



Upcoming Events Promote Safe Driving



Students take notice of the school's electronic bulletin board that lists new driving laws that went into effect on Jan. 1, 2010.

This Friday, members of the school's Teen Safe Driving Committee will hand out ice scrapers to the first 200 high school students, imprinted with the message: "safe driving is a scrape away." This is their latest effort to get the word out to their classmates on the dangers of driving while distracted. They also have invited an Illinois State Trooper to visit with fans and answer safe driving questions at the concession stand.

An agent from the Northbrook-based company is expected to be in attendance Jan. 23 for the girls' varsity basketball game, when they host conference rival Carmel Catholic High School from Mundelein.

During halftime, Allstate agent Walter Shelton will present the Teen Safe Driving Committee with a check for \$1,000 to help wage their campaign. At the boys' game, immediately following, students on the committee will challenge fans to a slam-dunk contest as part of their theme for the night: Safe driving is a slam-dunk.

While Saint Viator students warn against using excessive speed and not wearing seat belts, their main efforts have been centered on the dangers of driving while using such external devices as cell phones, electronic devices, and even putting on make-up.

They tasted the sweet taste of victory earlier this month when a new law went into effect in the state of Illinois, reinforcing their message by prohibiting texting while driving.

"It's a good way of preventing it," says senior Erick Diaz of Bensenville. "It shows that Illinois is making progress, and that maybe organizations like ours are making an impact."

However, underlying all the publicity about the new regulation was a law already on the books that prohibits drivers under the age of 19—or virtually all high school students—from using a cellular phone or any type of hand-held communication device while driving.

"Our whole objective is to get kids involved with our message," Diaz adds. "And maybe, at the same time, we'll be able to influence their parents to practice safe driving and encourage their kids to do the same."