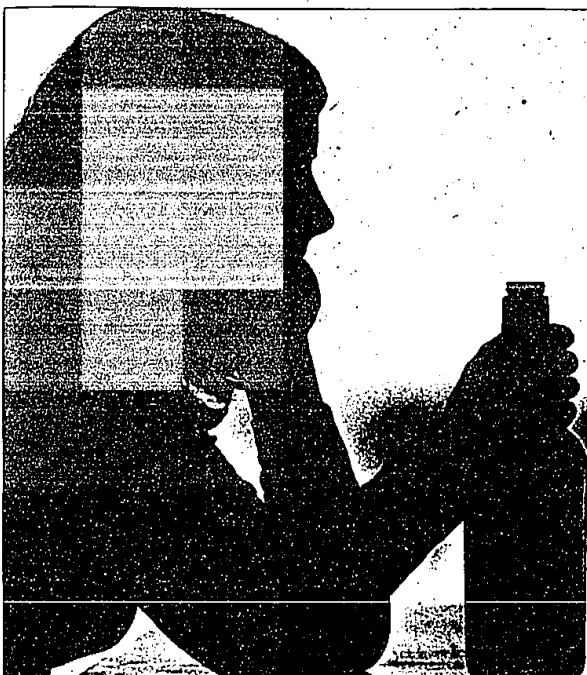




A recent nationwide survey found that the numbers of high school seniors who use alcohol every day increased slightly, with other categories such as monthly use and

heavy drinking in the last two weeks declining slightly. Most other drug use areas increased.

Tie one on

Ribbon signals group fight against alcohol and drug abuse by teens

By Dave Verga
staff writer

AS A HOLIDAY WISH, Ann Hansen and Greta Mackler would like to have red ribbons displayed on doors, trees, lapels, envelopes and even this story.

They also want families in action groups set up in every community in the state. They haven't gotten there, but they're working on it.

Hansen and Mackler are the only two full-time employees of the Michigan Communities in Action — a statewide network of local groups dedicated to fighting the problem of drug and alcohol abuse in families through specific action.

From their tiny downtown Birmingham office, the women organize what they call a "grassroots" movement to spur local interest in getting the message out to their community members. Their target group is obvious.

"We have good indications we are making progress among young people. Our thrust is young people. We do say adults should be role models. It really is a societal problem, we don't blame anybody," said Mackler, who serves as project director.

DURING THE past three months, MCA has helped organize 10 parent groups across the state.

And it has just recently started the red ribbon campaign. It really has nothing to do with the Christmas season.

The idea is to promote drug-free and alcohol-free youth, to show concern for our own, by displaying ribbons — similar to the yellow ribbons that symbolized concern for

prisoners of war from Vietnam and later hostages in Iran and the green ribbons for the children of Atlanta.

According to a statement about the red ribbon campaign for drug-free youth, it should be "a symbol of Americans united with one goal — not our children, not our families, not our country."

MCA was set up a little more than 1½ years ago under a federal grant.

MICHIGAN IS one of 45 states with a similar resource/networking group that feeds into the National Federation of Parents for Drug-Free Youth, one of first lady Nancy Reagan's pet projects.

Through its 400 community groups in Michigan alone, MCA can promote firm po-

"We don't advocate any drinking until after 21. Then is the time to start learning to drink responsibly."

— Ann Hansen
MCA network director



sitions. For instance, it is against the decriminalization of marijuana and it is against the concept of "responsible use" of alcohol by those under 21, Hansen said.

"We don't advocate any drinking until after 21. Then is the time to start learning to drink responsibly," said Hansen, who serves as MCA's network director.

MCA is encouraging groups to pressure local drugstores and other shops that sell magazines to stop carrying "High Times" and other pro-marijuana magazines. Members are also working on tobacco shops, gas stations and drug stores to stop selling rolling papers used to make marijuana cigarettes.

On a statewide basis, MCA is encouraging a state law similar to local "party" ordinances adopted in Birmingham, Farmington Hills, Rochester, Rochester Hills, Keego Harbor and Orchard Lake that hold adults responsible for alcohol consumption by minors at the adult's house.

THE GROUP is campaigning against shops that sell drug paraphernalia and working to fight the use and advertising of alcohol and smokeless tobacco on television.

The Birmingham office is stuffed with educational materials about the effects of drugs and alcohol on teen-agers, families and society. Providing resources is a most important part of their job, Mackler said.

"We can't stop the influx of drugs, we know that," Mackler said. "But we can educate people."

Although Hansen said they are proud of what they've accomplished, MCA members know they have more to do.

Here's where you can phone

Some parents are not aware or do not believe that drugs and alcohol abuse are prevalent among youth in their community.

That's one of the biggest stumbling blocks for the Michigan Communities in Action program to set up local groups.

"Many parents are not aware of it," said Greta Mackler of MCA. "We have to educate parents that, yes, it's happening in your community. It's happening in every community, no exceptions."

Local groups have been formed in many area communities. For information or to join, call Farmington Families in Action at 851-8555.



"We have to educate parents that, yes, it's happening in your community. It's happening in every community, no exceptions."

— Greta Mackler
MCA project director

Bullish forecast

Outlook is bright for area's rental market

By Jackie Klein
staff writer

Despite the uncertainty of tax reform legislation, apartment owners, developers and financiers are bullish on real estate investments.

