

# WISCONSIN TRAFFIC SAFETY REPORTER

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2010



## Good news in motorcycle safety, and new resources are coming

Major Dan Lonsdorf  
Director, BOTS

After a decade of steady increases, motorcyclist fatalities in the United States finally declined last year. In Wisconsin, motorcyclist deaths decreased slightly—82 in 2009, five less than 2008—according to WisDOT statistics. But even bigger reductions occurred in motorcycle crashes and injuries, which each declined by 17% in 2009 compared with 2008.

A one-year drop does not mean we can become complacent about motorcycle safety. In fact, this year more resources will go to preventing motorcycle crashes through rider training, share the road awareness for motorists, prevention of impaired riding, and high-visibility law enforcement especially at motorcycle rallies and other events.

A major area of emphasis for our Motorcycle Safety Program will be augmenting education and rider training initiatives. At the forefront of this effort is our new Mobile Classroom (see photo on page 4), which will greatly improve our ability to inform, educate and train riders and motorists throughout the state. We hope to reach the eight out of every 10 riders who have never attended any formal rider education programs. The Mobile Classroom is a state-of-the-art fifth wheel vehicle with a classroom and training area and interactive audiovisual equipment. It also has two motorcycle simulators for rider training. Three training motorcycles will be available for an experiential Introduction to Motorcycling course.

Four new rider education courses are also being launched (see page 4).

In our rider training programs and at other venues, we will show a new *Zero in Wisconsin* video, "Riding in Wisconsin—10 Stories, One Vision." It features motorcyclists from all walks of life who tell their personal experiences regarding helmet and equipment use, impaired riding and

*continued on page 2 sidebar*

high-visibility enforcement  
+ regional cooperation  
deters drunken driving  
and saves lives

Saving lives by discouraging people from driving impaired. This is what the Southeast Wisconsin Multi-Jurisdictional Drunk Driving Task Force is aiming for with its combination of high-visibility enforcement (HVE) and regional cooperation.

"Our goal isn't to make more OWI arrests. It's to help raise public awareness and reduce impaired driving," says Lt. William Brown of the Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office, who manages Task Force operations.

Launched in April 2009 with nine law enforcement agencies, the Task Force has already grown to 16 agencies. In March of this year, Michael Witter, regional administrator for NHTSA Region 5, wrote Lt. Brown and the Task Force encouraging them "to stay steadfast in its efforts." He said the Task Force's operation "is a noted accomplishment for law enforcement in the Milwaukee metropolitan area that we would appreciate seeing emulated elsewhere across Wisconsin and the nation."

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## WisDOT-BOTS Grant management system

The Bureau of Transportation Safety will start using a new web-based grant management system for all grants in Federal Fiscal Year 2011. The system will be unveiled this July to those agencies identified as being eligible for highway safety grants.

The system will allow agencies to submit grant applications, activity reports, reimbursement claims, invoices, receipts, etc. via the Web instead of attaching documents to emails as in the past. This will streamline the process for both grantees and BOTS staff.

Training for local agencies July 13-15 (at locations to be determined) will cover system navigation and use. Agencies eligible for grants will be contacted about specific training requirements.



Lt. William Brown of the Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office administers a breath alcohol test in December at the department's substation on Watertown Plank Road in Wauwatosa.



CREDIT: MARK HOFFMAN, MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL

## Drunk Driving Enforcement Zone

Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office  
Bayside  
Cudahy  
St. Francis  
Franklin  
Glendale  
Greendale  
South Milwaukee  
Wauwatosa  
West Allie  
WI State Patrol  
City of Brookfield  
Town of Brookfield



Driving Drunk?  
Buzzed?  
You WILL  
be caught.

The Southeast Wisconsin Drunk Driving Task Force  
**STOP, TEST AND ARREST.**

TARGET  
CORP.

Since this billboard was made, new Task Force members include: the police departments of Milwaukee, Elm Grove and Menomonee Falls, and the Waukesha County Sheriff Department



**Please note**  
Future issues of this newsletter will be emailed, so we need your email address.

Starting with the next issue, the *Wisconsin Traffic Safety Reporter* will be emailed to readers to save on printing and postage.

