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COVER

“Dead End—No U-turn”
 By Lester Young

Our Victories

by James J. Baxter, President, NMA

Once a year we ask our members to make an extra contribution to the *NMA Foundation*. We would like to be a self-sufficient lean mean machine, but our challenges always seem to exceed our means. Our opponents also have slightly deeper pockets than we do. For example, the collection of cities that has decided to rob their citizens with ticket cameras, rather than properly time traffic lights or set rational speed limits, always have a little more working capital than we do.

Most often, our successes are exemplified by things that *didn't* happen. A bill that *didn't* pass. A member who *wasn't* found guilty of a traffic violation. A newspaper article that *didn't* blame the world's ills on automobiles. Or, a government mandate that *wasn't* imposed.

Every day I marvel at the simple fact that we're here at all. Then, I think if NMA weren't here, who would the reporters call for the motorist perspective on red light cameras, speed limits, emissions inspections, roadblocks, HOV (High-Occupancy Vehicle) lanes, or traffic calming? Who would the lady who was just insulted and harangued at a traffic stop call for help? Where would the non-drinking member who was arrested for drunk driving go for a little guidance? How would a community activist find information to stop the installation of speed bumps in her neighborhood? Who would write the articles and editorials defending drivers against poor public policies, social engineering, and the latest anti-automobile campaign? Prior to

1982, the answer was, "No where, no way, no one."

I'd like to give you one example of something that *did* happen as a result of your past donations.

This past year we constantly confronted cities that employed ticket cameras and accused them of refusing to employ simple traffic engineering practices to eliminate intersection violations. They scoffed and claimed that the only

Most often, our successes are exemplified by things that didn't happen. A bill that didn't pass. A member who wasn't found guilty of a traffic violation. A newspaper article that didn't blame the world's ills on automobiles. Or, a government mandate that wasn't imposed.

way to reign in the criminals who run red lights was to fine them to death with ticket cameras. But, because we had a small reserve of funds in the *NMA Foundation*, we were able to issue

our \$10,000 Challenge to ticket camera cities. We offered to go "head-to-head" against the cameras with traffic engineering measures and prove that the real fault for most intersection violations, and accidents, lies with the people responsible for placing, maintaining and operating traffic lights.

Dead silence. Not one city had the courage to take us up on our challenge. Why? They know we're right. Not one public official spoke up to refute our claims, knowing that the obvious expectation would be for his/her city to take us up on our wager.

So what was (is) this worth? A great deal. Any time we talk to the press or a public official about red light cameras, we have the moral high ground. We put our money where our mouth was and the opposition's response was deafening in its silence!

continued on next page

Victories

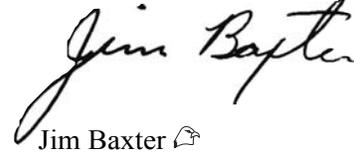
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So, have we stopped ticket cameras in their tracks? No, but we have sure slowed them down. And, as long as we can back up our claims with action, our effectiveness only increases.

Included with this newsletter are a donation response form (page 9) and an envelope for your use. I hope you will see the value in making a solid donation to the tax exempt **National Motorists Association Foundation**. Your donation is tax deductible to the full

extent of the law.

Thank you in advance for your generous contribution and support.



Jim Baxter 

Technology Is A Wonderful Thing?

Technology can blind us. It makes things so easy and convenient that we don't always consider the ramifications. And, now those great leaps in technology are blinding the motorists in Washington.

In Yakima, Washington motorists can now plead their case via email. On the surface, this may seem like a great idea. Proponents say that defendants don't have to miss a day of work to appear before the judge. This program handles only minor infractions

(speeding, running a stop sign, equipment violations, etc) In Yakima, all e-mails from defendants are handled on secure servers. The judge holds hearings, reads the e-mail, and issues a verdict. The court clerk later mails the verdict.

How can we argue against this time saver? Because the program is only available to those who **"plead guilty"** and ask for a mitigation hearing!

The city is looking for a way to mass process traffic tickets because

their court system is overcrowded with people contesting tickets. If the courts are that crowded, then the real solution is to roll back stupid regulations and laws, and obscene penalties that force citizens into courts. Instead, the public will buy into a system that makes their exploitation more streamlined and efficient. And, because this is almost guaranteed to save this particular court time and money, you are sure to see this type of program coming to a court near you. 

