



Badges, Buckles, Belts & Beyond

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Did you do your part?

The Smart, Safe and Sober May mobilization focused on raising Virginia's safety belt compliance rate to 77% — did you do your part? The

following is an excerpt from a local law enforcement press release on how Virginia Beach PD participated in raising the rate!

BUCKLE UP "NOW" VIRGINIA!

The Virginia Law Enforcement will be stepping up enforcement of Virginia's safety belt and child safety seat laws (May 20-June 3) as part of Buckle Up NOW Virginia!

The program, part of Smart, Safe & Sober and held in conjunction with the national Operation ABC Mobilization, is dedicated to saving lives on Virginia roadways.

Virginia's occupant-restraint usage rate was 72.3 percent in 2001. The state goal for 2002 is 77 percent.

"The Virginia Beach Police Department is always diligent about making sure that drivers and all passengers are buckled up," police spokesman Don Rimer says. "But during Buckle Up NOW Virginia, we will be practicing zero-tolerance when it comes to dealing with drivers who don't buckle up the children they are transporting. Zero-tolerance means: Click It or Ticket—tickets and fines—no

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Are you Smart, Safe and Sober?

Over 250 law enforcement officers and traffic safety advocates attended 6 regional Smart, Safe and Sober training sessions in March 2002. The morning was filled with information about the 2002 Smart, Safe & Sober May Mobilization in Virginia, which included the time frame for the mobilization, resources and funding, along with forms and documentation. The focus of the training, and particularly this May mobilization, is on raising the state safety belt usage



Mary Ann Rayment, Portsmouth District CTSP, provides training on Smart, Safe and Sober.

rate from the current 72.3% to the goal of 77%.

VCU completed a presentation on problem identification for highway safety program planning, which

was presented by either Bob Breitenbach or Kathy Bateman. The Virginia Association of Chiefs of

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New Motorist Laws Take Effect July 1



Governor Mark Warner signs the booster seat law on April 4, 2002 at the State Capitol.



The 2002 General Assembly passed a variety of laws that will affect motorists in Virginia. The following list highlights laws of interest to most motorists. Unless indicated otherwise, all new laws become effective July 1, 2002.

- **Aggressive driving.** Motorists will be guilty of aggressive driving if they commit one or more specific violations, such as following too closely or failure to observe lanes marked for traffic, with the intention to intimidate, harass, obstruct or injure another person. Aggressive driving will be punished as a Class 2 misdemeanor. Aggressive driving with the intent to injure another person will be punished as a Class 1 misdemeanor. (*House Bill 1342 / Senate Bill 522*)
- **Possession of open container of alcohol in a motor vehicle; penalty.** A police officer may assume that a driver has been drinking alcohol and driving if he observes that an open container is located in the passenger area of a motor vehicle, the alcoholic beverage in the open container has been at least partially removed and the appearance, conduct, odor of alcohol, speech or other physical characteristic of the driver may be reasonably associated with the consumption of an alcoholic beverage. A violation of drinking alcohol and driving is punishable as a Class 4 misdemeanor. (*Senate Bill 148*)
- **Child safety and booster seats.** All children under age six must be properly secured in a child safety seat or booster seat. Violations will result in a \$50 fine. (*House Bill 1328 / Senate Bill 395*)
- **Driver improvement clinics.** Individuals under age 18 may receive safe driving points for attending driver improvement clinics (if they have not been directed to attend by the DMV Commissioner or required to attend by a court). (*House Bill 1358*)

Young Drivers Speaker's Kit Available

According to the National Highway and Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for 15 to 20 year olds. Get the message out using this **FREE kit** which includes information for a variety of target audiences, such as the young driver, driver education instructors, parents, and community leaders.

The kit was developed by the Center for the Advancement of Public Health at George Mason University. It includes four presentations at 45 minutes each in length – one for each target group – and all on CD-ROM. You can get the kit online at www.caph.gmu.edu or by calling 1-703-993-3697.

