



Autumn  
2007



## Mike Laski Retiring After 31 Years With the State of Iowa

Iowa Department  
of Public Safety

### In this issue...

<b>Calendar</b>	2
<b>GTSB Employees</b>	
New Law Enforcement Liaison	2
Shelley DeForest leaves GTSB	2
<b>Mike Laski Retirement Luncheon</b>	3
<b>Local Agency Activity</b>	4
<b>Central Iowa Traffic Safety Task Force (CITSTF)</b>	5
<b>Youth News</b>	7
<b>Iowa Safety Belt Honor Roll Awards</b>	



**J. Michael Laski**, Director of the Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau announced that he will be retiring on December 13, 2007. He has served in this capacity since 1986; previously serving as the Director of the Research and Development Bureau and as the Department of Public Safety Legislative Liaison.

During his career Mike has represented the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Central Region as an Executive Board member of the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA). He has served as Chair of the GHSA Law Enforcement Engineering Committee, GHSA Board Vice-Chair and Treasurer and as an at-large Executive Board member.

Mike is a lifetime member of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) and has served as the President for the Iowa Traffic Control and Safety Association (ITSCA). He served on the first Board of Directors for the Guide One Foundation and enrolled as a Charter Member of the Association of Transportation Safety Information Professionals.

Come help us give Mike a big sendoff at his retirement luncheon at the West Des Moines Marriott on November 16, 2007. Information regarding his retirement luncheon can be found on page 3.



Iowa seat belt use	91.3%
2008 Goal	95%
Midwest ranking	# 2
U.S. Ranking	# 8

Every Trip – Every Time

## Calendar

2007

### November 1

Annual Reports  
Due from  
Contractors

### November 14

Shelley's last  
day

### November 16

Mike's  
Retirement  
Luncheon

### November 19- 25

Thanksgiving  
"Click It or  
Ticket"  
Mobilization

### November 30

Final Claims for  
2007 Contracts  
Due

### December

Red Ribbon  
Ceremony with  
Governor's  
Office

### December 13

Mike's last day

### February 28

Deadline for  
2009 402 and  
410 proposals

### March 26-27

GTSB  
Conference  
Council Bluffs, IA

### April 13-15

Lifesaver's  
Conference  
Portland Oregon



## New GTSB Law Enforcement Liaison

**Jim Meyerdirk**, has been hired as the new Law Enforcement Liaison with the Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau. He graduated from Western Iowa Tech in Sioux City, Iowa with an Associate of Applied Science Degree. Jim is a retired Deputy Sheriff from Dickinson County with 27 years experience in law enforcement. He and his wife will be residing in Altoona, Iowa. The couple have two boys, ages 22 & 25.

**Welcome to the GTSB, Jim !**



**Shelley DeForest**, Financial Manager for the GTSB, will be leaving the Bureau effective November 15, 2007. She will be joining the Finance Bureau in the Department of Public Safety. Shelley has gained nationwide attention with her financial skills and is often called upon to train other states regarding their financial programs. She has provided training for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Financial Training Classes. She received the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Public Service Award for 2006, the highest award given by NHTSA.

**We wish Shelley a great future in her new endeavors!**

## CrossRoads

**Chester J. Culver**, Governor

**Eugene T. Meyer**, Commissioner,  
Iowa Department of Public Safety

**J. Michael Laski**, Director

Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau

**Wendie S. Nerem**, Editor

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We welcome article submissions and ideas pertaining to traffic safety.

Visit our web site at: [www.iowagtsb.org](http://www.iowagtsb.org).

The latest issue of *CrossRoads* may be viewed in color at:

<http://iowagtsb.org/gtsbcrsr.pdf>

Back issues of *CrossRoads* may be viewed from links at:

<http://www.infoiowa.state.ia.us/DPS/index.htm>



He's Outta Here

Well, Almost

After 31 Years with the State of Iowa,  
Mike Laski is going to the Dugout

Mike's Retiring – Let's Send Him Off with a Great Meal!