To ensure delivery, please email us at [TSR@danenet.org](mailto:TSR@danenet.org). The subject can be "Email me the TSR" and put your name and organization in the body of your email.

Readers who don't use email and would like to continue receiving paper copies should write to us at: WisDOT Bureau of Transportation Safety, P.O. Box 7936, Madison, WI 53707-7936.

All TSR issues are on the WisDOT website:  
[www.dot.state.wi.us/news/newsletters.htm](http://www.dot.state.wi.us/news/newsletters.htm)

### New resources for motorcycle safety

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other aspects of safe motorcycling. See the video at [www.zeroinwisconsin.gov](http://www.zeroinwisconsin.gov).

Nearly 485,000 Wisconsin residents currently have motorcycle licenses and permits, and more than 382,000 motorcycles are registered in the state. Improving motorcycle safety will be an increasingly complex challenge that we must meet to save lives and prevent injuries on our streets and highways.



The *Wisconsin Traffic Safety Reporter* is published by the Bureau of Transportation Safety, Wisconsin Department of Transportation. Its purpose is to promote transportation safety, recognize worthwhile programs, and to educate and share ideas with safety professionals.

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Funded by WisDOT and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

## Detering drunken driving

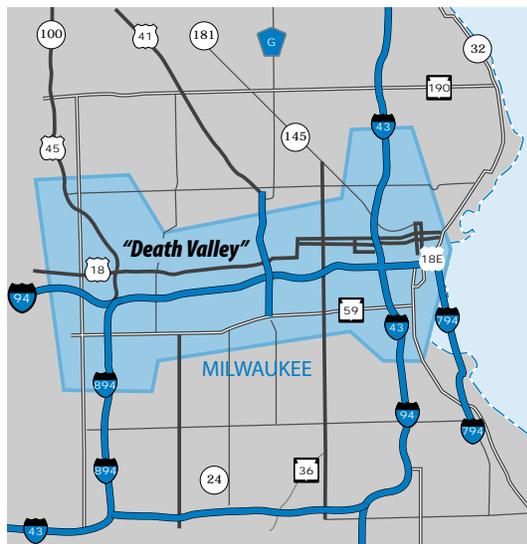
from page 1

In the nationwide battle against impaired driving, NHTSA has identified four crucial strategies: high-visibility law enforcement, support for prosecutors and OWI courts, increased use of medical screening and brief intervention for alcohol-abuse problems, and enactment of primary seat belt laws. (See: *The Nation's Top Strategies to Stop Impaired Driving* (DOT HS 910 712).) High-visibility enforcement “affects behavior through general deterrence by increasing the public’s perception that people who violate the law will be ticketed, arrested, convicted and punished, and thereby persuading them to adhere to the law.” A NHTSA study (DOT HS 811 039) found that “states can achieve significant reductions in alcohol-related crashes when they engage in sustained high-visibility enforcement.”

### How the Task Force works

Like other agencies statewide, the Milwaukee County Sheriff’s Office continually strives to optimize their use of limited resources. In this effort a key partner is the WisDOT Bureau of Transportation Safety, which analyzes statewide crash data to identify target areas where enhanced enforcement can do the most good.

In the Milwaukee area, crash data revealed stretches of freeway (see map) with the highest frequency of alcohol-related crashes. Milwaukee County, along with community partners such as then-Executive Director of the Wisconsin Chapter of MADD, Kari Kinnard, reached out to suburban police departments to explore how they could stage coordinated, concentrated patrols to deter impaired driving. Their first organizing meeting was held in January 2009 and the new Task Force’s initial deployment was two months later on the Brewers’ opening day. Since then, there have been two deployments per month.



