

ON THE MOVE



Summer fun

This summer provided an opportunity to get outside and enjoy activities involving wheels of all types. (clockwise from above), the Crowing Motors Car Show was held as part of the annual Chicken Show; a Tractor Parade featuring antique tractors was part of the Wayne County Fair; tractor pullers from throughout the area took part in a Tractor Pull during the fair; and a group of motorcycles were on display at the Crowing Motors Car Show. At the event, prizes were awarded on spectator vote in several categories.



NDOT celebrates major milestones in Nebraska infrastructure development

Recently, the Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) marked the achievement of three initiatives that will significantly improve the state's ability to address infrastructure needs. These include the completion of the US-30 Expressway from Columbus to Fremont, implementation of LB 1335 (2024) and the launch of the Nebraska Infrastructure Hub—each reflecting NDOT's commitment to growth and innovation.

The event featured remarks from Governor Jim Pillen, NDOT Director Vicki Kramer, Senator Mike Moser, and Game and Parks Director Tim McCoy, who have all played key roles in these accomplishments.

Dependable transportation systems at both the local and state levels are key to achieving Gov. Pillen's goal of One Nebraska. By improving these systems, NDOT not only enhances connectivity and unifies communities but also lays the groundwork for a sustainable future where infrastructure aligns with the broader vision of ongoing, effective service from the State down to the local level. These initiatives strengthen our capacity to support every Nebraskan's needs

across all regions, ensuring that Nebraska remains strong, connected and well-prepared to serve its residents—today and for years to come.

"Transportation infrastructure is the backbone of our state, connecting communities and driving economic development. The completion of the US-30 expressway, the launch of the Nebraska Infrastructure Hub, and the passage of LB 1335 are enormous steps forward. These achievements not only enhance safety and efficiency but also reflect our commitment to working together as One Nebraska to build infrastructure that strengthens our communities and drives long-term growth across the state," shared Gov. Pillen.

"These accomplishments mark significant developments in our mission to build and improve Nebraska's transportation system. The completion of the US-30 expressway strengthens regional connectivity, while the Nebraska Infrastructure Hub supports a One Nebraska approach to economic development and pursuit of federal discretionary funds. LB 1335 enables infrastructure own-

ers to make thoughtful decisions around the delivery of transportation projects. Together, these initiatives are leading the way for a safer, efficient and sustainable transportation system that benefits every Nebraskan," explained Vicki Kramer, NDOT Director.

The now complete US-30 Expressway will enhance safety, reduce congestion and improve regional connectivity for communities such as Columbus, Schuyler, Rogers, North Bend, Fremont and Omaha. With 8,000 vehicles using this corridor daily—a number projected to grow to 12,000 within 20 years—the project's start dates

to April 2001, gaining momentum with the Build Nebraska Act in 2011.

The Nebraska Infrastructure Hub is the state's first intergovernmental entity designed to empower public agencies in securing federal grants. Aligned with Governor Pillen's vision, the Hub supports state and local partners in navigating the grant process, enhancing Nebraska's competitiveness for federal funding. By centralizing decision-making, promoting transparency and fostering collaboration, the Hub will move forward critical infrastructure projects, boosting transportation systems and driv-

ing sustainable economic improvements across Nebraska.

LB 1335, passed during the last legislative session with significant collaboration from partners including Nebraska Game and Parks, provides NDOT and other governmental entities the tools to responsibly manage projects in environmentally sensitive areas. This approach ensures that Nebraska can meet its infrastructure goals while safeguarding natural resources, balancing growth with preservation and contributing to sustainable development.

How routine physical activity affects mental health

The physical changes people experience after committing to routine physical activity are visible to the naked eye. After making such a commitment, particularly if one is accustomed to a sedentary lifestyle, people may shed a noticeable amount of weight, move more quickly and even appear younger, a change that is perhaps related to the positive effects exercise has on sleep.

Less noticeable but no less advantageous are the mental health benefits associated with routine exercise. According to the Mental Health Foundation, physical activity releases chemicals in the brain that positively affect mood, thus making exercise a tool anyone can utilize to improve their mental health. As individuals ponder the benefits of physical activity, they can keep the following ways exercise affects mental health in mind.

