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Ignorance or Safety

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Ignorance - Two types of ignorance:

1. What we don't know.
2. What we know, but don't act on.

My grandson called wanting to get right my advice on learning. “You can learn by listening. You can learn by doing (reading, writing, calculating - math). Or you can learn the hard way -- by losing.”

Safety - The importance of safety information is underestimated. Too often all of us learn the hard way.

A recent fatal crash carries lessons in the magnitude of the tragic consequences and the potential importance of safety information. A fatal crash (on Feb 27th) killed a father, a mother, and a young brother (age 18), leaving a young daughter (age 15) who was brought to a trauma center with life threatening injuries. The collision is under investigation. See

<http://www.mymcpnews.com/2016/02/28/fatal-collision-on-river-road-investigated/>

So many questions! So many unknowns! Crash injury causes are multifactorial. What could have been done to prevent or mitigate this tragedy – and future tragedies? Traffic light? Safer vehicles? Etc.? See

https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/trafficandcommuting/deadly-crash-intensifies-push-for-changes-at-confusing-bethesda-intersection/2016/03/05/22b9ef38-e165-11e5-846c-10191d1fc4ec_story.html

At NHTSA I worked to develop a program (CIREN) in the 1990s by which serious injury crashes would be studied to determine what could be done to prevent, treat, and rehabilitate seriously injured crash victims. The auto industry did not like the program. CIREN is now under the direction of former GM employees. See <http://www.careforcrashvictims.com/blog-nhtsaexec2004.php>

So what do we, as drivers, parents, government officials, and citizens, have an obligation to do? And what do we have the power to do?

Purchasing Safety - Consider the power of safety information that is available to vehicle purchasers today. The Car Book, 2016 is now available.

One of the most important purchasing decisions people make is buying a new vehicle. Americans for 36 years have had a valuable information tool to help them make wise choices. See <http://www.careforcrashvictims.com/blog-naderbirthday.php>

I looked up in The Car Book 2016 the ratings of the two new vehicles that crashed. The vehicles in the fatal crash reportedly were both 2016 model year vehicles – The struck vehicle was a Chevy Volt and the striking vehicle was a BMW M235 according to a Police Report.

The Car Book ratings for the 2016 Chevy Volt Crash Safety Features should be warnings to prospective purchasers:

- * *Crash Test Rating: “Not Available”*
- * *Collision Avoidance: “Warning Only Optional”*
- * *Blind Spot Detection: “Optional”*
- * *Lane Keeping Assist: “Warning Only Optional”*
- * *Backup Camera: “Standard*” Does not meet government standards*
- * *Pedestrian Crash Avoidance: “None”*
- * *Dynamic Head Restraints: “None”*

Optional & Voluntary = Does Not Meet Mandatory Federal Standards

The 2016 BMW M235 had similar limitations in crash safety features.

But consider the alternative in “The Car Book 2016” which recommended the Volvo S60 (a vehicle comparably priced to the Chevy Volt) as a “Best Bet.” The Volvo S60 earned a 9 out of 10 rating on its Combo Crash Tests, a 10 for Safety Features, and an Overall Rating of 10. The 2016 Volvo S60 also has as standard equipment for Crash Avoidance both Crash Imminent Braking (CIB) and Dynamic Brake Support (DBS).

Whether this safety information could have been sufficient to prevent or mitigate the tragedy in this specific crash is unknown. But based on nearly 40 years of auto safety work, I would not want to make a vehicle purchase without the safety information in The Car Book. It can save you “time, money, aggravation, and possibly life, limbs, and livelihoods”. See my previous Review at <http://www.careforcrashvictims.com/assets/MonthlyReportforJanuary2015.pdf>

Safety Knowledge Saves Lives - If ignorance can be fatal, how do we get people to know and heed safety information - information that matters - before it is too late?

When nearly 100 people die of crash injuries, 400 suffer serious injuries, and losses are valued at \$2 Billion in the U.S.A. today – every day consider:

- **Our Media:** So much news and information is ignored because too many people think that corporate media is not providing something they can use. Imagine if the media recognized the value of The Car Book in relating to their audience with information of life or death importance. Imagine if reporters had a set of Car Books on their desk. When a serious crash occurred they could check the Car Book to see the safety ratings of that vehicle and ask questions important to their audience.
- **High Schools:** Imagine if all high schools had their students take a course using The Car Book as a text. Teens are at the highest risk of vehicular death and serious injuries. And teens are interested in cars.
- **Libraries:** Imagine every librarian having two copies of the Car Book. One on the shelves and a reference one in their desk drawer for times when the shelf copy is out on loan.
- **Law Offices:** Every law office and Police Station should have a set of Car Books to refer to when considering cases.
- **Doctors Offices & Hospital Emergency Rooms:** Doctors dispense medical, public health, and safety advice that could prevent major tragedies for their patients – point of care is one of the best places and time for safety information.
- **Churches:** Churches can provide information important to the physical and moral education of their members and inspire greater safety.

The Next Car Book - Imagine an electronic version. Imagine an electronic library of all the Car Books available online to the world.

Consider a section on documented safety advice. For example: How many prospective purchasers know that they can get a **free** safety option that reduces their crash risk by about 10% - just by choosing the color white?

See <http://www.careforcrashvictims.com/blog-daylightsavings.php>

Be smart and safe. Readers of The Car Book will always need real time updates on safety information. Reliable updates are available through the Center for Auto Safety at <http://www.autosafety.org/>