NHTSA Region III “Checkpoint Strikeforce” Program

Mini-grants available for local law enforcement to conduct sobriety checkpoints

There is a disturbing upward trend with the number of alcohol-related motor vehicle fatalities. Alcohol-related crashes cause an estimated 300,000 plus injuries each year nationally and cost society 45 billion dollars. For these reasons, law enforcement agencies and the State Highway Safety Office in Region III agreed to develop and implement the exciting and potentially life-saving **Checkpoint Strikeforce Program**. Region III consists of Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia. Law enforcement agencies in all of these jurisdictions have agreed to conduct at least one sobriety checkpoint per week from July 4, 2002 through January 4, 2003.

Research shows that sobriety checkpoints are the single most effective tool law enforcement can use to reduce the incidence of impaired driving.

In Virginia, the Department of State Police will be responsible for 97 sobriety checkpoints conducted throughout the state. DMV Transportation Safety mini-grants are available for local law enforcement to con-

duct sobriety checkpoints and/or to participate with the State Police on checkpoints. Law enforcement agencies are asked to provide the results of their checkpoints using the Smart, Safe and Sober Law Enforcement Activity Report and submit the report to the local Community Traffic Safety Program Manager. Results will be tabulated and submitted to NHTSA collectively from Virginia. Please do your part in getting impaired drivers off our roads.

There will be a Checkpoint Strikeforce kickoff event on June 27, 2002 at 10:00 a.m. in front of the U.S. Capitol Building in Washington DC. Invited speakers include Mayor Anthony Williams, District of Columbia; Chief Charles Ramsey, Metro-

politan Police Department; Ms. Millie I. Webb, Mothers Against Drunk Driving National President 2001-2003; and Dr. Jeff Runge, NHTSA Administrator. All of the states in Region III will send at least two police cruisers (one state, one local) to the kickoff to symbolize their commitment to the program. Join us and participate as we kickoff this exciting program.



CHECKPOINT STRIKEFORCE
You drink & drive. You lose.

On the web...

- The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety recently released a new report on drunk driving. The report was prepared by two authors well known to the safety community — Jim Hedlund and Anne McCartt. The report may be accessed online at <http://www.aaafoundation.org/pdf/DrunkDriving-SeekingAdditionalSolutions.pdf>
- Department of Motor Vehicles — www.dmvnow.com
- Fatal Vision Goggles — www.fatalvision.com
- Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police (VACP) — www.vachiefs.org
- DRIVE SMART Virginia — www.drivesmartva.org
- National Association of Governor’s Highway Safety Office — www.naghsr.org
- Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) — www.hwysafety.org
- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration — www.nhtsa.dot.gov
- Air Bag & Seat Belt Safety Campaign — www.nsc.org/airbag.htm
- Transportation Safety Training Center / VCU — www.vcu.edu/cppweb/tstc/tstc.html
- National Safety Council — www.nsc.org
- American Academy of Pediatrics — www.medem.com/MedLB/bufferpage_aap.cfm
- SafetyBeltSafe USA — www.carseat.org
- Recall List at North Carolina Safety Research Center — www.hsrb.unc.edu
- National Child Passenger Safety Board — www.cpsboard.org
- National Safe Kids Campaign — www.safekids.org
- Safe Ride News — www.twbc.com
- Virginia Department of Health – Child Safety — www.safetysatva.org

Community Forum Focuses Attention on I-81 Safety

On Wednesday, March 28, "Constructing Safety on I-81: A Community Forum" was held at the Roanoke Higher Education Center. The Blue Ridge Transportation Safety Board sponsored the forum, held as a follow-up to the "Is I-81 a Killer?" forum held in November 2000. The focus of this forum was safety, both present and future, on I-81 with the future portion specifically dealing with the proposed Star Solutions plan of widening the interstate.

Capt. Robert Strickler, chairman of the Blue Ridge Transportation Board, delivered the welcome and opening remarks. Bev Fitzpatrick of Ferrum College, and also a member of the board, served as moderator for the forum. The panel of speakers on the topic consisted of Fred Altizer, Jr., VDOT; Capt. Charles Compton, Virginia State Police Sixth Division; John Edwards, Virginia Senator for Senate District 21; Bob Goodlatte, US Congressman for Virginia's 6th District; Liniel Gregory, Fleetmaster Express; Jimmy Mills, Star Solutions;



Garth Patterson, YOVASO; and Tim Shephard, Howell's Motor Freight. Each speaker was given 7 minutes to express his viewpoint of the safety issues surrounding the widening of I-81.