Exercise and stress reduction

A 2022 Gallup poll found that 40 percent of adults worldwide experienced a lot of stress. The poll asked adults in 142 countries and areas, which underscores the significance of stress as a legitimate global health concern. The MHF notes that the most common physical signs of stress include difficulty sleeping, sweating and loss of appetite, symptoms that are triggered by a flood of the stress hor-

mones adrenaline and noradrenaline released in the body. Those hormones increase blood pressure

ers ultimately concluded that those who exercised had higher levels of self-esteem than those who did



and heart rate. Exercise can help to alleviate stress, and the MHF notes that adults who are highly active have been found to have lower rates of stress than those who live more sedentary lifestyles.

Exercise and self-esteem

A 2022 study published in The Journal of Sports Medicine and Physical Fitness compared 352 participants between the ages of 20 and 40 who regularly exercised at least two days per week for the previous six months with 350 similarly aged sedentary individuals. The study assessed various characteristics of each group and research-

not. As a result, the authors behind the study recommended exercise as a preferred method to increase self-esteem.

Exercise and depression

A systematic review and network meta-analysis of randomized control trials found that exercise is an effective treatment for depression. That review and analysis, published in the peer-reviewed medical journal The BMJ in 2024, reviewed 218 unique studies involving more than 14,000 participants. Walking, jogging, yoga, and strength training were found to be especially effective at treating depression, which the World Health Organization estimates affects about 280 million people worldwide.

The physical benefits of routine physical activity may be most noticeable. However, regular exercise also has a profound effect on individuals' mental health.



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Road-tested tips for a trip to remember

Passageways have been traversed for as long as there has been modes of transportation to get people from Point A to Point B. Although America's westward expansion spurred on by the Louisiana Purchase wasn't a road trip for pleasure, travelers were seeking a better way of life and the quest for land and riches, ultimately traveling thousands of miles in such pursuits.

Today, putting miles between oneself and home is a largely recreational pursuit. Road trips can be enjoyable ways to get close-

up views of notable sights. When planned correctly, road trips can be affordable vacation options.

Establish a road trip budget

Even if a road trip is a frugal way to travel, it's important to set a budget for how much you'll be spending on the road and at various points of interest. A budget can help you decide how far you can go and which types of accommodations to seek.

Schedule a vehicle maintenance appointment

Be sure to schedule a pre-trip appointment at the service center

to give your vehicle a once-over. Change the oil if necessary, have fluids topped off, check the cooling or heating system, and get the tires inspected/rotated. Also, build a road trip toolkit in case of any emergencies or breakdowns.

Take frequent breaks

Even if you think you don't need to, pull off at a rest stop to walk around, stretch and use the restroom. If the next rest stop is far away, you won't be uncomfortable waiting to reach it. Various smartphone apps list what's available at each highway exit as well as



Defensive driving refresher course suggestions offered

Driving affords people the freedom to travel wherever they desire so long as they have access to a reliable vehicle. However, soon after the "new car smell" of that freshly minted license wears off, motorists may realize that many roads can be chaotic and populated by erratic drivers. Defensive driving strategies can help any motorist feel safe on

promote their own. Harold L. Smith was a World War II veteran who founded the Smith System® driving school in 1952. Smith felt that driving schools only taught how to mechanically operate vehicles, not how to drive safely to avoid accidents. Smith's system uses the mnemonic "all good kids like milk," which refers to:

seconds away. In addition, scan mirrors every few seconds.

- **Keep your eyes moving®:** Avoid focusing on one object for more than a few seconds. Driving on autopilot or under "highway hypnosis" is dangerous.

- **Leave yourself an out®:** The "space cushion" terminology is something you may have heard. You always want to anticipate potential hazards and ensure a way to avoid them; otherwise, you may be forced to make a quick, and potentially dangerous, decision.

- **Make sure they see you®:** Drivers who can't see you may make their own maneuvers thinking the coast is clear. Try to make eye contact with other drivers, use headlights, your horn, and signal your intentions.

Take a defensive driving course

You can follow the Smith method outlined here or enroll in a defensive driving course to further hone your skills behind the wheel. Also, it may be worth it to check with your insurance provider to see if taking a defensive driving course will qualify you for a discount on your automotive policy.