**“Death Valley”** — Task Force target area: I-94 between the Waukesha County line and the lakefront, and US 45 between Capitol Drive and I-894 and Greenfield Avenue



*Milwaukee County Sheriff’s Deputy Tony Kasta directs a driver in a field sobriety test in December along I-894 in West Allis. The driver was stopped after a motorist called 911 to report him and then followed him until deputies pulled him over. His PAC was 0.11.*

The crucial first step is identifying target locations and times. An example is when the Bucks were in the playoffs and big crowds were expected. Another is this year’s St. Patrick’s Day deployment. Beginning at an early-bird 6:00 a.m., the first OWI arrest was made at 6:15 a.m. Heavy media coverage and a total of 120 squad cars created high visibility. Officers made a total of 499 traffic stops, issued 330 citations and made 77 arrests. For OWI arrests, the average BAC was 0.13. The next day, Dr. Todd Troshynski, director of trauma anesthesia at Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin, emailed the sheriff’s office: “As I was driving home from work between 1:00-1:30 a.m. on I-94, I saw no less than 5 traffic stops ongoing and several other Milwaukee County Sheriff’s vehicles on patrol. Outstanding work!”

Media coverage, task force signs, and participating officers’ task force vests all help raise public awareness of the simple message: officers will STOP, TEST AND ARREST. During the New Year’s Eve deployment, Chief Bruce Resnick of the Bayside Police Department made an OWI arrest at 3:26 a.m. The drunk driver had seen TV coverage on the deployment saying anyone arrested that evening was an idiot. The driver acknowledged being an idiot.

Cooperation among agencies makes it harder for impaired drivers to avoid arrest. Sheriff’s deputies often

notice drivers on the freeway who show signs of impairment but who notice a patrol car's lights and quickly exit the freeway, driving off into another jurisdiction to avoid arrest. With Task Force deployments, an officer from the local police department can be alerted to make the stop. St. Francis Police Department doubled its OWI arrests last year (see photo).

Bureau of Transportation Safety funding support covers officers' overtime hours during deployments, and Lt. Brown says, "The partnership we've developed with BOTS has been fantastic."

Another key partner is the Milwaukee County District Attorney's Office. Assistant DA Ron Dague reviews all Task Force arrests. He helps officers stay up-to-date on OWI laws and arrest procedures via trainings and briefings, and he fosters better communication between officers and prosecutors. For instance, officers sometimes feel frustrated when their OWI arrests don't lead to the charges they expected, while prosecutors are frustrated when they don't get the information from officers they need to prosecute cases. A recent improvement in this regard resulted from Ron's encouraging officers to get photos at arrest scenes of damaged vehicles, skid marks, etc., since juries increasingly depend on visual evidence. In Milwaukee County, the recent conviction rate for OWI arrests has been 92%.

On April 25, 2008, a drunken driver killed Jennifer Bukosky, her unborn daughter and her 10-year-old daughter in a crash on WIS 67 in Oconomowoc. Jennifer's parents, Paul and Judy Jenkins, have attended many Task Force press conferences and they rode along with an officer during a deployment. Judy commends the cooperation among agencies and finds it awe-inspiring how officers risk their lives to foster public safety. Her husband says, "We hope this approach spreads throughout the state."

### Encouraging prospects for this approach

At the 2008 Governor's Conference on Highway Safety, one workshop focused on "Innovative OWI Enforcement in Non-Checkpoint States" and it featured the successful Anoka County (Minnesota) Nightcap DWI Task Force. Anoka County is a northern suburb of the Twin Cities. Because of its high alcohol-related crash rate and because its law enforcement agencies had an exceptional record of working well together, it was chosen for a pilot project with high-visibility, multi-jurisdictional OWI enforcement. Their approach has been so successful that it's now expanding to 18 other counties in Minnesota. Similar approaches are being adopted by many agencies nationwide. For example, about 80% of all the law enforcement

agencies in North Dakota have made verbal commitments to trying this method. In such a mostly rural state, multi-agency cooperation is needed to achieve effective high-visibility enforcement.

One of the people at this 2008 Governor's Conference workshop was Lt. William Brown. Anoka County's success helped inspire him to become the enthusiastic manager of the Southeast Wisconsin Multi-Jurisdictional Drunk Driving Task Force. He notes that the Task Force's success is bringing in new agencies. He says, "All the participating police department chiefs get how importance this is. We're coordinating our efforts to make best use of our resources to change driver behavior and save lives."

Tom Knoop from the Bureau of Transportation Safety, who has worked closely with the Task Force, says, "We want to see this approach expanding to other parts of Wisconsin where there's a concentration of target areas for enhanced enforcement so it makes good sense to promote agencies working together."

