

# AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety PROGRESS REPORT

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## NEW CARDS FIGHT DROWSY DRIVING THE "SExC" WAY

Now the "Wake Up!" message will reach drivers in a new way, with colorful new cards being distributed by the Foundation. The cards offer simple, easy-to-read information about how drivers can stay alert behind the wheel.

The cards were created to reflect findings from the latest research—a Foundation-sponsored study by Dr. David Dinges of the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Dinges asked sleep specialists what motorists could do to stay awake. "Sleep" was the preferred answer from everyone, with "Use some caffeine" in second place and "exercise" a distant third.

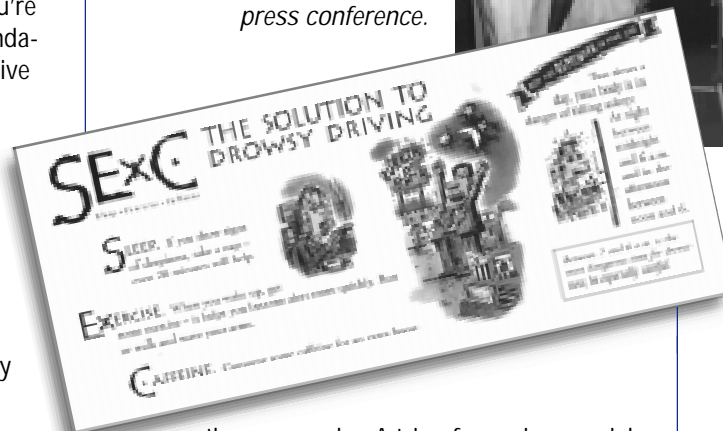
"If you feel your head nodding, you're yawning, and you keep wanting to close your eyes, you're probably too sleepy to drive," says AAA Foundation president David Willis. "The most effective way to fight fatigue is to pull off the road, take a nap, and then have a cup of coffee or other source of caffeine."

The Foundation's new cards outline this "SExC" system for fighting fatigue. Motorists should take a short **S**leep first, followed by brief but energetic **E**xercise to get rid of grogginess, and then ingest some **C**affeine. "Caffeine really does work," Willis says. "Any form of caffeine will do. There's caffeine in sodas, bottled water, even chewing gum."

At a press conference on September 2, Dr. Dinges discussed his research and David Willis presented

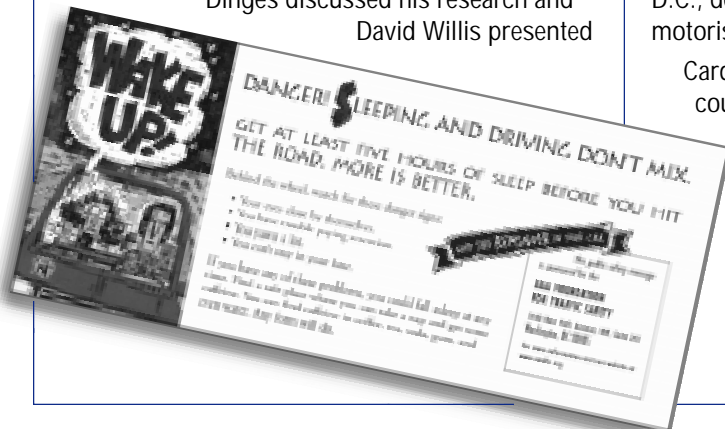


*Fitness experts Dave Ruff (above, left), Jay Walker, and Betsy Johnston demonstrate wake-up exercises at the Foundation's September 2 press conference.*



the new cards. A trio of exercise specialists from The Fitness Company in Washington, D.C., demonstrated a variety of exercises to help motorists get moving.

Cards have been sent to AAA Clubs around the country, and are available to any non-profit organization that wishes to distribute them. To order them for your organization, please send a letter, including tax-exempt status, to the Foundation. Cards are distributed in bundles of 50, and the Foundation reserves right to limit or stop distribution as supplies allow.



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## DR. SCOTT OSBERG JOINS FOUNDATION

Scott Osberg, Ph.D., has joined the Foundation as Director of Research. He takes the position vacated by Christopher Johnson, who left the Foundation to enroll in the MBA program at Duke University's Fuqua School of Business.



Dr. Osberg previously served as a research associate at the New England Medical Center in Boston, where he also established his own health research consulting business. He has published numerous safety-related studies, including research on safety belt effectiveness and bicycle and skate safety.

Dr. Osberg is himself an avid cyclist and inline skater who looks forward to wheeling around Washington. He also brings extensive experience in working with the Internet. "I found the job advertisement on the Internet and it seemed like it was written just for me," he says. "I quickly uncovered the AAA Foundation web site. What a great Web site and what super injury prevention materials!"

While at the Foundation, Dr. Osberg hopes to spend time researching key traffic safety issues. "The Foundation is poised to identify emerging traffic issues and to answer questions about injury prevention and control. It's working to reduce traffic crashes and injuries by changing behavior. I think that's possible and, as a social scientist, I've always been interested in measuring what works. Many attempts have been made to train young drivers to behave like older, more experienced drivers."

"But which approaches actually produce safe drivers?" Osberg hopes research will help answer these questions.



## JOSHUA POOLE— ANOTHER NEW FACE

When he applied for an internship at the Foundation last spring, Joshua Poole certainly didn't expect to join the staff full time—for one thing, he was still taking a

class at American University. But he fit in with the organization so well he's now on staff as a communications and marketing assistant.

