

# SAVED BY THE BELT

*“At the rate we were traveling, if I would not have been wearing my seat belt I would have gone directly into or through the front windshied.”*

Brett Thompson Lawrence, KS.

We were on our way back from the University of Kansas' 2006 Homecoming parade one great autumn morning in Mid- October. The parade had rolled through campus right down Jayhawk Boulevard, and had been a sight to see for all ages. It was a very joyous event for me, since I was surrounded by family and friends I hadn't seen in ages; even my friend Danny's black lab, Bob, had made an appearance at the parade. After we had had our fill of listening to the marching bands, gazing at the multi-colored floats, and watching Bob make friends, we decided that it was time to get back to the vehicle parked by the stadium. We had a very large tailgating party planned for the football game later that day and we would need to go to the stores for some supplies. We all hopped in Danny and Bob in the back, with Andrew and I up in front. Andrew and I both buckled our safety belts, even though it was only a short ride to the store; in the back it was a different story. Danny rode unrestrained with his K9 buddy in the back, perhaps so he could better control Bob's actions, so as not interfere with Andrew's driving. This move by Danny would prove to be one he would regret in just a few shorts moments. The stadium's parking lot in Lawrence is at the base of a very steep hill, and as we

reached the crest of the hill we came to a stop sign. Danny asked Andrew if he would mind rolling his window down for Bob, to see if that would help him relax. Andrew was driving his grandmother's car and was not familiar with that style of power window controls. As he fumbled around with them he took his eyes off the road for just a few crucial moments. As Andrew searched for the controls he accelerated pushing my side into the rear of a parked car. If this sounds silly or dumb it's definitely not. We were traveling around 35 miles per hour when Andrew crashed into the back of the stationary car, and because, he didn't see the parked car, so there was no chance to apply the brakes and slow down. I just remember not knowing what had happened and that my neck hurt. There was dust everywhere from the airbags, and all I could hear was the sound of the fraternity guys who saw the crash yelling and screaming to find out if we were OK. From the sight of the crash they weren't sure if we were. At the rate we were traveling, if I would not have been wearing my seat belt I would have gone directly into or through the front windshied. Danny and Bob, both unrestrained in the back, were not as lucky. Bob was thrown violently all around the interior of the car and ended up in the front seats, while Danny was thrown head first into the sides of the car, breaking his nose and cutting his face and lips so severely he needed 20 stiches to stop the bleeding. If I had not been wearing my safety belt I have no doubt I could of been killed or mangled by the collision. My seat belt gave me a chance to enjoy many more homecomings.