



The Newsletter of the Montana Traffic Education Association

# MTEA NEWS

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Winter 2014

## Parents and teens behind the wheel: Teaching safety while supervising teen driving

"It's one of the most dreaded rites of child-rearing—teaching a teenager to drive," writes Sue Shellenbarger in a recent article in the *Wall Street Journal*: *Better Ways to Teach Teens to Drive: Beyond Parallel Parking, Parents Can Impart Skills to Avoid Accidents*.

Now that every state requires parents to drive with their teens for six months and a minimum number of hours, there is evidence that some parents could use some help from the experts. Shellenbarger writes that most parents are good at teaching steering, parking and controlling the car, but fall short at teaching crash avoidance. New research gives parents better ways to fulfill their role as a driving coach. Staying calm, refraining from criticizing, focusing on risk awareness, and recognizing hazards are some of the tips gained from the research conducted with parents who agreed to have cameras installed in their vehicles while driving with their teens.<sup>1</sup>

Another study with 217 parent-teen pairs found the teen drivers performed better when they drove on varied roads, at night, and in bad weather.<sup>2</sup>

Still another study trained parents to ask open-ended questions when instructing their teens behind the wheel. Increasing the quality of communication between parent and teen made a big difference in remembering the important safety skills they were learning.<sup>3</sup>

Read more at <http://online.wsj.com/articles/better-ways-to-teach-teens-to-drive-1413915957>.

<sup>1</sup> Highway Safety Research Center at the University of North Carolina

<sup>2</sup> Center for Injury Research and Prevention at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia

<sup>3</sup> University of Iowa's Injury Prevention Research Center



**'Tis the season to encounter wildlife on highways and rural roads, especially in Montana where more than 2,000 crashes with wildlife are reported annually.**

**WATCH FOR WILDLIFE.  
DON'T VEER FOR DEER!**

Our neighbors to the north--the Wildlife Collision Prevention Coalition in British Columbia--have excellent tips for avoiding vehicle-wildlife collisions at <http://www.wildlifecollisions.ca/>.



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## MTEA News

This newsletter is published by the Montana Traffic Education Association in the fall, winter, and spring. Mailing address: PO Box 637, Conrad, MT 59425. Jim Carroll, Executive Secretary, (406) 278-7856. Web: [MTEAonline.org](http://MTEAonline.org).

MTEA News is mailed to members and active contributor/sustainers. The spring issue is mailed to all traffic educators in Montana to provide annual conference registration information.

To submit an article, photo, or letter to the editor, contact newsletter editor Steffani Grogan at [sgrogan@forsyth.k12.mt.us](mailto:sgrogan@forsyth.k12.mt.us).

Newsletter deadline for articles:

**Fall issue—October 1**

**Winter issue—December 1**

**Spring issue—March 1**



## 2015 MTEA-OPI Traffic Education Conference

April 26-28, 2015 ~ Great Falls, MT

Great speakers, sessions, workshops, socializing, and networking with other traffic education professionals.

Registration begins in March 2015.

Details to come in the Spring newsletter and online:

[MTEAOnline.org](http://MTEAOnline.org)

## In Memoriam

**Dick Shipporeit (1941-2014)** Excerpted from the Missoulian on 11-23-14: "Four decades of Missoula high school students learned the rules of the road under Dick Schipporeit's calm guidance. By his last years teaching at Sentinel High School, students were remarking how he'd taught their moms to drive.

So Schipporeit's passing last week touched generations of Missoula residents, past and present, who remembered him fondly as their teacher, or their children's teacher. In honor of his passing, we present a story written on June 6, 2008, by Rob Chaney, while Schipporeit was still behind the wheel with Missoula's youngest drivers. Read on and you'll understand why he is, and will be, missed and remembered."

To read the entire Missoulian tribute, visit the new *In Memoriam* page at [MTEAOnline.org](http://www.mteaonline.org/in-memoriam.html): <http://www.mteaonline.org/in-memoriam.html>.

## Increasing Funding for Driver Education: Plans are underway for the 2015 Montana Legislative Session

The 2015 Legislative Session will begin January 5. The Montana Traffic Education Association will be supporting a bill, currently known as LC1097, to increase funding for traffic education so that a higher proportion of eligible teens and their families will be able to afford taking the program.

You can help by talking with or sending an email to your representative and your senator telling them about the program at your school. Please ask if they might be interested in signing on as a co-sponsor to the bill with Rep. Rob Cook (R-Conrad) and Rep. Jean Price (D-Great Falls). As the session progresses, Jim Carroll will send out notices when the bill will be heard in a committee and the MTEA website will include updates.

