

COMMUNITYNEWS

Fishing opener creates traffic safety concerns

Drivers warned of annual traffic problems

BY SGT. CURT S. MOWERS
Regional Public Information Officer

The fishing opener weekend of May 10-11 will be a busy traffic period, especially in northern Minnesota.

According to Regional Public Information Officer, Sgt. Curt S. Mowers, “Some of the main concerns are drivers who are not paying attention, following too closely and speeding, especially around the lakes areas. Drivers are strongly encouraged to buckle up, take your time and pay strict attention to your driving.”

Drivers are also asked to keep an eye on their following distance and stay back far enough to prevent a crash with the vehicle ahead. Sgt. Mow-

ers says, “Normally, the three-second following distance rule is taught, but many northbound travelers during the fishing opener and all summer are pulling trailers with boats or ATV’s, campers, and the like – all of which would require following at a distance of at least 500 feet, which would be farther back than the three-second rule.”

Motorists should be aware of all the safety rules for trailers, trailer equipment and for all special mobile equipment they are transporting to the area for recreation. Safe operation begins with the driver taking personal responsibility for their own actions behind the wheel as well as making sure that all vehicle loads are secure.

Sgt. Mowers adds, “Just slow down, buckle up, drive sober and pay attention, and we can all be a lot safer this fishing opener.”

BORDERLAND BRIEFS

KABETOGRAMA CEMETERY ASSOCIATION

Kabetogama Cemetery Association will gather for the annual meeting at 7 p.m. Thursday at Kabetogama Fire Hall.

COMMUNITY GARDEN PLOTS

Community members who would like to rent a plot in the Third Street Community Garden for the upcoming season may call Community Education at 283-2571, ext. 186. Limited spots available. Costs are \$15 for 4’x6’ plot and \$20 for 4’x8’. Garden tools and water provided.

SUMMER SHAKESPEARE TROUPE

The Borealis Bards, local theater group, is offering a summer acting experience for interested actors and actresses. Teens and adults are welcome to participate in a “Summer Shakespeare Troupe.” Meetings will be Thursdays throughout the summer, with short skits from Shakespeare comedies and dramas performed locally. Organizational meeting is set for 6:30 to 8 p.m. Thursday at Backus Community Center, Room 101/102. For more information, call Bill Johnson, 240-1642, or Backus at 285-7225.

RUMMAGE SALE

A rummage sale is planned for 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. May 17 at Koochiching County Senior Center. Donations may be dropped off at the center, 307 Fourth St., beginning Thursday. No clothing will be accepted.

ASK A TROOPER

Youth laws about operating all terrain vehicles

BY SGT. CURT S. MOWERS
Minnesota State Patrol

Q: What are the youth laws when operating ATV’s? I’ve observed youth riding excessively on residential roads quite fast, unsupervised, and without helmets often. It is not only unsafe for them, but it is unsafe for the people that live in these residential areas, and it is noisy and annoying to have these ATVs

driving up and down the road at all hours of the day. How are these laws being reinforced? A reminder to youth and parents would be great!

A: I have answered this before, but it’s been awhile. Anyone can get a regulations booklet from just about any ATV dealer, local DNR office, DMV office, on the Internet at www.mndnr.gov/ohv, or at just about any police department or sheriff’s office. However, let

me just say that there are numerous regulations, but here are some of them that might answer part of your question.

Anyone under age 16 now has to have a parent or guardian’s permission to ride an ATV. All ATV operators and passengers under age 18 have to wear a helmet. Road authorities have the right to restrict operation of ATVs on roads under their jurisdiction, so people need to check every mu-

nicipality/township before riding. Under 10 years of age, operators can only ride on private property (with permission of land owner). Under age 12 operators may only ride an ATV up to 90 cc on public lands and frozen waters if accompanied by a parent or legal guardian, and may operate only on private property with permission of the owner (and must wear the helmet, and have parent’s permission).

There are specific laws

for operators ages 12-15, 15 and older, and ages 16 and 17. Unfortunately, there are too many laws to print here. All adults should take the responsibility for their youthful operators to ensure they are safe and obeying the laws. This should serve as a warning that these laws are being enforced statewide by all law enforcement, as many deaths and serious injuries are being reported every year.

Thanks for asking.

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(Mother's Day!)

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