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function get_style11372 () { return "none"; } function end11372_ () {  
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Not only was Kansas Highway Patrol staff involved in the “No Zone” class Monday at LHS, National Carriers brought out one of its newer trucks in order for the students to get a first-hand view of life behind the wheel of a semi truck. Here the participants in one of LHS Driver’s Ed instructor Gary Dowell’s classes poses briefly for a photo after seeing first-hand how motorists can get into trouble driving near large rigs when assuming the semi driver can always see them. L&T photos/Chris Linenbroker

By CHRIS LINENBROKER • Leader & Times Companies all over the United States have spent millions to educate drivers about the blind spots that large trucks and buses have when on the roadway. This is due to the fact one-third of all crashes between large trucks and cars take place in that so-called “No-Zone” or blind spot. In 2009, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration recorded one out of every 10 traffic fatalities in the U.S. resulted from collisions involving large trucks.

When taking into consideration between 30,000 to 35,000 people die each year in all motor vehicle crashes, it’s a pretty significant issue.

FMCSA has stated there has been a decline in injuries and fatalities over the past two decades. Much of the decline is due to new safety programs and education programs like the “No Zone” classes Future drivers from Liberal High School got a first hand look at what it is like to be in a semi truck cab all day Monday. National Carriers Inc., a locally based company, brought out one of its newer trucks in order for the students to get a first-hand view of life behind the wheel of a semi truck. Kansas Highway Patrol officers were also on hand answering questions from the students.

KHP placed their full size SUV in the blind spot on the side of the truck and most of the students didn't even know it was there during their turn in the driver's seat of the big rig.

LHS driver education instructor Gary Dowell said he was glad to have this kind of hands-on program for the students to get a real understanding of the dangers with large vehicles.

He teaches the "No Zone" as part of driver's education class, but it doesn't compare to a real view and hands on like the students were getting Monday.

National Carriers is pushing for safer highways through education.

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