Now, This Is A Defense!

By Eric Skrum, Managing Editor

North Carolina resident Henry L. Anderson, Jr. is fighting his Virginia traffic ticket.

Normally, I wouldn't comment on a situation like this because the majority of people I talk with during the day are fighting their own tickets. But, when I read about Mr. Anderson, I knew I had to pass on the story because he seems to be going the extra mile.

It has been estimated that Mr. Anderson has spent approximately \$20,000 on his defense. He was accused of driving 99 mph in a 55 mph zone. He hired House of Delegates Majority Leader Morgan Griffith and David Walker to represent him in this case.

Mr. Anderson was convicted in Botetourt General District Court in May. He was sentenced to 19 days in jail and fined \$500. His driver's license was suspended for three months. He has appealed and his trial has been set for late October 2002.

His defense is going to focus on the radar device and the deputy sheriff who operated it. He claims the device didn't meet state standards and that the officer hadn't received the required training to operate the device. Also, the radar device most likely malfunctioned while measuring his speed.

Mr. Anderson has also hired Roger Boyell (a Moorestown, NJ electronics engineer who has been giving expert

forensic assistance for 20 years) to give testimony in support of their contention with the radar and operator.

So why fight the ticket and spend so much more than the ticket is worth? "He believes he is innocent," Walker said. "There's no way he would go through what he's been through if he sincerely didn't believe something was wrong with the radar." 

*Support the NMA Foundation.
Give a donation today!*



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Laser Jammer Testing

By John Carr, Massachusetts Activist

John Carr (Massachusetts Activist) conducted these tests on three types of laser jammers with Tom Frank (Rhode Island State Chapter Coordinator and radar expert).

The laser we used, an LTI UltraLyte 100LR, was the latest model when purchased in 2000. The 100LR has a more powerful laser than older guns, giving it longer range and better jam resistance, and possibly better lock-on time. The laser also has an audible jam alarm.

We had three kinds of jammers: K40 "defuser," Blinder M-06 (an older model), and Blinder M-10 (the current model). The K40 is a license plate frame with a jammer inside. The Blinder is a pair of modules about 8cm x 5cm x 1.5cm. Superficially, the emitter of the K40 and Blinder look the same, having an opaque slightly rounded plastic cover of similar size and shape.

The M-06 is discontinued but can be found for about \$50. The K40 costs around \$200 and the M-10 costs approximately \$300.

The older jammers, the M-06 and K40, emit pulsed infrared light at all times, while the newer M-10 is normally inactive and starts jamming when it detects laser. An audible alarm also sounds.

The laser detector in the M-10 makes it more effective than the older models when actually jamming because the M-10 can adapt its jamming pattern to the source while the others emit a fixed pattern of pulses.

The need to see the incoming laser signal is the biggest weakness of the M-10. The laser beam is a very narrow cone. When it's 300 feet away from the gun, it's about as wide as a license plate. Only at ranges of well over 1000 feet does it cover the entire car. You can get hit with laser at close range and never know it because your laser

detector was outside of the laser beam. If the M-10 does not see the laser beam, it will not work.

In rural areas, most laser shots are from the front at about 1000 feet away, aimed at the front license plate. Because police are trained to aim at the license plate, the Blinders should be mounted near the plate. The K40 is built into a license plate frame.

Our test site allowed shots at up to a half-mile range. The operator is the real limitation on long-range shots. Although the advertised range is 4000 feet, 2500 feet is about as far as you can easily identify a car and hold the beam on it. At long-range, it can take a second or so for the gun to lock on. Inside 1000 feet, the gun reports a speed in less than half a second 90 percent of the time.

Test Results

First, we tested the rumor that infrared-absorbing license plate covers and high beam headlights could defeat laser. A Honda Accord with both alleged countermeasures was as detectable as any other car.

Our test vehicles were two cars (a Ford Contour and an Audi S4), and an SUV (a Ford Expedition). Large SUVs are very vulnerable to laser. (Big, boxy trucks are the best targets.)

On the two cars, the Blinder M-10 mounted on the front generally prevented detection at ranges over 500 feet, and often prevented detection at shorter ranges. Detections at short range resulted from the laser beam missing the jammer modules.

