and Officer R. L. Smith.

Officer Smith stated that due the severity of the crash, Ms. McElraff would have received greater injuries had she not been wearing her seat belt.



(Pictured, front, l. to r.: VACP Law Enforcement Liaison Don Allen, Ms. Terry McElraff, DMV CTSP Monty Mills, Chief Steve Surber and Officer R.L. Smith. Back: Saltville Town Council Members.)

New Laws Provide Exceptions for Active U.S. Military Members

Extensions granted for driver's licenses, inspection stickers

(June 17, 2008) RICHMOND—Several new laws give active members of the United States military more time to get their driving-related items up-to-date after returning from service.

Beginning July 1, 2008, driver's license extensions for certain armed services members, and their spouses and dependents, will increase from 60 to 90 days. The driver's license extension will be valid for three years or for 90 days after the driver returns to the U.S., whichever occurs first. A driver whose license is extended will be given an extension card by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) that must be carried with the expired license.

Starting July 1 safety inspection stickers on vehicles garaged outside Virginia will not expire during the owner's absence from Virginia, if the registered owner is an active member of the armed services. Also, the expiration date will be extended

and military members will have 72 hours instead of 24 to obtain a current vehicle inspection sticker after returning to the Commonwealth.

If an active member of the military's license plate or vehicle registration expires while he or she is deployed outside the U.S., the same new law will allow the servicemember 90 days from the date of return to renew.

A different military-related law effective July 1 eliminates the one-time, \$10 fee for both the Gold Star and Purple Heart special license plates.

Another new law will impact active military members who may be subject to a mechanic's or storage lien. Virginia law allows mechanics who repair vehicles, or operate stor-

age facilities, to apply for a lien to recover unpaid charges for repair work or storage costs. They could retain possession of the vehicle until the charges are paid. The law taking effect July 1 requires DMV to disclose the vehicle owner's military status when lienholders ask who owns the vehicle, for the purposes of satisfying a lien. Also, the bill requires the lienholder to comply with the federal Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA) when disposing of a vehicle owned by a member of the military. The SCRA is a federal statute to allow military members to suspend or postpone some civil obligations so they can devote their full attention to military duties.

For more information about SCRA, visit <http://www.servicemembers.gov>.



Three License Exam Failures Result in Driver Training School

Several more driving-related laws take effect July 1

(May 22, 2008) RICHMOND—Beginning July 1, 2008 driver's license applicants who fail the behind-the-wheel or knowledge examinations three times will be required to successfully complete the in-vehicle or knowledge component of driver instruction at a driver training school before taking the test a fourth time.

"An applicant who is unsuccessful passing the test three times needs further instruction to operate a vehicle safely," said D. B. Smit, Department of Motor Vehicles Commissioner, the Governor's highway safety representative. "This new law also ensures our employees will not spend time administering repeated tests to applicants who have not properly prepared or studied for the test."

Motorcyclists already have a similar requirement. Drivers applying for a motorcycle classification who fail the road test two times must successfully complete a motorcycle rider safety training course before obtaining their M classification, which is a requirement in Virginia to operate a motorcycle.

The legislature enacted several other driving-related laws that take effect July 1:

- If a law enforcement officer pursues a person who disregarded an officer's signal to stop his vehicle, and the officer is killed as a direct result of the pursuit, the person is guilty

of a Class 4 felony. A Class 4 felony is punishable by imprisonment for two to 10 years and a fine of up to \$100,000. Also, the penalty for disregarding a signal from an officer to stop, or attempting to escape or elude a law enforcement officer, is now a Class 2 misdemeanor, which can mean up to six months in jail and/or a fine of up to \$1,000.

- The maximum speed limit on any highway designated a rural rustic road is 35 mph. A road may be eligible for the rural rustic road program if the traffic count is less than 1,500 vehicles per day, it is predominantly used for local traffic, and minimal future growth is expected.
- School bus operators are prohibited from using cell phones and other wireless telecommunications devices while driving, except in emergencies, or when the vehicle is parked. Two-way radio devices authorized by the school bus owner are still permitted.
- After verification of employment, the court may authorize the issuance of a restricted driver's license for up to six months to motorists whose license is suspended for unpaid fines and costs.
- The courts may suspend the driving privileges, for 90 days, of motorists convicted of driving without a license.