Approximately fifty people attended the forum, including a large representation of teens involved in the YOVASO program. After the panel spoke, a brief intermission was taken, and then the forum reconvened for questions and comments by the audience members. Among the topics discussed were posting safety messages on the solar signs VDOT installed on I-81, "No-Zone" training sessions in high schools, and the new aggressive driving bill which is waiting approval from the Governor. Questions about these, and

other topics, were addressed to the panel by the youth in attendance.

Valuable discussion was generated by the forum and, for the evening at least, safety was brought to the forefront of the minds of the residents of Southwest Virginia.

Traffic Safety Calendar

July

- 1 – 4 "You Drink & Drive. You Lose" Mobilization (begins June 30)
- 21 – 27 Smooth Operator Enforcement Wave

August

- 25 – 31 Smooth Operator Enforcement Wave
- 29 Border to Border

September

- 9 – 13 Drive Safely Work Week

October

- 13 – 19 National School Bus Safety Week

November

- 11 – 17 Smart, Safe & Sober Enforcement Wave
- 12 – 14 Military/Civilian Transportation Safety Workshop, Ft. Eustis
- 18 – 25 Operation ABC Mobilization
- 18 – 24 Smart, Safe & Sober Enforcement Wave
- 25 – Dec. 2 Smart, Safe & Sober Enforcement Wave

December

- 2 – 8 Smart, Safe & Sober Enforcement Wave
- 14 – 16 "You Drink & Drive. You Lose" Mobilization

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Police provided an overview of the Saved by the Belt and Bag program, the Law Enforcement Challenge, and the schedule for child safety seat training. The afternoon was filled with a number of state and local traffic safety showcase programs.

DCJS training credits were offered for officers attending this training. Very important information was discussed and a variety of handouts were disseminated throughout the day. Everyone left ready to pass along the buckle up message and encourage citizens of Virginia to drive "Smart, Safe & Sober."

REMINDER: Child Safety Seat Training

The following dates have been set up for the Child Safety Seat Update Class and NTSC's Standardized Child Safety Seat Class at the Fairfax County Criminal Justice Academy. These classes are open to all. **If you wish to attend please contact Charlie Brown or Terri Allen at (703) 449-7200.**

Child Safety Seat Update Class

July 22, 2002
August 26, 2002
September 16, 2002
November 18, 2002
December 9, 2002

NHTSA Standardized CPS Certification Class

—
August 27-30, 2002
September 17-20, 2002
November 19-22, 2002
December 10-13, 2002

2002 Annual Conference on Transportation Safety (ACTS): Taking Safety to the Next Generation

Over 481 transportation safety advocates from across the state attended **Virginia's Annual Conference on Transportation Safety (ACTS)** on May 7-9, 2002 at the Sheraton Richmond West Hotel in Richmond.

"The ACTS conference brings Virginia's traffic safety community together to review accomplishments and study new ways to reduce the number of crashes, fatalities and injuries on our highways," said Department of Motor Vehicles Commissioner Ab Quillian. "National experts presented information on successful traffic safety and driver education programs that can make Virginia highways safer."

Conference speakers included Marion Blakey, Chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board. Prior to her appointment by President Bush, Blakey served in a number of government positions, including Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Blakey presented *The Impact of 9/11 on Traffic Safety in the United States*. Her presentation was preceded by top law enforcement officials in the Richmond metropolitan area speaking on the *Impact of 9/11 on Traffic Safety*. Remarks were made by Colonel Stanley, Henrico County Police Department; Lieutenant Colonel McDonald, Chesterfield County Police Department; and Major Monahan, Richmond Police Department.

John Moffat, director of the Washington State Traffic Safety Commission, actively represents his state across the country through the National Association of Governors' Highway Safety Representatives. He presented *Target Zero - Eliminating Traffic Deaths from our Highways*.

