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The TMA Group—Our Job is Getting You to Yours

VAN VOICES

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REPORT ACCIDENT CLAIMS IMMEDIATELY TO:

Synaxis Polk & Sullivan
615-385-8341
(Kay Biggs)

-and-

MiMi Lee
615-790-4005 or
After Hours:
615-517-6321

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SCHOOL'S OPEN— TRAFFIC SAFETY TIPS

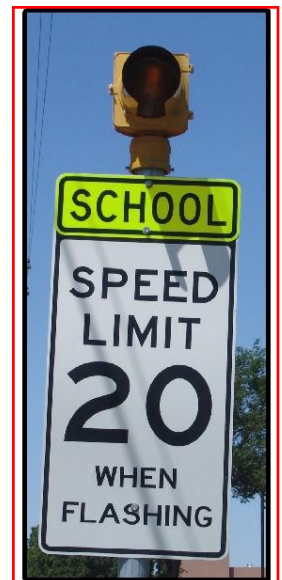
Another school year is beginning in Middle Tennessee. The TMA Group cautions the public about the hazards of sharing the road with back-to-school students. Awareness of the first time kindergartener crossing a cross walk to the inexperienced teenager driving to school should be foremost on every driver's mind. The safety of our children is paramount. Motorists need to pay extra attention to their driving when school is in session.

As the school year begins, remember to: observe the reduced speed limit in school zones; be vigilant for young children on school routes; watch for sudden movements of bicyclists and pedestrians onto the roadways; obey adult crossing guards; yield to pedestrians in crosswalks; and always buckle up your passengers and yourself. It is important for parents to

discuss traffic safety with their children. Young children cannot judge the speed or distance of vehicles moving towards them, and they think cars can stop suddenly.

For the teen-age sector, many for the first time will be driving to school and will be facing a number of increased risks. According to national research, teen drivers are a threat not only to themselves, but also to those around them. Police reports indicate that 82 percent of accidents involving teens are due to driver error. The rate of driver error causing an accident is highest among 16-year-olds. Teens are much less experienced drivers and are not as likely to be able to anticipate unsafe situations and react accordingly. In addition, teens are more likely to engage in activities that put them at risk, such as driving too fast or becoming easily distracted.

The graduated driver's license is designed to ease young drivers into the driving experience. According to the non-profit National Safety Council, graduated driver's licenses can reduce teen crash rates by as much as 33 percent. Parents are encouraged to sit down with their child and set the parameters of what is expected while behind the wheel of the car. Hours, speed, geographical boundaries should be established.



DEFENSIVE ROAD RULES

Welcome to "Road Rules" a new segment in *Van Voices* which will address defensive driving practices that every driver and passenger should know.

DON'T TRUST NOBODY!

You can never rely on what the other driver will do. Think back to all the mistakes you've made while driving. Think ahead to the ones you know you will make in the future. All the other drivers are just like us! *Don't trust them!* While you are driving, keep a wary eye on the other guy and leave yourself plenty of room. Anticipate the mistakes he might make and be ready for them.

If you are too trusting, you are relying on that other driver for your safety. Is he worthy of that trust? Maybe some of those other drivers are returning from a beer festival! Maybe they just lost a job, or worse, a loved one. The other driver might be an 11-year-old who found Dad's keys. Approach driving with the idea that every other driver is an unpredictable menace and out to get you. Most collisions occur when the "other guy" does something we don't expect, or when we do something they don't expect.

Drive with a wary attitude. Be careful of approaching red lights, because you know a light by itself never stopped anyone. Watch out for folks getting ready to pull out from parking beside the road. Look for gaps in lines of traffic which might be the result of someone pausing to let another vehicle cross in front of them. Be alert to the possibilities and have a strategy in mind for dealing with them.



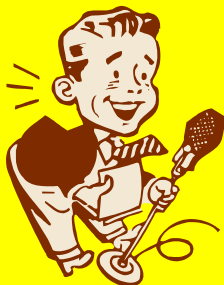
SECURE LOOSE OBJECTS!

Avoid injuries caused by loose objects that "fly" in a collision. When your vehicle suffers a sudden deceleration (as in a collision), the only things that stop with it, at least immediately, are the ones that are secured somehow. When the vehicle decelerates, a loose object temporarily keeps traveling at the speed the vehicle was originally going, until it hits something else in the slowing vehicle -- like you, maybe. Even fairly light-weight objects can cause serious injuries. A tissue box weighing half a pound, at 60 mph, would feel roughly like about *30 pounds* hitting you in the back of the head. Think about the damage heavier objects could do. What about canned goods in a grocery sack or two? The forces involved in more serious collisions can send these things flying like cannon shot.



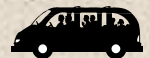
Inanimate objects are not the only loose objects that can hurt (or even kill) you. If I should fail in my responsibilities as a driver and hit something, or get hit by someone else, any passenger in my vehicle that is not belted becomes a loose object also. Drivers, safely belted into their seats, have been killed by un-belted back seat passengers who are launched forward in a crash. Babies, if not safely strapped into child-restraint seats, can be launched out windshields. Some parents think they can hold on to a baby in a crash. Because of the forces involved, that is often not the case; children can be involuntarily ejected from their parents' arms, despite their best efforts to "hang on." Take a look around your vehicle. Make sure everything is in a safe and secure place, in the trunk, under a cargo net, etc.

Let's hear from you!



We are looking for TMA vanpool stories to feature in *Van Voices*. All stories can be about anything, as long as they relate to vanpooling. You may want to share how much money you have saved by vanpooling; or tell of something amazing that happened to you while riding a TMA van. If you have a story to share, email it to: dhenry@tmagroup.org

Vanpool Vacancies



LIVE IN SPRING HILL/THOMPSON STATION AND WORK IN DOWNTOWN NASHVILLE?

LIVE IN COLUMBIA AND WORK IN DOWNTOWN NASHVILLE?

THE TMA GROUP WANTS TO START VANPOOLS IN THESE AREAS – CALL MIMI FOR DETAILS

If you have vacant seats on your van contact Mimi Lee:
615-628-0261 or mimi@tmagroup.org