Please join us for a Retirement Luncheon on November 16, 2007 at the  
West Des Moines Marriott, 1250 Jordan Creek Parkway  
from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., serving lunch at Noon

Salad - London Broil – Dauphinois Potatoes – Cherry/Apple Cobbler  
\$23.00

Entrance and Parking at the South End of the Hotel

Make checks payable to Christine Burkett – Deadline November 9<sup>th</sup>



HAPPY RETIREMENT

## Local Agency Activity



### Safety CheckPoint in Northeast Iowa Proves Successful

On September 1, 2007, a joint traffic safety check point was conducted on Highway 18 near Marquette, Iowa. Twenty-eight officers from the Clayton County Sheriff's Office, Iowa State Patrol, Fayette County Sheriff's Office, Postville Police Department, Clayton County Conservation, Iowa Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Transportation/Motor Vehicle Enforcement participated in the checkpoint.

As a result of the safety check point, there were 16 citations and 42 warnings for various traffic violations issued which included an OWI arrest and 5 MCSAP Inspections.



### SOUTHEAST IOWA LAW ENFORCEMENT CONDUCTS TRAFFIC SAFETY CHECK IN KEOKUK Article Submitted by Captain Dave Hinton, Keokuk Police Department

A joint traffic safety checkpoint was conducted at the North end of the Highway 61 By-Pass and Highway 218 junction in Keokuk on Thursday evening, August 30 from 4:00 PM – 8:00 PM. A total of 703 vehicles were checked during the 4 hour project.

28 officers from the Keokuk Police Department, Lee County Sheriff's Office, Iowa State Patrol, Iowa DOT Motor Vehicle Enforcement, Fort Madison Police Department and the Lee County Narcotics Task Force participated in the checkpoint. Other agencies assisting include the Iowa Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau and the Keokuk Salvation Army canteen.

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## Message from the Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau Director

Law enforcement agencies will be stepping up enforcement with another special "Click It or Ticket" enforcement mobilization during the week of the Thanksgiving holiday in an effort to boost Iowa's safety belt use and to reduce highway fatalities. Special safety belt checkpoints and other stepped-up law enforcement activities will be conducted during a heavy wave of enforcement November 19-25, 2007.

**"Wearing your safety belt costs you nothing, but not wearing it could cost you a ticket, or worse – your life. Please remember to buckle up day and night."**

Mike Laski, Director  
GTSB



## **THE CENTRAL IOWA TRAFFIC SAFETY TASK FORCE (CITSTF)**

The Central Iowa Traffic Safety Task Force, otherwise known as CITSTF, was organized in the late 1990s. Several agencies receiving GTSB grant money in Polk County were approached to work together on selected traffic enforcement projects such as saturation patrols, safety checkpoints, and other focused traffic enforcement efforts. The concept behind the formation of this new group was a very simple one- the end result of those agencies that choose to work together will see a much more meaningful and substantial message of traffic safety awareness than if each agency works independently towards the same goal.

As this new group grew, it began to receive grant money from the GTSB to fund training venues for various educational and promotional items such as the "Safe Street" signs posted in many communities. Additionally, numerous agencies have also taken advantage of GTSB funding to support their participation in CITSTF activities. This is especially effective since the GTSB requires participation in a certain number of "joint enforcement" activities per year.

CITSTF has now grown to the point where joint enforcement efforts that were once held 3-4 times a year are being conducted on a monthly basis. These monthly events are spread throughout the greater Des Moines metropolitan area depending upon identified needs and requests for assistance brought forth by agency representatives during monthly board meetings. These unified efforts now provide far more resources in manpower & equipment than any department in this area could garner independently.

In the past year this group has gotten a 28E agreement signed from participating agencies in Polk County. Under the 28E, officers working a special enforcement project in a different jurisdiction can now write citations in that jurisdiction using the host agency's local ordinances. Next year, CITSTF hopes to extend this opportunity into neighboring counties as well.

Following are some statistics regarding what this organization has accomplished during the 2006 contract year...

CITSTF scheduled eleven events for the year, normally planning each event for a four hour project – however, two of the events did have to be canceled due to inclement weather. Overall approximately 36 hours of concentrated enforcement activities were conducted in 9 separate events. In that time...

- This group made 986 total contacts with motorists.
- 175 seat belt citations were issued
- More than 250 speeding violations were addressed
- 27 minors in possession of alcohol were cited
- 15 OWI arrests were made, 1 boating while intoxicated arrest, and several more motorists were evaluated along with 8 potential motorists being arrested for public intoxication
- Additionally there were arrests for narcotics, domestic assault, outstanding warrants and several hundred equipment violations were also addressed.