Other speakers included David Ogle, Fredericksburg District Administrator, Virginia Department of Transportation; and Nazir Lalani, Principal Engineer, California Department of Transportation.



Marion Blakey, NTSB, presents on The Impact of 9/11 on Traffic Safety in the United States.

Individuals and organizations that have made contributions to transportation safety in Virginia were honored at the conference as well. The Governor's Transportation Safety Awards recognize exemplary accomplishments by individuals, state and local governments, federal agencies, the military and businesses and organizations that promote transportation safety.

The ACTS Conference was sponsored by several state agencies, including the departments of Alcoholic Beverage Control, Education, Game and Inland Fisheries, Motor Vehicles, and Transportation. Other sponsors include the American Automobile Association, the Commission on Virginia Alcohol Safety Action Program, DRIVE SMART Virginia, Mothers Against Drunk Driving, the Virginia State Police, and the Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police. Indoor and outdoor exhibits were viewed by conference participants, ranging from booths of traffic safety program exhibits to the No-Zone tractor trailer and speed boards.



YOVASO at ACTS — What is that?!

On May 7, Virginia's Annual Conference on Transportation Safety (ACTS) descended upon Richmond. The three-day conference, entitled "Taking Safety to the Next Generation," consisted of four tracks: education, enforcement, engineering, and youth. During the course of the conference, 481 drivers education instructors, police officers, traffic engineers, motivated teenagers, and other traffic safety professionals were in attendance.

The highlight of this year's conference was the youth track, which was the first of its kind in any state traffic safety conference. Approximately 60 youth, representing ten high schools and four colleges were in attendance.

The youth activities began with a luau/pizza party on Tuesday night. Teenagers, chaperones, police officers, and a variety of other conference participants gathered for

pizza, games, and a dramatic testimony. The event began with an awards ceremony, in which Jessica Bland, Virginia's Traffic Safety Youth Coordinator, presented awards to students and organizations that implemented exemplary projects within their schools and communities.

Following the awards, a personal testimony was given by Nicole Johnson, a Virginia Commonwealth University student who caused a horrific car crash that killed her best friend as a result of drinking and driving. Nicole sustained horrible injuries in the crash, including a severe brain injury that left her in a coma for months. Upon waking, she had to relearn to perform basic functions such as walking and talking. Even now, she has no recollection of approximately five years prior to the crash; a time period which includes her high school years and even her high

school graduation. Nicole spoke of her struggle to go on with her life after the terrible tragedy, the guilt she lives with every day, and she begged those in attendance to learn from her mistakes and to never drink and drive. Nicole's testimony touched everyone deeply and served as a powerful reminder about why raising awareness about traffic safety issues is so important. Though the tone was serious, it soon became much lighter as youth and police officers played games, participated in a limbo contest, and enjoyed each other's company for an evening.

Wednesday marked the first whole day of the conference. A sea of yellow was very conspicuous as the teens who attended the conference all wore yellow t-shirts proclaiming, "We ARE the Next Generation!" As the first general session began, the opening speakers, including Colonel Gerald

Massengill, Virginia State Police Superintendent; Asbury Quillian, Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles Commissioner; and others, all commented about how impressed they were to see such a large youth representation dedicated to learning and teaching others about traffic safety.

Following the general sessions, the individual tracks began. The youth track was completely planned and presented by the youth involved in the YOVASO Advisory Council. Topics discussed included drivers education, distracted driving, working with law enforcement, safe driving practices, and the amazing accomplishments that have been made within schools where YOVASO has become prevalent. The teens, facilitated by Katie Bush, gave presentations in a variety of creative ways to captive audiences who were very interested to hear their views. The tracks were informative and the youth in attendance, as

well as the adults who attended, all learned a lot.

In addition to the sessions organized by the youth, there was also a mock trial. This trial was a real-life reenactment of what happens when a teenager is caught driving under the influence of alcohol. Allan Sharrett, a defense attorney from Emporia, and the Honorable "Chip" Burgess, Chesterfield County Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court Judge, organized this session.

