

Troopers to Target Aggressive Driving During the Fourth of July Weekend

All available troopers will be on duty during the Fourth of July holiday travel period, enforcing traffic laws, assisting motorists and serving as visible reminders to drive safely. In addition to routine patrol operations, enforcement plans include license and sobriety checkpoints, saturation and line patrols, and operation of laser speed detection devices (LIDAR) from stationary vantage points.

According to Public Safety Director Col. Hugh B. McCall, troopers will pay close attention to those violations that frequently cause crashes -- making unsafe lane changes, following too closely, failing to yield the right of way and speeding. These behaviors generally constitute "aggressive" driving when two or more are combined. Troopers will actively work to identify and apprehend drivers impaired by alcohol or drugs during the holiday travel period.



McCall cited the value of highly visible, intensive enforcement in reducing motor vehicle crashes, deaths and injuries. "With heightened trooper presence, we have increased safety on Alabama's roadways. The number of crashes is down, and we are working hard to keep it that way," he said.

DPS's director said Alabama is committed to improving highway safety during the upcoming holiday. "Our goal as troopers is to save lives and safeguard all motorists on Alabama's roadways," he said.

Overtime grants administered through the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs and the Alabama Department of Transportation will support increased patrols during the Fourth of July travel period.

McCall urges motorists to make safety a priority, adding that it is important to make sure everyone in the vehicle buckles up on every trip, no matter how far the drive.

The official Independence Day travel period begins at 6 p.m. Friday, July 1, and ends at midnight Monday, July 4. Public Safety, however, will extend this enforcement campaign to midnight Tuesday, July 5. During last year's holiday travel period, there were 13 traffic fatalities -- including seven vehicle occupants and two motorcyclists. Almost half of these fatal crashes involved alcohol; and of the seven vehicle occupants who could have been restrained, only one was wearing a seat belt.



Alabama State Troopers Helping to Extinguish Gulf State Park Blaze



The Alabama Department of Public Safety's Aviation Unit was contacted June 25 to assist in containing a wildfire at Gulf State Park in Gulf Shores that burned approximately 250 acres.

Alabama state trooper pilots have made hundreds of "drops" using DPS's Bell 407 helicopter equipped with a 180-gallon "bambi bucket" to dump 100,000 gallons of water onto the blaze. Partnering with local and state agencies on the ground, the Aviation Unit played a vital role in saving two neighborhoods, two restaurants, a veterinary clinic, a water treatment plant, storage facilities and three bull dozers.

On July 27, Alabama Forestry Commission Director Stanley Anderson said the fire was 90 percent contained thanks to Alabama state trooper pilots. Without DPS's Aviation Unit's water-dropping capabilities, Anderson said the fire

would still be just over 25 percent contained. The pilots' ability to spot the fire as it jumped from one area to another and to drop water with precision was key to the fire's containment.

DPS's Aviation Unit, part of the department's Service Division, flew 957 missions during FY2010 in general support of law enforcement. Missions include marijuana eradication and searches for missing

persons and escapees. The Bell 407 was purchased with a U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance grant appropriated as part of the 2007 Supplemental Appropriations Act dedicated for Hurricane Katrina recovery and future responses. It is the department's largest helicopter and has enhanced capabilities allowing for tactical operations, rescue operations and fire suppression.



Aviation Busy With More Than Putting Out Fires

DPS's Aviation Unit has been busy lately. Not only have state trooper pilots been fighting wildfires in Gulf Shores, but they have also participated in search and rescue missions and marijuana eradication.

Recently, though, Chief Pilot Lee Hamilton and Cpl. Kent Smith flew the Bell 407 to Prattville to conduct a presentation on longline rescue basics and discuss partnering with Prattville Police Department's special operations unit. Their next stop was a children's day camp at Lanark, a nature center in Millbrook. Hamilton wowed the crowd – made up mostly of 5- to 12-year-olds – by landing the Bell 407 in a grassy field. Smith's kid-friendly presentation was also a big hit and drew a number of questions from the curious children.