Penalties Tougher for Underage Drinking and Driving

New laws also impact learner's permits, mopeds, child restraints

(June 4, 2008) RICHMOND—The punishment for underage drinkers who get behind the wheel will be stricter beginning July 1, 2008.

Underage drinking and driving will be punishable as a Class 1 misdemeanor. Currently, the punishment is loss of license for six months and a \$500 maximum fine. The new penalty will be one year in jail and either a minimum fine of \$500 or 50 hours of community service.

Alcohol use by people under age 21 is prohibited in Virginia. The Commonwealth has a zero tolerance law regarding teens and alcohol use. Zero tolerance means the legal limit for teens is a .02 blood alcohol concentration (BAC), which is the normal alcohol content of the aver-

age person. Even a small amount of alcohol can result in a conviction.

Several other laws taking effect July 1 impact teen drivers. A new law requires learner's permit holders to practice behind the wheel for more hours. It increases the minimum driving hours from 40 to 45, and at least 15 of those hours must be after sunset. The law also requires certification of the hours the learner's permit holder drives, which must be documented on a form supplied by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV).

Another new law affects those who drive a moped. Beginning July 1, anyone who operates a moped faster than 35 miles per hour is considered to be operating a motorcycle. The operator will

be subject to the same traffic laws that govern motorcycles. Moped operators must be at least 16 years old, and every person driving a moped must carry some form of identification that includes name, address and date of birth.

Also starting July 1, the penalties for repeat violators of Virginia's child restraint law will be more stringent. First time offenders will continue to be subject to the current civil penalty of \$50, but those convicted of a second or subsequent violation on different dates could pay a civil penalty of up to \$500. Virginia state code requires children up to age 8 to be properly secured in a child restraint device. Children between 8 and 16 must be properly secured by an appropriate safety belt.

Driver's Licenses Issued Beginning July 1 Valid for Eight Years

Cost remains same, \$4 per year

(May 7, 2008) RICHMOND—Starting July 1, 2008, driver's licenses issued by the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) will be valid for eight years instead of five. However, the validity period for identification cards will remain the same, five years. The cost of a driver's license, \$4 per year, will not change. An eight-year driver's license renewal will cost \$32.

"Reducing the frequency of customer visits to DMV is the goal of this new law that is cost-effective for both customers and Virginia," said DMV Commissioner D.B. Smit. "The legislation will lower DMV's operational costs and produce a future savings for taxpayers."

Instead of visiting a DMV customer service center (CSC), eligible customers may renew driver's licenses through the Internet (www.dmvNOW.com), telephone (1-888-337-4782) or mail. Customers must visit a DMV CSC every other renewal for a vision screening and new photograph.

Other important changes regarding driver's licenses and ID cards include:

- **Teens**

Driver's licenses issued to 16- and 17-year-olds will expire at age 20. State law says that anyone under 21, who is convicted of a moving violation, must take the written knowledge exam again when renewing their driver's license.

- **Sex Offenders**

Convicted sex offenders are an exception to the new eight-year driver's license validity period. These customers must visit a CSC to renew their driver's license at least every five years.

- **Commercial Drivers**

Commercial driver's licenses (CDL) will be valid for eight years beginning July 1. However, CDL holders with a HAZMAT endorsement must continue to follow federal guidelines and renew their HAZMAT endorsement every five years.

- **Limited Duration**

For customers with limited duration identification, their driver's license or ID card will continue to be valid only for the amount of time they are legally authorized to be in the U.S.

This new law also encourages customers to renew vehicle registrations (decals) online, over the phone or through the mail. Customers are urged to avoid renewing vehicle registrations at DMV customer service centers where a \$5 fee will be added. Internet renewals are discounted by \$1.



AAA Advises Hypermilers to Avoid Dangerous Fuel-Saving Techniques

Keep safety first by avoiding techniques that endanger motorists, harm vehicles

RICHMOND, VA (FRIDAY, JUNE 27, 2008)—As record-high fuel prices continue to stress household budgets, many motorists are looking for ways to improve their vehicle's fuel economy – sometimes to the point of putting their lives in danger. AAA advises motorists to think of safety first, refraining from fuel-saving techniques that could put themselves and others in danger and avoid practices that could harm their vehicles.

