

West Central Florida Community Traffic Safety Team  
Meeting Minutes of August 10, 2005

The meeting was called to order by Chair Steve Diez. Steve welcomed all members present and introductions were given. We had several members from AARP.

The minutes of the July meeting were approved as submitted.

Old Business: Team Building – letters will be going out to those members who have not been to a meeting for six months.

Problem Locations – One location was mentioned in Hernando County at US 98 and CR 491 for the construction schedule. Steve said he would check on this location. Peter Hsu congratulated Citrus and Hernando County with the trend in fatalities decreasing in both counties in 2005. On a statewide basis, the number of fatalities so far this year has increased by 12%. Citrus County has 11 fatalities this year so far compared with 17 at the same time last year and a total of 38 in 2004. Hernando County has 13 fatalities to date and at the same time last year had 23 with a total in 2004 of 45. In all the surrounding counties, the numbers are going up.

AARP gave the following report of their training activities.

<b>Event</b>	<b>Citrus</b>	<b>Hernando</b>	<b>Total</b>
2003 classes	64	93	157
2003 graduates	1524	2091	3615
2004 classes	89	101	190
2004 graduates	2043	2105	4148

Steve was requested to conduct a bike rodeo at a church in Hernando in July. He said they only had 4 children attend. He felt it was poorly executed and they may try again in the fall if the event can be promoted better.

It was announced that the son of Kris with the Citrus Sheriff's Office married the daughter of Karen from the Hernando County Health Department. Our congratulations to the bride and groom.

Peter distributed the traffic safety trading cards produced to educate the public on safety issues. He said he could offer his help to the AARP and AAA to help promote safety. The new transportation bill is being signed. Construction funding is being increased. Some funding will also be allocated to the Safe Ways to School program to help build sidewalks and for educational purposes. A statewide Safe Ways to School Task Force has been formed. Peter also said there is rural highway funding available to improve safety. These programs should start on October 1<sup>st</sup>. He also encouraged application for Section 402 Safety Grants as there should be an increase in funding amounts with this new legislation. If you know of a location with a crash problem, it should be identified for possible funding.

Peter also discussed a new educational and enforcement campaign along the I-4 corridor in Hillsborough County. He said there are two major street lighting projects coming in two years along US 19 from Spring Hill to SR 50. We need feedback from the group to think about an innovative approach. We have time to think about it and plan what would be effective. For the enforcement side, we could purchase lasers, a speed trailer, and/or message boards. The Federal Highway Administration is looking at other than engineering fixes; they are considering education and enforcement as part of the safety construction improvement projects.

Barbara Reincke reported on some Walk Your Child to School Day activities conducted in Marion County. They did an early morning safety fair, have officials speak to the students, involve School Board members, and pass out litter bags with goodies to take home and share. Jeanette reported they are producing some stickers for walkers.

Kris spoke about a trail connecting US 19 to SR 41 across Citrus County. They are putting in a side path.

Peter asked enforcement personnel if they patrol US 19. They replied, YES. They have a Labor Day DUI operation planned. So far this year, the Hernando County Sheriff's Office has made 300 DUI arrests. On Spring Hill Drive, they have made 90 DUI arrests.

Another problem location was identified at the new Challenger School on Elgin. This is a significant area with congestion. The turn lane is still under construction, and there is one way in and one way out. In the afternoon there is a significant problem. Steve Diez said he would ask them to look at it tomorrow.

George said the sign at Spring Hill Drive and the Suncoast Parkway is still not up.

Peter reported we have 250 white lights. FDOT is doing a statewide analysis of their effectiveness. The preliminary report says they are effective. We have some reserved for Hernando and Citrus counties. It was reported David Bland has the list for Hernando County. Kris said she would ask the Citrus Sheriff's Office if they need more white lights.

Gail Underwood with 55 Alive discussed an idea of having enforcement personnel go into the schools to discuss the new change in the seat belt law at 18 years old. It was suggested that this be put in the Drivers Ed classes. Sgt. Walker said there is a problem with judging age. It was suggested that a bookmark could be created with the new law.

The Hernando County Sheriff's Office saturated the school zones during the first week of school. The School Resource Officers made morning announcements and they put out media releases about school bus laws.

George asked a question about a suspended driver's license. They are asked if they are aware of their suspended license. The officer runs the license through teletype. If it is

deemed a non criminal infraction, they write them a ticket. If they know it is suspended and are driving anyway, they take them to jail.

AARP reported a reduction in fatalities has been shown with those that complete their classes. This lasts about three years. Now they recommend taking the class over to learn and renew their skills so they don't go back to old habits. Most insurance companies offer a discount for completing the class.

The Health Department got a CDC grant for injury prevention. The DOH encourages their Departments to be in contact with their CTST.

Kris's bicycle program activities for July included the Koala Tee Academy camp on M-W-F, continuing their camp visits to county trails. On Tuesdays (July 5, 12, 19) she worked with Citrus County Parks and Recreation with camps at Inverness Middle, Lecanto Middle, and Crystal River Middle schools. On July 26<sup>th</sup>, she worked with Tiny Treasure at Beverly Hills Park with 15 children. On July 25<sup>th</sup>, she held a camp for 45 children at North Oak Baptist Church.

Sue Littnan sent the following information to report on her Child Passenger Safety Program for July:

- 27 parents and caregivers participated in classes
- 16 safety seats were provided
- \$240 was received in fees and donations

Respectfully submitted,  
Jeanette Rouse for Sue Littnan

**Members Present:**

Barbara Reincke	WCFL Driver Improvement	352-726-8862
Shirlee Cox	AAA Auto Club South	352-683-3446
Steven Diez	Hernando County Planning	352-754-4057
Tracy DiMuro	Hernando County Sheriff's Office	352-754-6830
George Drobina	VFW 10209	352-688-8244
Karen Gidden	Hernando Co Health Dept	352-540-6800
Peter Hsu	FDOT Safety	813-975-6251
Paulette Murrin	Hernando County Health Dept	352-540-6800
Kristen Reinhard	Citrus County Sheriff's Office	352-726-4488
Jeanette Rouse	FDOT Safety	813-975-6256
Herman Sinemus	AARP	352-344-1901
James Walker	Hernando County Sheriff's Office	352-754-6830
Gail Leatherwood	AARP	352-686-2366

