

DID YOU KNOW???

NEW DRIVERS NEED EXPERIENCE FOR PROFICIENCY

Every driver starts off as a beginner. Over time, and through driving experience, they learn to be better drivers. But, from the day they get their driving permit to when they have the confidence and experience to be considered a proficient driver, there is much learning to be accomplished.

A new driver cannot immediately be a good driver in inclement weather without the experience of driving in all sorts of conditions. Proficiency in backing requires some degree of experience. Furthermore, big city driving is much different from rural driving.

Driving on interstate highways requires a whole new set of knowledge and skills to drive at expressway speeds with confidence and safety. This is significantly different from the two lane roads we have in the North Country. And, the nearest interstate highway is nearly 50 miles from most of Franklin County.

As a new driver works toward the required number of hours of supervised driving before taking the road test, he/she should be allowed to experience as many different driving challenges as possible. A significant problem with this approach is the danger associated with a new driver trying to achieve the driving skills associated with so many different driving conditions. So, how is a new driver supposed to get the experiences needed without the associated dangers?

Some are lucky enough to take Driver Education through their high school or perhaps a professional driving school. However, most new drivers usually take the obvious route – driving practice under the supervision of a parent, relative, or friend. The problem with this is twofold: first, exposure to the dangers of actually being on the road without the experience to recognize hazards and how to avoid crashes. Secondly, any bad habits engrained with parents or relatives are passed onto the new driver.

There may be another, much safer pathway to developing good driving skills without the associated risk. It's called "Driving EssentialsXE", a novice teen driver training program designed for the home user on the Xbox. I am merrily passing on this information without having tried it. Therefore, I do not necessarily endorse it as a good learning method for acquiring driving skills, but simulator training works for many learning skills such as airline pilot training, so this may have merit.

According to this company's brochure, Driving EssentialsXE goes way beyond basic driver training, providing challenging, real-world experiences such as inclement weather, distracted driving and complex traffic scenarios. The program is a complete training curriculum allowing students to learn and practice at their own pace, and in the safety of their own home. It is a novice teen driver training program designed for the home user on the Xbox. There are 10 in-depth lessons, 2.5 hours of training and unlimited practice drives. Students supplement classroom training and gain real world experience in a safe environment.

If you wish to give this a try, check out their web site at: www.drivingxe.com. The company claims it is available on the Microsoft Store. If you try it, I'd like to know your thoughts.