Defensive driving is important, as it can keep drivers and their passengers safe and potentially prevent accidents and injuries.



the road, and it can help anyone to revisit a defensive approach from time to time.

What is defensive driving?

The insurance firm Progressive notes defensive drivers employ techniques that can reduce accident risk. These techniques promote alertness, a recognition among drivers of the significance of controlling what they can, and a commitment to always expect the unexpected. The crux of defensive driving is realizing not everyone else drives well. Aggressive drivers are hazards, as are those who are distracted behind the wheel. Driving defensively serves to mitigate some of these hazards.

All good kids like milk?

There are various defensive driving techniques, and various driving schools or organizations may

- **Aim high in steering®:** Look ahead a minimum of 15 seconds to scan the road. At 60 miles per hour you want to look a quarter-mile ahead. This helps you make timely decisions.

- **Get the big picture®:** Keep a minimum following distance by picking a fixed object ahead and making sure you're at least seven

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rest stops nearby to help you plan accordingly.

Be smart about food and drink

If you have to stop for a meal, visit a grocery store instead of restaurants and fast food, as they offer healthier, less expensive options. Supermarkets also have restrooms and seating areas. If you're bringing along food, pack a cooler with frozen water bottles that can keep the food cold. As the water bottles melt, you will have access to drinks without having to compromise on cargo room.

Establish a special road trip treat

Plan something that you only enjoy on road trips. This can be an expensive package of chocolates, or dining out at a restaurant chain you don't have closer to home. It can enhance the anticipation and

enjoyment of the long ride.

Download favorite songs, podcasts and more

Downloading ensures access to the songs and additional entertainment you desire without having to worry if a cellular connection is spotty. Take turns alternating between tunes, audiobooks, movies, and even stand up comedy specials to help pass the time. Also, bring paper maps as backups to GPS systems.

Utilize coupon sites

Get on sites like Groupon to figure out what to do locally and grab deals in the process.

Road trips are enjoyable options for family or individual travel. Certain tips can make the ride go smoothly.



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The basics of EVs for first-time buyers explained

Electric vehicles are increasingly visible on roadways around the world. According to BloombergNEF, a strategic research provider covering global commodity markets, in June 2022 there were 20 million plug-in vehicles in use across the globe. That's an increase from only one million in 2016. As more people are drawn to EVs, drivers can exercise due diligence to learn more about them, particularly if they're considering buying their first such vehicle.

Different vehicle types

The term "electric vehicle" encompasses a variety of cars and trucks. The following are some common categories.

- **Hybrid electric vehicle:** These are the most common type of hybrids. They have two power drives, which include a fuel-based engine and an electric motor with a larger battery. A computer determines when electricity or gas should be used. The system utilizes regenerative braking that ensures the electric battery gets a little recharge every time the driver touches the breaks

- **Mild hybrid electric vehicle:** MHEVs use a battery and electric motor to increase the efficiency of an internal combustion engine



(ICE). An MHEV does not run solely on electric power, but the ICE can be turned off and the electric motor used while braking, coasting and stopping.

- **Battery electric vehicle:** BEVs are powered entirely by electricity and will have no ICE or fuel tank. Users charge the battery using an electrical outlet.

- **Plug-in hybrid electric vehicle:** Like BEVs, PHEVs have an electric motor that is charged by plugging it in. They also have a fuel-based ICE like HEVs. Where they differ is that PHEVs can travel a considerable distance on electric power alone, while HEVs cannot.

Driving range

The distance EVs can travel before needing to recharge

depends on the type of vehicle. Most EVs have a driving range between 50 and 330 miles. Shoppers should determine the "range-per-charge" for the vehicle to assess if it will fit their driving needs and daily commutes. Drivers who frequently take long road

trips may have to assess if a hybrid vehicle is more practical; otherwise, careful planning may be necessary to accommodate charging along the route.

