

Gorski Consulting Website

Archived News - 2013 - May

May 27, 2013

Our Apologies For Lack Of Recent Website Content

We offer our apologies to our frequent (and new) visitors on this website for our lack of new content in this past month. As an accident reconstruction firm our principal activity is to serve our legal and insurance clients with respect to assignments to which we are obligated. When time permits we try to maintain this website with new and interesting content. However we have been quite busy this past May, 2013 and therefore have not had the opportunity to post as many new materials as we would like. We recognize there are interesting topics available for discussion and we are still examining certain collision sites in south-western Ontario. However the time commitment to post our findings has made it difficult to complete this work.

We expect this to be temporary but it happens from time to time. We ask for your patience as the “log jam” will disperse and we will be posting new materials shortly.

May 22, 2013

Starbucks Crash In London Ontario Is A Reminder That Temporary Street Cafes Pose A Danger

Tuesday morning, May 21st, 2013, a car crashed into the store window and wall of the Starbucks Cafe at the intersection of Richmond Street and Central Avenue in downtown London, Ontario. This innocent happening resulted in no injuries however it caused some in the City to raise a warning regarding the danger posed by a recent political decision to allow sidewalk cafes to operate in the street parking spots of Dundas Street in downtown London. While that decision was thought to be helpful in raising interest in attending downtown London there appeared to be little attention paid to the

possibility that patrons sitting on the street would be unprotected from vehicles passing along Dundas Street within a few feet of them.

The idea of bringing a bit of romantic Paris into the City's core failed to underscore the fact that along most Paris streets there is some designed protection between the patrons and the road traffic, even if that protection is limited. The photo below shows an example of such protection at one of Paris's numerous cafes where metal posts are installed along the curb edge.



An example of a Paris sidewalk cafe where the patrons are protected from traffic by strong metal posts positioned at regular intervals along the curb edge.

Dundas Street in London, Ontario was once the main artery that brought traffic into the centre of the City and it still holds some of those historic characteristics. It is a long and straight road that allows vehicles to pick up speed as opposed to the much slower speeds of vehicles in the congested, winding, narrow streets of Paris. This fact has to be taken

into consideration when evaluating what kind of incident might occur that could cause injuries or worse to those person sitting on a chair “in the middle of traffic”.

May 10, 2013

“Intersection Has A History of Fatalities” – But What Does This News Media Comment Truly Mean?



Vehicle engulfed in flames from crash at intersection of Brigden Road and Lambton Line, north of Wallaceburg, Ontario on Thursday, May 9, 2013.

In their description of a two-vehicle collision May 9, 2013, at the intersection of Brigden Road and Lambton Line, the London Free Press (LFP) indicated that “Intersection Has A History of Fatalities”. But what purpose did this comment serve?

In their article the LFP indicated:

“There are a pair of makeshift memorials at the intersection, as the intersection has been the scene of numerous accidents, including a deadly one in September of 2011. Two Wallaceburg men died following a car motorcycle collision. Another accident occurred in January of 2002 after a van collided with a recycling truck at the intersection. The driver of the van died”.

From these words the average reader would take it that this intersection is particularly dangerous. But is it really? Two fatal collisions over a span of eleven years? Does that amount to something that indicates an unusual danger?

What if the volume of traffic passing through that intersection was 5,000 vehicles per day? Does that make the intersection more dangerous than if the same two fatal collisions occurred at another intersection where the volume of traffic is only 1,000 vehicles per day? Presumably not, so would it not be important to identify the traffic volume at this intersection? Even more importantly, would it not be prudent to obtain the full, five-year history of collisions at this intersection? Fatal collisions are very rare in the overall distribution of collisions and the presence of just two fatal collisions could just be a statistical fluke. But we do not know because the facts that would make this information meaningful have not been provided.

It is not to be disrespectful to the author of the LFP article as this is typical of what information is provided by most news agencies. The full accident history cannot be easily obtained because that is held in secret by the agencies that maintain this intersection. Thus inaccurate and mis-leading comments are made by news media and by the general public about issues that can have deadly consequences.

Un-informed comments are made by the public and in some instances groups are formed to pressure local politicians to do something about that “obviously dangerous” intersection. Time is lost, money is lost and undue focus is directed toward some roadways while others of perhaps equal or even more dangerous characteristics are

ignored. Primarily because the public is not provided with the facts and is not educated as to what the difference is between the roads in their area.

It has been our continual opinion that accident histories of our roads should not be held in secrecy as part of some national defense strategy. No, the terrorists will not benefit from knowing that one road has more accidents than another. The communists and martians will not invade us. The Parisians will not land on our beaches and beat us on our heads with their baguettes. We are simply unrealistic in our dealing with this road safety problem.

Lawyers and civil litigation is causing critical information about our safety to be hidden from the general public because those responsible for the safety of our roads are forced to hide any problems for fear of being held liable for an accident. In this modern age we should be able to find a resolution to this, or at least acknowledge that the problem exists.