Some motorists have gone to extreme measures to conserve fuel while driving by 'hypermiling' – trying to exceed the EPA estimated fuel efficiency of a vehicle by drastically modifying driving and maintenance habits.

"The goals of hypermiling are positive, such as eliminating aggressive driving and saving energy," said Windy VanCuren, Public Affairs Specialist for AAA Mid-Atlantic. "Unfortunately some motorists have taken their desire to improve fuel economy to extremes with techniques that put themselves, as well as their fellow motorists, in danger."

Examples of the dangerous hypermiling techniques include cutting off the vehicle's engine or putting it in neutral to coast on a roadway, tailgating or drafting larger vehicles, rolling through stop signs and driving at erratic and unsafe speeds. "These practices can put motorists in a treacherous situation where they could lose power steering and brakes or be unable to react to quickly changing traffic conditions," VanCuren said.

"Not only are these extreme driving behaviors dangerous, many of them also are illegal. However, there are several safe and legal driving techniques motorists can implement to conserve fuel, such as smooth and easy acceleration and braking, maintaining a steady speed, using cruise control and looking ahead to anticipate changing traffic conditions," she said.

Hypermiling techniques are not limited to driving style. How motorists maintain their vehicles is also key in reaching optimal fuel economy, but extreme measures can be harmful to a vehicle.

Keeping tires properly inflated can improve fuel economy by two to three percent, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. However, some drivers have taken this advice too far by over-inflating their tires, which the Rubber Manufacturers Association reports can make them more susceptible to road hazard damage and result in premature wear to the center portion of the tread. Over-inflation can also cause handling issues due to less tire surface making contact with the road.

Using the recommended grade of motor oil is also helpful in improving fuel economy. However, some hypermilers opt to use the lowest 'weight' motor oil (or that with the lowest kinematic viscosity) on the market. However, motor oil is not a fluid that can be freely interchanged, and using too light of oil can cause major damage to a vehicle's engine.

In both instances, AAA's auto maintenance experts recommend motorists check their owner's manual for the manufacturer's recommendations. Tires should only be inflated to the pressures specified by the vehicle manufacturer – and not what is listed on the sidewall of the tire. Motorists also should use the lowest grade motor oil recommended by the manufacturer for their climate.

For assistance with vehicle maintenance, AAA offers a listing of Approved Auto Repair facilities it has certified for meeting and maintaining high professional standards. To locate AAA Approved Auto Repair facilities nearby, visit the Cars and Driving page on www.aaamidatlantic.com.

AAA Mid-Atlantic serves nearly 835,000 members in the Commonwealth of Virginia and is the nation's fifth largest auto club with nearly 4 million members in Maryland, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Virginia. It provides a wide range of personal insurance, travel, financial and automotive services through its 50-plus retail branches, regional operations centers, and the Internet. For more information on AAA Mid-Atlantic, please visit our web site at www.AAA.com.

On May 19, 2008, Don Allen, Law Enforcement Liaison for the Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police, made a presentation to the Botetourt County TRIAD on "Senior Driving Issues: Becoming Aware of Changes".

Thirty-five members of the local TRIAD chapter attended the forty-five minute presentation held at the VFW Hall in Fincastle, Virginia. Lunch was served after the program.

The TRIAD concept originated in 1988 when the AARP, the International Association of Chiefs of Police and the National Sheriffs' Association agreed to establish a partnership to arm senior citizens with the information they need to keep from being victimized by criminals. TRIAD was brought to Virginia in 1995 by former Attorney General Jim Gilmore, who established a state TRIAD coordinating section in the Attorney General's office.

TRIAD seeks to build partnerships between senior citizens and law enforcement to share information on how seniors can avoid becoming victims of crime and enhance the safety and quality of their lives.





2008 GOVERNOR'S TRANSPORTATION SAFETY AWARDS

The Virginia Board of Transportation Safety announced the winners of this year's Governor's Transportation Safety Awards on June 11, 2008 at the Annual Conference on Transportation Safety in Portsmouth. The 12-member Board advises the Governor, Secretary of Transportation, and Commissioner of the Department of Motor Vehicles on transportation safety matters. It also identifies elements of a comprehensive safety program for all modes of transportation in Virginia, including air, rail, water, motor carrier, public transportation and pupil transportation. The following pages showcase the 2008 honorees and their award-winning transportation safety programs.

