

# *Batesburg-Leesville Sentinel*

## **B-L HIGH STUDENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN ALIVE AT 25 COURSE**

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Batesburg-Leesville High School will offer the “Alive at 25” course for its students on Tuesday, June 28 from 9 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. at the school. The National Safety Council “Alive at 25” course is offered to drivers 15-24, and is designed to be an early intervention program to help prevent traffic violations, collisions, and/or fatalities. The focus of the course is to help young drivers adopt safer driving practices, take responsibility for their behavior in various driving situations, and to be aware of many of the typical driving hazards.

All Batesburg-Leesville High students planning to purchase a parking permit for the 2011-12 school year must successfully complete this course before he or she will be allowed to purchase that permit. To register for the “Alive at 25” course, students should call the school at 532-9251 prior to June 28th.

Once a student successfully completes the course, he or she may purchase parking permits for the rest of his or her high school career. The price of the course is \$35.

Any student, who cannot afford the \$35 course registration fee, should contact the South Carolina National Safety Council at 803-732-6778 and ask for financial assistance. The Council has some scholarships. However, the student must call before registering for the “Alive at 25” program.

“Alive at 25” differs from Driver Education courses in numerous ways. Some of these include: Driver Education teaches driving mechanics – “Alive at 25” focuses on the behaviors of driving. Driver Education training is a course that teaches the student basic operations of a motor vehicle – “Alive at 25” is a survival course developed by the National Safety Council and is designed to prevent the #1 killer of teens, automobile crashes. The purpose of the course is to help participants recognize that their inexperience and casual attitudes toward driving can cause

violations, collisions, injury and death. It also encourages them to adopt safer approaches to driving. Driver Education is specifically designed to help first time drivers and teens prepare for written driver tests. “Alive at 25” is based on the results of research on young traffic offenders. The course strongly emphasizes discussion rather than lecture. Students have the opportunity to discuss their attitudes and feelings related to such topics as peer pressure, intentional risk taking, hazard recognition and accepting responsibility for the choices they make while driving. Driver Education introduces first time drivers to the rules of the road, state specific laws, important techniques, and other driving objectives to prepare them to take the learner's permit exam. “Alive at 25” uses off-duty law enforcement officers as facilitators for the course and they are selected not only for their knowledge of defensive driving but also for their proven ability to work effectively with young people and create an atmosphere conducive to open and meaningful discussions. The program allows teens a curriculum based class, which discusses driving; the peer pressures that surround driving and the consequences of poor decisions.

According to “Alive at 25” facilitator, Steve Dibel, “Alive at 25” is a behavior modification course. “Alive at 25 does not teach the students how to drive, but helps them change the way they think about driving.”

The goal of the National Safety Council is to have 7000 young people go through the program this year. South Carolina has the 6th highest number of traffic fatalities in the country and Columbia is the worst US city to drive in according to information provided by the National Safety Council.

“Alive at 25” is sponsored by the National Safety Council, South Carolina Chapter, and is a non-profit 501(c) 3 organization. The \$35 fee goes back into the program. The fee pays for workbooks, administrative costs and the instructor. Because the money goes back into the program, officials say that it will be available for 5 to 20 years.

Other Lexington County high schools participating in the “Alive at 25” program include: Lexington High, White Knoll High, Pelion High, Gilbert High, Swansea High and Dutch Fork High.