

# CASE Newsletter

California Association for Safety Education Volume XIV, Number 3 - June 2004

## U.S. Senate Bill Creates Office of Driver Licensing and Education

*Reprinted from The Chronicle of the American Driver and Traffic Safety Education Association*

In a surprise move, the Senate enacted S. 1072 (SAFTEA), the six-year surface transportation reauthorization bill. The vote was 76-21. Included in this bill was the DeWine amendment to establish a National Office of Driver Licensing and Education within NHTSA. The Office would develop and make available to the states “a recommended comprehensive model for motor vehicle driver education and graduated licensing that incorporates the best practices in driver education and graduated licensing”.... carry out research, provide technical assistance to states, develop methods to harmonize drivers’ education with grad licensing, develop and implement programs to certify driver education instructors, provide states with financial assistance, examine different options for delivering drivers’ education, and other functions. A state grant program is also established.

The amendment authorizes NHTSA to conduct a study to “determine whether the establishment and imposition of nationwide minimum standards of motor vehicle driver education would improve national highway traffic safety or the performance and legal compliance of novice drivers.” The National Office, the state grant program along with an organ donor program are funded at \$5 million a year out of Section 403 funds.

The future of the Senate bill is uncertain. The Senate bill would fund highways, transit and highway safety at \$318 billion. The bill does this by making adjustments to tax loopholes, cracking down on gasoline tax fraud and using other funding mechanisms. It does not increase the federal gasoline tax or index that tax. The funding is still considerably more than the Administration's bill which was \$256 billion. Hence, the White House is still considering a veto. However, the vote margin in the Senate was enough to override a veto.

*ADTSEA Chronicle, Spring 2004, Vol 52, No. 2, News and Views, p. 7*

*CASE Newsletter Editor's note: On May 19, 2004 the Senate incorporated S. 1072 into H.R. 3550 as an amendment. As of June 14 H.R. 3550 was in a House conference committee. Progress of this bill may be tracked online at the Library of Congress Legislative Information Website: <http://thomas.loc.gov>*



## President's Message

*by John Knippel*

“And the beat goes on” according to Sonny and Cher. This year’s conference picked up where we left off in 2003. Our keynote speaker, Dr. Daniel Simons, University of Illinois, presented us with many practical applications explaining how the mind perceives what the eyes see. This was a great complement to the program last year about the thinking processes of the brain. If you did not attend, you should order the DVD from Dr. Simons at [www.Viscog.com](http://www.Viscog.com). You might very well change what you have been teaching about vision and perception in your classroom. We also had great presentations by our exhibitors and several of the graduates of our credentialing program.

Next year plan to attend the conference at the Horizon Hotel, Lake Tahoe. Our theme will be “*Elevating the Value of Driver Education: The Lake Tahoe Experience.*” Please contact me if you desire to present or you know someone who would be a good presenter both on methodology and on getting our program publicized to the local community as well as to the state legislature. Now is the time to get on the band wagon and beat the drums. Driver Education can revitalize education in California. This is the governor we need to have and to work with. Let’s help the new Secretary of Education raise the value of all education by being the leader.

**Plan now to attend  
the 53rd Annual  
CASE  
Conference  
April 29-30,  
2005 at the  
Horizon Hotel, Lake Tahoe.**



## Hawaiian Islands Cruise— 2005 ADTSEA Conference

A 7-day Hawaiian Islands cruise on the *Pride of Aloha* is being offered to ADTSEA members in conjunction with the 2005 A D T S E A Conference.

Organized by members of the Illinois High School & College Driver Education



Association, the cruise will depart Honolulu on July 24, 2005, visiting the islands of Kauai, Hilo, Kona, and Maui. It will return to Honolulu on July 31. Next year's ADTSEA Conference will be from July 31-August 3, 2005, in Honolulu.

For details, visit the IHSCDE website at <http://www.ihscde.org> and click on the "Cruise Hawaii with us in 2005" link.