Contact Lt. William Brown, Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office, at (414) 454-4099 or [william.brown@milwcnty.com](mailto:william.brown@milwcnty.com). Also Mike Panosh, WisDOT-BOTS, at (920) 683-4960 or [michael.panosh@dot.state.wi.us](mailto:michael.panosh@dot.state.wi.us)

### National survey

## Many parents not using booster seats

Every day, nearly 200 children 4-8 years old in the United States need emergency care for injuries suffered in car crashes. Booster seats protect kids in this age group by lifting them up so their seatbelt fits better across their chest and hips. When kids don't fit comfortably in seatbelts, they often wear them improperly: e.g., putting the chest belt behind them or under their arm.

In Wisconsin, children 4 through 7 who both weigh at least 40 pounds but less than 80 and who are under 57 inches tall are required to be in a booster seat.

In January, the CS Mott Children's Hospital National Poll on Children's Health asked parents with kids 4-8 years old about booster seat use. The use rate nationwide was 76% but rates varied markedly by children's age: see graph.

CS Mott Children's Hospital is located in Ann Arbor, Mich. The survey was conducted by the University of Michigan's Child Health Evaluation and Research Unit and it included randomly selected and nationally representative households.

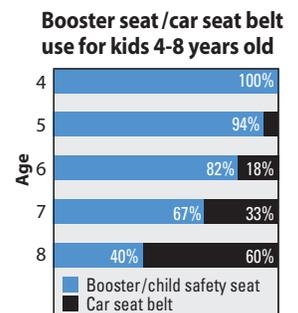
Visit [www.med.umich.edu/mott/npch/](http://www.med.umich.edu/mott/npch/) for the full report and the NHTSA website for booster seat information.



Officer Holly McManus receives a commendation from City of St. Francis Mayor Al Richards. During 2009 she made 25 OWI arrests, including some motorists who had exited the freeway to avoid arrest.



CREDIT: NHTSA



Source: C.S. Mott Children's Hospital Nat'l Poll on Children's Health, 2010



## Motorcycles & scooters

# New rider education courses coming

Along with the new Mobile Classroom (see page 1 and photo here), the Wisconsin Motorcycle Safety Program (WMSP) within the WisDOT Bureau of Transportation Safety is also helping launch four new rider ed courses. Together with the long-standing Basic *RiderCourse* (BRC) and Experienced *RiderCourse* (ERC), these courses will help meet the changing needs of the increasing number of motorcyclists and those who ride scooters statewide.

The Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) works with the federal government, state agencies and other organizations to offer training for all skill levels, and it continually assesses the changing needs for rider education. For example, many aging baby-boomers are now returning to motorcycling, and scooters are making a big comeback in some areas of the state.

MSF is beginning to develop a new course, Basic SBike-Bonding *RiderCourse* (BBBRC), primarily for novice riders who are just learning the basic skills of motorcycle operation. Emphasis will be on helping riders improve their control manipulation—that is, putting the motorcycle where they want it. “Bike bonding” refers to basic control manipulation, with handlebar movement and throttle sensitivity being most notable.

BBBRC will have a big brother—the Ultimate Bike-Bonding *RiderCourse*. It also stresses control operation



*Mobile Classroom being retro-fitted in May*

and body position as riders develop good handling skills, whether for low speeds or for higher-speed collision avoidance techniques. UBBRC is being designed for more experienced riders on larger motorcycles.

MSF is conducting a national UBBRC pilot in Wisconsin. With the assistance of WMSP personnel, RiderCoach Trainers and RiderCoaches, many of whom are police officers, MSF has started developing pilot exercises. Several RiderCoaches have participated in a pilot course offered at Waukesha County Technical College (see photos). This course will provide feedback on what could work on a standard-size range.

Other new courses include Street *RiderCourse* 1 (for new riders) and 2 (for experienced riders). Any licensed rider can enroll, but it's helpful if riders have recently completed the BRC and/or ERC. Taking four to five hours, they provide on-road experience, focusing on strategies for identifying and responding to typical riding situations such as lane positioning for visibility and space cushion, situational awareness and proper cornering.

