

## **DID YOU KNOW???**

### **DISTRACTED DRIVER? IF YOU ARE GUILTY, STOP IT!**

The National Sheriff's Association has excellent information relative to safe driving, and much of this information is published in their "Driver Safety Issues" newsletter, with links to driver safety information. In the May 12th issue was a link to an interesting article from TheNewsWheel.com, a digital automotive magazine based in Dayton, Ohio, that provides readers with a fresh perspective on car news. This article is based on information from that source. Thanks go to Franklin County Sheriff Kevin Mulverhill for providing the necessary link to this vital information.

Humans cannot simultaneously do multiple things at once, aka multitask. Yes, we can shift gears from one thing to another, turning our focus from one task to another quite rapidly, an ability which is often mistaken as multitasking. However, actually doing two or more things at once with any rate of success is just not going to happen.

Did you ever see a member of a sports team, amateur or professional, using their smart phone while playing their sport, even if the sport is one that does not have continuous action? Never! Can't you just imagine the baseball outfielder answering a text message between pitches? How about a hockey player checking out something on the internet while sitting on the bench between line shifts? Never happens because there's just too much going on to do both!

So, why is it that humans think they can do more than just drive a car when driving a car? Eating, talking on the phone—even if it's hands-free—attending to children in the backseat, messing with the sound system or applying makeup are just a few tasks drivers feel compelled and empowered to do while navigating traffic at high speeds.

According to Life360 Inc., the creators behind the location and communication app and messaging tool Life360 that helps families manage their chaotic schedules, 64% of all vehicular crashes are caused by cell phone use and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) reports that 660,000 drivers use cell phones while driving during the day. Texting while driving takes the lives of 11 teenagers each day, reports Life360. If that statistic doesn't scare you what will?

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Association (NHTSA), in the time it takes to read or send a text—approximately five seconds—a car can cover a distance of a football field if it's clocking 55 miles per hour. NHTSA defines distracted driving as "any activity that diverts attention from driving, including talking or texting on your phone, eating and drinking, talking to people in your vehicle, fiddling with the stereo, entertainment or navigation system—anything that takes your attention away from the task of safe driving."

Reminding ourselves and others about distracted driving habits is crucial to preventing and ending distracted driving, according to the NHTSA. The agency encourages parents to be a role model for their children to never engage in distracting habits while driving and to educate their teen driver about the dangers and responsibilities of driving. Teens should also be willing to influence their friends and speak up when someone is distracted behind the wheel and to share reminders to not drive distracted on social media. As a driver are you up to it?