

## **West Central Florida Community Traffic Safety Team Meeting Minutes of December 8, 2004**

Chairman Steve Diez called the meeting to order at 1:10 pm at the Hernando County Sheriff's Office. Introductions were made and the minutes of the previous meeting were approved. The CTST welcomed Chief Steve Burch from the Crystal River Police Department.

### **OLD BUSINESS-PROBLEM LOCATIONS**

Peter reported that the growth in Hernando County is up to a population of 150,000, which means that the FDOT is planning highway safety projects for future growth and asking the county to work with them. Pedestrian fatalities went from 2 to 7 on US 19. Steve added that many are due to people trying to cross 6 lanes of traffic and misjudging traffic, having poor lighting along much of the highway, or alcohol related. There were 35 ped fatalities in Hillsborough County, and 80% of ped fatalities in Pasco County were alcohol related.

Peter reported that the intersection of CR 486 and Croft Road in Citrus County will have a new signal when the widening project is complete.

### **NOVEMBER EVENTS**

Sue reported that 18 parents attended Car Seat Safety Classes in November, and 13 safety seats were provided at the Health Department. Along with Deputy Kurt Lynn and Bill Villanova, Sue provided a car seat safety class and safety seats for 4 people in the Teen Parent Program at WTI. A car seat training was also provided for 12 members of the OB nursing staff at Citrus Memorial Hospital.

Kris conducted bike education Classes at Lecanto Primary, doing 9 classes a day. She was able to provide bike safety programming at the Christian Academy for the first time. Koala Tee school will offer bike safety during the holiday break from Dec. 22-29.

School is out for the Holiday recess as of Dec. 17, so be aware that more children will be out on their bikes on the roads.

Steve said that since there is a new school board member in Hernando County, he is hoping to add bike /ped safety to Hernando Schools in addition to the classroom bike safety provided by the Sheriffs Office.

Crystal River Police Department conducted a driver's license checkpoint on October 30<sup>th</sup>. 95 cars went through the checkpoint which resulted in 1 DUI and 25 citations in 2 hours.

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

The Hernando SO traffic safety tip trading cards made their debut at this meeting, and they look great!

A suggestion was made to run a contest where kids can earn prizes as an incentive for collecting various amounts of the cards. Blinking reflector lights and bike helmets could be given as prizes.

AAA representative is going to visit restaurants and bars to educate the servers of alcohol on the "Tow to Go" program sponsored by Budweiser. If a patron has too much to drink, they can call and have their car towed home along with a ride for themselves. This may be more successful than calling for a ride and leaving the vehicle behind. 1,400 vehicles were towed between November and January statewide last year. There were 27 vehicles towed in Hernando County. No figure was available on cars towed in Citrus County.

Jeanette showed the "Tampa Bay Recipes for the Road" recipe book of non-alcoholic drinks for the holidays. The recipes were provided by various restaurants in Pinellas and Hillsborough Counties. Next year she plans to extend the coverage to cover Pasco, Hernando and Citrus Counties.

The Traffic Times newsletter included information on the Tow to Go program, travel tips and shopping hints. It also has an article on the "Tie One on for Safety" program from MADD.

Chief Burch asked about turn lanes on US 19 in the area near Hwy 98. With traffic moving at 55 or 60 mph, it is very dangerous to have a vehicle slowing up in the right hand lane to make a right turn.

#### **OPEN FORUM**

Denny from FDOT reported that traffic management centers will be promoted starting this year through 2012. Site management reduces time by 55% on closures and reduces crashes by 40%.

Peter reported that Hernando County is going to be the fastest growing county in the country, per the newspaper report. Estimates show that the population may increase from 150,000 to 400,000 in the next decade.

The roadways need to be upgraded to keep up with the exploding population of people and traffic.

Steve would like to start a "Share the Road" Campaign with billboards, PSA's etc. to educate drivers on roadway rules allowing bike riders to use the roadway. Many drivers do not know that bikes do not belong on the sidewalk. The Florida Bike Association has a video on bike education that can be obtained by checking with Steve or Kris.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sue Littnan  
Secretary

*The next meeting is at 1:00 pm  
Wednesday, January 12  
Citrus County Government Center  
in Lecanto*

**Members Present:**

Scott Bierwier	Hernando County Sheriff's Office	352-754-6830
Cristi Brown	Hernando County Risk Management	352-754-4429
Ralph Cotier	WCFL Driver Improvement	352-726-8862
Steven Diez	Hernando County Planning	352-754-4057x126
Peter Hsu	FDOT Safety	813-975-6251
Sue Littnan	Citrus County Health Department	352-726-1731x242
Paulette Murrin	Hernando County Health Department	352-754-4067x107
Jeanette Rouse	FDOT Safety	813-975-6256
Patrick Taylor	Hernando County Fire	352-540-4353
Donna Young	Citrus County School Board	352-726-1931
Shirlee Cox	AAA Auto Club South	352-683-3446
Phillip Wood	Hernando County Sheriff's Office	352-754-6830
Steven Burch	Crystal River Police Department	352-795-4241