

e-note
week of
4-20-07



featuring the geeky but lovable mascot and spokes-car...Sheldon

INSIDE:
Sheldon's first-ever
MOVIE REVIEW:
DISTURBIA



arrive alive: it's the journey

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EXXON

Sheldon's business of the week

Clarksville Exxon has been a supporter of courteous driving for two years. Fortuitously (SAT word!) located at the crossroads of Route 108 + Route 32, these are a helpful bunch of guys. They have—many a time—stopped what they were doing to change a tail light for a grateful driver. Shouts to you for taking good care of Sheldon and all the local courteous peeps.



SCHOOL RANKINGS

4/20/07

Centennial

Hammond

Long Reach

Wilde Lake

Howard

Reservoir

Glenelg

Marriots Ridge

River Hill

Atholton

Oakland Mills

Mt Hebron

Glenelg Country

CRUISE CONTROL DANGEROUS IN THE RAIN TRUTH OR URBAN LEGEND?

So have you received the e-mail about this 36 year old female from Kilgore, Texas? "It was raining when her car suddenly began to hydro-plane and literally flew through the air! When she explained to the highway patrolman what had happened he told her something that every driver should know—NEVER DRIVE IN THE RAIN WITH YOUR CRUISE CONTROL ON. The highway patrolman told her that if the cruise control is on and your car begins to hydro-plane—when your tires lose contact with the pavement, your car will accelerate to a higher rate of speed and you take off like an airplane."

TRUTH OR URBAN LEGEND?

Well, your ace reporter and geeky car guy Sheldon investigated (there are several urban legend websites you can go to to check out such well-circulated stories)...anyway, we discovered that the actual story may or may not be true...and the explanation offered is a little sketchy, BUT the advice is still worth heeding. Once site claims

Like most urban legends, this tale offers a "true story" of an extreme example of a rare, but real, risk...

Automotive experts, manufacturers and highway patrolmen advise against using a vehicle's cruise control on wet or icy pavement. Doing so can delay your reaction to situations that often offer only fractions of a second to maintain or regain control. To do so, you must reduce power and slow the wheels so that the tires can once again grip the pavement.

But not all cars will "accelerate to a high rate of speed" when they hydroplane. Rather, your vehicle's wheels will maintain the speed set by the cruise control. If set at 50 mph, the tires will continue to rotate at that rate—they will not suddenly accelerate out of control just because they aren't in contact with the road. *

Bottom Line: In poor conditions keep control of your car in your own hands!

*<http://www.breakthechain.org/exclusives/cruise.html>

Road-Rage leads to death on I-270

A Chrysler Sebring convertible overturned, ejecting the couple inside, after the driver exchanged gestures with the driver of a Chevy pickup, police said. Near the Urbana exit, **in an apparent attempt to have the last word**, police said, the pickup driver slammed on his brakes when the Chrysler Sebring convertible was on the truck's tail, prompting the convertible's driver to swerve right. The convertible slammed against the guardrail, flipped over and barreled into an embankment; both the driver and passenger were killed.

Sheldon says: if you must have the last word, let it be "whatever" ...and say it to yourself.

CIVILITY RULES!!!

This week we examine the 6th Rule of Civility from Dr. P.M. Forni of Johns Hopkins University. Just like the letters of C-O-U-R-T-E-S-Y, the 25 Rules of Civility can help you travel YOUR particular road.

Civility Rule #6 Speak Kindly

"Don't discount the power of your words."*

We've all heard that if you can't say something nice don't say anything at all. How about not just avoiding **Destructive** speech, but focusing on **CON-structive** speech? That's what we mean by **Courtesy on the Road**. Some say that our campaign cannot be effective unless we explain what we are **AGAINST**. But it's always been our desire to be encouraging + positive; to emphasize and reward the good—not punish the bad. On the road unkind speech or aggressive behavior can result in tragedy in just moments, like what happened to the couple who was killed in the road rage incident on I-270, described on page one of this e-note. Speak (and act) kindly.

Dr. PM Forni is co-founder and current director of The Civility Initiative at Johns Hopkins University and author of **Choosing Civility: Twenty-five Rules of Considerate Conduct**

* p. 60.

Sheldon's first-ever movie review Does dangerous driving disturb-ya?