May 9, 2013

2012 News Items Moved To “Archived News” Page

We have completed moving the remainder of the 2012 news items from this page to the “Archived News” page on this site. If you have interest in a particular news item from the last few years just visit the Archived News page and click on the month link that will get you to the listing of news items from that month.

Never Crash Your Lamborghini In Waterloo, Ontario

Too much muscle to handle? This is what Waterloo Regional Police appear to have determined from an incident on Erb Street East in Waterloo, Ontario when an eastbound Lamborghini was found stopped sideways on the north boulevard with damage visible to its left side wheels.

The Kitchener Record newspaper reported that “on Friday” at “7:23 p.m.” the driver of the Lamborghini had lost control of the vehicle resulting in a “careless driving” charge being laid against the driver. Police were quoted as saying that “The driver appears to have lost control because of the power of the car”.

It was apparent from the on-site photos that the vehicle had come to rest within about 100 metres from a right curve. That curve also contained a hillcrest. The Lamborghini's windshield wipers were still in the up position across the windshield suggesting that these wipers were on at the time of the crash. All these facts suggest that the driver lost control while travelling on a wet road surface that contained both horizontal vertical curves. This is a common problem for drivers of high powered vehicles as the power of the rear wheels produces the slide-out that was evident in the vehicle's final rest position. But by no means could the police prove that the spin out was due to high speed or carelessness as there would be no physical evidence to support that opinion.

So, don't crash your Lamborghini in Waterloo, Ontario or your vehicle's nameplate will find you guilty. But that won't matter as you will likely be crying over your repair bills anyway.

May 8, 2013

Justice of the Peace Donna Phillips Allegedly Mis-Led Police – An Opportunity To Accept Our Imperfection

The London Free Press has reported that an Ontario Justice of the Peace, Donna Phillips, mis-led police when the vehicle her daughter, Mary Anne Kechego, was driving was pulled over by police on March 30, 2012. Kechego was reportedly a suspended driver and tried to convince the officer that she was someone else. Justice Phillips allegedly supported that the driver was actually her niece. It eventually became revealed that this was not the case and now Justice Phillips will have to appear before a review council on May 23 to face possible discipline that could involve her firing.

If the allegations are true then we obviously do not support such behaviour, especially from someone we expect to uphold the law. However this is an opportunity to express our opinion that our society is unreasonable in its expectations that individuals must be perfect. We are failing to accept that our police, judges, doctors, mailmen, dog catchers...whatever, are capable of being decent persons for a large majority of their lives, but that at short lapses of judgment we are all capable of failure. We suffer through this hypocrisy in that everyone must display this image of perfection while hiding the fact that they are not. And when there is an instance that this imperfection shows

through, we come down hard on that individual as if they are something abnormal; certainly not deserving of holding a position of responsibility in our society.

It has always been our position that we need to be accepting of persons' imperfections by asking: Does this person perform badly on a regular basis, or did this person get caught up as a result of an isolated incident? Because, in all fairness, our society is becoming capable of placing "video cameras" into more and more areas of our daily lives and these will begin to reflect our true character – that we are all imperfect. And soon we will be eliminating numerous persons from our responsible positions leaving only those who are the exceptionally sly and deceiving and who are most capable of not getting caught.

Our society can benefit from discussing this issue of imperfection, recognizing its existence in all of us, and working toward a better understanding of what it actually means with respect to a specific individual. We should condemn those instances where persons, often in the news media, attempt at sensationalization of a story to whip the public into a hysterical feeding frenzy whenever they can demonstrate that someone has failed. Rather, we should request that the public be given an opportunity to understand who the individual is, what has been their record of past behaviour, and where that person truly stands when matched against all others.

The greater concern we have in examining the present story is that the reported incident allegedly took place on March 30, 2012, or over a year ago, yet we do not recall hearing of its occurrence. We should be more concerned when allegedly improper actions of persons of importance in our society are hidden from public scrutiny. As the official news agencies become controlled by a small number of big players the possibilities of manipulating the information that the public receives become that much more problematic.

May 3, 2013

Public Not Being Informed That Death of Trevorton Watson Did Not Involve A "Collision"

In an act of Big Brother, police and news media have failed to inform the public that when a garbage truck driver died in an incident on Oxford Line 4 on the north-eastern

outskirts of Woodstock Ontario on the morning of May 1, 2013, he did not die from an actual “collision” and the mechanism of his injuries should have been explained to the public. By playing Big Brother in this manner police and the official news media are creating opportunities to withhold information about how persons die and that can be a dangerous precedent in a democratic society. Whether or not there is a reasonable explanation from withholding such information, the manner in which the public has never been informed that information was withheld is troubling because it takes away the opportunity for the public to evaluate what information should be withheld and for what reasons.

The photo below shows that the eastbound garbage truck simply veered off the right edge of the road and stayed upright as it then veered back onto the road.



View of tire marks on right (north) roadside of Oxford Line 4 where the garbage truck veered onto the roadside and then re-entered the road.

After crossing the road the vehicle travelled into the south ditch and came to a halt. A blood stain in the eastbound lane of the road indicates the driver's rest position.