LIFETIME SAFETY ACHIEVEMENT

Captain Robert W. Strickler (Retired) – Franklin County, VA

Captain Robert W. Strickler joined the Franklin County Sheriff's Office in July 1982 and retired after 25 years of service in December 2007. Strickler was involved with the Franklin County Transportation Safety Commission for 25 years and served as chairman for 20 years. He assisted the commission in developing special programs for young drivers, improving seat belt and safety seat use, reducing speeding, DUI/DUID enforcement, and roadway structural issues. He was a founding member of the Blue Ridge Transportation Safety Board, and served as chairman for 11 years. During his tenure, he assisted with the REACH America regional program, which lasted for 14 years and trained more than 4,000 youth in drug and alcohol prevention, and traffic safety techniques.



EMPLOYER SAFETY

Mount Rogers IDC – Wytheville, VA

The Mount Rogers Industrial and Development Center (IDC) in Wytheville offers daily transportation services for citizens with disabilities. During 2007, these vehicles were used to conduct 102,838 passenger trips, and transported approximately 240 persons daily. They also traveled 532,545 miles with no citations to drivers and no crashes resulting in injuries to passengers. (Award accepted on their behalf by Monty Mills, Virginia Highway Safety Office.)



GENERAL TRAFFIC SAFETY

Bedford Police Department – Bedford, VA

The Bedford Police Department enhanced its efforts for traffic safety by starting an occupant protection initiative to raise awareness about seat belts and air bags. The effort included partnering with local businesses to promote child passenger safety issues.



All photos by Erin Schrad, VACP. Digital files are available for download at <http://www.actconference.org>.

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY AWARDS

IMPAIRED DRIVING

United States Fleet Forces – Norfolk, VA

The Alcohol and Drug Control Officers (ADCO) of the United States Fleet Forces, located in Norfolk, set up command prevention teams, and implemented the SAFE RIDE home program and the Save-A-Life tour.



LAW ENFORCEMENT

Sgt. Kyle Moore, Special Agent David Willis and Trooper Allen Mann, Virginia State Police – Salem, VA

Sgt. Kyle Moore, Special Agent David Willis and Trooper Allen Mann, all assigned to the Virginia State Police's Salem division, recently developed and secured funding for a DUI simulator to accompany their DUI-preventative presentations. The golf-cart-turned-miniature-Dodge-Charger works by allowing a driver to drive a course without any impairment. The driver then puts on a pair of fatal vision goggles, which simulate what your mind perceives while under the influence of alcohol, and attempts the course once again.



LEGAL

Mark M. Neil, National Traffic Law Center – Alexandria, VA

Senior attorney Mark M. Neil from the National Traffic Law Center (NTLC), promotes traffic safety issues for the prosecution, and assists law enforcement in their efforts. He is also credited with drafting solid DUI legislation. The NTLC increases the awareness of highway safety issues through the compilation, creation and distribution of legal and technical information, and by providing training and reference services.



MEDIA

Emily Crider, WHSV TV3 – Winchester, VA

Emily Crider from WHSV TV3 in Winchester helped the Front Royal Police Department disseminate transportation safety information to citizens. Some of the important stories that she covered in 2007 include the Click It or Ticket campaign, the Slow Down in Our Town campaign, child safety seat issues and cab rides for intoxicated drivers.



MOTOR CARRIER SAFETY

Virginia Beach Police Department – Virginia Beach, VA

The Virginia Beach Police Department's Motor Carrier Unit formed a Specialized Transportation Safety Coalition by partnering with local contractors, permitting authorities, and the other motor carrier safety teams in Hampton Roads to develop a uniform set of hauling regulations. In 2007, there were no fatal crashes involving a commercial carrier where the driver was found at fault, and no serious crashes involving commercial motor vehicles were reported.



OCCUPANT PROTECTION SAFETY

Northside High School SADD – Roanoke, VA

The Northside High School Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) club in Roanoke participated in a variety of activities in 2007 including the Buckle Up Challenge to raise awareness about wearing seatbelts, and a homecoming parade float with the message: "Don't be a Dummy, Buckle Up!" The club also organized the school's Prom Promise, a presentation for juniors and seniors consisting of speakers, videos and lectures to encourage students to pledge not to drink and drive on prom night.