Article by Dennis McDaniel, Chairperson  
CITSTF

**Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau Web Site**

**<http://www.iowagtsb.org>**

*Veronica Roshek is the Opinion Editor of the Johnston High School Publication "The Black and White." She wrote the following article for the September 2007 edition. It is being included in the CrossRoads to show that many of our youth do understand the importance of wearing a seat belt and set a great example for everyone.*

## **Click it, or regret it**

By Veronica Roshek

Impatiently waiting to break out of the cramped parking lot at the end of the day, bored silly, I glance around at the other students' cars engulfing me. Everyone with the same goal in mind of getting out of there as fast as possible, yet I am intrigued by the one thing which seems not to be in use in too many of these cars; seat belts.

These simple safety devices have been repeatedly nailed into our heads with the objective of getting us to wear them consistently. However, as so-called "mature" high school students, along with many others not in high school, we are misunderstanding the underlying message.

Before starting the engine every time I drive with someone else in the car, I always make sure all seat belts are strapped down. While driving, it is important to be responsible for others in the car, including following the law by using seat belts. I would be extremely ticked off if I ever got a ticket because someone else with me was not wearing a seat belt, especially when forgetting to buckle up is as stupid as forgetting to brush your teeth before leaving the house.

Even if I am in someone else's car and I do not know him or her that well, I will still ask them to put on his or her seat belt if it is not fastened. I do not do this to throw myself in an uncomfortable situation by having to request putting their seat belt on; I simply care enough to want them to be safe.

According to a study by James Madison University, reminding others to put their seat belt on sends a significant reminder, and nine out of 10 people do buckle up when asked. However, not only will they click it this time, but there is a much better chance they will remember to the next time they are in a car as well.

# **OUR IOWA YOUTH**

There is no reasonable excuse to not wear a seat belt that I have heard. Comfort is not an issue; everyone that wears them is not complaining. It does not matter how great of a driver you are or how much you trust who is driving, you cannot protect yourself from other reckless drivers on the road. Forgetting is not ok. If you get in the habit of it, you will not forget.

When approximately 35,000 people are killed in motor vehicle accidents every year and about half of them could have been saved if they were wearing their seat belts, everyone should be more adamant on wearing them. What is it that does not add up here? This petty ignorance is ridiculous, but me harping on the importance of seat belts is not going to force anyone to wear it.

It is frustrating to see people that I know, even some that I am good friends with, driving around without the strap pressed across their shoulders. Driver's seat, front seat, back seat, it does not matter where in a car: not taking the half-second to buckle up could be the worst mistake of your life.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) campaign "Click It or Ticket" has created the highest seat belt usage rate of 82 per-cent. Teenagers, on the other hand, have the highest statistics for not wearing their seat belts, especially males. As a generation starting to be known for other unpleasant things, I do not want poor seat belt usage to be added to the list.

As the slogan goes: "unless you want to risk a ticket, or worse – your life, you need to always remember to "Click It or Ticket" day and night.



## 2008 sTEP Waves

November 19 – 25, 2007

March 13 – 17, 2008

May 19 – June 1, 2008

July 3 – 6, 2008

August 18 – 31, 2008



## Iowa Safety Belt Honor Roll Awards



Denny Becker (on the left) of the Iowa Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau presents an award for achieving 100% Safety Belt Usage to **United Parcel Service of Des Moines, Iowa**. Scott Schmitz, Health and Safety Manager for UPS, is shown accepting the award .



Randy Hunefeld (on the right) of the Iowa Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau presents an award for achieving 95% Safety Belt Usage to the **City of Toledo, Iowa**. Jeff Harnish, Chief of the Toledo Police Department, is shown accepting the award for the city.



Christine Burkett (on the left) of the Iowa Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau presents an award for achieving 95% Safety Belt Usage to **the City of Johnston, Iowa**. Accepting the award is Chief Doug Nichols and Sgt. Craig Porter of the Johnston Police Department.

**Article Submissions**

To submit articles for the CrossRoads Publication send to Wendie Nerem, Editor; Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau; Public Safety Building, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor; 215 East 7<sup>th</sup> Street; Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0248; FAX 515-725-6133 or e-mail to [nerem@dps.state.ia.us](mailto:nerem@dps.state.ia.us).

Be sure to indicate that you would like to have the article published in the CrossRoads.  
If you have any comments or questions contact Wendie Nerem at 515-725-6131.

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