

COMMUNITY NEWS

ASK A TROOPER

Crashes are not accidents

BY SGT. CURT S. MOWERS
Minnesota State Patrol

Q.: As a traffic safety official, I am very upset that people don't realize that there is some significance as to what is going on with using the term "crash" as compared to using the word "accident" in news articles and other media. I see both terms used and I personally know that there is some intentionality about this. I know that you use the word crash for a reason, so can you do an article about this issue so that we can get everyone on the same page?

A.: There is indeed something going on, and intentionally for the most part. The spark for this issue stems from a court trial from more than a decade ago involving the intentional ramming of a police vehicle, which resulted in the death of a police officer. During the trial, an attorney brought up the point that the incident was referred to by police in all of the reports as an "accident." It also was reported by police on an "accident" report form, thus it was argued that the incident was not intentional and charges should be dismissed. I won't get into the results of that trial, but ever since that time, traffic safety officials in the state have made a huge effort to influence everyone to use the word "crash" and not the word "accident."

Personally, I have been on board with this since the beginning. Mostly, the initial efforts for change were aimed at officers, media and traffic safety officials. We know that human driv-

ing error causes the vast majority of crashes and are therefore preventable. These crashes are not accidents and we need to use the correct term to define this.

Currently, the crash reports still have the word "accident" on them; however, I do think we have made great progress in changing the vernacular from accident to crash. We still have a lot of people using the term accident instead of crash, and it quite frankly is something that all traffic safety officials would like to see change. Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) program officials also feel very strongly about this and would love to see this change immediately. In addition, local traffic safety coalitions have helped a lot with this issue in many regions of the state.

I know this effort continues at the Department of Public Safety, in particular the Office of Traffic Safety. Also, most spokespersons at the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) also have learned to use the term crash in interviews. Even though we continue to emphasize the word crash, the media frequently refers to them as accidents. I'm sure this is because they have grown up hearing crashes called "car accidents." As far as the media in general, I think there is such a turnover in some media outlets that reporters move on and up into other venues and it seems like we are training in the new ones all the time.

Everyone should get into the habit of using the word "crash" instead of "accident," so we can all be on the same page with traffic safety and move forward.

Thanks for asking.

BORDERLAND BRIEF

FLY TYERS GATHERING

Local tyers or persons interested in tying are welcome to attend an informal gathering March 8 in the back room of Coffee Landing Cafe. Set up begins around 9 a.m. Bring vise (and a spare if possible) and share a favorite or new fly pattern or learn and ask questions. For more information, call David Simon at 283-8908 or Wade Sutton, 218-556-2120.

LOTTERY

WEDNESDAY'S DAILY 3 8, 8, 3	SATURDAY'S MEGA MILLIONS 12, 18, 25, 35, 66
WEDNESDAY'S NORTHSTAR CASH 9, 12, 17, 26, 28	MEGA BALL 15
WEDNESDAY'S GOPHER 5 6, 11, 13, 41, 47	WEDNESDAY'S POWERBALL 11, 12, 17, 38, 42
WEDNESDAY'S HOT LOTTO 6, 12, 24, 33, 36	POWERBALL 2
HOT BALL 7	

CALENDAR

TODAY

- Littlefork Ambulance Thrift Shop open, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.
- Moose Lodge events – Open, noon; Bingo, 1 p.m.; Stuffed Pork Chops Supper, 6 (reservations, 283-3615).
- Guided Snowshoe Hike, 2-3:30 p.m., Rainy Lake Visitor Center.
- Backus Performing Arts Series, "The Mill," 7 p.m., Backus Auditorium; Mary Casanova, book signing and sales, new edition "RIOT"
- A.A., 7 p.m., Alano Club.

SUNDAY

- American Legion Post 66 serving breakfast, 8-11 a.m., VFW Post.
- Open Discussion, 9 a.m., Alano Club.
- A.A., 7 p.m., Pineview Recovery Center.
- Sunday Night Into Action Group, Step and Tradition Study, (bring Big Book and Twelve by Twelve), 7:30-9 p.m., Borderland Alano Club.

MONDAY

- AARP Tax-Aide Service, 9 a.m.-noon and 12:30-3 p.m., KOOTASCA Community Action (283-5236).
- Exercise, 10-11 a.m., Backus Auditorium gymnasium.
- Northland Art Society open, various arts, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Backus, Room 114.
- Community Band, 4 p.m., The Dungeon, Backus Community Center.
- International Falls City Council, 4:30 p.m., Falls Municipal Building, council chambers.
- Women's Non-Violence Group, 5:15-6:45 p.m., Friends Against Abuse office.
- International Falls Lions Club, 6 p.m., Lenard's.
- Polar Polers Ski Club, 6:30 p.m., International Falls Public Library, basement meeting room.
- Bronco Basketball Boosters, 6:30 p.m., Falls High School, Cooking Room 130.
- After School Arts, Intro to Architecture, 6:30-7:30 p.m., Backus, Room 205.
- Texas Hold 'Em, 7 p.m., Moose Lodge.
- Cribbage, 7 p.m., Elks Lodge 1599.
- Indus Recreation Association, 7 p.m., Indus School library.
- Alcoholics Anonymous, Women's Step Study, 7 p.m., Coffee Landing Cafe.
- Borderland Substance Abuse Court Alumni Recovery support group, 7:30 p.m., Alano Club, 410 Fifth Ave.
- Narcotics Anonymous, "How It Works" step gathering, 7:30-9 p.m., Alanon Club.