Hamilton said Aviation Unit personnel are always eager to conduct presentations when time and budget allow. This two-venue trip, for instance, was necessary for



several reasons: The helicopter hadn't been flown and was due for an auto-pilot maintenance check; Hamilton needed to get in some flight time; and it was important for Prattville's tactical team to see the helicopter and its rescue equipment.

Grant funding for marijuana eradication is provided by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. Training and equipment was funded with grants from the Alabama Department of Homeland Security.

If you know of a group in your area that would benefit from an Aviation Unit presentation, contact the unit at 334-242-4055.

DPS is Cookin'

The Department of Public Safety held the first DPS employee luncheon June 24 at Headquarters. The Alabama State Trooper Association sponsored the gathering catered by Dreamland Bar-B-Que.

In addition to the delicious food, all who came were entered in a raffle for various prizes including Montgomery Biscuits baseball tickets, movie passes, dinner for two at Sinclair's, a round of golf at RTJ Capitol Hill, and tickets to Troy, ASU and UAB college football games.

The previous week, the Montgomery Post held its own cookout where troopers, PCOs and staff gathered to enjoy hamburgers, hotdogs and grilled chicken in the company of friends.



DPS Recipes For Your Next Family Cookout

American flags and fireworks aren't the only stars of a great Fourth of July. Add some quick but delicious foods to the mix for a memorable summer celebration.

The Department of Public Safety family comprises a number of great cooks, including Frances Benton of Wetumpka (retired PCO, Montgomery Post). She enjoys collecting new recipes and preparing them for her family and friends. In fact, she whipped up a batch of Cornbread Salad a few days ago for a church potluck. Ideal for the Fourth, the dish is different and one that a number of loved ones often request. Her Strawberry 7-Up Cake has also become a family favorite.

Following are instructions for each of Benton's recipes, which you may want to include in this weekend's holiday menu:

Cornbread Salad

4 cups crumbled cornbread
4 boiled eggs, chopped
1 medium onion, chopped
1 12-ounce can Mexican-style corn, drained
1 17-ounce can English peas, drained
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup mayonnaise

Combine all ingredients in a large bowl. Cover and chill overnight.

Then, for dessert, you may consider something light, cool – and red, white and blue. Benton's Strawberry (and Blueberry) 7-Up Cake is perfect for summer:

Strawberry 7-Up Cake

Cake:

1 box strawberry cake mix
3 eggs
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cooking oil
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water
1 cup 7-Up

Topping:

1 3-ounce package strawberry Jell-O

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup boiling water
2-3 tablespoons sugar
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup cold water
3-4 cups sliced strawberries
Large container Cool Whip

Set oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Grease a 9-by-13-inch pan. Mix all ingredients, and beat until smooth. Pour mixture into pan, and bake 30-35 minutes or until done. Cool completely before topping.

Dissolve Jell-O into boiling water with sugar. Add cold water and mix well. Poke holes into cake, drizzle Jell-O mixture over cake. Place strawberries evenly to cover top of cake. Refrigerate 2 hours. Top with Cool Whip.

Note: Add a few blueberries for a patriotic touch for the Fourth of July.

Seasoned to perfection

What would the Fourth be without hamburgers and hot dogs on the grill?



Retired PCO Frances Benton prepares her family's favorite: Strawberry 7-up Cake.

This time of year, Lt. Tim Sartain (ABI Area III commander, Birmingham) does some limited grilling, and he sticks mostly to burgers and hot dogs. But he has another favorite from the grill, chicken breasts with an Italian-style marinade. Not only is this dish simple, but it is simply delicious.

To prepare the chicken for the grill, Sartain takes filleted chicken breasts and places them in a shallow dish or bowl and covers the poultry with Italian salad dressing. He then lets the chicken marinate for several hours in the refrigerator (turning at least once to ensure all pieces are covered in marinade).

"The Italian dressing provides all the seasoning needed," said Sartain, whose 25th DPS anniversary is weeks away. "I have not tried it on pork chops, but I understand they are delicious, too."

Donations to Operation Home Care Assist Alabamians in Tornado Recovery

Following April's devastating tornadoes that destroyed thousands of people's homes and their possessions, a DPS employee from the Driver License Division had an idea to collect donations within the Alabama Department of Public Safety to help those in need.

