



For Immediate Release

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June 13, 2019

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North Mason High School students partner with WSP, MCSO for new senior tradition

BELFAIR – The 2019 graduating class of North Mason High School created a new tradition Thursday dubbed “The Senior Stroll” in place of the “The Senior Slowdown” of years past thanks to the collaboration of the student body, Mason County Sheriff’s Office and Washington State Patrol.

The longstanding “Senior Slowdown” involved North Mason High School graduates blocking State Route 3 and impeding traffic as they left campus on their final day of school and paraded into Belfair. The event blocked traffic and access to businesses, creating traffic backups that affected roadways hours after the event was finished.

In more recent years, some participating students were observed car surfing, hanging out of windows and walking in the roadway, adding additional safety concerns to the traffic congestion.

The Washington State Patrol, Mason County Sheriff’s Office and North Mason High School student leaders met earlier this year to discuss solutions. The result was “The Senior Stroll,” which involved an 8-minute law enforcement escort, taking the seniors from the campus parking lot to Mary E. Theler Wetlands Nature Preserve. The students paraded down the sidewalks on foot to Safeway, then returned to their vehicles.

“We were supportive of the student’s efforts of reaching out and trying to find a solution to what we have viewed as a large public safety concern,” said Washington State Patrol District 8 Captain James Mjor. “The collaboration between law enforcement and the students lead to an opportunity for the students to safely celebrate without creating the concerning issues of the past.”

The Washington State Patrol assumed a zero tolerance policy for anyone who deviated from the agreed event. No concerning issues occurred during Thursday’s escort or the proceeding foot parade. No enforcement actions were taken.

District 8 serves Clallam, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Kitsap, Mason, Pacific and Wahkiakum counties.

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