The mood was optimistic at Apartment Association of Michigan seminar Nov. 29 at the Southfield Hilton Hotel where far-reaching changes for those in the multi-family dwelling industry were explored.

The theme was "Structuring Real Estate Investment and Transactions." "The rental situation has reached a crisis stage because of the shortage of units in the Detroit area," said Ed Fenton, president of Cadbury Management and the apartment association.

"My forecast is that there will be acceleration in construction of apartment dwellings with modern projects providing almost resort living — tennis courts, swimming pools, club houses and well-maintained buildings and grounds."

MARK WEIDLEMAN of the Craig Hall Real Estate Group said he's seeing a rush to the marketplace and a large number of real estate investment transactions.

"Who knows what tax bills will pass?" he questioned. "It's an exciting financial market, syndication is alive and well, and business is good but difficult."

The most important words in real estate used to be location, location, location. Then it was economics, economics, economics. Now it's write off, write off, write off.

Eric Lutz of Eric Lutz Inc. said 1985 is the year of Detroit. Last year the Tigers won the World Series. This year, developers are swinging the bats, he maintained.

"There's an epidemic of apartments spreading from Detroit's riverfront to the center of Southfield," Lutz said. "Investors have heaps of opportunities to lift through and make large profits."

ACCORDING TO Tom Trimble of Consolidated Capital, Michigan is one of the better real estate investment markets. The local market isn't set for a big downturn, he predicted.

Tuck Brubaker of Mutual Service Corp. said real estate investment syn-

dicates are the fastest growing and most dynamic part of the real estate business. Private and public sector activity in this area is increasing, he said.

"Nobody knows which if any tax reform bills will be passed," said Neil Sosin of Northern Equity Group. "The uncertainty caused a slowdown in investments in the first few months of the year, but in the last four months, we've seen a push to beat the possible Jan. 1 tax shelter deadline."

Special interest groups are jumping into tax reform considerations, Sosin said.

"Democrats don't want to be caught with Republicans saying the Dems killed the great tax reform," he said. "The proposed legislation has unbelievable complications. The bills may make it to the Democratic controlled House, but then what?"

THE ATTITUDE on Wall Street has completely turned around, Sosin said. "Perception is the king," he said. "It's not that apartment development is hotter or colder, but in the last two years, the demand has outstripped the supply."

NEW AFFILIATES are holding mortgages on employee's properties. Foreign companies are investing in pension funds. Mortgage backed securities are expanding to the commercial and apartment market.

Real estate syndicates will be alive next year, but the ranks will dwindle, Weidelman predicted. The middle-sized players will disappear. Broker-dealers will have to beef up diligence and the institutional marketplace will be more

active if new tax laws are detrimental to the individual investor, he said. "Investors like instant gratification," he said. "You should be looking for patient money with 10 year financing when you sell to syndicates."

"Michigan is at or near the top of the cycle and it's a good time to sell. There will be excellent opportunities for acquisition in 1986."

THE LOCAL market is ready for good, long-term growth, Trimble maintained. Automobile companies are bringing in employees who pay apartment rents no one thought was possible, he said.

"The syndication business is ever-changing," he said. "Investors are looking at the overall rate of return after taxes, cash flow, equity buildup, appreciation potential and tax benefits."

"These benefits won't disappear, and changes in tax laws won't be as dramatic as everyone fears. Investors are enticed by tax benefits, but they're also looking for a high rate of return. The small guy is more concerned about tax changes."

Rent at heart of controversy

By Jackie Klein
staff writer

Some good news for developers and real estate investors — that apartment construction is making a strong comeback after a recession-created lag — may be bad news to tenants fed up with rising rents.

According to a number of speakers at the Apartment Association of Michigan seminar Nov. 20 in Southfield, annual rent increases for tenants entice large real estate syndicates to invest in multiple housing projects.

Raising rents for vacant units adds value to the investment deal when even 10 percent of the project rolls over, said Tom Trimble of Consolidated Capital.

"Apartment owners should borrow money if necessary to make their projects look pretty," Trimble advised.

"That's the target of your sales package and pitch in this single largest apartment market in the country."

THE LOCAL market is too conservative on the rent side. Apartment developers have been sweating bullets for a few years and \$20 rent increases won't help. You're committed to deliver the best service to investors, not to subsidize housing costs.

Craig Smith of Berger-Lewiston-Smith said he and his partners raised rents in a Dearborn apartment project from \$500 to \$610.

"We spent \$3,000 a unit upgrading the 20-year-old development, and we had a waiting list of yuppies. After living through recessions, you can't be conservative."

Southeast Michigan has changed from GM, Chrysler and Ford to high tech corporations, such as IDS and

Hughes Aircraft, Trimble said. Younger employees are renting apartments, he said.

"DESPITE the threats of state Rep. Maxine Berman (D-Southfield) and her tenants' rights legislation, charging rents on a market basis is the name of the game," Trimble said. "Upgrading property increases its value."

"We're not talking about gouging tenants. Nobody complains about renovated units. They attract high-quality tenants and older properties are left behind when new ones come on stream. The late 1970s and early 1980s were gut-wrenching years for developers."

Rentals are a function of income, construction and land costs. In suburbs, such as Southfield and Farmington Hills, where the median



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