



Photo submitted by DAVID GOODSPEED

The weather was perfect in the Crescent City — even if the ride to get there wasn't.

Hard lessons learned on road to New Orleans

I recently took a road trip to New Orleans from my home base in the 'burbs of Dallas.

New Orleans was a blast. The weather was chamber-of-commerce perfect, and I was impressed with how clean the city was and how few bugs there were, even in the swamps.

The trip was 8½ hours each way behind the wheel, and because I was taking a press fleet vehicle, only I could do the driving. Specific features in vehicles can make for more enjoyable travel — features offering comfort, convenience, economy and safety.

I got most of that out of the Nissan Altima Coupe I drove. The 2011 tester featured the frugal 2.5-liter four-cylinder engine backed by a six-speed manual gearbox. I enjoyed highway fuel economy better than the 31 mpg EPA rating, but the manual transmission just added to the frustration of the crush of congestion in downtown New Orleans.

I expected my Altima model to include navigation and satellite radio, but I was wrong on both counts.

There was nothing but a constant retuning of country music stations with bad disc jockeys all the way to New Orleans and back, and I had no help finding my way around the confusing traffic grid of the Crescent City.



DAVID GOODSPEED

Contributor

neighborsgo.com/blog/steeringcolumn

NISSAN ALTIMA COUPE MODELS

	2.5 S	3.5 SR
Engine	2.5-liter four-cylinder V6	3.5-liter four-cylinder V6
Horsepower	175	270
MSRP	\$22,940	\$27,770

Nissan chops off quite a bit of cargo room in the trunk of the coupe version Altima versus the sedan. I barely had room for my computer bag after cramming two roller bags back there — and everything else rode in the passenger compartment.

I am writing this experience off as a valuable educational experience. Next time, I will not be such a cheapskate on gas and will spring for the Cadillac Escalade as my choice of transportation.

Duncanville resident David Goodspeed blogs about automotive issues.

Kaitlyn Lucy commits to Oklahoma Baptist

By MICHELLE BURKS
Contributor

Kaitlyn Lucy, a senior volleyball standout for The Canterbury Episcopal School in DeSoto, recently signed to play for Oklahoma Baptist University.

Lucy, a Midlothian resident who has attended Canterbury since kindergarten, was a member of the Canterbury state champion volleyball team this season. She will be a libero for the nationally ranked OBU Bisons, who play in the Sooner Athletic Conference.

Canterbury athletic director and volleyball coach Scott Vaughan said Lucy has worked extremely hard over the past four years and was a great leader for the Lady Cougars this season. She was selected to the first team all-state team with two of her teammates and will play in the TAPPS all-star game in June.



Photo submitted by MICHELLE BURKS

Kaitlyn Lucy (center) signs to play volleyball for Oklahoma Baptist University with Kirt Henderson (back left), OBU admissions counselor; Scott Vaughan, Canterbury athletic director; Steve Lucy, her father; Lisa Lucy (front left), her mother; and Jack Asbury, her grandfather.

Michelle Burks contributes to neighborsgo.com on behalf of The Canterbury Episcopal School.

YOUTH SAFETY

DeSoto High School trainer discusses catastrophic injuries

By BETH TRIMBLE
Contributor

DeSoto High School head athletic trainer Scott Galloway discussed severe and fatal sports injuries Dec. 7 at a summit hosted by the National Athletic Trainers' Association in Washington, D.C.

The incidence of youth sport injuries; recent national attention to helmet-to-helmet hitting in football; and the risk of chronic or catastrophic injury from concussion, sudden cardiac arrest, sickle cell trait and heat illness, among other conditions, have spotlighted the urgent need for immediate and improved health care on the playing field, Galloway said.

Galloway, one of four medical presenters,

encourages sickle cell trait testing of athletes at every level to ensure their safe participation in sports. In the past 11 years, exertional sickling has killed 16 athletes, making sickle cell trait the leading cause of non-traumatic death in Division I football in the past 10 years.

Galloway is a member of the NATA task force on sickle cell trait.

The summit included more than 40 sports and health organizations, including the NFL, collegiate programs, the Centers for Disease Control and the American Medical Society of Sports Medicine.

The group issued the 2010 report card on youth sports safety. NATA gave 2010 a grade of C-plus, noting that 48 young athletes have died since the beginning of the year.

Beth Trimble contributes to neighborsgo.com on behalf of DeSoto ISD.



Scott Galloway