Advanced *RiderCourse*—*Sportbike Techniques*, for sport and other style motorcycles, includes three classroom hours focusing on rider awareness and risk management, and four hours riding on a closed range with exercises to develop both technique and judgment.

A new course for scooter riders will focus on basic scooter operation and learning street-riding strategies.

“We want to be in face-to-face contact with the motorcycling community,” says Greg Patzer, WMSP manager. “Many experienced riders, for instance, feel they don't need to upgrade their skills. With the Mobile Classroom and these new courses, we can go beyond the impact of what sending out brochures or putting up posters can do.”

These courses will be available at Wisconsin's Technical Colleges and a variety of other rider ed sites statewide.

Contact Greg at (608) 266-7855 or [Gregory.Patzer@dot.wi.gov](mailto:Gregory.Patzer@dot.wi.gov).

For information on current rider ed courses, visit the WisDOT website.



In April, pilot courses for the new Ultimate Bike-Bonding/*RiderCourse* were held at Waukesha County Technical College (WCTC).

Participants included seasoned riders (many from the Harley Owners Group), RiderCoaches, RiderCoach Trainers, and WCTC UBBRC training staff. The two days were rainy, foggy, windy and chilly, but riders stayed cheerful—even after seven hours in the saddle. The courses were observed and assessed by Ray Ochs, director of education for the Motorcycle Safety Foundation.

## Multiple-fatality OWI crash near Marinette

# Crash reconstruction helps bring justice

On the evening of Sunday, Jan. 18, 2009, Joel Rivas, 44, from Wrightstown, Wis., and four of his children had gone to Marinette as part of their cleaning business to work at the Aurora Medical Clinic. Driving west on Country Meadows Road in the Town of Peshtigo, Marinette County, he intended to turn left as he approached US 41.

On US 41, a northbound GMC Sierra pickup driven by Richard Powell, from Marinette, was approaching the same intersection. At 7:43 p.m., Joel's Kia Sephia entered the intersection, going between 10 and 16 mph, and was struck by Powell's pickup. Joel and his four daughters sustained fatal injuries. Two of his daughters were pregnant.



The Rivas family's Kia Sephia

Seven individuals had been killed—the most fatalities in an OWI-related crash in Wisconsin since at least 1980. The first responder, a state trooper, found a terrible scene, at first not even realizing two passengers had been ejected. Powell's BAC was 0.24—three times the legal limit. Careful crash reconstruction determined he had been going between 77 and 81 mph. The speed limit was 45mph.

Facing rock solid evidence—in part from the crash reconstruction—Powell, 40, accepted a plea agreement in February 2010 and was sentenced to 25 years in prison.

The job of the crash reconstructionist is to determine as accurately as possible how a crash occurred. At a crash scene, the first challenges are to control the site, which is sometimes a crime scene, and gather any short-lived

evidence, like tire marks or rim gouges on the road surface. New technology is making evidence collection faster and more accurate, so the crash site can be cleared more quickly. One powerful tool is the Total Station (see photo), a surveying instrument that maps the site by measuring distances and angles. Back at the office, mapping software uses this raw data to generate scaled 3-D diagrams.

### Determining speed

On this case, the crash reconstructionist was State Patrol Trooper Timothy Austin, who is an accredited reconstruction specialist. Among many factors analyzed, one was vehicle speed. The primary method of determining speed is momentum analysis. Moving vehicles have a certain amount of momentum, which is expressed as a product of their mass times their velocity. Since momentum is always conserved, the sum of the vehicles' momenta before the collision must equal their sum afterwards:

$$m_1u_1 + m_2u_2 = m_1v_1 + m_2v_2$$

where  $u_1$  and  $u_2$  are the velocities of the two vehicles before collision, and  $v_1$  and  $v_2$  are their velocities after collision. By analyzing what happened after the crash, pre-crash velocities can be determined.

To double-check his speed analysis, crash and environmental data were entered in a computer simulation using HVE-2D software that tied together all the evidence.

One of the benefits of precise reconstruction is that pinning down exactly how a crash occurred leaves less room for legal wrangling. When Powell accepted a plea agreement in December, a jury trial had been scheduled for the next week. Marinette County District Attorney Allen Brey reported that Powell's defense attorney could find no way to dispute Trooper Austin's reconstruction and analysis.