## Auto Visibility Safety Bill Clears Assembly

A bill authored by Assemblyman Joseph Simitian (D-Palo Alto) would require drivers to turn on their headlights during inclement weather. AB 1854 has passed through the Assembly by a vote of 62-15 and is now in the Senate Transportation Committee.

The bill defines "inclement weather" as a weather condition that is either of the following:

- A condition that prevents a driver of a motor vehicle from clearly discerning a person or another motor vehicle on the highway from a distance of 1,000 feet; or,
- A condition requiring the windshield wipers to be in continuous use due to rain, mist, snow, fog, or other precipitation.

The author believes that the idea for "wipers on, lights on" is a commonsense measure. He adds that it's a public safety issue that 28 other states have already recognized by enacting similar laws.

A violation of the provisions of this bill result in an infraction, a base fine of \$25, but no point on a driver's record. If it becomes law, the bill will not become effective until July 1, 2005 to provide enough time for motorists to become aware of the new requirement.



## CASE Calendar

**July 7-10, 2004** - NSSP 2004 National Conference, Seattle, Washington. NSSP: <http://adtsea.iup.edu/nssp>

**July 24-29, 2004** - 48th ADTSEA Conference, Doubletree Jantzen Beach Hotel, Portland, Oregon. ADTSEA: <http://adtsea.iup.edu/adtsea>

**April 29-30, 2005** - 53rd Annual CASE Conference, Horizon Hotel & Resort, Stateline, Lake Tahoe. Watch this fall for registration forms in the mail or online at [www.casewebsite.org](http://www.casewebsite.org)

## Driving Distraction Brochure Available

You deal with distractions every time you are behind the wheel, but do you let them get the best of you or do you have the discipline to ignore them?

*Pay Attention!*, a new eight-page brochure published by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, covers both the obvious and not so obvious distractions that can get a driver into trouble or even a crash. Tips and best practices are covered to help all drivers manage the multitude of distractions with which our society and technology have made commonplace.

Driver Education instructors may order up to 50 free copies from the AAA Foundation website: [www.aaafoundation.org](http://www.aaafoundation.org)

## CASE Election Results

Results of the April CASE Election are as follows:

President-Elect:	Bill Corliss
First Vice President	James Lewis
Second Vice President	Keith Merrihew
South Region Rep.	Larry Woodruff
North Region Rep.	Larry Terrill

## CASE Newsletter

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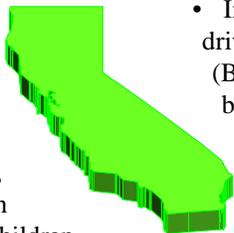
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## How Does California Rate in Traffic Safety?

California was recently ranked by Good Housekeeping magazine as the safest state for children in the nation. Our state laws, including safety helmet and child restraint/ seat belt laws, top the list as the toughest in the nation in protecting our children.



California's 2002 Mileage Death Rate (MDR, fatalities per 100 million miles of travel) is 1.27, while the national MDR is 1.51. If California's rate was the same as the national average, over 750 additional people would have lost their lives in 2002. Only 10 states recorded a lower 2002 MDR than California.

In the National Safety Council's most recent report card, California received the Nation's only "A" grade for having a high seat belt use rate and a tough seat belt law that is well enforced.

California's seat belt usage rate survey increased slightly from 91.1% in 2002 to 91.2% in 2003. The "late eight" (8.8%) represents the more than 3 million California vehicle occupants that remain unbelted - more than the population of 21 states.

In the National SAFE KIDS Campaign's most recent 'Rating the States', California received the Nation's only "A" grade for its child occupant protection laws and child safety seat use rate.

California's 2003 child safety seat usage rate is 86.6% - up from 85.6% in 2002. Misuse is estimated to be 80%.

In MADD's most recent "Rating of the States" report card, California received a B+ grade - the Nation's highest grade. This was the second consecutive time that California has earned the Nation's highest grade.