Parking /charging situation

Individuals who live in private homes or rentals with access to outlets may be more inclined to invest in EVs. Charging can be done with a standard 120V outlet, but it will increase charging time considerably. Many people opt to have a 240V charger installed in a garage or driveway, which is known as "Level 2 ESVE equipment." With this type of setup, a charge can be reached in roughly four to six hours, says Valley Clean Energy. Public charging stations utilize a 480V input and

can charge many EV models in about 20 to 30 minutes. Plug-in hybrid vehicles do not typically have fast charging capabilities, however.

Reduce maintenance

BEVs require less maintenance than conventional vehicles because there are fewer fluids like oil and transmission fluid to change, and far fewer moving parts. EVs require minimal scheduled maintenance to electrical systems, including the battery and electrical motor. Hybrid vehicles still require the standard maintenance of gas-powered vehicles.

EVs are growing in popularity, so potential buyers can school themselves on these newer vehicles to determine if they're the right fit for them.

Kayaking dos and don'ts

Kayaking is a healthy and enjoyable activity that attracts new enthusiasts all the time. Part of what makes the sport so popular is the relative ease with which people can get started. Kayaking requires minimal gear (kayaks can be rented if not purchased) and no advanced skills are required. However, kayaking is not to be taken lightly, as water sports can be unpredictable. Adhering to certain dos and don'ts can make kayaking safer.

- **DO** choose the right boat. There are boats rated for kayak racing and those that are strictly for recreational purposes. Some boats are meant for calmer waters and others for waves and open seas.
- **DON'T** forget to check the weather forecast before heading



- **DO** let someone know where you're going and how long you plan

out in the water. Storms can come up relatively quickly, and offshore winds can make it challenging to paddle back to shore.

to be out on the water.

- **DON'T** touch or get too close to wildlife, as animals can be unpredictable and even dangerous.
- **DO** dress for the water temperature and not the weather outside. This helps ensure your health if you intentionally or accidentally enter the water.

- **DON'T** skip wearing a life jacket/buoyancy aid.
- **DO** expect to get wet, even if you do not fall in. Splash up will occur from paddles and some water will get in the boat regardless.
- **DON'T** forget to bring along some snacks and water.
- **DO** bring a fellow kayaker along. Whether you're a novice or a seasoned professional, bringing a friend along ensures someone can go for help if you're involved in an accident or suffer an injury.

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Tips to conserve fuel on road trips

Road trips remind drivers of just how thrilling the open road can be. For millions of individuals, nothing provides a sense of escapism as effectively as the open road.

Though road trips can be liberating, they do not allow a complete escape from reality, something drivers realize when the time comes to fill up the gas tank.

Gas prices fell considerably by mid-December 2023, dipping to

an average of \$3.12 per gallon of regular by the middle of that month according to data from AAA. That marked a significant decline from just a month earlier, when prices for a gallon of regular gas averaged \$3.36. But drivers know prices can spike just as quickly as they drop, so it pays dividends to recognize strategies to conserve fuel. Such strategies can be especially beneficial for drivers about to embark on

a road trip.

- **Slow down.** Pushing the pedal to the medal might be a romantic, if unsafe, notion of how to drive on a road trip. But that approach can be costly at the pump. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, every five miles per hour motorists drive over 50 miles per hour is the equivalent of paying \$0.30 more per gallon of gas. That estimate is based on a gallon of gas costing

Why swimming is so good for your body

Engaging in fitness activities that are enjoyable can increase the likelihood that a person will remain

workout

Swimming increases heart rate without stressing the body. The fit-



A 2021 study published in BMC Sports Science, Medicine and Rehabilitation revealed that 16 weeks of swimming led to significant reductions in body fat and BMI among those studied.

Improves heart health

Research has linked swimming to a reduction in blood pressure and additional benefits related to improved cardiovascular health.

Enhances lung volume

Swimming involves deeper breathing and can strengthen the muscles involved with respiration, says Everyday Health.

Improves quality of life

Older adults who swim may experience decreased rates of disability and improved quality of life. Swimming helps to improve or maintain bone health, particularly among post-menopausal women. Water-based exercise also is low-impact and builds strength.

Improves mental health

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention notes that swimming can improve mood in both men and women. Swimming may decrease anxiety, and exercise therapy in warm water can improve symptoms of depression.

