

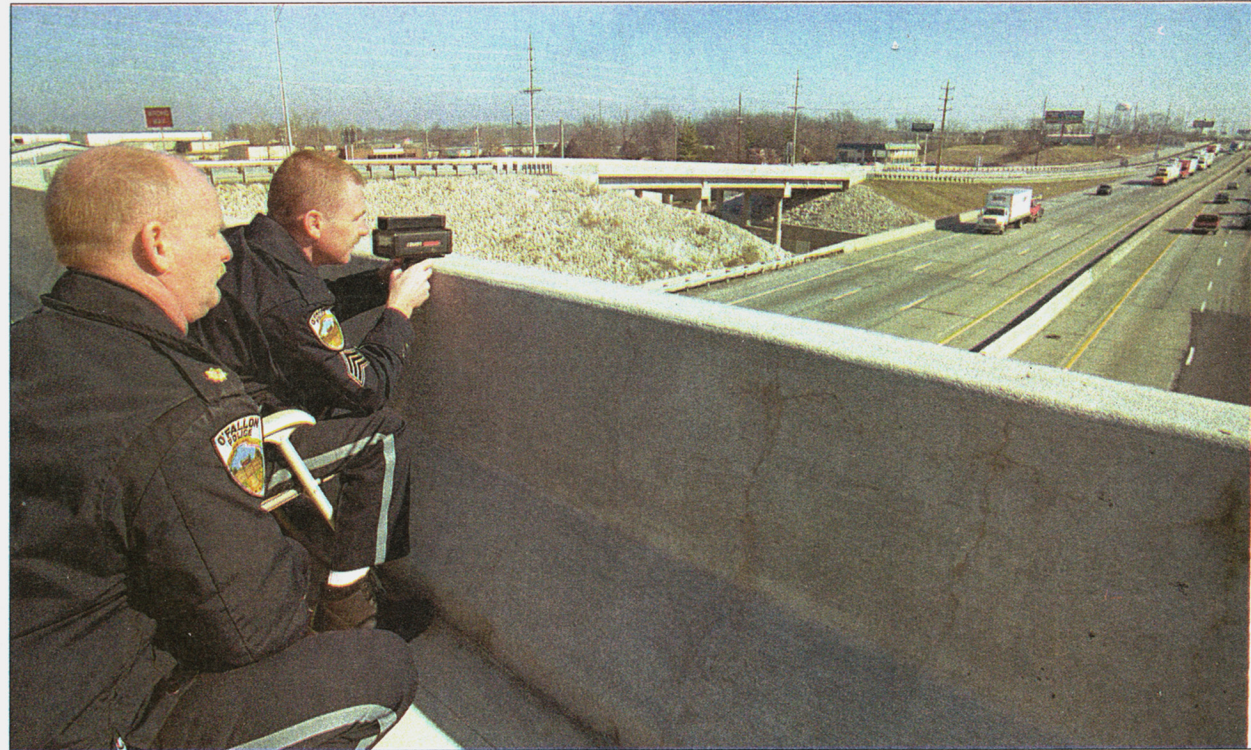
# O'Fallon Journal

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Alan George photo

Sgt. William Stringer, with radar gun in hand, and Assistant Chief Mike Henke of the O'Fallon Police Department scan Interstate 70 for speeders on Thursday from atop the T.R. Hughes Boulevard and Belleau Creek Road interchange.

## Operation impacts speeders

### 98 summonses issued

By Alan George  
Staff writer

Dozens of lead-foot drivers succumbed to O'Fallon police on Thursday along Interstate 70 near the T.R. Hughes Boulevard and Belleau Creek Road interchange as part of "Operation Impact." The bimonthly, statewide law enforcement effort targets major arterial roadways and interstates, said Sgt. William Stringer of the O'Fallon Police.

"On Thursday we issued 98 summonses for speeding, four for no insurance, four for driver's-license violations, four vehicle-registration violations, seven seat-belt violations and one improper-lane-use violation," he said on Friday.

"The operation is held two days a month and on special holidays, like

Memorial Day and Veterans Day - busy travel holidays."

Stringer, with radar gun in hand, scanned eastbound violators from his perch atop the overpass and radioed their descriptions to seven patrol cars waiting further down the interstate. "There's a maroon SUV coming up the hill at 80," Stringer radioed to the officers near the start of the operation.

"The speeds up here are incredible," he said. "Sometimes they're going so fast I can't get a good description."

Remarkably, Stringer said the officers on Thursday were only writing tickets for speeders going 80 miles per hour and above.

"We're not being generous, we just don't have the manpower to get them all," he said. "We clocked a 97 the other day and I didn't have a car available. The speeds are just too excessive out here. After you sit up here awhile, you can tell which cars are speeding."

At 80 miles per hour, a car is traveling at 117 feet per second, Stringer said. "It takes the average person 1.6 seconds to

touch their brakes," he said. "So, they've gone more than 117 feet before they can hit the brakes."

The operation is less about writing tickets than it is about spreading awareness of posted speed limits, Stringer said. "When you see seven cars lined up with violators stopped, people realize they should obey the speed limit," he said. "We just want to get the word out."

The city is obligated to participate in several operations to receive traffic enforcement grants from the state, Stringer said.

"We don't necessarily participate in every one," he said. "We try to do as many as we can. If every agency in the state participated at the same time, imagine what that would be like."

After three hours on Interstate 70, the officers targeted T.R. Hughes Boulevard and later Highway 40-61, Stringer said.

"KSHE radio alerted its listeners that we were enforcing the speed limits," he said. "They think it's funny, but they're helping us out. They accomplished our goal for us."