On the back of the cars, the M-10 was similarly effective, especially when mounted inboard close to the license plate.

On the SUV, the front-mounted Blinder M-10 was ineffective at close range, about 60 percent effective from 500 feet to 1000 feet, and 90 percent effective outside that range. Mounting the jammers closer to the license plate

worked better.

With one exception, the M-06 and K40 were completely ineffective on the SUV. When we mounted both M-06 modules and the K40 adjacent to the front license plate, they were ineffective at very long range but defeated some laser shots inside 1500 feet. Mounted on the plate, they did nothing when shots were aimed at the headlights.

The K40 occasionally set off the laser gun jam alarm, and the plate-concentrated K40/M-06 jammer combination set off the jam alarm on the laser gun about 40 percent of the time within 1100 feet. In contrast, the M-10 never caused an alarm.

Summary

The K40 and Blinder M-06 are not effective against modern laser guns. The Blinder M-10 is very effective when mounted on a car and somewhat effective on the front of an SUV. Though the Blinder M-10 is more expensive, it seems to be the more effective device. 🐾

The Law On Jammers

Any device intended to interfere with speed measurement is illegal in California, the District of Columbia, Minnesota, Utah, and Virginia. These laws prohibit license plate covers designed to defeat laser as well as active radar and laser jammers. Oklahoma prohibits radar jammers but not laser jammers.

Sale or use of a radar jammer may violate federal law, depending on how the jammer works. In practice, FCC enforcement is usually limited to companies that sell jammers. 🐾

Just In Time For The Holidays!



New Books!

The first is *Ohio Traffic Tickets Are For The Birds: A Practical Defense Manual for Juveniles And Adults* by Brian Jonathan Wolk. This book is an extremely detailed manual on how to fight traffic tickets in Ohio (although there are some parts of the book that would be applicable in other states). Not only does it cover speeding tickets, but it also gives advice on other types of traffic tickets (i.e. tickets based on traffic signs, "reasonable control," "right-of-way tickets," etc). Furthermore, it offers a review of the *Ohio Manual On Uniform Traffic Control Devices*. This book includes helpful checklists, statutes, and forms that you will use in preparing your case. If you want to be prepared to fight a traffic ticket of any sort, *Ohio Traffic Tickets Are For The Birds* is a great start.

The second book is *Winning In Traffic Court: I Fight My Traffic Tickets In Court, On My Own... And Usually Win... Anyone Can* by Bryan Fitz Gerald. This book is a helpful, enjoyable read on how to fight a traffic ticket. I say it's enjoyable because Gerald not only explains how to fight a traffic ticket, but also offers amusing anecdotes along with his justification for fighting every ticket you receive. This justification not only parallels the NMA philosophy, but it is delivered in an engaging entertaining style with plenty of humor. This isn't to say that the information is any less valid than other books on the subject. However, the writing style makes this book not only palatable, but also an enjoyable read.

Of course, there are more books that the NMA offers as great holiday gifts. *Joyriding: A Manual for Learning the Fundamentals of*

Masterful Driving is a great gift for any beginning driver. *Speeding Excuses That Work* by NMA member Alex Carroll is a humorous look at traffic stops that a driver of any age can enjoy.

Give A Gift Membership!

Or you might want to give the gift that keeps on giving all year long—a membership in the NMA! *Gift Memberships* are discounted at 25.00 and are a great way to show your support of the NMA! You can order a Gift Membership by using the form on page 13 of this issue. You can order our books and other great gift ideas by using the order form on page 15 of this issue. And, you can place multiple orders by calling our Membership Department at 800-882-2785.

Have a safe and happy holiday season!

The NMA staff. 🐾

Photo Contest Winner



The latest winner in our cover photo contest is Lester Young of Freehold, New Jersey.

He suggested a variety of captions for his photo such as "New Jersey's Automotive Version of a Chinese Finger Trap." And, "New Jersey's Version of 'Hotel California': You can check in, but you can never leave."

The photo contest continues. The *NMAF NEWS* is looking for interesting, motorist-related graphics or photos for its cover. If we use your entry, *NMAF NEWS* will send you \$50.

Here are the requirements.