Maybe you were one of the millions of teens who saw the movie **Disturbia** which opened this past weekend. And while Sheldon does not normally review movies and whereas I am not going to deal with any of the serial-killer-slasher stuff, I did want to bring your attention to the opening scene which was a **car's worst nightmare**. Illustrating ALL the letters of **C-O-U-R-T-E-S-Y** (see right), this opening scene builds the perfect storm—a confluence (SAT word!) of thoroughly "disturbing" driving phenomena.

First off, Kyle (the 17-year-old behind the wheel) and his dad were riding an emotional high, heading home from their father-son fishing trip. Naturally, they want to share the experience with Mom at home, so the dad gets on the cell phone. He and Mom chat awhile; then he stupidly gives the phone to his son, a rookie driver, while they travel at high speeds down the highway. (Dare I suggest that they were probably over the limit?) Between the distraction of the heady banter the attention-sucking cell phone, and the euphoria, ANYONE would be paying less than 100% attention to the road.

Enter: an aggressive driver in a pick-up truck, passing without warning, cutting off our hero and his dad. Now Kyle's hormones are really raging, but he fights the urge to play chicken with the truck, remembering that his dad is beside him in the car. Mr. Aggressive Pick-up plays with him while simultaneously tail-gating the—surprise—previously unseen sedan driving in front of the truck. Well...you can only imagine how this ends up (though it does so via a surprising and circuitous route!)

At least these dangerous driving behaviors are not glorified or presented with the casual appeal of some films. The remainder of the 104 minutes deals with the fall-out of this horrifying incident. Let the viewer beware: driving while emotional, road rage and aggressive driving can end up in tragedy, house arrest, serial killers and other "disturbing" stuff. 🚗



C
Do not cut people off

O
be aware of Others

U
Use common sense

R
Avoid Road Rage

T
Do not Tailgate

E
Do not Drive While Emotional

S
Use your Signal

Y
You can make a difference



Details almost set 4 the "CAN U SAY LIMO?" RAFFLE

We will be raffling off the most coveted of all prizes...the incredibly cool limo ride, where you and nine other students can travel in style to Baltimore, Annapolis, Washington DC, dinner or a movie!

It could be YOU! check in next week for details.

...and now 4 the student caught being **safe, smart + courteous**—

the Sheldon Sighting winner of the week

SARAH EDDY

mt. hebron high school

Caught driving on Route 99 near Route 29

Check out these sweeeeeet prizes:

Gift certificate to **Biago Day Spa**, Clarksville

Gift certificate to **Lucerna Grille**, Glenwood

Free oil change at **Clarksville Exxon**, Clarksville

\$20 gift certificate to the **Cookie Lee Jewelry Catalog**
courtesy of **Mindy Atlas, Glenelg**

Free facial + glamour makeover for you and a friend
from **Michelle Rucker, Mary Kay Rep**

2 free passes to the **Columbia Association**

Gift certificate from **David's Natural Market**, Wilde Lake

One dozen donuts from **Dunkin Donuts**,
Clarksville or Scaggsville

Free coffee from **Cafe 10**, Clarksville

8-pc Chicken Nuggets from **Chick-fil-A**, Columbia Mall

2 Convoy in Progress magnets from **Follow Me Necessities**

1 month FREE Tae Kwon Do lessons (for two!)

at **Integrity Martial Arts**, Savage

Hey! past, current and future winners! Be sure to thank the businesses that donated your gifts and let them know that you appreciate them supporting Courtesy on the Road!

MAY THE MAGNET BE WITH YOU

arrive
alive

Signaling, backing up slowly
and outta here (till next week!)

Sheldon the handsome little car guy

Courtesy on the Road is a proud partner of:



Traf-FAQs

A traf-FAQ is a little-known traffic-related factoid. The first student to e-mail Sheldon with the correct answer, available on our web site, will win 8-pc chicken nuggets from Chick-fil-A at the Columbia Mall.

Last week's Traf-FAQ:
According to the Maryland Driver's Handbook, experienced cyclists on the road can reach speeds of: **20-30 mph**

Congrats to Daviea Harvey of Hammond and Michelle Harland of Wilde Lake!

This week's Traf-FAQ:
Of the 3,052 crashes in HoCo in '05, ____ were fatal, ____ were injury crashes and a total of ____ persons were injured.

How to win? Now go to www.courtesyontheroad.com, locate the "T"—Traf-FAQs—page, then click to email the correct answer to info@courtesyontheroad.com. First correct answer gets nuggets, courtesy of Sheldon +



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