That means we will be asking you to come testify—or to find a student or a parent with a traffic education story to tell—multiple times. Testimony usually is very short—carefully planned to inform legislators about a particular fact or need in a few clear sentences, after opening protocol.

For each hearing we need about 12 people testifying, about 25 more

signing in at the door in support of the bill and sitting in the hearing room, and at least 100 more sending emails in support of Do Pass — that step in the process of the bill becoming law.

Please develop a list of colleagues, family members, friends, parents and students whom you can quickly ask to, at a minimum, send emails in support of the bill at each hearing—and perhaps plan to participate in one or two hearings.

You can track the progress of the bill online and easily send emails to legislators. Go to <http://www.leg.mt.gov/>. In the left column, click on Bills, click on 2015 and enter LC1097 in the LC box. Back in the left column, click on Legislators and then on “find a legislator” or “contact a legislator.”

*I am looking forward to working with you during the 64<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly! Please contact me with any questions or suggestions. Together we can be successful this session.*

*Jane Hamman, Lobbyist*

## 2015 MTEA President-Elect Election by Mail-in Ballot

Look for a separate mailing soon from MTEA to select a new President-Elect by mail-in ballot. Nominees and their candidacy platforms will be presented in the mailing.

Please participate by voting and sending back your ballot by the January deadline (*details in the mailing to come*).

## MINUTES SUMMARY Board of Directors Meeting

An Executive Board Meeting was held on November 23 in Helena. The topics below were heard:

- Approved the prior meeting minutes and financial report.
- Reviewed the 2014 Bozeman conference including reports on speakers, awards, door prizes, social mixer, breakout sessions, accommodations, meals, and costs.
- Newsletter and web site report.
- The current membership insurance coverage program.
- The David Huff Memorial Scholarship Program.
- A discussion on Legislative planning for 2016.
- The Teacher and Contributor of the Year program.
- President-Elect nominations.
- Planning for the 2015 MTEA conference took place, with various speakers and break-out sessions.
- The purchase of door prizes and awards for the conference was approved.
- Plans for the conference silent auction.

**The next meeting was set for January 25, 2015, in Helena.** Anyone with items for discussion should contact Diane Prongua, MTEA President, or Jim Carroll, Executive Secretary, as soon as possible to be included on the agenda.

Visit your website:  
**MTEAOnline.org**

## Driving in Montana's High Wind

By Jeffrey Bennett, 2014 Traffic Education Teacher of the Year

*Thank you for the honor of being your Traffic Education Teacher of the Year for 2014. There are many teachers who give so much and I am honored to be a part of your lives and to teach such a valuable program.*

*Living and teaching in Livingston and Clyde Park where windy driving conditions are legendary, I thought the following notes that I use in my traffic education program may be useful to many teachers. The Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) provides these helpful tips for driving in windy areas.*

- Plan ahead. Leave extra time, as your drive may take longer due to the need to drive more slowly in high winds.
- Always wear a seatbelt.
- Slow your speed to a safe driving speed and turn on headlights if needed to account for potentially lower visibility created by blowing dust, sand, snow or rain.
- Keep your hands firmly on the wheel, of course, at 9 and 3 is best.
- Make steering corrections when driving from wind-protected areas to unprotected areas. The wind may suddenly move your car when traveling from a protected to unprotected area, such as hills, groups of trees, or passing larger vehicles that block the wind.
- Be aware of and maintain safe distances from other vehicles near you, particularly RVs, campers, trucks, buses, or trailers being towed. These vehicles could swing out and hit your car in sudden wind gusts.
- Take extra care in a high-profile vehicle such as trucks, vans, SUVs, or when towing a trailer, as these are more prone to being pushed or flipped by high winds. NDOT (as well as MDT) maintains wind warnings systems for high-profile vehicles in wind-prone areas. Drivers of high profile vehicles must obey these wind warnings and prohibitions when in effect.
- Watch for objects that could potentially blow into the roadway. Tree limbs may break and/



High winds are an often-overlooked driving danger that can cause crashes. High winds are not unusual in Montana, as it is the 4th windiest state, and extreme caution should be used when driving a car in high winds or any type of severe weather. Pay attention to warning signs.

or other debris may come loose during strong winds.

