

A Letter from the Editor – On the road, out of control

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Hollywood, MD - Over 40 years ago the State of Maryland posted signs at its borders greeting visitors and asking them to “please drive gently.” Many out-of-staters and quite a few natives mocked this choice of words. “Drive Gently? What does that mean?” Perhaps it’s time to plead for sanity and gentility on the road again, especially here in Southern Maryland, where everybody appears to be either in a big hurry, seriously distracted or disturbed.

Motorcyclists, bicyclists and pedestrians have especially had it bad this year. Operators of sedans, sport utility vehicles and trucks need to keep in mind that the road is to be shared. The public roads ought to be a passageway through life’s journey. It’s not supposed to be a competitive arena to decide who survives and who doesn’t. The days when the region’s roads weren’t so busy have been over for some time. Calvert and Charles counties are home to a large out-of-jurisdiction workforce. St. Mary’s County is home to a huge workplace—Patuxent Naval Air Station. There is plenty of incentive to merely desire getting from point A to point B as safely as possible. The prosperity and tranquility of families depend on safe travel.

There are already enough hazards out there for motorists—wild animals such as deer, potholes, occasional adverse weather conditions, mechanical breakdowns—those things are very difficult to control. Getting a grip on our collective competence to operate motor vehicles in a safe manner ought to be an attainable goal—a challenge to be answered—every time we drive.

Unlike the bearing of arms, driving is not a right guaranteed by the Constitution. It’s a privilege bestowed upon us by society, one which we all pay a big price for—purchasing and maintaining a vehicle, insuring it, fueling it. Paying for it with our lives or the lives of others is unacceptable.

Have a great ride!

This Letter from the Editor does not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of The BayNet management and staff.

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