MOTORCYCLE SAFETY

Fred W. Austin – Ashland, VA

Fred W. Austin, founder of the Motorcycle Safety Center of Virginia (MSCV), secured additional ranges and classrooms throughout the Richmond District to offer motorcycle rider training courses that meet the diverse needs of the public. The MSCV offers three distinct rider training programs and 3,169 students were enrolled in 2007. Mr. Austin secured corporate sponsorships to ensure that all individuals have the opportunity to learn how to safely operate a motorcycle in Virginia.



PEDESTRIAN / BICYCLE SAFETY

Harrisonburg Police Department – Harrisonburg, VA

The Harrisonburg Police Department educated the public after the Harrisonburg City Council passed a Bicycle Helmet Ordinance for children 14 and younger last year. Approximately 1,500 helmets were properly fitted and given away during 2007 by Harrisonburg police officers. Officers also coordinated traffic control at intersections and deployed departmental speed trailers along school routes during the week after the ordinance passed at all four city elementary schools.



TRANSPORTATION SAFETY AWARDS

PUPIL TRANSPORTATION

Henrico County Division of Police – Richmond, VA

The Henrico County Division of Police issued 1,029 summonses for speeding in a school zone in 2007. Officers also promoted traffic safety during National School Bus Safety Week and Operation Back to School.



RAIL SAFETY

Buster Ray Davis, Norfolk Southern Corporation

Buster Ray Davis from Norfolk Southern Corporation has worked as a railroad employee for 53 years injury-free. His long career and safety record have been recognized many times. When Mr. Davis sees an employee needing help or assistance with rules compliance, he is the first to offer advice. He does not hesitate to question his co-workers about performing the job correctly in order to keep the railways operation safe.



WATER SAFETY

Virginia Safe Boating Alliance

Senator Stephen D. Newman, Delegate Kathy J. Byron and the Virginia Safe Boating Alliance responded to a tragic boating fatality in August 2005 by taking action to increase boater safety education. The Virginia Safe Boating Alliance was formed to create a boating safety education requirement for Virginia. In 2007, both Delegate Byron and Senator Newman introduced boating safety education requirement bills, which Governor Kaine approved in March 2007.



YOUTH TRAFFIC SAFETY

Drive Safe Hampton Roads – Virginia Beach, VA

The Drive Safe Hampton Roads “Get It Together Challenge” was a regional safety belt challenge providing education to area high school students. Through a joint partnership with AAA Tidewater, USAA, GEICO, Golden Corral and DMV’s Virginia Highway Safety Office, a liaison was provided to each school who assisted with seat belt checks.



U.S. Secretary of Transportation Mary Peters Announces Historic Drop in Highway Fatalities and Fatality Rate

However, motorcycle fatalities rising; Increased outreach, enforcement announced

(August 28, 2008) The number of people who died on the nation's roads dropped again last year, reaching historically low levels, U.S. Transportation Secretary Mary E. Peters announced today.

Secretary Peters said that in 2007, the overall number of traffic fatalities fell to 41,059, the lowest number since 1994. In addition, the fatality rate per 100 million vehicle miles traveled was 1.37, the lowest fatality rate on record, she noted. The Secretary added that 2.49 million people were injured in highway crashes last year, the lowest seen since the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration began collecting injury data in 1988.

"Thanks to safer vehicles, aggressive law enforcement and our efforts, countless families were spared the devastating news that a loved one was not coming home last year," Secretary Peters said. "You can be sure that we're not stopping here, the quest is not over until that bottom line number is zero."

She noted, for example, that motorcycle safety continues to be a problem. Motorcycle fatalities now account for 13 percent of all fatalities and, in 2007 alone, the number of motorcycle riders or passengers killed on the nation's roads increased 6.6 percent over the previous year, the Secretary said.

To address these challenges, Secretary Peters announced the launch of new advertisements that focus on motorcycle safety and drunk driving. They can be viewed at <http://www.stopimpaireddriving.org/planners/crackdown2008/planner/index.cfm>

Tomorrow, the Department will kick off its annual impaired driving enforcement crackdown called, "Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest." The effort runs through Labor Day.

During today's announcement, made outside of the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Police Department's Second District headquarters, Secretary Peters viewed a motorcycle safety demonstration. Secretary Peters added that the Department will continue its efforts to combat impaired driving, increase safety belt use and improve motorcycle safety.