Catherine Taylor, a senior from Rustburg High School played the part of the defendant. Steve Goodwin, DMV Community Traffic Safety Program Manager, played the part of the defendant's father. Mary Langer, prosecutor from Chesterfield County, played the part of the prosecuting attorney, and D. C. Williams, Chesterfield County Police Department, served as the arresting officer.

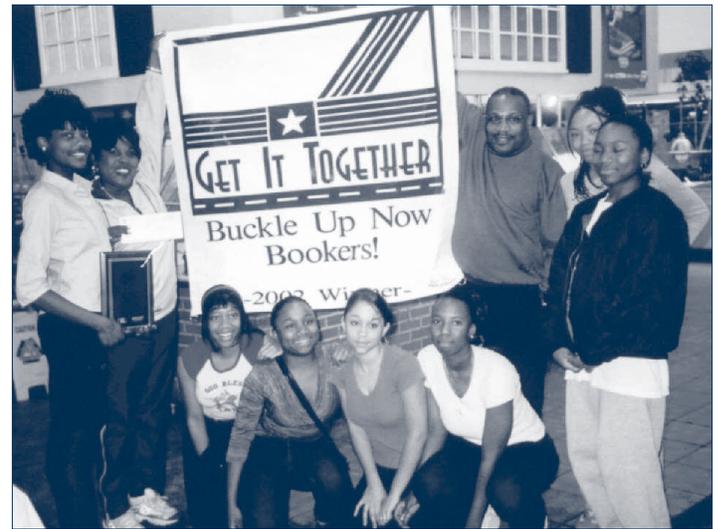
The trial was enacted exactly as it would be in a Virginia court

of law. The scenario that played out showed a model student from a caring family who tried alcohol with friends after school to see what it tasted like and then proceeded to drive home. Though her BAC was only .03, and minimum impairment was evident through the sobriety exercises the arresting officer had her perform, the judge would not excuse her actions and her driver's license was revoked for 6 months. Following the trial, the floor was opened for questions from the audience. Many probing questions were asked and interesting discussion ensued.

Overall, the 2002 ACTS Conference, "Taking Safety to the Next Generation," went extremely well. All in attendance learned a great deal. The youth who presented gained a great amount of confidence and the youth who came to learn went back to their schools motivated, excited, and ready to make a difference in their schools and communities.



The Honorable "Chip" Burgess, Steve Goodwin, Mary Langer, Allan Sharrett, Catherine Taylor, and D. C. Williams participate in a mock trial at the ACTS Conference to show what happens when a teenager is caught driving under the influence of alcohol.



Teens “GET IT TOGETHER” in Hampton Roads

For the third year, teens in area south Hampton Roads high schools tried to “GET IT TOGETHER” by buckling their safety belts. Fifteen high schools participated in a High School Safety Belt Challenge, educating their students in not only safety belt use, but also all types of safe driving behaviors. This year’s Challenge exposed over 27,000 teens to safe driving information.

The Safety Belt Challenge kicked off with a breakfast in January. At that time, each school received a Challenge Information Kit and a Resource Manual.

Resources available to the schools were items such as the Fatal Vision Goggles, Vince and Larry costumes, the Grim Reaper, and even Buckle Bear. Literature, computer software such as “Dead or Alive” and “Moving Safely through America,” and the Fatal Reflections program allowed the schools to educate and fit in with the Standards of Learning (SOL) requirements. Extensive lists of videos, posters, and bumper stickers were made available as

incentives to the students.

Speakers from the Virginia State Police, ENCARE nurses, DMV, and AAA and victims provided personal experiences for the students. A mandatory presentation for each school was a program provided by

safety booklets, morning announcements, mock crashes, and even creative writing assignments (again to fit in with SOLs).

During the Challenge period, February to April, three safety belt checks were held at each school.

Community volunteers with DRIVE SMART Hampton Roads and Concerned Citizens Advocating Traffic Safety provided monitoring and safety assistance at the belt checks. Those students who were belted received incentives and educational information. If they were not belted, they received sneers and jeers from their peers! The kids had a great time.