- Orientation: It should be **vertically** oriented with the subject of the photo in the bottom two-thirds of the graphic area. Also, the subject should also be to one side or the other to allow room for captions.
 - Topic: Your entry must be motorist-related in its content.
- Please send your entry to:
- Cover Contest
NMAF NEWS
402 W. 2nd Street
Wauwaukee, WI 53597
- You can also email your entry to nma@motorists.org.
- Please remember to include your name and address with your entry. If you wish to have your photo or

drawing returned, please include a self-addressed stamped envelope suitable for that purpose. 📧

Visit one of the NMA web sites for more motorist information.

www.motorists.org

www.speedtrap.org

www.roadblock.org

What's Next? Penalties? Points? Fines?

by Aarne Frobom

Seat-belt use nationally is hovering around 75 per cent, with significant regional variation, and lower use rates among light-truck drivers and males, and persons of various age groups. To many safety crusaders, these numbers mean more lawmaking is needed.

Advocates of belt use at first agitated for mandatory belt use, with "secondary" enforcement. That is, a ticket for violating the seat-belt law could only be issued if a traffic policeman pulled a driver over for another offense. Secondary enforcement produced a slight increase in belt use, and may have influenced traffic-cop behavior. Infractions that would not have triggered a traffic stop may have caused drivers to be pulled over if they were also not wearing a seat belt. In some of these cases, the police may have issued tickets that they formerly wouldn't have, in order to justify the stop for the seat-belt citation. So "secondary" enforcement was a political compromise that eased the way for stiffer laws, and provided dubious protection to motorists' rights.

The current party line among seat-belt activists is that "primary" enforcement is needed to get the national use rate up above 75 percent. Eighteen states and DC have primary enforcement, and advocates point to higher use rates in these states as the "only way" to get people to buckle up. They're agitating for another penalty on states' federal highway aid to force state legislators to enact primary enforcement laws in the remaining 32 states. This could become a feature of the 2003 federal highway bill.

But there's a problem. In Michigan, for example, seat-belt use rose as high as 83 per cent following mandatory enforcement, which was instituted with a ticket blitz, and remains a popular cause among police and politicians. But in the two years since, the rate of

belt use has fallen back to 78 percent. Some traffic-safety commentators are saying that the limit can be raised above 73 per cent or thereabouts only temporarily, in response to special promotions.

What if there's an upper limit to the number of Americans who can be made to wear seat belts regularly, that no amount of intervention can change? Even if this proves true, it doesn't mean that legislators will stop trying.

What's next? After mandatory enforcement becomes universal, and if its effect proves temporary, expect the penalties on taxpayers to get more personal than federal road aid. Higher fines will be the penalty of choice, since they bring bucks directly to local governments, and a steady 20 percent or more of the population can be counted on to contribute whenever the local books run into the red.

Quotas on seat-belt stops are a corollary to increased fines, and raise the possibility of quota-driven cops getting sloppy about noticing who is and isn't wearing their belt. Road-blocks to check for belt use (and troll for other violations) are a distinct possibility in most states.

Driver's license points for non-use are another possibility. Although these points are supposed to indicate the risk a driver poses to other traffic, points for non-use of belts has already been proposed in some states.

And if these measures don't work, others will probably be thought up.

Unfavorable statistics have never been a problem for traffic-safety crusaders. Good statistics indicate a successful program that should be rewarded with more funding. Bad statistics mean that we're not trying hard enough, and more funding is needed. When results oscillate between good and bad from year to year, in normal statistical variation around a steady mean, police agencies simply

issue alternate press releases according to which way the numbers are running this year. Seat-belt statistics could provide a rich source of public-safety funds for years to come. 📧

NMA Corrections

There was a typo in the article, "Moyers Situation Disappointing" on page 4 of the last issue of *NMAF NEWS*. We stated, "Ninety minutes later, an admissible test was taken and showed Moyers to be at .79 percent which is below the .08 percent law in Vermont."

It should have been .079 percent, which is below the .08 percent law in Vermont. 📧

Return Address

We receive quite a bit of mail without return addresses. This makes it difficult for our membership department to ensure that you receive your benefits. For example, a member will pay for his/her membership with a money order and not include the renewal form. That member's name isn't on the money order and the signature isn't legible. We then refer to the return address on the envelope for a name. If it isn't there, we don't know who to credit with the renewal.

