

2010 People Saving People Award Recipients

Ks Transportation Safety Conference, Mar 31, Doubletree Hotel Overland Park

William "Rusty" James, Incident Management Coordinator, KC Scout, Kansas City, Mo.

With more than 25 years experience in traffic safety as a law enforcement officer, Rusty came to Scout in May of 2007 to fill the newly created Incident Management Coordinator position and led the charge to create a robust Incident Management Program. Aware that the goals of a traffic incident management program must include coordination of the activities of the various responding agencies Rusty immediately began a public relations style campaign meeting with area law enforcement associations, police and fire chiefs to explain his new position and to enlist their assistance in implementing an effective incident management program for Scout and the Kansas City area. Rusty ensured the Scout system would provide adequate warning on dynamic message signs to motorists approaching the incident and Motorist Assist would make available positive traffic control at all incident scenes to increase the safety of first responders and he developed and distributed quick contact lists for emergency responders to carry with them to expedite clearance of incidents.

With the understanding that careful planning alone would not achieve the desired results if communication among agencies, responders, and the public is not occurring, Rusty in an unprecedented move organized "communication summits" bringing together law enforcement, fire departments, on-scene emergency medical technicians, tow companies, dispatchers and media traffic reporting personnel from all around Kansas City to establish a serious dialogue about the needs of each agency as they respond to on-scene incidents. Additionally he included Kansas and Missouri's departments of transportation maintenance and motorist assist personnel.

The impact of the program is a more uniform incident scene, a reduction in crash clearance times and minimization of accident-related congestion. In 2009, there were 201 fewer hours of lane closures from crashes than before the incident management program began. Under Rusty's direction, the program has instituted improved traffic control procedures at the incident site and upstream to reduce the chance of secondary crashes, which are usually more severe.

David Corp, KDOT Senior Law Enforcement Liaison, Topeka, Kan.

Kansas and Southeast Kansas counties, in particular, have among the lowest rates of seat belt usage in the country: 15 to 17-year old seat belt usage rates as low as 27%, compared to national teenage seat belt usage at 61%, and statewide adult usage at 77%. After the Ulysses, Kan. death of four teen girls in 2008, David Corp, KDOT's Sr. Law Enforcement Liaison, was inspired to devise a much expanded version of the Buckle Up Butler (Co.)

teen driver program, one with frequent reward opportunities that would be student-led, data-driven and built on the close cooperation of student and adult representatives from the education, law enforcement and business sectors of their communities.

With help from Sheriff Sandy Horton, Crawford County's pilot of the S.A.F.E. (Seatbelts Are for Everyone) initiative that resulted in a People-Saving-People Award last year, David is in the process of creating similar programs in Neosho and Montgomery Counties, the other two lowest-usage counties in Southeast Kansas, as well as in the counties of Leavenworth, Wyandotte, Saline, Cowley and Seward. He has also recruited the Trauma Nurses of Kansas and other regional health agencies through the Kansas Department of Health & Environment and helped raise money both locally and regionally. The short-term goal is to establish and sustain the program in 20–30 low-usage counties; the long-term goal is S.A.F.E. in all 105 Kansas counties.

Local student leaders develop the program so they have ownership. Safety messages are part of every communication within the school. The program creates healthy competition among county high schools to see who can do the best in seat belt usage. It's coupled with seat belt enforcement by local law enforcement. It

brings school officials, law enforcement and students together in a fun, meaningful program that should develop lifelong driving safety habits. They are finding that younger siblings and parents are also benefiting from the habits being developed by many of the teens. David's passion and enthusiasm for this program have been contagious across the state. His work will have lasting effects on the safety of teens across the state.

Southwest Kansas Community Driving Day/Week

In 2005, a BP-approved contract water hauler was involved in an accident that resulted in the loss of 6 lives (4 were children). As a result, BP looked at the 9 counties they operate in and found that the overall injury and fatality rate was very high considering the low concentration of population in those counties. In an effort to make these southwest Kansas counties a safer place to drive, BP began what has become an annual event: the Southwest Kansas Community Driving Day. This event consists of a day of activities for the whole family to help raise awareness of driving hazards and to encourage the use of seat belts. Entities involved in the event include Bp contractors, Kansas Highway Patrol, Ulysses Police Department, Grant County Sheriff, EMS, Fire/Rescue, Kansas Traffic Safety Resource Office, railroad safety, and MADD as well as 4-wheeler retailers, car dealerships, and local businesses. With the addition of prizes and lunch, it is fun as well as informative.

In 2009, in an effort to engage more young people, the organization moved into Ulysses school district 214 with age-appropriate information for booster seat and seat belt use for all students (K-12). The high school activities added a pep rally with a very important message. Driving Day t-shirts are distributed in the community. A Driving for Donuts program has been used at the Ulysses High School, where students were greeted as they came to school, and given t-shirts if they were wearing their seat belt and donuts to all who stopped to visit about their driving habits and seatbelt use. BP has produced a driving video that shared the driving day event, along with the hazards of driving in this area and the tragic loss experienced by a BP team leader whose daughter was one of the four young ladies killed in a single crash in Ulysses on March 28, 2008.

