

VOLUNTEERS: Two Major Events Coming Up

Remember back in typing class in high school when the phrase that was used in almost all of the warm up exercises was, "Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of their country"? Well -- Now is the time for all good volunteers to come to the aid of their chapter!!!

We have two major volunteer events coming up that will require over 50 volunteers each. We are staffing the Designated Driver Booths at the Vintage Virginia Wine Festival on June 5 and 6. We are also the designated charity for the Kmart Kids Race Against Drugs at several Northern Virginia Kmart's on October 23 and 24.

Volunteers who have worked at these events in the past have reported that they had a very good time. The shifts are generally about four hours in length and then volunteers are free to join in the activities. At Vintage Virginia, MADD volunteers get a free pass for entry to the event on their off day. Of course, at the Kmart races, volunteers have a great excuse to go into Kmart to go shopping after their shift.

Because we need to get individual passes for the Vintage Virginia volunteers, we really need for volunteers to let us know right away that they will help us. Please call the office at 703-352-3944 today. This event is both a fundraiser for the chapter and a way that we can encourage the use of designated drivers. Our participation will help to save lives but we need your help. Please call us today to volunteer.

MADD Is In the High Schools

Thanks to grants from the Virginia Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (VABC) and several other major donors, we have been able to present several programs to local youth and parent groups. The presentations, which are part of MADD's emphasis on the prevention of underage alcohol use, have been well received.

One program, at Yorktown High School in Arlington, included both video and live presentations to both parents and students. This program was a week-long series of assemblies, loudspeaker announcements, and hall posters that reinforced the message that drinking by teens is not OK. It occurred just before spring break when many students take vacations.

Another week-long program, at Madeira School in McLean, was entirely student organized. The students heard from one MADD speaker about how he was about to graduate from college and begin his dream of becoming a

Naval Officer when a drunk driver shattered both his leg and his dream. From the questions that followed the presentation, it was clear that many of the students were seriously rethinking their attitudes toward drinking and driving.

The ultimate impact of MADD's programs on future drunk driving tragedies will be hard to measure for many years. However, by getting young people thinking about the consequences of their actions now, we are helping our area's youth to have the tools to make responsible decisions about alcohol use.

Be sure to check out the
fun volunteer
opportunities now
available.

If you have not updated your membership with the Northern Virginia chapter [not just with the national office of MADD] within the past year, this may be your last newsletter. Call us at 703-352-3944 or mail in the form on the back page so that you will continue to receive newsletters and information about local happenings.

Winners Cruise On The Odyssey

A major donation from Odyssey Cruise Lines has made it possible for the winners of the MADD PosterESSAY Contest and several individuals who have been recognized by MADD for exceptional contributions to the community to be honored at a Recognition Cruise on board the Odyssey III on the Potomac River this month. The special cruise, which is being fully underwritten by Odyssey, will be the first time that MADD of Northern Virginia has had such an exotic venue for honoring those who are leading the fight against drunk driving and underage drinking.

In addition to the PosterESSAY contest winners and the normal youth and youth leader awardees, whose names are not yet available, MADD is also recognizing three senior community leaders for their efforts to make our streets safer for all of us. The long-term impact that these three individuals have had on our community is truly positive.

The three are Fairfax Supervisor Bob Dix, Arlington Police Chief Edward Flynn, and Virginia Delegate Brian Moran. Through their tireless efforts, laws have been passed and enforced in such a way that those who would drink and drive -- and thereby endanger the lives of their families and their neighbors -- are being removed from the roads. From championing the initiative to lower the BAC limit to .08 in Virginia, to instituting routine sobriety checkpoints, to shepherding the bill to make the third DUI conviction a felony, these community leaders have made Virginia safer for all of us.

We will list the names of the others who are recognized on the cruise in the next issue of the newsletter. Although it is too late for any students to enter the PosterESSAY contest for this year, keep in mind that we will be conducting this very competitive contest again next year. If you know of a school that is not participating, please have the principal contact the office so that deserving students are not left out.

President's Letter

As the summer months start becoming more of a reality, I am sure we will all be heading out for cookouts with family and friends. These weekend get-togethers give us a great chance to catch up with each other and provide a good diversion from our other problems. Unfortunately, it also provides an opportunity to have too much to drink before getting behind the wheel to go home. Please remember to designate a driver before you go out. If you are the host, please make sure that no one leaves your home if they have had too much to drink. It is a much more comfortable night's sleep on a friend's couch than in a jail cell.