Filling out the return address will make it easier for us to ensure that you receive the member benefits that you deserve. Please help us to better serve you. Thanks. 📧

NMA Gatherings



Massachusetts

On a rainy night in September, NMA members gathered in Burlington, Massachusetts to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the National Motorists Association. The event was planned and hosted by Massachusetts State Chapter Coordinator Ivan Sever. Ivan went all out with his efforts and had numerous activities planned. Members were encouraged to draw raffle tickets from a police officer's hat. Those numbers were then placed inside a police car piñata that Ivan brought with him. Winners walked away with various books, bumperstickers, and NMA shirts. The evening was brought to a nice close with the cutting of the

NMA birthday cake. You can find photos of this event on NMA Massachusetts Chapter web site at www.motorists.org/ma/party.html

Indiana

NMA Representative Gail Morrison met with members of NMA's Indiana Chapter in Indianapolis in September to discuss her exploits in helping the NMA repeal the National Maximum Speed Limit in 1995. Activists Matt Roberts and Jim Phend were among the members present. Along with humorous anecdotes, Gail offered the benefit of her experience in the guise of suggestions for the chapter's continuing efforts to increase the state speed limits in Indiana. Indiana

members who weren't at the meeting but who would like to help with legislation to increase the speed limit or to prohibit red light cameras can contact Matt (574-247-1918) or Jim (317-844-1932).

Elsewhere?

Are you interested in hosting an NMA gathering in your area? Contact your State Chapter Coordinator or Activist and let them know you would like to help organize an event for members. If there isn't a State Chapter Coordinator or Activist in your state, contact the National Office for help in establishing similar events in your area. 🐾

International Cameras

By Eric Skrum, Managing Editor



Many times when proponents of photo enforcement are extolling the virtues of these devices, they point to the success of other countries. But are other countries really enjoying success? Taking the word of these proponents (the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety and cities reaping the monetary benefits of these devices) is foolhardy. So we decided to give you clippings from newspapers that show the "success" these countries have had.

Ireland: "Operation Lifesaver, the road safety strategy initiated in the Louth/Meath Garda division, had 'no measurable effect on fatalities' during a key study period, it emerged yesterday."—The Irish Times, June 27, 2002.

Canada: "Five of six communities testing red light cameras, including Toronto, Hamilton, and Ottawa, report they help improve driver behaviour. But Transportation Minister Norm Sterling says there is absolutely no

improvement at other intersections in those communities.—Broadcast News (BN), June 27, 2002.

"Privacy Commissioner George Radwanski said yesterday he's asking the Supreme Court of British Columbia to declare the police force's use of a video camera in Kelowna, B.C., is a violation of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms as well as international covenants."—Ottawa Citizen, June 22, 2002 Lancashire.

United Kingdom: "More children are dying on Lancashire roads despite claims that speed cameras are making the county safer. The number of youngsters killed on the highways has risen by 60 percent in the last year, new figures have revealed. The overall number of accidents involving death or serious injury has also increased by 16 percent."—Lancashire Evening Post (Preston) June 26, 2002.

United Kingdom: "The latest road fatality figures show that far from being reduced, the number of people

killed on our roads has risen since the spread of speed cameras. Road Casualties Great Britain: 2001, just published by the Department of Transport, shows that the number of people killed on British roads rose from 3,409 in 2000 to 3,443 in 2001."—The Daily Telegraph (London) June 22, 2002.

As these clippings show, photo enforcement is not the "cure all" its proponents claim. It doesn't work in other parts of the world, and as we have shown with our information in the past, it doesn't work in our part of the world either. 🐾

*Have a **friend** join the NMA and you'll get an extra three months of membership*

FREE!

News From Around The Country

Alabama

Alabama is planning to install 210 new state troopers on the road by the end of 2003. Money for the state to pay for training and salaries of 135 of the troopers will come from fee increases to reinstate suspended or revoked driver's licenses.

Illinois

Mayor Richard Daley and City Council Transportation Committee Chairman Thomas Allen plan to crackdown on drivers who run stop signs and red lights, speed down residential streets, and block intersections. Violators would pay with double and even triple fines—up to \$300 for a wide array of traffic offenses. There was no mention of improving traffic lights or removing unnecessary stop signs.