These are just some of the health benefits associated with swimming.

committed to routine exercise. In addition to being fun, swimming is an exercise that benefits the entire body. It's also ideal for people of all ages, as the buoyancy of water reduces the strain on muscles and joints.

Healthline reports that an hour of swimming burns almost as many calories as running, without all the impact to the bones and joints. Many people who commit to swimming each week may have no problem getting the recommended 150 minutes of moderate activity or 75 minutes of vigorous activity each week recommended by various health organizations. Here are some of the ways swimming is good for your body.

Engages the entire body

Swimming works just about all the muscles of the body. Various swimming strokes can enable a person to focus on certain muscle groups, if desired.

A thorough cardiovascular

ness level can be customized and gradually built up so that one can increase strength and endurance.

Reduces body fat

Swimming can help many people slim down. According to Harvard Medical school, a 155-pound person can burn about 432 calories swimming versus about 266 calories walking at a moderate pace for the same duration of time.

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\$4.32, but drivers can still conserve a considerable amount of fuel by slowing down.

- **Steer clear of city driving.** The stop-and-go traffic that is a hallmark of city driving can compromise fuel efficiency. The Office of Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy notes that rapid acceleration and braking, which is hard to avoid when driving through cities with lots of stoplights and pedestrians, can lower gas mileage by as much as 40 percent.

- **Avoid rooftop cargo.** Rooftop cargo boxes might be a necessity when a car is packed with passengers. But these luxuries come at a steep cost. A study from the Oak Ridge National Laboratory found that rooftop cargo boxes can reduce fuel efficiency by as much as 17 percent on the highway and as much as 25 percent on interstates where drivers drive at speeds

between 65 and 75 miles per hour. The DOE reports that rear-mount cargo boxes are much more efficient, so drivers looking to conserve fuel may want to pack light and/or opt for rear-mount cargo boxes instead of rooftop boxes.

- **Utilize cruise control.** The auto manufacturer Kia estimates that utilizing the cruise control function on a vehicle can save drivers as much as 14 percent on fuel. Cruise control is not advisable when driving in cities or on roads with stoplights. However, when driving on interstates, driving at the same continuous speed helps drivers avoid constant accelerations and decelerations, which compromise fuel efficiency.

When the open road beckons, drivers can make their road trips more affordable by implementing various strategies to conserve fuel.

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What young athletes can do to reduce injury risk

Exercise is great for the body. Scholastic and recreational sports are one of the primary ways children and adolescents get the exercise they need. Even though sports participation is relatively safe, there's no guarantee athletes won't suffer an injury. However, there are ways

for student athletes to reduce their risk of getting hurt while playing the games they love.

Maintain flexibility

Mount Sinai says it is extremely important for athletes to perform dynamic stretches before starting any activity. Cold muscles are vulnerable to injury, so it's best to do some sort of physical warm-up, including jumping jacks, butt kicks, running in place, or arm circles.

Practice proper technique

Athletes should learn and implement the proper techniques for whatever sport they are playing to lower their injury risk.

Don't push through pain

Pain is one way the body communicates that something isn't right. At the first sign of pain, an athlete should take a break and be assessed by a medical professional. Playing through pain can make an injury worse and sideline athletes for longer than expected.

Wear the right gear

Johns Hopkins Medicine emphasizes using proper, well-fitting gear. Certain gear may be cumbersome and athletes may be tempted to forego it, but that can result in greater injury risk.

Get a sports physical

Most programs mandate an updated sports physical examination. This pre-participation physical allows for the screening, prevention and treatment of any condi-



tions that can affect play and contribute to injury.

Gradually increase training intensity

The American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine indicates athletes should always build up their training gradually. One way to do so is to follow the 10 percent rule, which advises against increasing training activity, weight, mileage, or pace by more than 10 percent per week.

Rest and take breaks

Athletes who play sports year-round have a greater tendency than others to suffer overuse injuries because their bodies are not given an opportunity to rest and recover. Athletes should take at least one season off per year.

Play different sports

By participating in different sports, an athlete can avoid using the same muscle groups all the time. For example, the muscles used for swimming may be different from those used for playing field hockey. Utilizing different muscles reduces the risk for overuse injuries.