- Listen to the radio for changes in weather conditions that could create more dangerous driving.
- If winds are severe enough to prevent safe driving, pull over into a safe parking area (the shoulder of a busy roadway is not safe) and stop, making sure you are away from trees, power lines or other tall objects that could fall onto your vehicle.
- When arriving at your destination, avoid parking near trees, downed power lines and buildings.
- In the event of downed power lines:
  - ◇ Never drive over downed power lines. Even if they have been knocked over by the wind, high-voltage wires may still be alive and very dangerous.
  - ◇ Avoid anything that may be touching downed lines, including vehicles or tree branches.
  - ◇ Report downed lines to your local utility emergency center and to the police.

More from <https://www.nevadadot.com>

## Speed kills! Or does it? Judgment and experience play a part ...

**Speed Limits and Safety:** The Montana Department of Transportation has released a report that considers the relationship between vehicle speed and safety performance on roadways with posted speed limits set lower than engineering recommendations. A reduction in speed provides a safety benefit in most cases, although the magnitudes of these benefits vary greatly. Here are a few excerpts from the literature review.

**Speed choice and compliance:** When selecting a speed on a given roadway segment, a driver considers many factors. These include:

- roadway characteristics (i.e., width, speed curvature);
- vehicle characteristics (i.e., power, comfort);
- surrounding traffic (i.e., average speed, percentage of heavy vehicles);
- and the environment (i.e., weather, lighting, speed limit) (WHO 2004).

Upon inclusion of internal factors (i.e., age, risk acceptance, driving history), both consciously and subconsciously, a driver then selects a desired speed.

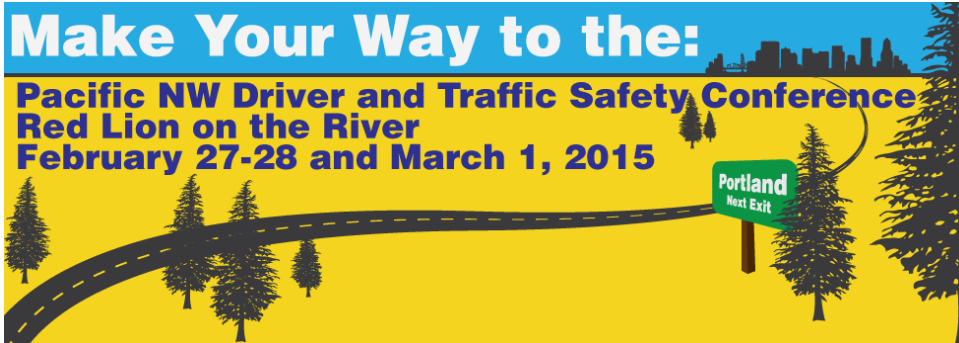
While all of these factors play into speed choice, they affect the decision at different magnitudes. *Page 16*

**Speed crash and severity:** Speed not only influences crash frequency but also severity. Simply reviewing the equation ( $E=1/2mv^2$ ) for kinetic energy reveals how speed relates to the energy of a moving vehicle.

Obviously, vehicles moving at higher speeds release energy during impact, thus increasing the possibility of increased injury severity in a collision. *Page 25.*

Download the full report here:

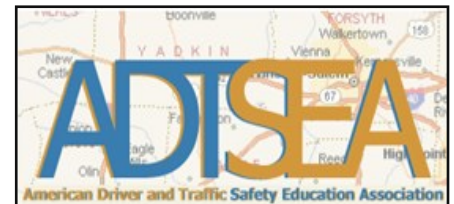
[http://www.mdt.mt.gov/other/research/external/docs/research\\_proj/speed\\_limit\\_lower/Task-1\\_OCT14.pdf](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/other/research/external/docs/research_proj/speed_limit_lower/Task-1_OCT14.pdf)



The **2015 Pacific NW Drivers & Traffic Safety Conference** is hosted by the Oregon Department of Transportation and Western Oregon University. The goal of the conference is to provide a quality professional growth activity for traffic safety educators.

Conference sessions enable attendees to gain new information and insights on topics pertinent to the field as well as provide an opportunity to interact with their peers from the region.

For more info, visit: <https://www.wou.edu/provost/extprogram/tse/tse2014conference.php>.



The **2015 ADTSEA (American Driver and Traffic Safety Education Association) summer conference** will be held **July 12-15** at the Hilton North Raleigh/Midtown Hotel in Raleigh, NC.


Remember, MTEA has a scholarship program that will provide up to \$300 per person to offset conference costs.

If you can't attend the conference, at least consider joining ADTSEA, your national organization.

Visit the ADTSEA website for details about registration, room rates, and tentative agenda. <http://www.adtsea.org>.