Another benefit of careful crash reconstruction is that by determining exactly how crashes occur we can sometimes learn more about how to prevent them.



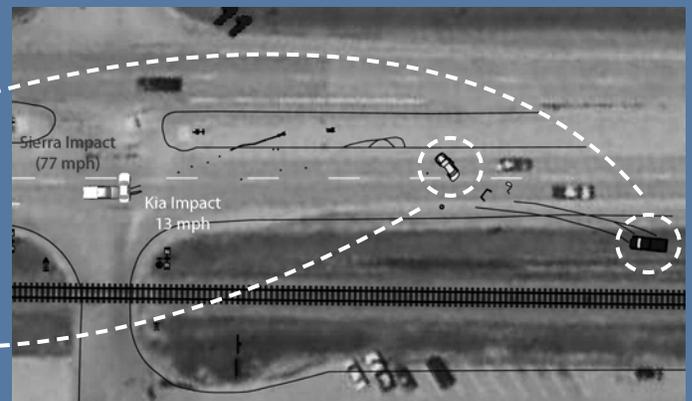
Geodimeter 610 Total Station

**BELOW RIGHT:** A simulation performed with the GMC Sierra impact speed at 77 mph and the Kia's pre-crash speed at 13 mph

### Actual crash scene



### Simulation: impact and final vehicle positions



## Get to know ... the WisDOT Library

**A library  
is not a  
luxury but  
one of life's  
necessities.**

— Henry Ward  
Beecher

The WisDOT Library can be a great resource for anyone who cares about improving traffic safety. Whatever your areas of interest, the library's staff can help you find your way around their extensive in-house collections, and they can help you access a wealth of resources at many other libraries and online.

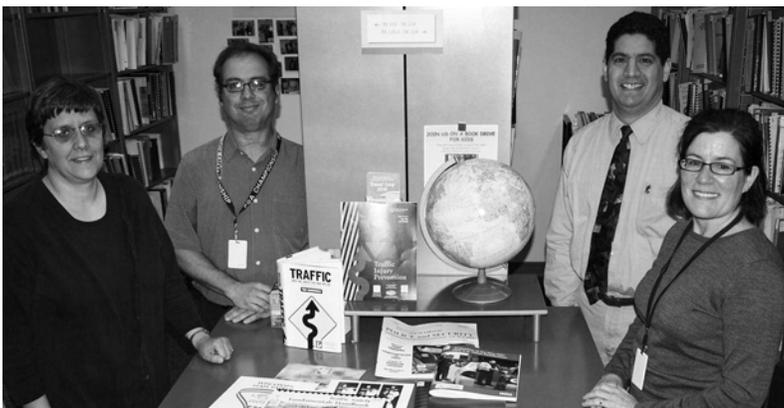
In 2007, the library moved from the 8th floor of the Hill Farms State Office Building to the first floor, right off the lobby in the main entrance area. This new location offers user-friendly meeting spaces, a reading area, Internet-access computer terminals, and access to the library's many collections.

### Library resources

With more than 40,000 items, it is one of the top five DOT libraries in the nation. Its contents are searchable through a statewide shared online catalog, WisCAT, which is accessible via the library's website: [www.dot.wisconsin.gov/library](http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/library).

Its in-house collections include diverse traffic safety and police science resources, many donated by the Wisconsin State Patrol. These include AV materials on safety belt use, teen driving and impaired driving. It has one of the most complete collections of traffic crash facts from most of the 50 states, along with textbooks and reports on traffic safety, bicycle-pedestrian safety, sobriety testing, crash reconstruction and many other topics. Trade magazines include: *Police and Security News*, *Traffic Injury Prevention*, and *Accident Analysis and Prevention*. The library has a complete file of the highly respected *Annual Proceedings of the Association for the Advancement of Automotive Medicine*,

along with complete technical files of the Transportation Research Board and the American Association of State and Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and most from the Federal Highway Administration. Other resources are available from NHTSA and the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety.