TUESDAY

- Water Testing, 8 a.m.-noon, Koochiching County Health Department.
- St. Paul Lutheran Church men, 8:30 a.m., Lenard's.
- Rainy Lake Medical Center hospital campus present and former employees, 9 a.m., Lenard's.
- Boise Cascade retirees and former employees – paper test, beater room and ChemLab, 9 a.m., Grandma's Pantry, Ranier.
- AARP Tax-Aide Service, 9 a.m.-noon and 12:30-3 p.m., KOOTASCA Community Action (283-5236).
- Koochiching Development Authority, 9:30 a.m.; Koochiching County Board of Commissioners following, Koochiching County Courthouse.
- Rainy Lake Medical Center Auxiliary, 10 a.m., hospital campus, meeting room.
- Bone Builders, 10 a.m., Woodland

- Apartments.
- Littlefork Ambulance Thrift Shop open, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
- Northland Art Society open, various arts, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Backus, Room 114.
- Falls Hunger Coalition Food Shelf open, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., 1000 Fifth St.
- Alanon, 1:30 p.m., Zion Lutheran Church (283-3739, 283-8540).
- Crafty Science, 3-7:30 p.m., International Falls Public Library.
- After School Arts — Spanish I, 4-5 p.m.; Spanish II, 5:15-6:15, Backus, Room 205.
- TOPS MN34, 5 p.m. weigh-in; 5:45, meeting, Koochiching County Senior Center.
- Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, 5-6:30 p.m., Holy Trinity Episcopal Church.
- Women's Ministries, 5-7 p.m., The Salvation Army.
- After Loss Group, 5:30 p.m., Lenard's.
- Community Café, free meals served, 5:30-6 p.m., Spanish rice, vegetable, fruit, dinner rolls, Backus Community Center.
- Beginner's Tae Kwon Do, 5:45 p.m., Falls Elementary School gymnasium or cafeteria.
- Greater International Falls Jaycees, 6 p.m., AmericInn.
- Borealis Bards, 6:30 p.m., Backus Community Center.
- Women's Support Group, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Friends Against Abuse office.
- International Early Iron Car Club, 7 p.m. (Leon, 283-9773; Sandy, 807-274-2345).
- Koochiching Men's Garden Club, 7 p.m., Hampton Court (Tom Sakry host).
- Texas Hold 'Em, 7 p.m., Moose Lodge.
- Littlefork Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 9641 and Auxiliary, 7 p.m., Post Home.
- A.A./N.A., 7 p.m., Pineview Recovery Center.
- Adult mixed volleyball, 7-9 p.m., St. Thomas Aquinas Hall.
- "Celebrate Recovery," 7-9 p.m., Evangelical Covenant Church.
- BigBook Study, 7:30 p.m., Alano Club, 410 Fifth Ave.
- Non-smoking Alcoholics Anonymous Group, 7:30 p.m., Zion Lutheran Church.

WEDNESDAY

- AARP Tax-Aide Service, 9 a.m.-noon and 12:30-3 p.m., KOOTASCA Community Action (283-5236).
- Exercise, 10-11 a.m., Backus Auditorium gymnasium.
- Littlefork Ambulance Thrift Shop open, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
- Northland Art Society open, various arts, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Backus, Room 114.
- Wednesday Study Group, 10:15 a.m., Faith United Church of Christ.
- Falls High School Class of 1963, 11:30 a.m., Lenard's.
- Test of emergency sirens – 1 p.m., International Falls; 2, Fort Frances.
- After School Arts, Theater Games, 4-5:30 p.m., Backus, Room 101.
- Sunbeams and Girl Guards, 4:30-6 p.m., The Salvation Army.
- Free At Last, 4:30-6:30 p.m., Forestland Annex, lower level conference room.
- Community Band, 5 p.m., The Dungeon, Backus Community Center.
- Men's Non-Violence Group, 6-8 p.m., Friends Against Abuse office.
- Elks Lodge Wednesday Meal, 6:30 p.m., chicken breast/wild rice, ginger carrots, salad, dessert.
- Little Lambs (up to age 4) and King's Kids (ages 5 and up), 6:30-7:15 p.m., Full Gospel Fellowship Church.
- Downtowners Group, 7:30 p.m., Alano Club.

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Fax: (218) 285-7206
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Staff

Chairman
Arlin Albrecht
Publisher
Rob Davenport:
rob@ifallsjournal.com
Editor
Laurel Beager:
laurel@ifallsjournal.com
Circulation Manager
Dana Hartje:
dana@ifallsjournal.com
Advertising Manager
Mickie Olson:
mickie@ifallsjournal.com
Production Supervisor
Jerry Flansberg:
jerry@northstarpublishingmn.com
Office Manager
Kami Kostiuik
kami@northstarpublishingmn.com

News

Sports Editor
Kevin Boneske:
kevin@ifallsjournal.com
Staff writer
Emily Gedde:
emily@ifallsjournal.com
Staff writer
Spenser Bickett:
spenser@ifallsjournal.com
Obits/weddings/Borderland Briefs
Tammie Calder:
tammiec@ifallsjournal.com

Display advertising

Display ad representative
Wyatt Wimmer:
wyatt@ifallsjournal.com
Jeanie Tilander:
jeanie@ifallsjournal.com

Classified advertising
classifieds@ifallsjournal.com

Subscriptions
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