

How students are affected while driving in N.H. and M.A. after enforcing a no texting while driving ban

KASSONDRA ROULEAU

EQUINOX STAFF

We may all be guilty of it. The phone rings while on the way to work, a text message; one may feel the need to look at it right away.

It's an addiction; some can't go on without knowing who the message is from or what it says.

According to edgarsnyder.com, nearly 6,000 people die while another half million are injured in accidents due to texting and driving every year.

The mindset is always the same, "it will never happen to me."

Students at Keene State College aren't any different. "I text and drive all the time," said a freshman at Keene State College, who wished to remain anonymous.

"I know it's bad, but it has become a habit, and I feel like I'm able to handle it."

Most believe they can handle sending a text while still keeping their eyes and focus on the road.

The fact of the matter is that our mind wanders without the body knowing. This has become an issue called distracted driving.

"Sometimes I feel it necessary to text and drive

(thinking I'm good at it). I keep one eye on the road, one on my phone," said KSC student Alanna Johnson.

I have a pretty good feel for speed and distance as well as keeping a steady hand, staying within the lines.

At times though I have gone off on the gravel past the white line or in the other lane past the yellow having kept my eye off the road a few seconds too long with this distraction.

I do need to keep in mind the risk of harming another, even an animal, but will I give up texting? I don't know, the temptation at times is very great," Johnson said.

Surveys done by AAA and Seventeen Magazine have shown that 61 percent of teenagers have admitted to bold behavior behind the wheel, including sending texts while driving. Cell phone use while operating a vehicle has become such a problem that many states have passed laws banning them.

California, Connecticut, Delaware, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Washington, and even D.C. and the Virgin Islands have restricted the use of handheld phones while driving. Thirty states, D.C. and even Guam have banned text messaging while driving.

Here in New Hampshire, the law prohibits all driv-

ers from texting while operating any vehicle.

Texting while driving has had such an effect on our lives that not only have laws been passed against it, but its deadly consequences are featured in commercials and even television shows.

Back in January of this year, "The Oprah Winfrey Show" aired a segment on distracted driving.

The episode featured parents and family members of victims of distracted driving, as well as interviews with those who have killed others due to texting and driving.

Oprah has been encouraging everyone to take her pledge of making your car a 'No Phone Zone.'

"In today's world texting is used for a majority of communication; it's easier to ask a single question for me. I hate talking because usually people keep me on

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-KEENE STATE COLLEGE STUDENT

the phone for longer than I'd like to be," Johnson said.

Texting and driving accidents are 100 percent preventable, so why do we do it? We've seen the consequences it has. Not only can it kill others, but it could bring us to our own death as well.

Does it give us a sense of accomplishment, to be able to send a text while dodging traffic? Does it give us a sense of empowerment? Next time you're driving and you receive a text, see if you can refrain from checking it. See if you can hold off until you reach your destination to respond. Make it a challenge.

See how many lives can be saved by just focusing on the road, and not on the phone.

Kassondra Rouleau can be contacted at krouleau@keene-equinox.com

COLUMNIST



FLAVOR OF THE WEEK

KRISTYN BELLINO

One last toast to Pumpkin Festival at Keene State College

Sure, people will be mad if it gets taken away from us, but what will really make them mad?

Will it be that on Oct. 15 there is no excuse to drink and party?

Will it be that we will not be carving pumpkins on the Fiske Quad while enjoying the feeling of throwing pumpkin guts around?

Or will it be because we will never see foliage that pretty ever again?

It really all begins with Pumpkin Lobotomy. We get to bond with everyone while carving a silly or unique design on our pumpkins.

Not only does this make for amazing pictures, but it really involves you with the college.

Then our pumpkins, along with thousands of others, make their

way down Main Street. Some of the designs are so beautiful and so detailed it is unbelievable.

While we get to admire all of this foliage with our friends and family, we also get to taste the amazing fall foods.

Everything is brought to us from pumpkin bread to apple turnovers.

Some people may think Pumpkin Fest is being put to a halt for various reasons.

A. It is too expensive to run, B. there are too many problems, and C. Boston has beat our record of the most pumpkins.

All I can say to this is we have to stay positive about the future of Pumpkin Fest.

Someone out there in the Keene community will hopefully put

Pumpkin Fest in their hands next year.

I am sure some of us seniors would love to come back next year to be reunited with the college and especially the pumpkins.

Something important to remember, we the college students should try to remember this isn't spring break, so maybe we should try to party the right way to prevent us from encountering problems.

Sure we can have a good time, but knowing our boundaries is always a good thing to factor in.

Lastly, even if Boston has beat our record of pumpkins, who cares?

That should push us to carve bigger, better, and more pumpkins.

I am from the Boston area and I can't believe I am saying this, but I

think it is time we beat them at their own game.

It is safe to say for us seniors at KSC, the last three years these memories have been some of the best of our lives.

But if I can hope and wish for one thing this year it is NO RAIN. Every year this special event seems to be rained on, or rained out.

Rumors are already flying around campus that a "storm" is on its way for the weekend.

Who wants to walk around Main Street dripping wet for the fourth time in a row?

So please, please Mr. Sun, shine down on Keene that day so the college kids can still play.

The most important thing, do not take this weekend for granted.

If you planned on going home, reconsider! This event is one of the most infamous things Keene is known for.

This free event could be one of the best times of your life.

Take advantage of what Pumpkin Festival has to offer.

Lastly, remember to keep your head up. Even though you may not want to, treat this year's Pumpkin Fest as if it were your last.

Take a taste of every food you can, carve the best pumpkin you have ever carved, and make a toast to Pumpkin Festival 2010.

Kristyn Bellino can be contacted at kbellino@keeneequinox.com