(l-r) Wendy Brand, librarian; John Cherney, head librarian; Daniel Yeh, section chief for the Research and Communication Services Section; and Ann Pahnke, Research and Library Unit supervisor

The library lends to, and borrows from, other libraries directly for WisDOT staff. Other interested individuals can borrow from the library through an interlibrary loan program at their local public or academic library.

The library's website provides a wealth of resources, including online journals (e.g., this newsletter), links to law enforcement and other traffic safety organizations, other states' traffic safety offices, and resources in the Safety & Consumer Protection section of WisDOT's website.

### Networks and partnerships

As a member of the Online Computer Library Center ([www.oclc.org](http://www.oclc.org)), the library is your gateway to a worldwide network of information. This global library cooperative has more than 72,000 member libraries in 171 countries, and it enables the WisDOT Library to share materials worldwide. It also supports the global library database WorldCat ([www.worldcat.org](http://www.worldcat.org)), a massive online catalog of the world's libraries that is freely searchable by the general public.

The library prides itself on delivering what's needed when it's needed. For instance, a crash reconstructionist at the State Patrol Academy was looking for studies on the phenomenon known as black ice. Via a literature search, library staff identified a relevant study and borrowed it from the UW-Oshkosh library through OCLC in time for him to review it before a court trial.

The library is a founding member of the Midwest Transportation Knowledge Network (MTKN), a group of 19 state DOT, academic, corporate and nonprofit transportation libraries and information centers, which share resources. It is the lead in a multi-state project connecting transportation libraries, which was key in establishing an AASHTO task force on TKNs. It also participates on committees for the Transportation Research Board, keeping current and sharing best practices.

Through these efforts it is helping build a national infrastructure of transportation information. This effort, headed by USDOT, is based on models already serving the medical and agricultural fields. This infrastructure will facilitate better access to all types of transportation information. The partnership has produced two reports that provide background and the strategic plan: *Transportation Knowledge Networks: A Management Strategy for the 21st Century* and *Implementing Transportation Knowledge Networks*.

### Library and Research collaboration

Libraries everywhere are realizing that they need to be much more than a loaning program. The WisDOT library provides technology transfer within the Research and Library Unit. The Library's natural partnership with Research serves the Department in borrowing resources worldwide, literature searches, more in-depth synthesis reports, and full-blown research projects. Access to web services and communication helps the library achieve its goal of providing timely access to resources in formats that are increasingly multi-media.

continued on page 7

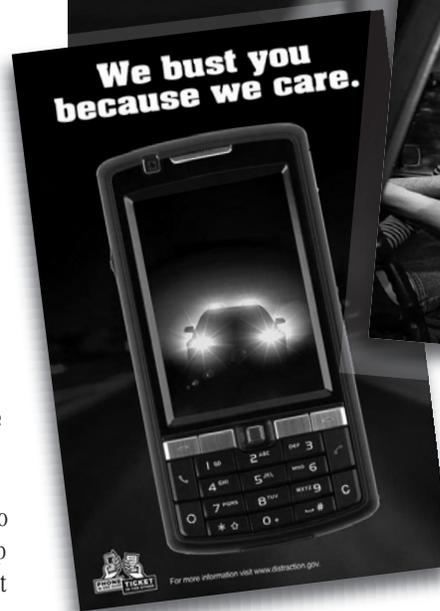
## Momentum builds nationwide against distracted driving

“Distracted driving is an epidemic that kills thousands and injures hundreds of thousands more each year,” says U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood. “To put it plainly, distracted driving is a menace to society. And it seems to be getting worse every year.” In 2008, nearly 6,000 people died and more than half a million were injured in crashes involving distracted drivers. (NHTSA)

NHTSA has launched a website, [www.distraction.gov](http://www.distraction.gov), with a wealth of resources to help communities raise public awareness. This includes campaign tools for parents, schools, law enforcement, employers and the media. Also see: *Overview of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration’s Driver Distraction Program* (DOT HS 811 299, April 2010).

In January U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood and National Safety Council President Janet Froetscher announced the creation of *FocusDriven*—Advocates for Cell-Free Driving, the first national nonprofit organization devoted specifically to raising awareness about the dangers of distracted driving. Secretary LaHood said, “Just as groups like MADD changed attitudes about drunk driving, I believe FocusDriven can help raise awareness and change the way people think about distracted driving. Together, I hope we can put an end to this dangerous practice.” Visit [www.focusdriven.org](http://www.focusdriven.org).