Maryland

Hyattstown residents are now using art to slow down traffic. A stick figure with an upraised, white-gloved hand is one of the 19 artworks along Route 355 that is part of this new project.

Massachusetts

The State Senate has placed on its agenda a bill (H 3601) allowing police chiefs to waive the enforcement of the law prohibiting drivers under 18 from driving between midnight and 5 a.m. without their parents or an immediate family member of the operator. The waiver is allowed only if the person is driving for a recognized "safe ride" organization, which often include volunteer teenage drivers who provide rides to peers who may be intoxicated.

Michigan

HB 6366 (Rep. Daniels, D-Detroit) would lower Michigan's prima facie minimum speed limit from 25 to 15 mph in "residence districts" and school zones. The Michigan Vehicle Code's definition of "residence district" applies to any road where the roadside

land use is residential for a distance of 300 feet, or pretty much any road with houses on it.

New York

Following California's lead, a bill (AB 11895) has been introduced in the New York Assembly to reduce "greenhouse" gas (GHG) emissions from new vehicles sold in the state of New York. The bill provides that the regulations must be consistent with California's newly enacted GHG restriction law and pending regulations. And, like California, the bill will apply to 2009 model year and later vehicles. There has been no action on this bill to date. *(Information from SEMA.)*

Pennsylvania

House Bill 2410 has portions that apply to commercial truck drivers while others aren't limited to truck drivers only. Here are some of the new anti-motorist provisions:

- ** If you are caught going 11 mph over the speed limit in a work zone, your license is suspended for 15 days.
- ** Your headlights must be on at all times in work zones otherwise you are setting yourself up for a \$25 ticket. (This is secondary enforcement like the seatbelt law. You must be committing another violation to be pulled over and ticketed for this.)
- ** Serious jail time for accidents resulting in injuries or fatalities with proof of culpability being "a preponderance of evidence." In other words, if it's your word against the cop's, who wasn't even at the scene until after the accident, you lose and it's off to jail.
- ** The six and ten mile speed tolerance allowances that apply to tickets issued with electrical/mechanical devices don't apply in school zones or work zones.

This bill has many sponsors and the Governor is pushing it. It has cleared the House of Representatives and has gone to the Senate where it was

modified slightly. This means that it must go back to the House of Representatives one more time before it is fast-tracked to the Governor.

Tennessee

In Mid-October, Tennessee drivers got a new look to their drivers' licenses as well as new security features. The details of the security features won't be released to the public due to security concerns. Your Social Security number will now be required for the license as well.

Washington DC

The city is considering exercising an option that it has with the company that supplies the red light cameras for their city. This would be a more comprehensive "Automated Traffic Enforcement Program." It would allow red light cameras to also give speeding tickets. At the same time, DC Mayor Anthony A. Williams has gone on record as saying "he wants to expand the use of traffic cameras because the city needs the money." On "Ask the Mayor" program on WTOP Radio, Mr. Williams said looming fiscal problems forced the city to get creative in closing a potential \$323 million budget deficit. "The only reason we're looking at the enforcement with revenue figures is because we're in such a bind now," Mr. Williams said. 🗑️

Motorist News

If you have any news on motorist issues, please send it to the National Office. You can email it to us at nma@motorists.org

or you can mail it to:
Eric Skrum, Executive Editor
NMAF NEWS
402 W. 2nd Street
Waunakee, WI 53597

Annual NMA Foundation Fundraiser

It's that time when we ask our members to dig a little deeper and make a personal contribution to the NMA Foundation. This is the money that gives us real leverage and working capital. Our membership dues cover our day-to-day functions and services. Your extra donations are what give us the resources to go on the offensive representing your interests as a motorist.

As a "thank you" for your contribution we would like to send you a free hardcover edition of *American Autobahn*, by NMA member Mark Rask.* Mark was also a consultant on a recent television special on the history of the Autobahn.

To donate to the NMA Foundation: Please choose if you would like to make one donation or if you would like to make a series of donations over a period of time. If

you wish to make a series of payments, please choose how often you would like a payment made and if it should be an automatic charge card payment plan or an automatic checking account withdrawal. For those who would like to make a major donation, bequest, or significant transfer of funds, please contact Jim Phend at 317/844-1932.