**MTEAONLINE.ORG** Your traffic education association has its own website and it's chock full of good information and resources: traffic education teachers' websites, videos, legislative updates, membership and conference details, and a list of MTEA's past presidents and traffic education award recipients.

If YOU have a teacher's website you would like added to the Resources page or other helpful links for traffic education teachers, let us know!

 <b>Montana</b> <b>Office of Public Instruction</b> Denise Juneau, State Superintendent opi.mt.gov	<b>Statewide Summary of Montana's  2013-14 Traffic Education Programs*</b> (From the period of July 1, 2013– June 30, 2014)
<b>PROGRAM ENROLLMENT</b>	
173	public high school districts were <b>eligible</b> to offer a traffic education program.
138	high school districts <b>offered</b> a state-approved traffic education program.
12362	public and private high school students were <b>eligible</b> to enroll in traffic education.
8530	students <b>completed</b> traffic education.
<b>WHEN OFFERED</b>	
25	districts offered the program <b>before school hours</b> .
33	districts offered the program during <b>regular school hours</b> .
64	districts offered the program <b>after school hours</b> .
97	districts offered the program in the <b>summer</b> .
<b>PROGRAM FEES</b>	
128	high school districts charged a fee. The <b>mode</b> fee was <b>\$150.00</b> . The <b>minimum</b> fee was <b>\$25.00</b> . The <b>maximum</b> fee was <b>\$340.00</b> .
11	districts <b>plan to increase the fee</b> charged students for the upcoming school year and summer.
<b>PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS</b>	
65	districts <b>granted credit</b> for successful completion of traffic education.
138	districts <b>screened students</b> for visual acuity.
88	districts employed a traffic and safety education <b>coordinator and/or supervisor</b> .
78	districts offered <b>pedestrian</b> safety instruction in the elementary and middle schools.
95	districts offered <b>school bus rider</b> safety instruction in the elementary and middle schools.
73	districts offered <b>bicycle</b> safety instruction in the elementary and middle schools.
55	districts offered traffic education for <b>adult</b> beginners.
131	districts provided traffic education for <b>students with disabilities</b> .
129	districts taught an instructional unit on sharing the road with <b>motorcycles</b> .
138	districts emphasized and required the use of <b>seatbelts</b> .
137	districts used Montana's current Traffic Education <b>Curriculum Guide</b> for its high school program.
36	districts conducted <b>follow-up research</b> on student performance (violations/crashes).
138	districts taught an instructional unit on the effects of <b>alcohol/drug</b> use in driving.
137	districts involved <b>parents</b> in the Traffic Education program.
124	districts participated in the <b>Cooperative Driver Testing Program (CDTP)</b> .
120	districts utilized <b>computers</b> in their program.
136	districts used the Office of Public Instruction ( <b>OPI</b> ) Web site to obtain traffic education information.
<b>NUMBER OF TEACHERS AND RATES OF PAY</b>	
46	<b>full-time</b> teachers were employed.
247	<b>part-time</b> teachers were employed.
\$13.00	per hour is the <b>minimum</b> rate paid.
\$52.00	per hour is the <b>maximum</b> rate paid.
\$20.00	per hour is the <b>mode</b> rate paid..
<b>VEHICLES</b>	
279	<b>vehicles</b> were used in the program.
6	districts obtained their vehicles on a <b>free loan</b> basis.
1	districts obtained their vehicles on a <b>daily fee</b> basis.
32	districts obtained their vehicles on a <b>lease or rent</b> basis.
105	districts <b>owned</b> their vehicles.
1	<b>instructors owned</b> and provided vehicles.
0	districts used <b>other</b> means to obtain vehicles.
<b>CRASHES</b>	
7	traffic <b>crashes</b> occurred involving a student driver while in the traffic education vehicle.
0	persons were <b>killed</b> .
0	persons were <b>injured</b> .
\$8,773.31	<b>property damage</b> costs incurred.
<b>COST PER PUPIL</b>	
\$453.16	is the <b>average</b> per pupil cost. (District costs were partially offset by state reimbursement amounting to <b>\$97.22</b> per pupil.)

\* This information was compiled from the 2013-14 Traffic Education Year End Reports completed by all high school districts conducting state-approved traffic education programs during the summer of 2013 and the school year 2013-14. If you have questions, please contact Fran Penner-Ray by telephone at (406) 444-4396, or by e-mail at fpenner-ray@mt.gov.

## Fran's Findings



In this season of hope and giving, I'm grateful for the dedication of our traffic education teachers who go above and beyond in their work with teens to develop safe driving skills and smart choices.