New to the Challenge this year was media encouragement provided by WNOR FM-99 radio and WB 33 TV station. Public Service Announcements were played during the two-month period. The nighttime DJ, Twitch, had current safety tips on his website and noted who was in the lead after every safety belt check. Both media outlets provided door prizes for the awards event.

High School Safety Belt Challenge Awards

At the Challenge recognition breakfast in April, these schools received awards in the following categories:

Highest Safety Belt Usage

1st Place	Indian River High School	97.54%
2nd Place	Oscar Smith High School	93.24%

Most Improved Safety Belt Usage

1st Place	Booker T. Washington High School	37% increase
2nd Place	Granby High School	20% increase

International Training Ltd. on off road crashes and recovery and distracted driving, two big problems with teen drivers.

Students, teacher sponsors, and school resource officers brainstormed how they would educate their students to use safety belts and drive responsibly. They came up with new and innovative ways to get their message across, such as a safety belt relay, balloon trivia,

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excuses, no exceptions.”

Virginia law requires all children under four to be in a child safety seat, and all children four through fifteen to be in a safety belt. A bill sent to Governor Mark Warner by the 2002 General Assembly ensures that after July 1, children under six will be in a child seat or booster seat.

“All too often, a police officer, sheriff’s deputy or trooper has to pull a fatally injured child from the wreckage of an automobile,” MPO Don Rimer notes. “We would rather write thousands of tickets, if that’s what it takes to get people to buckle up themselves and their children, than face one more of these tragedies.”

In November, when the last Operation ABC Mobilization was held, 171 state and local law-enforcement agencies participated. The upcoming Operation takes place during another high-volume traffic period, just as the summer vacation-driving season begins.

In Virginia Beach, Buckle Up NOW Virginia and the ABC Mobilization are being conducted by members of the Police Department’s Special Operations, along with assistance and cooperation from the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles, Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police, Virginia Sheriff’s Association, Virginia Department of State Police,

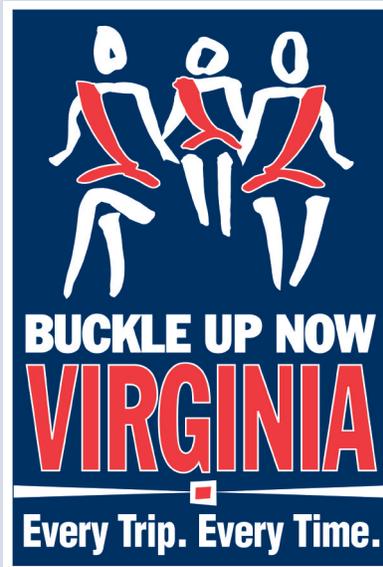
the Air Bag & Seat Belt Safety Campaign of the National Safety Council, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, National Transportation Safety Board, Mothers Against Drunk Driving, and DRIVE SMART Virginia.

The Police Department will utilize Traffic Safety Check Points and Saturation Patrols to accomplish the goals of this program. Failing to buckle up can result in a fine of up to \$50 per child. Safety belts and child safety seats just happen to save lives!

Nationwide, more than 4,600 young people age 16 to 18 years old were killed or seriously injured in fatal traffic crashes in 2000, according to data compiled by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Two thirds of them—67%—were not wearing seat belts. That same year in Virginia, 165 young people in this age group were killed or injured; 61% of them were unbelted.

“Between the ages of 16 and 18, young people are at a deadly intersection of age and high risk behavior,” said MPO Rimer. “Inexperienced at the wheel and more likely to take chances, these teenagers are at a time in their life when seat belts are essential. Yet, too many teens don’t buckle up, and end up in our emergency rooms disabled or dead.”

Buckle Up NOW, Virginia!



Virginia Holiday Fatalities

	<i>2001 Fatal Crashes</i>	<i>2001 Fatalities</i>
Memorial Day	10	10
July 4th	4	5
Labor Day	6	6
Thanksgiving Day	14	17
Christmas Day	13	13
New Year’s Day	9	10
TOTAL	56	61

2002 Governor's Transportation Safety Awards

The Governor's Transportation Safety Awards were established in 1993 and is sponsored by the Virginia Transportation Safety Board, which is comprised of citizens appointed by the Governor of Virginia. The 2002 Awards were given to the recipients at the Annual Conference on Transportation Safety luncheon on May 8, 2002.