California's alcohol fatality rate per 100 million vehicle miles traveled is 0.50, well below the national alcohol fatality rate of 0.62. If California's rate were the same as the national average, more than 375 additional people would have lost their lives in 2002.

In 2002, 28.8% of all fatally injured drivers had a Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) of .08 or greater—significantly below the national average of 36%.

Persons killed in alcohol involved collisions increased 8.3% - up from 1,308 in 2001 to 1,416 in 2002. Since 1998, California has experienced a 32% increase in persons killed in alcohol-involved collisions. However, in OTS grant funded cities, alcohol-involved fatal and injury collisions decreased 26.3%.

Injured pedestrians under age 15 decreased 4.4% from 4,161 in 2001 to 3,980 in 2002.

In 2002, the total number of pedestrians killed was 702 - down from 721 in 2001.

*Source: California Office of Traffic Safety  
[www.ots.ca.gov/stats/facts.asp](http://www.ots.ca.gov/stats/facts.asp)*

## Teaching Position Available

by John Knippel  
CASE President

Our credentialing classes are growing, especially in Northern California. We need someone to be the instructor for the classes from Fresno to the north. With the time constraints for Bill Lee and myself, the weekend commute and the on-line time need to be shared with our membership.

We are looking for someone who has completed the courses with us in the last 3 or 4 years. However, that pool of instructors is not large and there is opportunity for a seasoned veteran teacher to take on one or two of the classes also. A veteran teacher would be most valuable for the simulation and behind the wheel courses. If you are interested or want more information to make a well informed decision, please email me, John F. Knippel, at [maceberly@aol.com](mailto:maceberly@aol.com)

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# 52nd Annual CASE Conference



President-Elect Bill Corliss presenting during the Friday session



CASE Treasurer Howard Hough presented past president Richard Schroer with this year's Cecil Zaun Award for outstanding service and dedication.



2nd Vice President Keith Merrihew was a Saturday presenter.

# “Build It and They Will Come”



David Sanchez,  
CTA Vice President



CASE officers and board members: Rich Mikulik, Howard Hough, Jerry Gaines, Bill Lee, Dr. Bill Cole, John Knippel, Keith Merrihew, Jim Lewis, Bill Corliss, past president Richard Schroer.



CASE board members met Thursday evening before the conference.

## Special Thanks to Our Conference Sponsors and Exhibitors

American Trucking Association  
Automobile Club of Southern California  
BNSF Railroad  
California Educational Creations  
Cingular Wireless  
Doron Precision Systems, Inc.  
Mazda Motor Corporation  
Pearson Publishing  
Safety Industries, Inc.  
Simulator Systems International, Inc.  
State Farm Insurance



# Using Surprising Studies of Visual Awareness

by John Knippel

*Editor's note: This article concerns the use of a perception and attention DVD created by Dr. Daniel Simons of the University of Illinois. Dr. Simons was keynote speaker at the 2004 CASE Conference in Palm Springs. John Knippel has been working with the DVD for the past year.*

When using the new DVD by Dr. Daniel Simons (available at [www.viscog.com](http://www.viscog.com)) here are a few tips to make the program as practical and relevant as it is captivating and fun. Remember, driver education as a classroom experience is far more than theory. Students should leave your room everyday with something they can apply behind the wheel almost immediately. Great visual perception is our primary goal. We are guiding our students from being low speed, distracted, pedestrians to being high speed, focused, and visually alert drivers. Dr. Simons' new DVD is another great tool.



The "flicker task" is surprisingly difficult at first. It doesn't get much easier with practice either. This is good to know and to pass on to your students. Noticing small changes in a large viewing field is the task of a driver. This helps students at the visceral level to understand how difficult driving can be even when paying full attention. As I show this section I help the students to grasp the concept of a moving background. When the entire visual field is flickering, with the small change occurring every other flicker, it is quite difficult to notice the small change. However, when the background is still the change is very dramatic. This is the reason for making a full stop at a stop sign or before turning right-on-red. Rolling stops, as we call them, keep the background moving thus making the movement of a pedestrian or wrong way bicycle rider more difficult to notice. Noting movement against a constantly changing background is very difficult. Noting movement against a stationary background is simple.

