

Volunteers met with Franklin County Sheriff Bill Overton on July 6 to review the results of the recent “speed study” conducted in TWE. Of note, the Sheriff’s office has been directing additional routine patrols in many areas to increase its visibility throughout the county. Along with these 78 “directed patrols” by Deputies in TWE, there were 20 “Citizen’s on Patrol (COPs)” patrols from May 11 through July 6. The COPs patrols were designed to collect speed data and were conducted at 7 locations in TWE Monday-Saturday between 8:30am-5pm. No enforcement action was taken by Deputies or COPs volunteers during this period.

Observations/Results:

- The roads were “heavily” traveled by pedestrians, runners, golf carts, and bicyclists
- A large number of service vehicles were observed
- 1522 total vehicles were measured for speed
- 92.5% of the vehicles were traveling within NORMAL RANGE
- 7% of vehicles were traveling 11-20 mph over the speed limit
- 0.5% of vehicles were traveling >20mph over the speed limit
- “Most” vehicles considered to be exceeding normal range were commercial/service vehicles

Other Comments:

- Deputies were concerned when they heard the same false rumors of arrests or tickets issued that were spreading within the community because it cast a shadow over a well-intentioned effort.
- Deputies were greeted favorably whenever there was an interaction with citizens.
- Residents should be aware that Sheriff’s Deputies play an important public safety role and want to be viewed favorably as an asset by the community.

Next Steps:

- As part of the county-wide effort, the Sheriff’s office has requested the “speed trailer” be positioned in TWE to collect additional data, remind drivers of the speed limit, and show drivers their actual speed. As of this writing, the trailer is at the exit of TWE near the sign.
- Deputies will continue to patrol our area, as well as the rest of the county’s outlying areas, for visibility and familiarity.
- The WEPOA will consider inviting Sheriff Overton to the Annual Meeting to speak briefly and answer questions.
- Representatives of the six TWE Associations may want to send a letter to service providers reminding them of the speed limit and asking their drivers to observe it and be mindful of pedestrians, bicycles, etc.
- Representatives of the six TWE Associations may want to consider VDOT for additional speed control measures. Sheriff Overton can help with that if needed.