Strengthen the core

Mount Sinai notes a strong core, which is the abdominal area of the body, can help athletes avoid injuries. Exercises that strengthen the core can improve balance, stability and strength.

Student athletes may want to get ahead in the sports they play, but it should never be at the expense of putting their bodies at a greater risk for injury.



Sharing the news

Organizers of the annual Cars -N- Carroll Show & Shine event were among those having entries in the Wakefest celebration earlier this month. This year's event is scheduled for Sunday, Sept. 22. Hundreds of vehicles fill the streets of Carroll that day.

Travel perks and discounts for seniors

Having made it to their golden years, seniors enjoy not only the privilege of earned wisdom, but also a few perks that come with aging. Many adults who have reached a certain age are entitled to an array of discounts, which take into consideration seniors' fixed retirement incomes. Discounts are available on various services, including many travel options.

Seniors have a lot of time to

devote to recreational pursuits. This list of available travel discounts can help seniors get the most bang for their vacation bucks.

Airline tickets

Before booking a flight, it is worth investigating if a particular airline carrier offers senior discounts. The global pandemic has changed how some airlines do business, and many have faced significant adversity since early 2020.

Airlines may offer more affordable flights to drum up business. In the past, American Airlines, Southwest Airlines, British Airlines, and United Airlines have offered various discounts for people ages 65 and older.

Ground travel

Flying isn't the only mode of travel available. AARP partners with various car rental companies to offer senior discounts. Seniors also may be entitled to discounts of 5 percent or more on tickets from Greyhound, Amtrak, and Trailways. Seniors who live in metropolitan areas also may get reduced fares on public buses and trains through providers like New York City's Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

Accommodations

Getting there is one thing, but seniors also can receive discounts on hotel stays or cruise cabins. AARP reports that many major hotel and motel chains offer senior discounts between 5 and 15 percent. Royal Caribbean has offered senior discounts on select sailings and state-

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Get the most out of traveling in an RV

Traveling in an RV is a popular pastime that reached new heights during the pandemic. Though some of that enthusiasm has waned since the world reopened to travel, RV trips remain a very popular prospect across the United States and Canada.

According to the RV Industry Association's April 2023 survey of manufacturers, total RV shipments ended the month with 31,216 units and 109,616 total shipments as

categories.

"RV ownership remains one of the most economical ways for consumers to travel while also maintaining control over their costs, which is more important than ever for consumers right now," indicated RV Industry Association President & CEO Craig Kirby.

Some people may be new to the RV lifestyle and are interested in learning how to maximize the time spent on RV trips across the

clearance or narrow lanes that may limit large motorhomes and RVs. It's important to know the height of the RV so you can determine which roadways feature low-clearance bridges that should be avoided.

Level your RV

Before filling your freshwater tank, it's important to have your RV on a level surface to ensure you are getting a full tank of water to use for all of your trip needs. Similarly, consider replacing the showerhead in the RV with a water-saving model to help conserve water.

Make reservations

Even if there are scores of campsites and RV parks along a route, that does not necessarily mean there will be available space. It can be challenging to find an open lot during peak season. Don't leave it to chance; make reservations to safeguard your stay.

Adjust driving habits

Driving an RV is not like driving other vehicles. An RV is heavier, larger and has a different stopping distance and turning radius than other vehicles. Practice driving your RV before heading out on the open road. Driving the RV too fast also may put you in danger of a tire blowout, and making turns too abruptly can potentially flip the RV over.

Plan for stops

One of the benefits of RV travel is that you can take time with your trip. Make as many stops as you like along the way, taking advantage of opportunities to refuel and rest. When traveling in an RV, it's not just the destination, but also the journey that makes for the most memorable trip.

RV trips are still very popular,

and this affordable way of travel is lifestyle every year. Make reservations attracting new converts to the RV



of April 2023. Travel Trailers - 5th wheel and Mini (Type C) campers topped the list of consumer preferences for towable and motorhome

Make the decision that matters the most

Would you ride a roller coaster without being safely secured in?! Would you text your friends while scuba diving?!

