

## **DID YOU KNOW???**

### **10 YEARS, 520 ARTICLES ON VTL AND TRAFFIC SAFETY**

On January 22, 2007, the Franklin County Traffic Safety Board sent out the first “Did You Know” article to the Malone Telegram, WICY, and a few other persons associated with traffic safety – it basically was an introductory article explaining our intent to educate the general public about vehicle and traffic law (VTL) and traffic safety. At no time did I or anyone on the Traffic Safety Board ever expect these articles to continue for 10 years, but, with this article being sent out on January 19th for use during the week of January 23rd, it marks 10 years of weekly articles – no misses, no skips.

I knew I could find enough topics to write a weekly article for at least a year and longer if it received a favorable response. The plan was to evaluate what interest there was in the information presented, and to determine if it was worthy to continue after the initial year. And here we are 10 years and 520 articles later. Not a bad start!

Each week, the articles are sent to Franklin County media, numerous police agencies, the National Transportation Safety Institute, Cornell Local Roads Program, Federal Highway Administration, the Governor’s Traffic Safety Committee and NYS DOT headquarters in Albany. They also go to agencies as far south as Westchester County, the Finger Lakes area, and as far west as Rochester and Niagara County. Before the articles are distributed, they are reviewed and approved by New York State Police Troop B Traffic Sergeant Brian Goetz and Franklin County Sheriff and former State Police Traffic Sergeant Kevin Mulverhill. Articles involving other agencies, such as NYS DOT, are approved by that agency as well. Every effort is made to insure accuracy and completeness before the articles are released.

To complete this article, I thought it would be interesting to repeat the initial article of 10 years ago which kicked off this education project. That article follows:

*After several years of utilizing the “**Violation of the Month**” program to inform motorists in Franklin County of safe driving issues, the Franklin County Traffic Safety Board (TSB) is ending that program for the time being and instituting a new weekly program entitled “**Did you know???**” It is the hope and expectation of the TSB that this new program, with the cooperation of the local media, will be able to address some of the complex vehicle and traffic laws that may not be fully understood by the average motorist, as well as new vehicle and traffic laws and how they apply to local driving.*

*Since there is no requirement for refresher driver training in New York State, many older motorists are unfamiliar with the multitude of new laws. Also, new driving lanes, turning lanes, pavement markings, and traffic signs are constantly appearing as traffic volumes increase, and some motorists may have difficulty understanding exactly what they mean or how they are expected to operate their vehicle given the changes.*

*The TSB will try to measure the level of interest in the new series and, if necessary, change or modify its approach to educating motorists.*

*Feedback is essential from you the residents of Franklin County and the primary drivers on our streets and roads. We will try to present issues that we feel need addressing and encourage you to request articles on subjects YOU feel need addressing,*

*by making your thoughts and ideas known to your local media or to the Franklin County Traffic Safety Board by calling 481-1554.*

*We hope you will find the articles interesting and informative. We want you to know the law, and to drive safely.*

That was the introductory article of 10 years ago. Thanks for being a recipient of the weekly articles or a reader, for all or part of the 520 articles. Education is one of the most important functions of the Traffic Safety Board, and these articles are a major part of our education component. We hope we have met the challenge.