View of blood stain in the eastbound lane of Oxford Line 4 indicating the resting position of the driver. The vehicle's final rest position was in the background in the south ditch.

The photo below shows the location where the garbage truck came to rest in the south ditch.



View, looking east along the south ditch of Oxford Line 4 showing the final rest location of the garbage truck.

Events involving large trucks create a lot of visible evidence because of the large amount of kinetic energy that is possessed and must be transferred in order for the vehicle to come to rest and dissipate that energy. So when we look at the amount of upheaval it can lead to a misunderstanding of the severity of the crash and of the severity of the forces that should be exerted on the driver. In reality the rate of deceleration of a truck like this under these conditions would not be expected to exceed 2 gs, or two times the acceleration due to gravity. In collision terms that is a very low severity event that, provided the driver stays within the truck cab and is not affected by any form of intrusion, should be ridden down without any significant consequences. So what actually happened?

Certainly the truck had to be under the driver's control when the vehicle veered onto the right roadside because he managed to bring the truck back to the left and back onto the roadway. The more likely situation is that something may have occurred at the location where the vehicle entered the ditch near its final rest position. But then why is the

driver's rest position in the middle of the road, back from where the vehicle came to rest? When facts like these do not add up an explanation should be provided.

Needs are sometimes in conflict as there are important reasons to withhold information and there are important reasons to release it. But in the realm of motor vehicle collisions too often authorities fail to recognize the importance of an informed public if our society is to function in a properly democratic fashion.

May 2, 2013

Rash of Major Collisions in Ingersoll & Woodstock Regions

Several life-threatening collisions have occurred in the past 24-hours in the vicinity of Ingersoll and Woodstock, Ontario.

A garbage truck travelling eastbound on Oxford Line 4 on the north-east outskirts of Woodstock at approximately 0900 hours on Wednesday, May 1st, 2013, went out of control and travelled into a ditch. The unusual fact is that a collision did not occur although the truck was in dire threat of over-turning as it passed through a steep, north sideslope of the road before it came back onto the south roadside and came to a stop in the south ditch. For an unexplainable reason the driver may have suffered a significant head injury and was likely lying in the middle of the road prior to the vehicle's eventual travel into the south ditch. Possibilities are that he might have been ejected from the vehicle during its crossing of the road or he may have been struck by something in the interior of the cab. Neither police nor news media have provided any information to the public of this unusual occurrence.

In a separate incident, at approximately 1500 hours, a westbound pick-up truck attempted to cross Plank Road at Union Road just south of Highway 401 and north of the village of Salford. A southbound dump truck on Plank Road struck the left-front bumper area of the pick-up causing it to spin off into a large wood-based traffic sign, knocking the sign over. Meanwhile the dump truck travelled several hundred metres northward where it eventually stopped on the right (east) shoulder. Given the very large post-impact travel distance of the dump truck police should be attempting to determine whether the dump truck had a readable engine control module (ECM) that could determine its speed. Unfortunately this is not often the case and police simply charge

the driver of the vehicle that entered from a stop sign. Interestingly, the police spokeswoman claimed that the female driver of the pick-up truck only sustained “minor” injuries yet she was transported to a London hospital by air ambulance. Since when is a person with minor injuries treated in such a way? We suspect the severity of the injuries are much more severe than what police have reported.

In a third incident, two vehicles reportedly collided on Plank line south of Ingersoll just before 2000 hours. Official news media are providing confusing information about the location of the collision but information indicates that at least one person has sustained critical level injuries.

May 1, 2013

Second Time That A Veteran Durham Police Officer Flees The Scene Of A Collision

Maybe our expectations of police are a little too high.

You see, we expect that when a public citizen is involved in an accident then they should stay at the scene, not only because that is the ethical thing to do, but also because it can be a Criminal Code offense. So when a police officer is involved in an accident we believe the standards should be the same, stay at the scene and identify yourself.

But it appears our expectations are just too high. When the Toronto Star newspaper reported that in December, 2012 Constable Richard Robinson was charged with failing to remain at the scene of an accident we made a fuss when the Chief of police appeared to be more concerned that the story was leaked rather than the consequences such actions have on the public’s confidence: that police try to hide their dirty deeds.

But now the Toronto Star is reporting that the charge of “fail to remain” against Robinson has been dropped, with no explanation given. But that’s not all folks...

The Toronto Star is also reporting that a second Durham police officer fled the scene of an accident on March 16, 2013, where his vehicle struck a parked car and then a house. Police searched for the driver but could not find him. Fourteen hours later Detective Pat Davidson reported that he was the driver. Will the Chief once again send out a search

party to try to identify who the culprit was who leaked this second story? This would almost be comical if it was not truly serious.

There are dangerous criminals out there. People who are capable of doing a lot of harm and from whom we need police protection. And the police need the public's help in capturing these dangerous people. It has to be a combined effort. But what is the public expected to believe when stories like these come out that police are fleeing the scenes of accidents and their charges are then dropped? Is it really that difficult to find someone with some basic integrity?

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