

# VENTURING MAGAZINE

## Crew 125 takes a *Safety Break*

July 2012

Over the Memorial Day Weekend, Venturing Crew 125 of Germantown, Maryland, hosted *Safety Break* 2012, its 3rd annual service project to promote traffic safety. For 72 hours straight, Venturers and adult volunteers gave away free coffee, hotdogs, and donuts, along with safety literature and promotional items to travelers who visited the Maryland Welcome Center rest area on northbound I-95 near Savage, Maryland.



Motor vehicle accidents are the leading cause of death in the United States. The objective of the *Safety Break* was to raise awareness of driving risks, and actions that travelers could take to avoid them. In addition to the giveaways, the Crew ran multimedia public service announcements (PSAs) that engaged drivers, and shared information about the dangers of impaired and distracted driving, the proper use of safety restraints for travelers of all ages, motorcycle awareness, and other key traffic safety issues. Vince and Larry (the Crash Test Dummies) also made an appearance, posing for pictures with travelers.



The Venturers worked with the Maryland Highway Safety Office and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, which provided most of the giveaways and developed many of the PSAs. They also distributed information from the National Safety Council on distracted driving, and risks unique to small children - back-over accidents and hyperthermia, when infants and toddlers are left unattended in a vehicle. Other safety materials were provided by the Century Council, the National Organizations for Youth Safety, and the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety.

The service project was the result of a personal challenge in 2009, by the Honorable Deborah A.P. Hersman, current Chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), a federal agency that investigates accidents and makes recommendations to prevent them. Several members of Crew 125 attended a career day at NTSB, and shared information about the Venturing program with Hersman. While discussing service projects that the Venturers and another Eagle Scout in attendance had done, Hersman challenged the group to undertake a service project in support of transportation safety. Shortly thereafter, the planning began, and the first *Safety Break* was held Memorial Day Weekend 2010.

In addition to being a service project that reaches thousands of people, the *Safety Break* is an opportunity for Venturers to learn about driving risks and how to make themselves safer drivers. Crew 125 is developing written guidance that other Crews can use to host their own *Safety Break*. Ultimately, the Venturers would like to see the *Safety Break* become a national Venturing service project. The event supports the Venturing method of "Teaching Others," while giving Venturers an opportunity to gain visibility within their communities and help save lives - and to have fun doing so!