Poole hails originally from Canton, Ohio, and just graduated with an interdisciplinary major in "CLEG": communications, legal studies, economics, and government. At the Foundation Poole handles the web site, driver-ZED technical support, and a wide variety of other duties ranging from writing to shipping.

## BE SAFE, BE SEEN AS DARKNESS FALLS

As twilight arrives earlier each evening and daylight savings time goes, take care to be visible after dark.

Retroreflective clothing provides the best night-time visibility for cyclists and pedestrians, and even for motorists stranded by bad weather or car problems.

The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety offers an easily-seen, lightweight safety vest, ideal for bikers, joggers, and walkers. Drivers may also want to keep one in the car for emergencies. For additional visibility, add reflective ankle/arm bands



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Address correspondence to Editor, AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, Suite 201, 1440 New York Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20005.  
Telephone: 202-638-5944; Fax: 202-638-5943

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that adjust easily with Velcro closures.

Vests are available from the Foundation for \$9.95 in one adjustable size. Ankle/arm bands are \$5.95 per pair, or buy the Foundation's Ultimate Visibility Package of a vest and two pairs of bands for \$19.95. Call 1-800-305-7233 to order.



are avid cyclists," Osberg says. In Europe the cycling population is much more mixed. For example, in Amsterdam, 43 percent of cyclists were women; in Paris 30 percent; and in Boston only 19 percent. Cyclists in Europe also tend to be older; in Amsterdam 15 percent were estimated to be over 50, with 10 percent in Paris and only 7 percent in Boston.

Osberg thinks that many American cities could benefit from traffic safety policies that stress cycling. "The Netherlands appears to have a dramatically lower death rate for people in passenger cars and for the combined group of cyclists and passenger car occupants," Osberg says. "Transportation planners and safety experts can learn a lot from the Dutch about how to promote cycling and build a safe, bicycle-friendly environment."

Dr. Osberg's full article is published in *Transportation Quarterly*, Volume 52 No. 4, Fall, 1998.

## U.S., EUROPE TAKE DIFFERENT ROADS TO BICYCLE SAFETY

North American bicyclists are far more likely to wear helmets than their European counterparts, finds a study by Dr. Scott Osberg. Yet several aspects of the European approach to cycling would improve the environment for U.S. cyclists. The study looked at bicycle use and safety in Boston, Paris, and Amsterdam, three cities with very different approaches to bicycling. Osberg spent over 250 hours at different locations in the three cities counting bicycle traffic and observing helmet and light use.

"People don't wear helmets in much of Europe, but they do here," Dr. Osberg says. "They're very anti-helmet generally, which is amazing to a safety professional such as myself." Instead, Europeans rely on better bicycle education, separation of bicycle traffic from car traffic, and other strategies that don't focus on helmets. Lights, another safety feature, are used most in Paris: 45 percent of Parisian cyclists used lights at night, but only 16 percent of bikers in Boston and 8 percent of cyclists in Amsterdam.

"Bicycles are used differently in the three cities," Osberg says. In France, estimates are that 47 percent of trips are made by car, compared to 45 percent in the Netherlands and 82 percent in the United States. France achieves this with greater use of mass transit; the Netherlands emphasizes bicycle use. "Amsterdam is an anomaly. A huge proportion of their travel is done by bicycle," Osberg says. "During the OPEC oil embargo in the 1970s, the city made a big effort to promote bicycle transportation as an alternative to driving, Osberg says, and today "everybody bikes."

Bicycle users also differ among the cities. "Here it's mainly children, with some adults who

## AUTO CLUB OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA TELLS MEMBERS, "WAKE UP!"

Drivers in Southern California will soon learn more about drowsy driving—every time they visit a AAA club office.

The Auto Club of Southern California has ordered 100,000 of the AAA Foundation's cards, which explain the "SExC" system to fight drowsy driving.

"We're sending 100 of the cards to each of our district offices for starters," says Arline Dillman, the club's manager of traffic safety. The district offices will have the option of using the cards however they want, she says. The cards have their own stock number in the club's ordering system so the district offices can get as many as they need.

Dillman is enthusiastic about distributing the cards to AAA members. "The offices will put them in displays and on counters to be a 'take one.' Hopefully they'll also get used in the travel section." The cards will fit nicely into Trip-Tiks and maps used by auto travel counselors, Dillman says.

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### **WAKE UP!**—*from page 3*

"They're a great thing to take to safety fairs and events like that," Dillman says. "Our state office of traffic safety has an annual state-wide conference each year, with law enforcement, city governments, and educators. We'll have copies of the drowsy driving card at our booth at the conference. So lots of people will be made aware of it."

## **WEB SITE UPGRADE UNDERWAY: MORE NEWS, LINKS**

The AAA Foundation web site—<http://www.aaafoundation.org>—is adding content and becoming more user-friendly. Revised main page headings provide better information about the site to first-time visitors and make features easier to locate.

Other revisions include a new archive, which includes all back issues of the Progress Report.

A topic and headline index lets browsers find specific articles that have appeared in the news-letter or just catch up on missed issues.

There's also a page of new drowsy driving information based on the Foundation's latest research. Sleep experts and the public disagree about what works to prevent drowsiness while driving; graphs and text will describe effective countermeasures against sleepiness.

Existing on-line research reports are being updated to include hot links to related materials, both on the Foundation's server and on other traffic safety sites. In addition, a site map allows visitors to find the information they need quickly and easily.

Finally, the revised page includes up-to-date e-mail information for the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety staff, including new employees Scott Osberg and Joshua Poole. Meanwhile, using the Foundation's secure server, Internet surfers can still order any Foundation product through the site.