

D.A.T. Driver Safety Program

By

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The DAT/Safety program at Campvention 2010 focused on driver safety, and included activities for youth, teens, and adults alike. It began with daily safe driving facts that were tested with an optional driver safety quiz that was given at the DAT Safe Driving Fair on Wednesday morning.

David Campbell, DAT/Safety Chairman and DAT/Safety captain from Kentucky, coordinated the program, in conjunction with the fire and police departments of Berrien Springs, with the assistance of Jim Duplanty from Michigan, Bo Gries from Indiana and Jeff Robinson from Kentucky.

The morning started with a “Quick Click Challenge,” where teams of 4 tested their flexibility and speed in clicking seat belts for safety as they maneuvered to get into each seat in the vehicle.

Individuals were able to test their coordination using “Fatal Vision” goggles, which give the sensation of having imbibed alcohol or drugs. Though it was humorous, it also demonstrated the loss of control when driving with alcohol or other drugs on board.



Quick Click competition in the Driver Safety Fair

There was also a bicycle “rodeo” course to test the safety of the young (and occasionally not-so-young) participants.



Mock Accident

The highlight of the morning was a mock automobile accident, staged using campvention volunteers. The dramatic presentation took observers through the trauma of each millisecond during and following a collision, in this case caused by a driver impaired by alcohol and distracted by texting while driving. Realism was achieved by the use of real vehicles, real emergency personnel in the attempted rescue of the victims and arrest of the driver, and by the very creative victim makeup

applied by Megan Campbell Lewis.

The conclusion of the week-long Driver Safety presentation came during a finale including a video prepared by the parents of a teenager from Kentucky who was killed as a result of being ejected from a vehicle during an accident in which she was not using seat belts.

This was followed by “Ghost Out” program. Fifteen volunteers, chosen by the “Grim Reaper” earlier in the week, were asked each to write their own obituary. Each had been a victim of an accident involving impaired or distracted drivers. Fourteen obituaries were read as the “victim” had his or her candle extinguished and was covered with a white sheet. The final victim was arrested as the result of her poor judgment in driving while impaired, showing that the lives of survivors as well as victims are forever changed.

This dramatic presentation will hopefully be a catalyst for individuals, young and old, to remember their duty to be responsible drivers. As noted by David Campbell, “If only one life is saved as a result of this program, it will make it worthwhile.”