When that employee approached the DPS Command Staff, the idea quickly expanded to also include the Department of Corrections and Pardons and Parole.

This collaborative effort between these three agencies brought food, clothing, bottled water and other various sundries that were collected to Operation Home Care Inc., located in the small town of York, in Sumter County.

Collected items were brought from Headquarters by Titus Ashley in the DPS Supply truck the morning of June 1. Shortly thereafter, a caravan of DPS employees lined up



to assist in unloading the donation at Operation Home Care's distribution center. Local leaders from York were also on hand to assist in unloading the truck.

Tpr. John Reese then greeted Cynthia Brooks, director of Operation Home Care, and explained to her why DPS chose their organization,

and how it all started with one Driver License employee wanted to assist the many families in west Alabama.

Also assisting with the operation were Maj. Herman Wright, Capt. Agatha Windsor, Lt. Terry Windham, Tpr. Jason Vice and Tpr. Brett Christian. Other agencies assisting included Sumter County Sheriff Tyrone Clark, Sumter County Chief Deputy Robert Cottrell, Chief B. Harris of York Police Department and Sumter County Commissioner Drucilla Jackson.

Operation Home Care was established following the events of Hurricane Katrina. Since its inception, it has played a vital role in assisting families during disastrous situations. All members of this organization are dedicated volunteers who work long hours with no pay.



Roadcheck 2011

Targets Commercial Vehicle Safety

Motor Carrier Compliance officers from the Alabama Department of Public Safety teamed up with the Alabama Department of Transportation and other commercial vehicle inspection officers throughout the United States, Canada and Mexico for Roadcheck 2011, an international initiative June 7-9 to promote safety and security on highways throughout North America. The enforcement event, which began in 1988, is sponsored by the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance.

Lt. Mike Junkin, assistant commander of Motor Carrier, said, "The goal of this program is to emphasize commercial vehicle safety in partnership with the trucking industry and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. We will be looking for compliance with the rules and regulations and will not hesitate to issue out-of-service orders."



The Roadcheck program also emphasizes the review of drivers' logbooks. Commercial truck drivers are encouraged to maintain a detailed logbook and take all necessary breaks to prevent fatigue, as well as to drive without distractions.

Roadcheck 2011 also placed focus on high-occupancy passenger carriers in wake of recent fatal bus crashes.

While MCSU troopers perform checks year-round, the 72-hour period of Roadcheck places special emphasis on truck and bus safety inspections specifically aimed at saving lives on North American highways.

The Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program is a Federal grant program from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration that provides financial assistance to states to reduce the number and severity of crashes and hazardous materials incidents involving commercial motor vehicles. Additional funding is provided by the Alabama Department of Transportation.



Troopers Help Make International Rail Safety Day a Success

Troopers from the Birmingham Post participated in an Operation Lifesaver event June 9 at the Heart of Dixie Railroad Museum in Calera.

Cpls. Steve Smith and Jeffery Harris and Tpr. William Elston were on hand for International Rail Safety Day, an event that offered free train rides to the public and other free, fun family events, while also including valuable information concerning rail safety.

Approximately 400 children from the Birmingham area visited troopers at the event to get a closer look at the Dodge Charger and DPS BATmobile on display. Funding for BATmobiles was provided to DPS by the Northwest Alabama Highway Safety Office and ADECA.

Capt. Reginald Fornis, Lt. Donte Vincent and Sgt. Tim Doyal also seized the opportunity to visit the rail museum for the safety event.

Operation Lifesaver is a non-profit, international, public education program first established in 1972 to end collisions, deaths and injuries at highway-rail grade crossings and on railroad rights-of-way.



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CRT Training Keeps Troopers' Rescue Skills Sharp

Crisis Response Team troopers participated in a survival swimming training course June 13 taught by the Alabama Marine Police at the Selma YMCA.

At the training, CRT troopers learned several life-saving techniques, including towing a victim to safety, safely removing a victim from water, rescue breathing, spinal injury management and use of a uniform for flotation.