This awards program recognizes individuals and/or organizations that have made extraordinary contributions to transportation safety in Virginia. The awards recognize exemplary accomplishments in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors by individuals, state and local governments, federal agencies, the military, and businesses and organizations that promote transportation safety.

The diligent work of those involved in transportation safety initiatives and the countless numbers of volunteers who make a difference by improving the safety in the Commonwealth is impressive. This awards program demonstrates the appreciation for those committed to transportation safety and highlights the achievements of deserving Virginians. To be nominated for one of these awards is a top achievement and it speaks highly of their work. To actually win one of these awards is indeed a true honor.

2002 Award Winners

Lifetime Safety Achievement

George "Dick" Tyson, Jr.

Aviation Safety

Captain Jeanie Rae Carter

General Traffic Safety

Youth of Virginia Speak Out (YOVASO)

Impaired Driving

Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control – "None for the Road" Program

Law Enforcement

Captain Robert Strickler

Legal

J. Christopher LaGow

Media

Tracie Meadow

Motor Carrier Safety

The Specialized Transportation Safety Coalition

Motorcycle Safety

Larry Lippolis

Occupant Protection

Wythe County Sheriff's Office – "Operation We Care – DayCare"

Pedestrian / Bicycle Safety

BikeWalk Virginia

Public Transportation Safety

Van Go

Pupil Transportation Safety

Newport News Police Department

Newport News Pupil Transportation

Minute Men Taskforce

Rail Safety

J. W. Johnson, Jr.

Water Safety

Department of Game and Inland Fisheries

Smith Mountain Lake Water Safety Council

Roanoke City Bike Patrol a visible force in the May Mobilization



The Roanoke City Police Department Bike Patrol Unit was very visible during the Smart, Safe & Sober May Mobilization, particularly during Memorial Day Weekend, May 24-27. On that weekend, almost a dozen police officers ran radar and issued tickets while on bicycles.

Between Friday and Saturday, 30 summonses were written, 14 criminal arrests were made, and approximately 30 other assorted violations were discovered. On Friday evening alone, in one location, 12 speeding tickets were issued, along with numerous other citations.

During 2002, the Bike Patrol has also been responsible for removing 9 drunk drivers off of Roanoke's streets.

SMOOTH OPERATOR

It's Time To Get Tough On Aggressive Drivers!

2002 Smooth Operator Campaign is launched

Aggressive drivers in the Washington area should be on the alert now that the 2002 Smooth Operator Campaign is underway in Northern Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia. The area-wide law enforcement and public awareness campaign targets motorists who speed, tailgate, fail to yield the right of way, run red lights and stop signs, weave in and out of traffic, change lanes unsafely and drive with a conscious and willful disregard for their safety and that of others on the road.



"We all have the capacity to be aggressive drivers if we are stressed and frustrated on our streets and highways," said Virginia State Senator William C. Mims, who also sponsored the Commonwealth's aggressive driving law.

The campaign will include four week-long waves of law enforcement targeted at those who drive aggres-

sively. The first wave was May 25 – 31, and later waves will occur June 16-22, July 21-27 and August 25-31. The waves are accompanied by a comprehensive public awareness campaign designed to raise the motorists' awareness of the dangers of aggressive driving on area roads and highways, posters featuring a child's shoes scattered near visible tire skid marks on a roadway will be displayed on bus backs, and radio spots narrated by John Davis of MotorWeek, will air on area radio stations to reach drivers in their vehicles.

This is the third year that the Smooth Operator program has included both law enforcement waves and a public awareness campaign. Since the law enforcement program began in 1997, law enforcement officers have issued 400,000 citations and more than 7,100 warnings to drivers for aggressive driving behavior. When the program began, 18 law enforcement agencies were involved; today, 50 law enforcement agencies are participating.



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