"As these new statistics show, we are making progress, but far too many of our friends, neighbors and family members are still getting killed or seriously injured," Secretary Peters said.

The Department collects crash statistics annually from 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico to produce annual reports on fatalities and injuries. To view the 2007 report in its entirety, please visit <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/Pubs/811017.PDF>

Dui Fatalities Down Nationwide and in 32 States

(August 28, 2008) New national figures released today show a significant decline in the number of drunk driving-related fatalities occurring nationally and in 32 individual states, U.S. Secretary of Transportation Mary Peters announced. However, the Secretary noted that the number of alcohol related fatalities among motorcyclists is climbing in half of the states.

"More drivers are getting the message that if you drink and drive, you will be caught, you will be arrested and you will go to jail," said Secretary Peters. "But as good as this progress is, in this day and age there is simply no excuse for someone to drink and then drive."

Secretary Peters noted that last year an estimated 12,998 people were killed in crashes where a vehicle operator had a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 or higher. She said that represented a 3.7 percent decline from the 13,491 fatalities in 2006. However, figures showing that 25 states experienced an increase in the number of drunk motorcycle riders involved in fatal crashes was disappointing, the Secretary said.

The Secretary added that the Department was working with law enforcement agencies across the nation to launch stepped-up drunk driving enforcement efforts during the Labor Day holi-

day period. She added that the Department also was investing \$13 million in advertising during the holiday weekend to deliver the message, "Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest."

A National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) advertising campaign this year will include media outlets and information sources that are most likely to reach high risk demographic groups. The agency is using more web-based outreach, teaming up with alternative media partners. The new ads are being seen on message banners on well-known social media sites, internet TV programming, mobile devices and even PC-based video games.

Secretary Peters also reminded drivers — and motorcycle riders — attending holiday gatherings that if they plan to drink, that they make arrangements for a ride home with a sober driver.

NHTSA's new statistical report on 2007 alcohol-related fatalities is drawn from the agency's Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) and can be viewed at <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/Pubs/811016.PDF>

For campaign materials, go to <http://www.stopimpaireddriving.org/>

Peters Outlines Steps to Delay Highway Safety Trust Fund Shortfall, Calls On Congress to Pass Legislation to Address Problem

(September 5, 2008) U.S. Secretary of Transportation Mary E. Peters today directed the Federal Highway Administration to take immediate steps to protect the solvency of the highway account of the Highway Trust Fund and called on Congress to act quickly to finally address this long-predicted problem.

"Time and again, the President has warned Congress of the pending shortfall and submitted fiscally prudent budgets to close the gap," said Secretary Peters. "Americans cannot afford to have Congress play 'kick the can' with highway funding for another year, another month, or frankly, another week."

She called on Congress to provide immediate short-term relief by passing pending legislation, already approved by the House of Representatives, that would make an additional \$8 billion available for the highway trust fund. She urged Congress, however, to avoid adding pet projects, new earmarks or unrelated provisions on the "must pass" legislation and to get the bill done by the end of next week.

The Secretary said the legislation was needed now because Congress had failed to heed over three years of warnings from the President and the Department about the long-predicted highway trust fund shortfall. She added that the recent and sudden decline in American driving and the resulting decline in gas tax revenue during the summer had accelerated the predicted shortfall.

The Secretary said that, in order to allow for continued highway payments to states while Congress acts, the federal government would begin making reimbursements to states on a weekly basis starting next week. In addition, she said the agency would make funds available on a pro-rated basis. For example, if there are only enough funds to cover 80 percent of requests, the highway agency will pay only 80 percent of each.

Secretary Peters added that states would receive the balance of the funds in the following week, and then any new requests would also be dealt with on a pro-rated basis. She added that the Department will also review its personnel and purchasing policies and consult with other federal agencies receiving highway funds to find ways to free up additional funding for reimbursing state partners.

As recently as July, the Administration opposed the House Trust Fund legislation, in part because the \$8 billion would come from the government's general fund. However, the recent decline in federal gas tax revenue requires immediate action on legislation that has already passed the House to ensure states are not adversely affected.

Peters noted that today's problem would have been avoided had Congress acted on the President's fiscally responsible proposal from last February to transfer funds from the highway trust fund's mass transit account, which has a surplus. That measure would not have affected current transit investments at all, she added.

