

news

NHTSA

A Close Look at Air Bags



Tom Enright, Region IV Deputy Administrator (front), and Bob O'Connell, Region VIII Administrator, participate in an air bag deployment demonstration during a Regional Representatives meeting in Washington.



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Editor M. J. Noll

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Consumers everywhere can now see first-hand just how an air bag works. On display in each NHTSA region is a 1977 Chevrolet Impala equipped with a rechargeable air bag demonstration system. Its purpose is to acquaint the American public with the performance characteristics of the air bag system.

The Impalas can be found just about anywhere that crowds gather--at State and County fairs, town meetings, in the middle of shopping centers or even at a football rally. Over and over again they do their thing, while a NHTSA staffer stands by to answer questions.

The repeated deployment of the bags is made possible by two nitrogen tanks

in the trunk of the vehicle. These tanks supply gas that inflates the bags when a switch is activated by a NHTSA technician. The bag deploys in 2 to 3 seconds, taking more than 50 times as long as the 1/25th second that an air bag takes to deploy in a real-world crash situation. This slow motion deployment gives viewers a closer look at how an air bag system works to cushion front seat occupants. Once the air bags have been deployed, they are repacked. Three minutes later, the cycle can be repeated.

The project was initiated by NHTSA Administrator Joan Claybrook, to

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'Round About NHTSA

With Deep Regret

We would like to extend our condolences to Bill Searcy (TSP) and his family. Mr. and Mrs. Searcy's son, Rodney Alan, 20, was killed August 9 when hit by a truck-tractor and semi-trailer. Rodney was a computer repairman assigned to the 1st Military Intelligence Brigade at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina. He was buried August 12 at Arlington National Cemetery.

The Searcys have two other children, Cindy and Mark.

With Deep Sorrow

We were sorry to learn of the death of Ms. Sandy Miller on August 22. Sandy had been ill for some time and had just recently returned to work. Currently, she was with the Office of Contracts and Procurement.

Sandy had been with the Department since 1972 and had also worked in the Office of the Chief Scientist, Administrative Services, and the Office of Personnel Management.

Congratulations

Beulah Evans, Clerk-Typist in the Office of Vehicle Systems Research, and her husband, John, became proud parents of a baby boy, John Henry Evans, Jr. (JJ) weighing 6 pounds, 6-1/2 ounces, on June 22. The Evanses have another son, Milton Roland, age 14.

A Letter's Impact

Acting on an impulse, a doctor in Boston wrote a note of thanks to a childhood teacher whose faith in him had greatly influenced his life. She replied in a shaky scrawl.

"Dear Willy, I can't tell you how much your note meant to me. I am in my 80's . . . lonely like that last leaf of fall. I taught school for 50 years and yours is the first note of appreciation I ever received. It cheered me as nothing has in years."

We all have such impulses. They flash through our minds at odd moments.

We feel inspired to write to a friend, to respond to or comment on something we've read in the newspaper or seen on TV, to encourage or oppose a piece of impending legislation, to congratulate someone.

Then we become busy or are distracted by another thought. The good intention often fades and is forgotten.

When you don't follow that impulse to write, you will never know what opportunity you missed. When you do follow it, the effect of your letter could be beyond anything you imagined--or hoped. And you'll know you have made a difference because you took the time to "put it in writing."

Thought Provoker

Knowledge is of two kinds. We know a subject ourselves, or we know where we can find information upon it.

From Boswell, Life of Johnson

Animal-Related Highway Accidents

Remember the old Burma Shave signs. They were all well done, but one in particular has stuck in mind over the years. It went like this:

Cattle Crossing
Means Go Slow;
That old bull
Is some cow's beau.

Humorous, yes. But it also bears an important highway safety message. Facts are that about 100 persons are killed and 5,000 injured nationwide in animal-motor vehicle accidents each year. Although there is no record of all the kinds of animals involved in accidents with motor vehicles, accident reports include a variety of domesticated animals, farm animals, including horses, cattle, and hogs, and larger wild animals such as deer.

It is estimated that 120,000 deer are killed by motorists each year, based on a survey of State conservation departments. Driving in deer country requires motorists to keep speeds down and watch for and obey deer-crossing signs.

Also, when driving on winding country roads, it pays to slow down and stay alert, as the old Burma Shave slogan points out.

Air Bag Demonstration Cars

(from page 1)

help the American public understand what air bags are and how they work. The many inquiries that have poured into the Department since Secretary Adams' June 30 decision underscored the need to reach the American consumer on a grassroots basis.

The project involves the support of a myriad of NHTSA personnel, from both headquarters and the regions. Among the key persons are:

Duayne Trecker, Bobby Boaz and Ed Reiley of PACS helped draw up the initial plans and have continued to furnish public information support to the project.

Jeannette Feldman, Office of the Administrator, is project coordinator. She is the key contact for questions, problems or overall guidance. Among many other things, she tracks the vehicles on a day-to-day basis.

Joe Bolos and Leif Myhl, Office of Contracts and Procurement, managed all contracts associated with the project. This included modification and transport of the Impalas.

Judie Stone, Special Assistant to the Administrator, was instrumental in setting up the initial program and has been deeply involved in all phases of the followup. She is one of several who have traveled to the regions on technical speaking assignments.