Also consider the location of the changes. Most of the changes are not at the center of the visual field. Our students are very computer savvy and thus have been unwittingly and unintentionally trained to focus primarily at the center of the computer screen. The same goes for all the television and the movies they love to watch. Many of our driving problems come from the edges of our visual field. Children "come out of nowhere". Trees "jump in front of us". Vehicles come out from "hidden driveways". Actually, all of these are predictable and can be seen early if we are trained to look more often to the sides and about 100 feet wider than the street we are driving on.

I also point out the similar shapes and colors of the items that flicker in and out of the visual image. The items that change are not

unusually distinctive – they don't jump out from the background.. If teens wonder why they get so many tickets, you can tell them it is because they contrast so much in relation to the other drivers and vehicles on the road. Most of the experienced drivers are like the objects in the flicker task, low contrast, similar speeds, outside locations, and standard shapes. When you modify your car, weave in and out of traffic, paint the car bright colors and use unusual lighting, you are bound to be seen by everyone- including the police.

Use the *Gradual Change Task* to explain how freeway driving is so radically different from city street driving. In the city cars move in and out of your blind spots quickly. You notice the changes even with your peripheral vision. However, on the freeway the other vehicles are almost not moving relative to your car. Add to this the constantly changing background at a high speed and you can easily hide a vehicle right next to your car door. Factor in the need to focus far ahead and your ability to notice things in the periphery is almost gone. Finally keep the distinctiveness, low, make changes very slowly, and vary the location of the object of change. More than one half of your audience of novice drivers will not even see the first change take place. All these subtle changes take place on the freeway.

This is great proof for having to teach them how to drive "In the Hole". Driving in the Hole allows one to shift the attention, move the eyes, and have enough time to truly see the changes in traffic. It is similar to parents not noticing how much their child grew overnight (The change is so gradual) yet the grandparents most always exclaim "My, how you have grown!" (The change is greater over the time since the child was last seen). This section is also proof for the need to "Keep the Eyes Moving". Things change by the time you look at the same location again, thus they are more easily spotted.

Always remind the students that they should really be focused in to look for change as you use this DVD. When they are driving they must teach themselves to have the "habit of looking for change". The intense level of focus used for this lesson must be driven in to the mind so that we can drive without thinking about it. We must have the proper mindset and the proper visual search patterns. Have fun. Let me know if you find other practical explanations in the use of this marvelous tool. [macheverly@aol.com](mailto:macheverly@aol.com)

Visit the CASE Website: [www.casewebsite.org](http://www.casewebsite.org)



## DOT Releases Preliminary Estimates Of 2003 Highway Fatalities

Injuries from motor vehicle crashes declined slightly in 2003, to the lowest levels since such data have been kept, according to preliminary estimates from the U. S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). The report on fatalities is mixed, however, with 43,220 deaths overall on the nation's highways in 2003, up slightly from 42,815 in 2002.

NHTSA estimates that the fatality rate in 2003 remained unchanged from 2002 - 1.5 deaths per 100 million vehicle miles traveled.

Motorcycle fatalities rose by 348 to 3,592, an 11 percent increase. Passenger car fatalities declined by 778, but SUV fatalities increased by 456, 55 percent of which were rollover crashes. This increase was partially accounted for by increases in SUV sales.

Declining fatalities in passenger cars and injuries overall can be attributed to more crashworthy vehicles in the fleet and increases in safety belt use.

In 2003, 58 percent of those killed in passenger vehicles were not wearing safety belts. Forty percent (17,401) of all fatalities were alcohol-related, essentially unchanged from 2002. This underscores the value of the need for states to adopt standard safety belt laws and to increase enforcement of impaired driving laws.

