

# OK, enough's enough!

No politics this time, folks. That's because some things just transcend politics.

One of them is lousy drivers. I know Paragould is called The Friendly City, and by and large it deserves the appellation.

And I will admit I am not the city's best driver myself. But I have lost count of how many times I have encountered drivers who:

■ Make right turns into the inside lane of a street with two lanes going the same direction – often right in front of me as I travel in the inside lane, obliging either slowing down or even slamming on the brakes to avoid hitting their vehicles. This is a traffic violation, irrespective of any accident potential.

■ Make left turns into the outside lane of such roads as I am traveling in that outside lane, likewise obliging abrupt slowing or even hard braking. Again, this is a traffic violation, any accident potential aside.

■ Having pulled up on a side street to its intersection with the road on which I am traveling, pull out right in front of me, yet again obliging abrupt slowing or hard braking to avoid hitting them. That has "failure to yield right of



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way" written all over it, irrespective of any accident such a move could cause.

And then there are the guys who, as I am driving at least the speed limit on a road with only one lane of traffic in my direction, come up on me at a speed much faster than mine, as if expecting me to speed up or get out of their way (nowhere to go on such a road... ). And I should speed up (risking a speeding ticket – or worse – myself) to accommodate what could likely be poor time management on their part BECAUSE... ?

And let's not forget those drivers who may think they are more skilled than the rest of us, such that they think they can shoot a small gap between me and the car in front of me without getting hit by me, or hitting the guy in front of me. And all of it without the use of turn signals ... I guess they must think it's sorta like doing a trapeze act without a net. You know: "boy, what guts he has!"

(Yeah, if it doesn't go well, everybody might get to see those guts – and maybe ours too – splattered all over the road ... )

To be sure, I have also been blessed by many drivers in Paragould who have done things they did not have to do for me, like stop to let me into their lane of traffic during peak traffic times. I thank them one and all.

But to those other drivers whom I have described above:

As most readers will already know, I cover the crime beat among others.

And I have lost count of how many drug arrests took place as the result of traffic stops, from improper right turns (you know, like into the inside lane), to improper lane changes (you know, like shooting the gap) to not using turn signals (ditto).

So does that mean everybody who doesn't drive the way he or she should is a drug offender? Of course not.

But it has become very apparent to me that law enforcement officers, always on the lookout to keep us safe on our roads and streets, have made the same connection I have between traffic violations and

drug arrests. After all, they enforce both traffic and drug laws for a living.

So if you are not using, possessing or transporting drugs, do yourself a favor: don't invite the attention of our law officers by DWD (driving while dumb).

They may take up a good deal more of your time looking for drugs you don't have as the result of a traffic stop that they already know could conceivably produce such drugs.

You know you don't have them, but they don't. And you know that in most cases, they are not going to be naive enough to take your word that you don't have any.

If you are doing drugs, on the other hand, be warned that your poor driving will probably be one of the things that gives you away. You know you don't want to go to jail, and you probably don't want to do the drugs you are doing either.

That is how addictions work ...

So get some help. If you could quit on your own, you already would have ...

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