**For contributions of \$50 or more.*

TO MAKE A SINGLE DONATION TO THE NMA FOUNDATION

Here is my NMA Foundation tax-deductible donation!!

I wish to receive my **FREE** hardcover copy of *American Autobahn*.*
(*For contributions of \$50 or more)

- Donate with this handy form
- Call toll-free 1-800-882-2785 to donate
- Fax your donation to 608-849-8697

DONATION AMOUNT

TOTAL ENCLOSED (Thank you!) \$ _____

PAYMENT METHOD (CANADA: Visa or MasterCard ONLY)

- My check is enclosed (payable to NMAF)
 I prefer to use: VISA MasterCard

Account #:

Exp. Date

/

Signature

X

My Total Donation Amount:

\$5000 \$1000 \$500 \$200 \$100 \$50 \$ _____
Other

NMA Member # _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Daytime Phone(_____) _____ E-mail _____

TO MAKE A SERIES OF DONATIONS TO THE NMA FOUNDATION

Credit Card Automatic Donation Authorization

I authorize the National Motorists Association to charge my Visa MasterCard and at the appropriate time (first of the month) remit my donation installment.

My Total Donation Amount:

\$5000 \$1000 \$500 \$200 \$100 \$50 \$ _____
Other

My Donation Plan:

I would like to make _____ installments of \$ _____ per month for my donation.

Number of installments

Installment amount

(The installments will begin on the first of the month, following receipt of this form.)

Authorized Signature

Date

Card Number

Expiration Date

Name as it appears on the card

(See reverse side for *NMA Bank Automatic Donation Authorization*)

The Experts' Corner

Do you have a question that only an expert can answer? If so, look no further. We have many NMA members with special fields of expertise. This feature was created to assist members with answers to both practical and technical questions.

This sharing of knowledge is another benefit of belonging to the NMA. Please indicate that you are an NMA member when calling a listed "Expert."

Can you help? Please contact us with your field of expertise and provide us with a contact address.

A telephone number would be very helpful, but is not required. Feel free to list preferred contact times if you do provide a telephone number.

PLEASE NOTE: This is not intended for listing of commercial business services.

As an NMA member, the Experts' Corner is available to you online at

<http://www.motorists.org/join/membersonly/experts.html>



MEMBERS WRITE

Your letters are welcomed and appreciated. This is a forum for diverse opinions, different perspectives, and personal experiences. Letters may be edited for length or clarity. Letters should not exceed 300 words in length. Full-length articles will also be considered for publication in the NMAF NEWS. Articles should not exceed 600 words in length. Positions and opinions expressed in letters and member-authored articles are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect NMA policies or objectives. To submit, you can email us at nma@motorists.org or mail to our NMAF Office.

In your article "A New Kind Of License," (*NMAF NEWS*, Vol. 13, Issue 5), you discuss the possibility of a National ID Card. May I suggest that if it does become a reality, and if it has an embedded device for the storage of personal data, then one to two seconds in a microwave oven (set to high), should disable that device completely. If not, several more seconds should do the job nicely. For an apt display of what will happen, take a CD (usually one of the seemingly ubiquitous AOL trial membership CDs), and place it in the microwave, bottom-side up (so that you may observe the action). Usually one second works. Note the crazed pattern: That is the metal film which has been overloaded with electrical current and has burned apart in numerous places. This is what will happen to the thin film of an embedded device.

E. J. Totty
Darrington, WA

I was reading last night in my latest *NMAF NEWS* about a proposed system in Holland (I believe) that uses GPS to issue fees for driving on a per-mile basis, and getting rid of license fees, gas taxes, etc. (to some degree).

Some of the benefits are enticing, such as charging people for how much they use the roads, the idea that the more you use the road the more damage you do to them. And the idea of charging more during

peak times is intriguing as well. But I do worry about the "Big Brother" problems associated with GPS tracking of where and when I do my driving. You also mention the automatic ticketing of speed violations and mention the technology is not there yet. It is, however, and some rental car companies already try to charge a surcharge for speeders.