"This problem will not be solved in Washington, DC, alone," said NHTSA Administrator Jeffrey Runge, M.D. "We need the cooperation of every American to drive responsibly, fasten his or her safety belt and care for each other's safety on the roads."

NHTSA earlier estimated that highway crashes cost society \$230.6 billion a year, about \$820 per person.

"Although we are seeing progress in some areas, our nation must take this epidemic seriously," said Dr. Runge. "Traffic crashes are the leading cause of death in American children and young adults, but that can change through personal responsibility and enforcement of laws and regulations."

NHTSA's Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) also shows that, in 2003:

- Pedestrian deaths declined 2.8 percent from 4,808 in 2002 to 4,672 in 2003.
- Fatalities from large truck crashes increased slightly from 4,897 in 2002 to 4,942 in 2003, a 0.9 percent rise.
- Deaths of children seven and under remained near historic low levels, with 972 children seven and under killed, compared with



968 in 2002.

- The number of fatal crashes involving young drivers (16-20) declined by 3.7 percent (from 7,738 in 2002 to 7,452).
- In 2003, vehicle miles traveled increased slightly to 2.88 trillion, up from 2.86 trillion in 2002, according to the DOT's Federal Highway Administration.
- There were larger than normal increases in vehicle miles traveled in the last half of the year, consistent with improvements in the economy.
- The number of registered vehicles increased from 225.7 million in 2002 to 230.2 million in 2003.

NHTSA annually collects crash statistics from 50 states and the District of Columbia to produce the annual report on traffic fatality trends. The final 2003 report, pending completion of data collection and quality control verification, will be available in August. Summaries of the preliminary report are available on the NHTSA web site at:

<http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/pdf/nrd-30/NCSA/PPT/2003EARRelease.pdf>.

*NHTSA Press Release, April 28, 2004*

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## Driver Education Credential Classes

New classes for the Driver Education credential will start in November of 2004. The first class is focused on motivation and visual skills. It is called "Driver Choice and Responsibility." The second course focuses on how to teach hazard recognition and practical ways to teach driving procedures. The third class works with traffic strategy and advanced driving skills and begins to introduce behind-the-wheel topics of route planning and simulation. The fourth course is administrative knowledge and practiced skills of management. The last class is "Simulation and Behind the Wheel Experience."

Sign up with Jackie Gunderson at the Fresno County Office of Education (559) 265-3031 or with Michelle Sang at UC Riverside School of Extended Education (909) 787-4361 x11661. Even if you have a credential, this is good for salary scale advancement as the units are all graduate credit. Besides, you will learn much in the way of valuable information and techniques.

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## The Insurance Educator Newsletter is Going Electronic

For years many driver education instructors have been receiving free copies of *The Insurance Educator*. Published by the Insurance Education Foundation, this newsletter contains helpful information of use in teaching about automobile insurance. The spring issue included an automobile insurance lesson plan with a worksheet and accompanying test.

Future issues will be sent only by e-mail and posted on the IEF website. If you wish to receive the newsletter, complete and submit the form available at [www.ief.org](http://www.ief.org) or send an e-mail to [csilvey@ief.org](mailto:csilvey@ief.org). The information you submit should include your e-mail address, mailing address, and phone number.

## Please help us increase our membership!

Our Membership Committee is requesting that each member do his/her part to bring in new members. Please check with the driver education professionals at your school or district to see if they are members of CASE. If not, provide them with the membership application below and discuss the importance of belonging to their professional association.



Make check payable to:  
CASE  
25 Shelbourne Place  
San Mateo, CA 94402

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### Membership Application (please type or print)

Professional Memberships are **\$40.00**. New memberships are valid for one year from date of receipt.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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School: \_\_\_\_\_ District \_\_\_\_\_

County: \_\_\_\_\_

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