Because CRT troopers were working alongside the Alabama Marine Police, training was also beneficial for bringing together two vital components of the Alabama Department of Homeland Security Region 8 law enforcement team.



In order to successfully complete the training, all CRT troopers had to tread water for one minute while fully clothed, including footwear, and wearing a weighted gun belt. After completing this task, troopers had to swim 10 yards, drop the gun belt and then continue swimming until being told to stop by the instructor.

The following day, CRT troopers completed CPR recertification at the ACJTC in Selma. Due to the many disastrous situations they routinely face, particularly search-and-rescue missions, CPR is a critical and necessary skill for all CRT troopers to possess.

Training and equipment for CRT are provided by the Alabama Department of Homeland Security.

People You Know!



Transfer

Justin Oneal	5.16.11	Trooper	HP/Bibb County
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Military Leave

Walter Mendenhall	5.20.11	Trooper	HP/Selma
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Resignation

Brittany Morris	5.27.11	ASA I	ABI/Identification
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Expiration of Temporary Appointment

Amanda Ellis	5.31.11	Clerical Aide	DL/Medical Records
Carol Tharpe	5.31.11	Clerical Aide	DL/Medical Records

Safety Day at Nana's Daycare

Tpr. John Reese was invited to Nana's Daycare in Valley Grande on June 23 to present a safety program for small children as part of their safety awareness day.

"I taught the children the valuable lesson of wearing a seat belt," said Reese. "The kids also had the opportunity to sit in my patrol car, and had fun talking on the car's PA system."

While some of the young children were a bit frightened at first, Reese greeted the children with a little song to ease any tension they had, and all enjoyed an informative morning.



AMC Javelin Visits Wellborn Musclicar Museum

Tim Wellborn invited Sgt. Steve Jarrett to display the legendary state trooper AMC Javelin on June 10 at the Wellborn Musclicar Museum in Alexander City.

The Alabama Highway Patrol was the first police organization in the United States to use a pony car as a police car when it purchased 132 Javelins for its fleet in 1971 and 1972, leading a trend that would follow with Camaros, Mustangs and Chargers purchased for patrol use by other departments in subsequent years.



Alabama Department of



Public Safety

CONTRIBUTING:

- Capt. Marty Griffin, ABI
- Chief Pilot Lee Hamilton, SER
- Capt. Jack Clark, HP
- Tpr. Greg Eubanks, ADM
- Tommy Giles, Photography
- Reserve Tpr. Tony Dickey
- Robyn Bradley Litchfield

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Questions? Comments? Concerns?

STAY IN TOUCH WITH *THE BLUE LIGHT*.
PLEASE E-MAIL ALL REQUESTS TO:

RYAN.GODFREY@DPS.ALABAMA.GOV

On Your Calendar

Monday, July 4

Independence Day

Monday, September 5

Labor Day

Monday, October 10

Columbus Day

Friday, November 11

Veterans Day

July Academy Schedule

Dignitary Protection Training	July 11-15
Patrol Rifle Training	11-15
Microsoft Word 2003	18-19
THI Training	18-22
Giving Presentations	20
Microsoft Windows 7	21
Computer Basics	22
Microsoft PowerPoint 2007	25-26
Microsoft PowerPoint 2003	27-28

To Whom It May Concern:

Several weeks ago, I hit debris heading north on Interstate 65 near Clanton that resulted in a flat tire. I pulled off the interstate and called AAA. Shortly after stopping, Tpr. Adam Ezekiel stopped to check on me. Thinking he would be too busy to assist by changing my tire, I explained to him that I already called for assistance. However, Tpr. Ezekiel insisted, stating, "It is just part of my job, ma'am." He did not hesitate, but instead fixed the tire for me, saving me both time and money, as well as keeping me safe and getting me off of the shoulder of the road quickly. I certainly appreciated his help and willingness and wanted you to know! Too often people are quick to complain and withhold compliments about our State Troopers. Therefore, I wanted to share my gratitude and compliment your staff. Thank you again for helping me to travel safely!

Miriam Gaines