According to data from the Nebraska Motor Vehicle Traffic Accident Report, over 1,400 Nebraskans from 2011 to 2020, had a crash because they were distracted by a mobile device. During that same time frame, teen drivers were involved in 395 of those crashes. In 2020, Nebraska had 131 drivers involved in a crash due to distracted driving from their mobile device that year, including 41 teen drivers.

Whether it's down the street or across the country, buckling your seat belt and putting your phone down are two of the most impactful actions any driver, teen or not, can make. Just like being secured into a roller coaster ride or not scuba diving and texting!

nation. Following these guidelines can make for exciting adventures.

Plan the route

Many scenic roadways traverse the country, and all of them may seem like great places to embark on RV adventures. However, according to Crossroads Trailers, not all roads, bridges and tunnels are RV-friendly. You must pay attention to overhead

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Travel

(Continued from page 6)

room categories. Smarter Travel notes that most chains require travelers to book directly rather than through an online booking agency/deal site to be eligible for discounts.

Dining out

Many restaurants, and national chains in particular, offer senior discounts with or without AARP membership. Applebee's offers 10 to 15 percent off to those age 60

or older. Brick House Tap & Tavern, Carrabba's Italian Grill, Denny's, IHOP, Outback Steakhouse, and many others provide discounts or special senior pricing.

Tours and more

Seniors also can speak with travel agents or booking services about discounts on sightseeing tours and other vacation excursions.

One of the perks of getting older is the chance to save money on travel-related services.



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Get ready for scholastic sports seasons

Students have plenty of reasons to participate in school sports and many of them confirm what the experts say regarding the benefits of such pursuits. The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) indicates some

•Listening to and learning from coaches

Millions of children participate in scholastic sports and recreational leagues across the country. Young athletes can take certain steps to prepare for the upcoming season.

that they schedule one prior to the start of the season. Remember to bring along any athletic forms that will need to be filled out and officially signed by health care professionals.

Create a portal account

Schools now rely primarily on technology to organize the acquisition of health records and other pertinent information so that students can participate in play. Services like Student Central and GoToMySportsPhysical enable schools to aggregate forms and sports clearance information in one place. Usage of these systems typically requires setting up both parent and student accounts and then populating the information and digitally signing as needed. In addition to uploading sports physical forms, the portal may ask users to sign waivers and to confirm that they have read information regarding injury risk.

Check gear

Student athletes should confirm which gear they may need for the upcoming season. Check last season's gear to ensure it still fits and remains in good working order.

Get in shape

Some athletes continue with their training regimens all year long. Others may take breaks between seasons. It may be necessary to create a new exercise plan so athletes can start acclimating their bodies to the demands of the sport.

Undergo a

concussion baseline test

Some schools require a concussion baseline test prior to sports participation. It is a specific questionnaire for each player that will

create baseline data regarding processing speed, symptoms, pain levels, balance, and physical abilities, according to CognitiveFx. Should a sports injury occur, the test will be repeated and the results can be compared to assess depth of injury.

The new scholastic season may be beginning shortly and student athletes need to take certain steps to ensure they're eligible and able to play when practices start.



of the main benefits include:

- Building relationships through the team
- Developing care and empathy
- Maintaining strong physical fitness
- Understanding limitations and how to push past them

Get a sports physical

Most sports programs will not enroll participants without a recent sports physical. Physicals typically must be updated every year. Students and parents should check the date on athletes' most recent physical examination and be sure

Did you know?

Southern California residents, particularly those who work and live in Los Angeles, often bemoan how congested the city's numerous highways can be at any given moment. But data from the American Transportation Research Institute indicates that a road on the other side of the country holds the distinction as the biggest truck bottleneck in the United States.

According to the ATRI, Interstate-95 at State Route 4 in Fort Lee, New Jersey, is the busiest highway in the country. Much of that congestion can be traced to the George Washington Bridge, as

the area where I-95 meets Route 4 is just west of the GWB. But as stressful as that bottleneck can be for truck drivers and commuters, they may be glad that they are not forced to navigate Atlanta each day.

ATRI data indicates that Georgia's most populous city is home to three of the country's 10 most-congested roadways: I-285 at I-85 (North), which is second on the list; I-75 at I-285 (North), which is third; and I-20 at I-285 (West), which is the seventh most congested bottleneck in the United States.



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