

The Owens Interlink

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Summer time

Time of year

By Diana Owens

It is hard to believe that 09 is already half over. It hit home when paying for a service charge for my car. All I could think of – “how can this be”? But when you look outside and see the multitude of kids in our parking lot and on the streets, it is evident that school is out and youth are making the most of the time out of school. For some, this is an on-going event for the entire year – out of school for any number of reasons.

This is especially concerning when you read articles like one in the Omaha World Herald on June 5. The title of the article was “Kids’ success in school can make you safer.” The thrust of the article was about the high drop out rate for students in our school system and the ties between increased education and decreased crime.

David Kass, President of Fight Crime stated “the results of not graduating from high school are pretty serious. Increasing high school graduation rates in Nebraska by 10% could prevent 14 people from being killed in the

Midlands each year....”

The article clearly identified that the lack of education is one of the most consistent factors that contributes to crime. This article is similar to the series in the Sunday edition of the World Herald in April that identified the difficulties drop out students have with gaining employment, getting additional training and staying away from criminal activities.

OES agrees with the need for prevention programs in early education, but we also know that there is a generation right now that needs help as well. The Metro does have a limited number of programs for those youth who want to change – but what about the many that could care less if they got an education. It all boils down to funding.

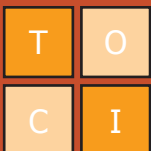
The Reporting Center has been idle for several months as there does not seem to be dollars available for the true at-risk population in our community. Our classroom could be full tomorrow if we opened the doors and would do it for “free”. But

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Time of year; cont'd.

this is the real world and we know that in order to put gas in the vans to pick up the youth, feed them and have professional, talented people who can make a difference in the lives of these youth – it takes dollars.

It amazes me that we can incarcerate a youth and spend over \$200 a day to lock them up, but are unwilling to pay \$90.00 a day to supervise, transport, feed and facilitate life skill changes for the youth.

We encourage all our readers to contact those mentioned in the article to support our efforts

BLIND ZONES: BEWARE

Backing up can turn deadly when kids are at play. Each week, an average of 50 children across our nation are struck by vehicles that are backing up – resulting in at least two deaths.

Many of us don't realize that they can't see a large area behind them when backing up – even when using mirrors. In general, the wider,

1. Walk around and behind your vehicle before getting in and back out slowly. Most back over accidents occur in driveways and parking lots.
2. Know where children are and have another adult watch them. Tragically, parents or a close relative are involved in more than 70% of back overs.
3. Teach children that parked vehicles might move and that even though they can see the car, the driver might not see them.
4. Never let children run "loose" in a parking lot. Drivers are more apt to see an adult holding the hand of a child than the child who runs ahead or behind an adult.
5. Always think and use caution – especially those times when children are out of school.
6. Take a second look before backing up – it could mean the difference between life and death of a child.

in reopening the Center to increase education and decrease crime. Those identified would be Don Kleine our County Attorney, Eric Buske, Chief of Police and Tim Dunning, County Sheriff. How many studies and articles need to be completed or written about for our community to understand the severity of problems we face with high school truancy/drop out situations. OES has known this since 1986 and has been attempting to be part of the solution and not the problem since then.



longer and higher the vehicle, the bigger the "blind zones" are. Shorter drivers also have larger blind zones.

Depending on the size of the driver and the vehicle, it's not uncommon for rearward blind zones to stretch eight feet wide and 50 feet long.

Tips to consider:



Renewed spirit of commitment from OES board

Maybe we are a little biased, but the staff feels that OES has one of the most professional, hard working and true youth compassionate members of any non-profit organization. Their commitment to build the organization was renewed at this month's meeting.

In line with this, Directors are identifying new potential members who would share in the mission of the organization as well as the vision the board has for the organization for the future. They are always open to recommendations and would love to meet with them to discuss OES and their interest in serving. Referrals can be sent to Diana who will pass on to the Directors. There are four distinct levels of Directorship with OES. They would include:

Full Board Member – with voting power and veto rites, who assists in developing, reviewing and evaluating the programs, service delivery and finances to meet the goals and mission of the organization.

Associate Board Member – who

forms a partnership with the Full Board activities supporting their actions and activities as requested. These individuals can become Full Board Members when an opening occurs. Associate Members do not have voting power however.

Advisory Board Members – are silent members who participate whenever possible in Board activities. They offer suggestions and recommendations to the full Board.

Honorary Board Members – individuals who have and continue to support the mission and cause of the organization and have given outstanding contributions in the advancement of the organization's mission.

To assist our present Directors in identifying persons who might have an interest in serving on our voluntary board – the Mission of OES is:

“To provide educational opportunities, alternatives to incarceration and life skills training for at-risk and disadvantaged youth and their families.”



IT PAYS TO DRIVE GREEN

Eco-driving can reduce fuel use by up to 15%. Here are some tips to make it happen:

1. Tighten up your gas cap. Loose gas caps can allow up to 30 gallons of gas to evaporate over a year's time and can be a reason why your “check engine” light comes on.
2. Go Slower. Most cars have a mileage “sweet” spot around 6-65 m/p/h. Going even seven to eight miles faster than that decreases fuel economy up to 10%.
3. Favor a “Feather” Foot. Sudden starts and stops can lower gas mileage by 33%. Anticipate stops and slow down gradually.
4. Lighten the Load. Don't carry unnecessary weight. An extra 100 pounds can reduce mileage about 2 %.
5. Don't be Idle. Shut off your engine if you are not in traffic and expect a stop to exceed 30 – 60 seconds.

--For more gas saving tips visit: www.ecodrivingusa.com

CHANGES IN LINCOLN POSITIONS/DUTIES

Edited by Joe Owens



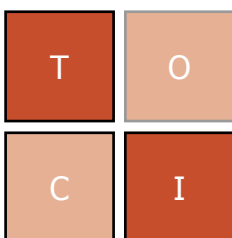
With the growing case load for tracker, DST and Electronic Monitoring

services, we have decided that a "juvenile justice administrative assistant is necessary in the Lincoln office. Since Brian Thies (who now is at the front desk) worked in the field as a tracker in his early days with Owens, he is being transferred to work with the present tracker staff.

Brian will spend his day monitoring the youth who are assigned on electronic monitoring equipment, scheduling drug screens and notifying the appropriate sources if a youth alert goes off. Brian will have numerous responsibilities in this

department in conjunction with monitoring the electronic equipment and drug testing. Paula Suhr, who presently is a Family Assistant, will be moving into Brian's present position at the front desk. With Paula's understanding of what it takes to be a field worker, and the program itself, these will only add to the efficiency of the office. Please bear with us as we undertake this transition and training for both of these individuals in their new positions.

Paula is joining the internal staff just in time to help us move our offices back across the street next to our visitation center. Have fun Paula! Congratulations to both Brian and Paula on their new endeavors.



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