Other NHTSA headquarters personnel who have assisted the Administrator and Deputy Administrator in

Tom Enright, Region IV, shows NHTSA Administrator Joan Claybrook and Special Assistant Carl Nash the nitrogen tanks stored in the trunk of the demonstration car.



Region II Administrator Dean Van Gorden repacks passenger air bag after a demonstration.

technical speaking assignments are: Carl Nash, Assistant to the Administrator; George Reagle, Special Assistant to the Deputy Administrator; Bill Boehly, Augie Burgett, Ralph Hitchcock and Guy Hunter of MVP; and Kinnerly Digges of RD.

Key Regional contacts

for the project are: Jim Williamson, Region I; Tom Louizou, Region II; Mike Impellizzeri, Region III; Tom Enright, Region IV; Jim Downey, Region V; Don Hill, Region VI; Frank Pattee, Region VII; Brad Marks, Region VIII; Craig Miller, Region IX; and Laurretta Carlson, Region X.

Speaking Out

Student Aids working in NHTSA develop a positive attitude toward passive restraints as voiced by Ms. Loretta Grier.

Ms. Grier, who has worked for NHTSA's Office of Financial Management about a year, spoke to a class of 20 students at American University on passive restraint systems on August 16.

graffiti

Some said, "John print it";
others said, "Not so."
Some said, "It might do good";
others said, "No."

John Bunyon
Pilgrim's Progress
Apology for His Book

Youth Committee Member Killed

A former member of NHTSA's Youth Highway Safety Advisory Committee was killed on August 11 when his private plane crashed in a field near Damascus, Maryland.

Kenneth Howard Bingle, 23, of Risingsun, Ohio, was returning home from a one-day trip to Washington, D.C. when the fatal accident occurred. Wreckage was found scattered for 200 yards in a field at Camp Waredaca, about 1,500 yards north of Damascus. Cause of the accident is under investigation.

Ken was a member of the Youth Advisory Committee from 1974-1976 while attending Ohio State University. From 1972-1974, he served as Chairman of the Ohio Governor's Traffic Safety Committee (Youth Division). He had also been the recipient of numerous awards and scholarships.

Ken is survived by his mother, three sisters and a brother.

Job Openings

For complete details, see the official vacancy announcements. Vacancy announcements are posted on the NHTSA Bulletin Boards at both the Nassif and Transpoint Buildings. They are also distributed to each Office Director.

Electronics Technician, GS-856-9, MVP. Opens: 8-19, Closes: 9-9. NHTSA 77-110.

Mech. Engineer, GS-830-13, TSP. Opens: 8-24, Closes: 9-14. NHTSA 77-111.

Personnel

Welcome Aboard

Emily H. Fenn, Law Clerk, OCC, 6-27.

W. Burleigh Seaver, Social Science Program Specialist, TSP, 7-11.

'Bye and Good Luck

Robert Barlett, Hwy. Safety Management Spec., TSP, 7-16.

Sharon Hamm, Staffing Clerk, AD, 7-17.

Dallas L. Rhodes, Engineering Technician, RD, 7-16.

Congrats on Promotion

Timothy Abney, Mech. Engineer, RD, 7-17.

Lauretta M. Carlson, HSMS, Region X, 7-17.

Awards...Awards...Awards...Awards

Since May, 31 NHTSA employees have received awards for especially noteworthy contributions on the job.

Outstanding performance ratings were given to Richard M. Cook, Region V; Wendell A. Cook, TSP; Mary A. Coyle, MVP; Beverly Day, TSP; William H. Eargle, Jr., Region III; Rae A. Eddy, Region X; Charles A. Goodwin, TSP; Barbara Hansberry, AD; William Hollowell, RD; Gordon G. Lindquist, Region V; Eunice Moran, Exec. Sec.; Duane A. Perrin, MVP; Marcia A. Robertson, RD; Elizabeth R. Seaborn, Region II; Barbara L. Williams, MVP; and Donald A. Williamson, Region V.

Receiving Special

Kathleen C. Demeter, Attorney-Advisor, OCC, 7-17.

Jerry Hubbard, Accountant, Region IV, 7-17.

Terry M. Klein, Math. Statistician, TSP, 7-17.

Katherine Lambert, Clerk-Steno, Region V, 7-17.

John F. Magee, Liaison Officer, Office of the Administrator, 7-17.

Ernst Meyer, General Engineer, RD, 7-17.

Mary Fean Mungenast, Math. Statistician, RD, 7-17.

John R. Nelson, HSMS, Region IX, 7-17.

Patricia Wells, Clerk Steno, Engineering Test Facility Transportation Research Center of Ohio, 7-17.

Achievement Awards were: Garland V. Cross, MVP; Michael D. Gibbons, RD; Maxine Gregory, AD; Bruce C. Hammerton, MVP; Doris T. Hartness, Region IV; Walter J. Norbet, TSP; Jo Ann Nunn, MVP; Charles H. Marcus, MVP; Brendan J. Reilly, MVP; Sandra Y. Washington, TSP; and Jonathan D. White, MVP.

Quality Step Increase Awards were awarded to Francis W. Barton, MVP; Barbara A. Brown, MVP; Charles Elder, TSP; and Bonita D. Barrison, TSP.

Safety Hints

In a night fog headlights should be on low beam for best vision, since fog reflects headlight glare.