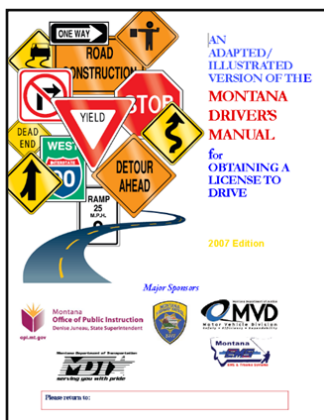
The Cooperative Driver Testing Program (CDTP) is a wonderful success story. We currently have 90% of Montana's high schools participating in the CDTP and 96% of our teachers are CDTP-certified to give the exams and issue TELL permits.

Integrating parents into driver education through the required parent meetings, TELL permits, and the required 50 hours of supervised driving practice has helped reduce young driver crashes. We can celebrate that Montana realized a **57% reduction in the number of teens (aged 14 to 18) involved in fatal and serious injury crashes** five years after Montana's Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) became law in 2005.

Research finds that teens who complete driver education have fewer crashes and traffic citations, but we still have miles to go to reach Vision Zero.

In ten years, 189 teens died in fatal crashes and 58% were not wearing a seatbelt. We can fix this. One message our teens can share with their friends and family is that **seat belts save lives**. I was glad to hear this message reinforced in the new Disney movie, *Big Hero 6*, by the gentle nurse robot on the day before the snowstorm when Helena had a collision every 15 minutes. Lessons about following distance, anticipating hazards and controlling speed for road conditions are also critical when our wild Montana weather makes intersections and winding roads extremely treacherous.

*Best wishes for holidays filled with joy and safe travels.  
Fran Penner-Ray, Director of Traffic Education*



### SEEKING VOLUNTEERS

to review and suggest changes for an upcoming revision of the *Adapted Illustrated Montana Driver's Manual*.

Please contact Fran Penner-Ray at [fpenner-ray@mt.gov](mailto:fpenner-ray@mt.gov) or call (406) 444-4396 to volunteer!

### Teen Driver Safety E-News

If you are not receiving OPI's Traffic Ed E-News, sign up at <http://www.opi.mt.gov/Subscriptions/>.

You'll be kept informed about curriculum updates, grants and contests, professional development and training opportunities, MTEA events, OPI program requirements, and the latest research and useful resources for traffic education.

### TRAFFIC EDUCATION REPORTS AVAILABLE

The Montana Office of Public Instruction publishes annual reports that summarize data collected from districts:

- The Statewide Summary (shown on the facing page),
- a listing of districts and counties and their annual reimbursements,
- and an annual sampling of Traffic Education Program Salaries, Fees and Schedules.

Find these reports at <http://opi.mt.gov/Programs/DriverEd> and click on Traffic Education Reports.



Montana  
Office of Public Instruction  
Denise Juneau, State Superintendent

[opi.mt.gov](http://opi.mt.gov)





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**SAVE THE DATE! April 26-28, 2015**  
**2015 Montana Traffic Education Conference!**



The annual spring conference has been scheduled at the **Best Western Heritage Inn** in **Great Falls** on **April 26-28, 2015**. Preconference workshops on the Saturday and Sunday morning prior to the conference may be scheduled as well. Remember, the cost of attending the conference is considered an allowable expense for local traffic program expenses under OPI guidelines.

Look for more information on room rates and conference schedule in upcoming newsletters and on the MTEA and OPI websites. Visit <http://www.MTEAOnline.org> or <http://www.opi.mt.gov/Programs/DriverEd> for details.

- **Calling all Door Prizes!** Did you know that MTEA budgets money, mostly from the proceeds from our 50/50 drawings, for the purchase of door prizes? Because we have several drawings (and winners) throughout the conference, we can always use more door prizes. Consider asking at least one business in your community if they would donate something as a door prize. Bring it with you when you arrive. We will add it to the collection and offer it up during one of the many opportunities to win a prize.
- **Teacher and Contributor of the Year Awards**—Nomination forms for the MTEA Teacher and Contributor of the Year awards can be downloaded at the MTEA website or the MTEA link on the OPI Traffic Education website. Forms will not be mailed out unless you are unable to access the Internet. Contact MTEA if you need forms mailed to you. Please consider nominating a fellow teacher and/or supporter of your program for the 2015 awards.
- **Silent Auction**—Our last two silent auctions at the conference have been a huge success because of the great gifts donated and your generous support. The proceeds raised will help fund the David Huff Scholarship and offset the cost of future door prizes and auction items. If you would like to donate something to the MTEA silent auction, bring it to the conference. And thanks for your support!