

Fall into defensive driving habits to reduce risk of deer-car collision

Fall has arrived, and so has the time when motorists are more likely to encounter deer on highways. According to Todd Hileman, Kansas Highway public resource officer, about 40 percent of all car-deer accidents investigated by the Patrol fall between October and December.

Unfortunately, these meetings often result in a serious traffic accident.

Hundreds of thousands of animal-vehicle crashes occur each year, the majority with deer. This results in millions of dollars of damages, injuries and in some cases, even death.

Sometimes these accidents are unavoidable, particularly during the fall months into early winter when deer are active and breeding. However, attentive drivers can take several simple precautions to reduce the likelihood of these encounters resulting in a traffic acci-

dent.

Here are some defensive driving tips to help avoid deer-vehicle accidents:

- Fasten your seatbelt. It's simple common sense and the best defense in the event a crash is unavoidable.

- Pay attention to deer-crossing signs.
- Be especially alert at dawn and dusk. These are the times deer are most active.

- If you see one deer, expect more to follow. Deer typically travel in single file.

- If you see a deer on the road, brake firmly and blow your horn.

- If a crash is unavoidable, don't swerve. Studies show the most serious crashes when motorists swerve to avoid a deer and hit another vehicle or object, or roll over.

One preventive measure you might hear about is the use of deer whistles. Deer whistles

produce ultrasonic noise when the vehicle they are attached to exceeds 30 mph. The idea is the deer will be warned upon hearing the noise. It's unclear whether deer hear the noise, but regardless, studies show the whistles have no effect on deer behavior, according to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety.

If you do strike a deer, contact the authorities. In Kansas you are legally required to report any accident which causes damage of \$1,000 or more or an personal injury.

Also contact your insurance company to report your claim. Collision with an animal is covered under the comprehensive section of your auto insurance policy. Since comprehensive coverage is optional, be sure to check your auto insurance policy for specific coverages.

Deer accidents dropping

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. (AP) — State Farm insurance company says the number of deer-vehicle collisions has dropped nationally for the third year in a row.

The Bloomington-based insurance company said Monday that client data show a 7 percent drop in deer-vehicle collisions between July 2010 and June 2011. Data show 1.09 million collisions between deer and vehicles during that time period.

State Farm says motorists in West Virginia are most likely to run into a deer. The state tops the list for the fifth year in a row. Iowa is second and South Dakota is third, followed by Pennsylvania and Michigan.

Deer-vehicle collisions are least likely in Hawaii.

State Farm classifies Illinois as a medium-risk state, saying odds are 1 in 250 of having a deer and vehicle collision.

On the Beat

THOMAS COUNTY SHERIFF Monday, Sept. 26

8:16 a.m. — Caller reported possible animal cruelty to goats in Menlo. Report filed.

10:25 a.m. — Caller reported cow and donkey running loose in ditch on County Rd. 27 at County Rd. CC. Left message for owner.

Tuesday, Sept. 27
12:01 p.m. — Warrant arrest made.

Last Wednesday
12:38 a.m. — Caller reported a vehicle going eastbound on I-70 in the westbound lane from mile 53. Unable to locate to mile 62.

8:22 a.m. — Caller reported cattle out on old U.S. 24 mile 41. Contacted owner.

10:16 a.m. — Brought inmate from Decatur County to Colby.

11:23 a.m. — Booked Paul Henry Parsons.

2:01 p.m. — Caller reported theft of irrigation batteries. Report filed.

4:55 p.m. — Helped subject with

civil matter in Brewster.
6:06 p.m. — Removed tire debris from roadway out I-70 eastbound mile 46.

Thursday
11:34 a.m. — Helped Colby Police on Suspicious Incident call in the 100 block of E. Fifth Street.

12:42 p.m. — Civil forfeiture: helped Highway Patrol on traffic stop for drugs at eastbound I-70 mile 49. Report filed.

1:36 p.m. — Helped Fire Department on field fire in the 1900 block of County Rd. 23.

2:02 p.m. — Subject came to Law Enforcement Center about lost license tag. Report filed.

2:52 p.m. — Subject came to Law Enforcement Center about a county dump truck that cracked her windshield in the 3300 block of W. Fourth. Report filed.

3:48 p.m. — Report filed for obstruction.

4:25 p.m. — Robert Lee-Nathaniel Adams arrested on warrant.

5:11 p.m. — Booked Adams.

7:16 p.m. — Caller reported cattle out at U.S. 83 and the Nine Mile Corner. Report filed.

Emergency Management: prepare for zombie attack!

Envision this: Hordes of walking corpses roaming the landscape with only one goal — to kill and devour the living.

It is, of course, a nightmare scenario straight out of a Hollywood movie, but what if it were real? Would you be prepared?

With tongue firmly planted in cheek, that is the question posed by the Kansas Division of Emergency Management during October's Zombie Preparedness Month, part of a national campaign to encourage the public to take an all-hazards approach to preparing themselves for tornadoes, floods, fires, hurricanes, terrorist attacks and other disasters — including zombie attacks.

"If you are prepared for a zombie attack, you are prepared for anything," said Devan Tucking-Strickler, Department of Emergency Management Human Services officer. "No matter what the disaster, the preparations are the same: make an emergency kit that will allow you and your family to survive for a minimum of three days until help can arrive, devise a home emergency plan and practice it so that everyone knows what to do if a disaster strikes — even zombies."

For information about the Kansas Division of Emergency Management and emergency preparedness, go to http://kansastag.gov/kdem_default.asp

Kids can color Kansas history

The Kansas Historical Society has published a new children's activity book, /Kid's Kansas/. This full-color, 44-page book features stickers, pull-out famous Kansan trading cards and flags, and several pages of puzzles, activities, and Kansas stories.

The Historical Society is offering a free copy of /Kid's Kansas/ to any fourth grade Kansas teacher. Teachers should send an email request with their mailing address to kidskansas@kshs.org. Learn more about /Kid's Kansas/ at kshs.org/17236.

Stolen car a crushing finale

KINGSPORT, Tenn. (AP) — A Kingsport man has ended a dispute over a car with crushing finality.

Police charged Robbert N. Owens with theft when he told them he stole a car he had sold and recycled it. In a statement to Kingsport

Police, Owens said the buyer still owed him money on the vehicle, which sold for \$1,200.

Owens said when he didn't get the rest of his money, he stole the car and had it crushed at Kingsport Auto Recyclers, according to the *Kingsport Times-News*.



Squeeze Play coming to Goodland stage

World champion accordionists Dan and Kim Christian, who together make Squeeze Play, will perform at 3 p.m. (Central Time) Sunday at the Goodland High School auditorium.

Squeeze Play has an extensive repertoire, and the band is sure to please audiences of all ages with fascinating finger and bellows techniques.

Admission is by Western Plains Arts Association season ticket or at the door. Cost for adults is \$20 and students K-12, \$10. Student groups of twenty or more may have a special admission price of \$5 per student at the door, as long as there is room for all season ticketholders.

Fort Hays homecoming has Colby royalty candidates

Two students from Colby are among the candidates for Fort Hays State University's homecoming king and queen.

Seniors Ryan Baalmann and Anthony Rohr were nominated for the competition by student organizations. Baalmann was nominated by the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners and Rohr was nominated by Mortar Board, a na-

tional honor society in which he is currently serving as president.

Candidates must be full-time Fort Hays students and have a minimum grade point average of 2.5.

Final elections are today and Thursday. Winners will be crowned during half-time of Saturday's football game against Pittsburg State University.

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