Look for the names of the PosterESSAY contest winners in the next issue of the newsletter.

In Northern Virginia, we lose, on average, one person a week to the hands of a drunk driver. While some may think the problem is going away, those families and friends of victims can tell you differently. In order for us to help eliminate or reduce this problem, we need your help. MADD provides many services

to the community - victims assistance, support groups, public education programs, court monitoring, etc. All of these take time and people. Please consider volunteering some time with MADD. Knowing that you are making a difference will be well worth it. Call the office at 352-3944 to find out what you can do!

Have You Seen Our Website?

Thanks to a very generous grant from the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles, we have recently upgraded our computers in the office. This upgrade has allowed us to have the capacity to keep our website (which has been donated by WorldWeb) current. We have also benefitted from the help of Jill Braibanti, a Yorktown High School Senior, who has been our web technician for the past year.

If you have web access, please look us up at www.worldweb.net/~maddnova/index.html. There you can join us in thanking Jill for her help as she heads off to college.

Executive Director's Letter

Well its budget time again. Your chapter has had to make several very painful decisions about how to allocate our scarce resources during our next fiscal year, July 1, 1999 through June 30, 2000. Our major problem is that we do not have enough income to support all of the programs that are needed in Northern Virginia. Much of this is due to the fact that we are receiving fewer dollars than we did just a few years ago and the costs of instituting new programs keep increasing.

I read recently that charitable giving is up slightly in actual dollar terms but that there has been a threefold increase in the number of charities since 1990. Since there are three times as many charities asking American donors for support, it is easy to see why donations to any given charity are down. Although I can explain what is happening to us, that does not make it any easier when we have to cut programs because of it.

So, here is my plea. If you work for a company or belong to a club or other organization that might support MADD, please have the forms sent to us or give us the name of the person to contact. Also, many businesses will match employee's gifts to charities. If yours does, please send us the matching gifts forms. Finally, if you are in a position to send a gift, large or small, to us, please use the form in this newsletter. Remember, ONLY those gifts that are sent to MADD at the chapter address are used exclusively in Northern Virginia.

What Is a "Victim Advocate"

A major part of MADD's mission is to support the victims of drunk driving crashes. A primary method of doing this occurs when the chapter assigns victim advocates to help victims with the aftermath of drunk driving crashes. A victim advocate is an individual who offers emotional support to victims and their families, guidance through the criminal justice system, and referral for other needs related to the crash.

Most MADD victim advocates are not professionally licensed or credentialed, although extensive in-service training is provided to victim advocates through

certified victim assistance institutes. Victim advocacy is peer support and guidance.

One of our greatest needs is to have a sufficient number of volunteers who are trained as victim advocates. In order to increase the number of available victim advocates, we are conducting a victim advocate training institute here in Northern Virginia May 14 through May 16. If you would like to find out more about becoming a victim advocate or about the upcoming institute, just call the MADD office.

A Great Way to Help MADD

Here is a great way to help MADD of Northern Virginia while getting a good deal for yourself. The Internet service provider, Right1.Net has offered to donate \$2.00 per month for every MADD member or supporter who signs up for monthly Internet access from them. The monthly charge is just \$15.99 and allows for fast (up to 56k) connection. Because they have a ten to one modem policy, you should not get busy signals.

In order to get started, simply call Right1.Net at 800-711-8788. Their customer service operators will get you started right away. If you want more information, you can also call the MADD office at 703-352-3944. When you consider that their \$15.99 rate is among the lowest in the country for this kind of service and MADD gets a donation every month that you subscribe, this is a real win-win situation.

Safe Fun In Georgetown?

Is it possible for someone in the age 16 to 25 crowd to go to Georgetown and have a fun alcohol-free good time? Until recently, the options were very limited. However, a recent article in *The Washington Post* "Weekend Section" talked about a new cafe, called "CafeMyst.Com" at 3241 M Street, NW, which seems perfect for the under-21 crowd and the over-21 folks who don't require alcohol to party. Cafe Myst.Com has computers, music, food, and non-alcoholic drinks. If you or your kids have been there, let us know what you think. We want to promote those places that provide fun activities while discouraging drinking and driving.