

ACHS students share driving horror stories

by Michael Cohen

The following are three Antioch Community High School students' stories from behind the wheel, dealing with speeding and other traffic violations. They included their candid thoughts on the inconsistency of officers and how they hand out tickets, they attitude they get from officers when they are pulled over, and even some tips on how to get out of a fine. The students also discuss how getting pulled over has changed their driving ways.

"First, being honest helps, and secondly, don't make the cop angry."
-Anonymous ACHS senior

One ACHS senior, who wished to remain anonymous, has been caught speeding twice. Neither time, though, has he been ticketed or fined.

"First," he says, "being honest always helps, and secondly, don't make the cop angry."

Asked if the leniency that was dealt to him on the officer's part and the fact that he's only gotten two warnings for speeding has changed his driving habits, the student says no.

"They [the cops] let me off, so I think that was pretty good of them. But, in reality, it hasn't stopped me from speeding."

Chris Schinler, an ACHS senior, was caught speeding in Gurnee. He was going 70 mph in a 50 mph zone. Unfortunately for him, Schinler was fined. However, he doesn't think the officer was unfair with him. In fact, he thought it was funny he was being pulled over in the first place.

"My friend and I were just trying not to laugh when he pulled us over," he said.

Schinler wondered why he got caught and fined while other drivers, like the anonymous student, don't get fined at all.

"It must depend on the location," Schinler said. "I'll still speed, but just not on that road again."

Divya Gollapudi, an ACHS senior, was caught on the Ohio Turnpike speeding. She was pulled over on a highway with a 75 mph limit.

"The officer said I was going 87 mph, but I was only going 80," says Gollapudi.

Gollapudi felt lucky because she had her family with her in the car when she was pulled over.

"The cop was really mean to me. She kept on cutting me off when I would answer her questions and I started to cry."

The cop even forced Gollapudi to read the radar gun proving that she was going 87 mph. The violation cost Gollapudi \$75, but she did not have to go to court.

"I think it is unfair that I got pulled over because I know people who've been pulled over five times and haven't gotten a fine," she says.

"The only reason I got pulled over was because I was out of state and I slowed down rapidly when I saw the cop car."

by Kristen Berman

You take the routine glance in your rear view mirror, only to have your stomach drop. Behind you is a squad car, with their lights turning and sirens roaring. You pray that they are in pursuit of the guy in front of you, who you could swear was going at least five more than you. You slowly pull over and the lights follow, as the police pull right behind you. Now what?

1. Pull over as promptly as you can do and do safely. Always yield to the right side of the road.
2. Leave your seatbelt on.
3. Turn your radio off. If nighttime turn interior light on.
4. Know the location of your insurance card and be able to present it upon request. If driving someone's vehicle, know where their card is kept.
5. Keep your hands visible at all times. Do not get out of the car unless asked to do so.
6. Listen to officer's explanation. Be polite and courteous.
7. DON'T be afraid to negotiate with the officer. Explain the possible special circumstances of your situation.

It takes a semester in drivers ed, and then what seems like an eternity waiting for the blue slip, but finally, after hours at the DMV, (Department of Motor Vehicles) the hungry 16- year old has a license in hand. It's a symbol of freedom, independence, growth, and most important- responsibility. "It's a huge responsibility- and especially within the first few years of having it can be deadly," said Commander Klahs.

-In Antioch there are usually three to six officers out on the roads at one time, by comparison, Lindenhurst has about two. The most enforcement is between the hours of 3 to 11.
-There are no designated areas for these cops to sit and 'hide.' However, in Lindenhurst, Klause said that on Grand Avenue and on the back roads are where the most amount of stops are made for their department.
-It is not legal to have something hanging from the rear view mirror. Police will use minor violations like that to pull over a car to check on other things. "It's a proven stat that traffic stops are the number one way to prevent all crime," said Antioch Police officer Dave Jenson.



Kings of the Road



Traffic school cleans records, educates drivers

by Jessica Halston

Lisa Daniels, who has been teaching various traffic school courses for 10 years amongst a total of 15 teachers at CLC

Teenagers are exposed to a documentary about risk taking, and another detailing accident deaths and paralyzation.

I've ever had in a class-like atmosphere," said Antioch Community High School senior Kim Lewis.

Lewis, who attended a session last fall for a minor traffic infraction, described her experiences with a rushed instructor.

"The first thing the teacher said was, 'I have better things to do, so you're getting out an hour early.'" Said Lewis. "We just had to sit and talk about what we did."

Lindenhurst police commander Kevin Klahs recalls his encounter with traffic school as a learning experience.

How many tickets can I receive before my license is revoked?
If you are under 18, two tickets will result in a minimum of a one-month suspension.

Can I get pulled over for driving 5 m.p.h. over the speed limit?
According to Commander Klause at the Lindenhurst Police Department, it's the overall perspective of the situation, not just the speed. If it's rainy, or there are children out, it's possible to be pulled over for going five over.

Can I get pulled over in a parking lot?
Officers always have the ability to pull you over in their town for suspected DUI or reckless driving. If the private owners have an agreement with the police, they are able to write speeding tickets as well.

Should I go to court or just pay the ticket? And what about traffic school?
If you don't go to traffic school, the ticket will go on your record for a year. With traffic school it will be off of your record in three months. Taking the ticket to court will not hurt you unless you miss the trial date.

Though millions of driving errors occur everyday and go unnoticed, there are the unfortunate few who get nailed with a ticket.

Luckily, the assailant still has a choice: let the existence of a traffic violation stain your permanent record, or go to a day's worth of traffic school.

The mixed age classes are subjected to a film about road rage and the story of Princess Diana's tragic death, which brings closeness to the viewers.

All materials are received from the National Safety Council.

Daniels described the curriculum for all classes as beneficial, with research surveys proving her accuracy.

Those who have attended a session of traffic school are less likely to receive another ticket.

"It had to be the most fun day

"The first thing the teacher said was, 'I have better things to do, so you're getting out an hour early.'"
-Kim Lewis ACHS senior

During the week, I teach a variety of classes," said College of Lake County Instructor Trainer

Both the teenage and mixed age groups watch two films.

The fee to attend a session of traffic school will soar to over one hundred dollars, in addition to the price of the ticket.

The final verdict: Traffic school may be a hassle, but the advantages of its availability are worth the trouble. The experience may even lead to better driving etiquette.

While living in New York, Klahs viewed a film entitled "The Highway of Agony."

"It was a gruesome picture