My question is, doesn't a gas tax, like we already have, have most of the advantages of the above (with the exception of being able to surcharge during peak hours)? Think about it, if I drive more often I have to buy more gas, therefore I pay more. If I drive a heavy vehicle that damages the roads more, that invariably means I buy more gas, ditto. If I buy a more fuel efficient car, or drive in a fuel efficient manner, I save myself money. If I combine errands and don't hop in the car when all I need is a bag of pretzels, I save money.

I think a gas tax, combined with vehicle registration fees based on weight and fuel economy, solves nearly all the problems, for far less money than a GPS system would, and with no "Big Brother" intrusion. Think simple. Technology is not always the answer.

Bill Jurasz
Cedar Park, TX

Editor's Note: Bill, you'll get no argument from us!

I do not understand how you can defend the actions of a motorist driving under the influence of alcohol who is having trouble controlling his car ("swerved repeatedly across the center line of the road and had trouble negotiating a curve"). His drinking and driving would be defensible only if he had not been driving recklessly (negligently). I think you have chosen a poor case to make your point.

Eric Gross
Slingerlands, NY

I would hope the NMA sees getting DWI drivers off the road, as they are a threat to all, including other members. Which unfair DWI enforcement technique did Moyers suffer? I see a lot of sloppy drivers, and while some can be attributed to inexperience, excess hormones, or extreme age, some are most likely intoxicated. The officers had an unofficial test, to try and save Moyers the inconvenience of being held for official testing. Thanks to his hard working metabolism and time, Moyers did not quite fail the official test, but these state standards are set so loose that an embarrassingly drunk man can pass. Would you ask a .079 drunk guy to drive your mother home? Isn't it negligent driving when you leave your lane, repeatedly? The whole article struck me a more knee-jerk than

continued on next page

Members Write

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thought out to me. I was disappointed to see NMA giving up the moral high ground.

David Pickett
Laurys Station, PA

Editor's Note: I would like to clarify the intent of the article. First, referring to someone with a .079 BAC as "drunk" is the equivalent of calling someone driving 60 mph on an interstate highway posted at 55 mph a "reckless speeder." Second, BAC levels rise for one to three hours after the cessation of drinking. Therefore, Moyer's BAC may have been lower when he was first stopped, but with breathalyzers having an error factor + - 50 percent, the whole game is a crap shoot.

And, finally, I was not trying to defend Moyers' driving behavior. It is the idea that here is a person who believed that he was innocent and that he was going to fight this ticket (at least this is what he told the press). There was plenty of evidence that he wasn't impaired And, yet in the end rather than fight for his belief, he chose to plea bargain and accept penalties that had nothing to do with the charge.

Editor's Note: Following is just one of the letters that members wrote to their Representatives in opposition to HR 4633 (The Driver's License Modernization Act of 2002) which was an article in the last issue of NMAF NEWS.

I want to make you aware that I'm opposed to HR 4633.

This country does not need to further empower our government (which is becoming more and more like the "Big Brother" of George Orwell's 1984) by allowing them to be able to move further towards a computerized nation database of all

its citizens/residents.

This bill, in my opinion, is being driven by the events of 9/11/01. While no American can't help but desire and hope that our government takes the proper steps to better protect this country from future acts of terrorism, such steps need to be slow and deliberate as our government, time and again, tends to cast its net too wide.

I hope you will work against any bill that provides for any sort of all encompassing national list of our citizens. My suggestion is that you work to have our government police the borders better, go ahead and develop a computerized national list of visitors or non-citizens, and feel free to have our watchers focus or key on visitors from countries known to have an orientation that does not favor us. *But please, PLEASE, don't let the government use 9/11 as a reason to reach further into the personal freedoms that every citizen should cherish.*

Robert W. LaRoche
Burlington, CT

Mr. Baxter,

Just a note to tell you I thought your article, "The Positives" in the latest issue of the *NMAF NEWS* was outstanding—really superb.

Norman Ingram
Palm Beach Gardens, FL

The *Legal Defense Kit™* is excellent. I'm sorry I didn't rent it before I got the citation. I strongly recommend other members do so. While it did not result in complete acquittal, it did force an acceptable plea bargain.

The LDK also alerted my brother who works at a law firm in Philadelphia, PA about a State Supreme Court Ruling that was still in effect applicable to my case. I advise members to get educated and exercise their rights.

Stephen DeFranco
Nazareth, PA ☺

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