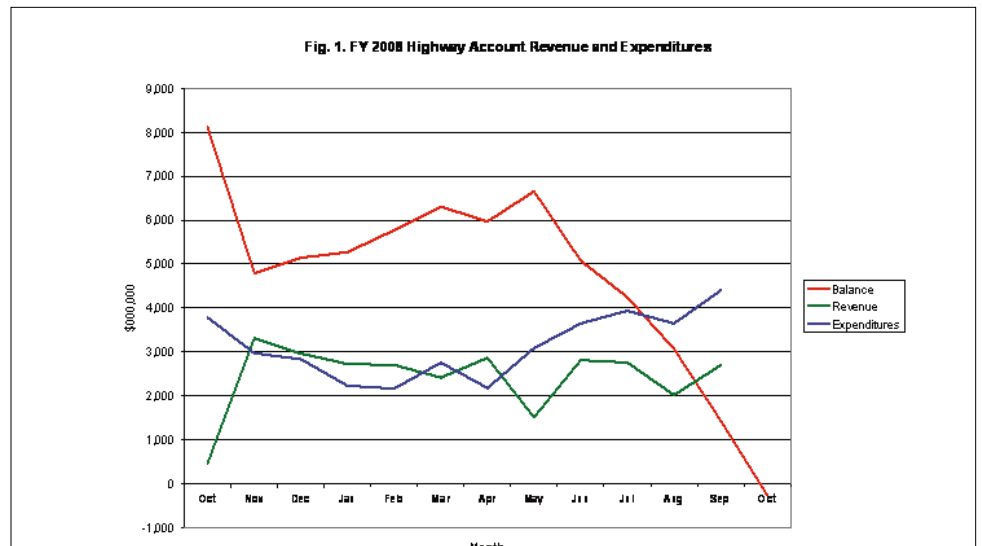
"Taking money from other pressing national priorities to plug a hole caused

by poor fiscal discipline sets a dangerous and disturbing precedent," Peters said. She added, though, that "states are working hard to keep the nation's bridges and roads in good repair and deserve better than IOUs from Congress."

The Secretary said it was time to fundamentally reform the nation's scattered approach to transportation. She said Congress should do away with billions in annual earmarks and consolidate the over 100 special niche programs that require states to slice and dice federal transportation funds to do things like build museums and restore lighthouses. She noted that the Administration issued a comprehensive transportation reform proposal along those lines several weeks ago.

To avoid future shortfalls, the Secretary said it was time to embrace new funding mechanisms that respond to today's transportation challenges and are in keeping with national energy policies.

"The current approach may have made sense 50 years ago, but it is ineffective and unsustainable when we are trying to reduce congestion and encouraging Americans to embrace more fuel-efficient cars," she noted.



Traffic Safety Calendar

- Oct 4-7, 2008 **10th Annual BikeWalk Conference** — Richmond, VA — www.bikewalkvirginia.org
- Oct 6-10, 2008 **Drive Safely Work Week** — www.netsnational.org
- Oct 8, 2008 **International Walk to School Day** — www.walktoschool.org
- Oct 10, 2008 **Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day** — www.brakesonfatalities.org
- Oct 19-25, 2008 **National Teen Driver Safety Week** — www.chop.edu/ntdsw
- Oct 19-25, 2008 **National School Bus Safety Week** — www.napt.org
- Oct 24-31, 2008 ***Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving: Halloween Impaired Driving Awareness Campaign*** — www.stopimpaireddriving.org
- Nov 8-12, 2008 **International Assn. of Chiefs of Police Annual Conference** — San Diego, CA — www.iacpconference.org
The 2007 National Law Enforcement Challenge Awards will be presented at the IACP Conference.
- Nov 17-30, 2008 ***Click It or Ticket Mini-Mobilization: Thanksgiving Weekend Travel*** — www.smartsafeandsober.org
- Nov 30 – Dec 12, 2008 ***Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving: Holiday Season Impaired Driving Awareness Campaign*** — www.stopimpaireddriving.org
- Dec 13-31, 2008 ***Checkpoint Strikeforce — Over the Limit. Under Arrest.: Holiday Season Impaired Driving Enforcement Campaign*** — www.checkpointstrikeforce.net