Youth Leadership Butler, Butler, County, Kan.

Youth Leadership Butler is a group of high school juniors from all over the county who come together for a leadership class. One of the things they must accomplish is a community service project that addresses a need in their communities. The 2009 class chose to address Texting and Driving as their issue. With the help of a mini-grant from KDOT, they...

- put up street signs at the entrance and exits of their school driveways with the logo, "Stay Alive, Don't Text and Drive."
- ordered lanyards with the logo, then set up a table in the school lunchrooms and, during lunch, showed video clips of texting-related crashes, talked to the students who stopped by, and distributed the lanyards.
- set up tables at schools without representatives in the Leadership class.
- timed the project to precede the Kansas Legislature's consideration of texting and driving legislation.
- raised \$1500 to match the state donation to meet their costs.

Officer Kenneth Garrett, DUI Officer, Kansas City, Kan. Police Department

As with any major metropolitan area, Kansas City, Kansas has a significant amount of drinking establishments within its boundaries. The rank-and-file KCKPD officer makes great efforts to ensure that drivers do not drive while under the influence; however, 911 calls for service are a frequent and overriding priority, which can make traffic enforcement spotty. KCKPD created a DUI enforcement position to assist with this concern.

Officer Garrett has worked in the DUI enforcement position for about 14 years. During that time, he has acted as our agency's compliance officer and records custodian. He oversees officers' certification relating to the Intoxilyzer 8000 (and its calibration). Aside from these responsibilities, Officer Garrett has daily DUI patrol

duties (mostly at night). These duties consist of making DUI stops, processing DUI offenders, and assisting other officers with DUI arrests. In 2009, Officer Garrett made 649 car stops, 474 DUI arrests, and issued 2,433 other citations relating to DUI enforcement. He typically works from 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. to increase the likelihood of a DUI encounter. These hours facilitate enforcement; however, court cases are scheduled in the day time hours. For every hour that a DUI arrest and processing requires, an equal amount (or more) of time is required in Driver's License hearings, prosecutors offices, waiting outside the court room and sitting in the witness stand.

Where Officer Garrett takes his responsibility to a new level is in his encouragement of other KCKPD officers to make DUI stops during their street patrols. He does this by offering to process their DUI drivers, complete their tedious paperwork and other tasks related to the arrests for them. This gets the officers back on the streets quickly where they can be available to respond to other traffic offenses and 911 calls. Kenny does all this in addition to his own aggressive patrols and arrests of DUI offenders. Additionally, he has dedicated personal time to acquiring training in a variety of areas. As a result, he teaches accident investigation as well as DUI enforcement at the KCKPD Police Academy. Truly, Officer Garrett's commitment to DUI enforcement has made a significant impact on safety in the Kansas City, Kansas community.

Lt. J.P. Thurlo, Fairway, Kansas Police Department

The City of Fairway, in the KC metro area, consists of mainly residential roadways, with the exception of Shawnee Mission Parkway. Conducting traffic enforcement operations while still responding to calls for service – especially with a small nine-officer department like Fairway PD – has always been challenging. Lt. Thurlo was tasked with creating a traffic enforcement team focused on reducing traffic crashes and increasing traffic law compliance without negatively impacting the department's ability to respond to calls for service. This was in 2007. Since that time he's managed a highly successful program with minimal impact to both the department budget and patrol schedule. Traffic crashes in 2007 were reduced by nearly 50% from the 2006 totals, and injury accidents were reduced almost half. These reduced rates have continued despite increased traffic congestion, a multi-month construction project on Shawnee Mission Parkway, and increased demands on patrol assets.

Lt. Thurlo succeeds by careful planning, leading by example, and searching out all available resources. Through careful research, he obtained training slots for three officers (including himself) to become certified police motorcycle operators. This training is thought by many to be one of the most challenging courses an officer can take, and the motorcycle units have been extremely effective. Lt. Thurlo has also made the most of the department's participation in KDOT's funding of Special Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP) campaigns and sobriety check lanes. These operations have surprised many motorists who believed they were "safe" from enforcement by using side roads. Lt. Thurlo, when faced with limited resources, single-handedly conducts enforcement operations. This leadership by example has inspired other officers to redouble their efforts to maintain safe roads for our residents.

In conclusion, unlike larger departments where traffic supervision is a full time assignment, Lt. Thurlo's traffic supervision hat is just one of many he wears within the organization. His success in this particular field is reflected in Fairway's continued low traffic accident and injury rates as compared to pre-traffic program data. His exemplary planning skills, high sense of selfless service, and vision for a safer future bring great credit to him, his profession, and the City of Fairway.