In May, Governor Jim Doyle signed legislation making Wisconsin the 25th state to ban texting while driving. The new law bans texting by all drivers. First-time violators face fines of \$20 to \$400, along with four points on their driving records. Second-time violators face fines of \$200 to \$800. The law is primary, meaning police officers can stop motorists suspected of this offense alone. It goes into effect December 1, 2010.



Posters available along with other NHTSA campaign tools at [www.distraction.gov](http://www.distraction.gov)

Also see: *Understanding the Distracted Brain: Why driving while using hands-free cell phones is risky behavior*, National Safety Council

[www.nsc.org/safety\\_road/Distracted\\_Driving/Pages/CognitiveDistraction.aspx](http://www.nsc.org/safety_road/Distracted_Driving/Pages/CognitiveDistraction.aspx)

### WisDOT Library

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WisDOT Research manages a \$3.5 million annual research program that leverages federal funds to examine key research topics. At any given time, the program is managing about 50 active WisDOT-sponsored projects. The program also oversees the Department’s involvement in national pooled fund projects. These projects allow states and other agencies to pool resources and conduct larger studies that focus on issues of regional concern or that impact a variety of states.

WisDOT has recently completed, or is currently involved in, many research projects related to traffic safety. Research reports can be found on the library’s website, which also provides research and library newsletters, project briefs and ways to request research services.

Research and Library Services can be your link to information, history and best practices.

### Tom Knoop: new RPM for northcentral Wisconsin

Tom, who has been state manager of Law Enforcement Programs for the WisDOT Bureau of Transportation Safety, is now the BOTS regional program manager for northcentral Wisconsin.

He is taking the position of recently-retired Patti Nelles. “Patti retired in February after 13 years representing the Bureau to traffic safety commissions and many other local agencies and safety advocates in the 21 counties of north-central Wisconsin,” says Dennis Hughes, chief of the Safety Programs Section for the Wisconsin State Patrol.



TOM'S  
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## Mark your calendar!

**August 25-26**

**36th annual  
Governor's Conference  
on Highway Safety**

Chula Vista Resort  
Wisconsin Dells

*Golf outing: August 24  
(tentative depending on  
number of participants)*

Chula Vista Golf Course  
Start time: 2 p.m.  
4 person scramble  
18 holes-\$45/person

Contact Vicki Schwabe  
WisDOT-BOTS  
at (608) 266-0402  
FAX (608) 267-0441  
or Vicki.Schwabe@  
dot.wi.gov.

**September 11-17**

**National Seat  
Saturday & Child  
Passenger Safety Week**

[www.nhtsa.gov](http://www.nhtsa.gov)

**October**

**International Walk to  
School Month**

[www.walktoschool.org](http://www.walktoschool.org)

## Safety belt champions



At the Lifesavers 2010 conference held in Philadelphia in April, NHTSA honored individuals for exemplary achievements in promoting traffic safety. Governor Jim Doyle was honored for his leadership in guiding Wisconsin to enact and enforce its primary safety belt law in 2009. In 2008, Wisconsin's safety belt use rate was about 74%, one of the lowest in the nation and



well below the 83% national average. NHTSA studies show that when states upgrade to primary enforcement their belt use rate typically increases by about 10%. Major Dan Lonsdorf (left), Director of the

WisDOT Bureau of Transportation Safety, accepted the award on behalf of the governor from NHTSA Administrator David Strickland.

Meharry Medical College, located in Nashville, Tennessee, is the nation's largest private, historically black academic health center dedicated to educating minority and other health professionals. It has formed an alliance with State Farm Insurance to help reduce the disparity in safety belt use among African Americans compared to other populations. In April, at the Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center in Madison, the alliance honored the leadership of Governor Doyle, Senator Fred Risser, Representative Garey Bies and Representative Jason Fields in enacting the state's primary enforcement law. State Patrol Superintendent David Collins (above, center) accepted the award on behalf of the governor .