

Attorney General issues consumer alert about charitable fund-raisers

Michigan Attorney General Jennifer Granholm issued a Consumer Alert last week regarding charitable fund-raisers.

"The smooth-talking, fast-acting caller who interrupts your dinner hour or your family time wants you to believe everything they tell you, but sometimes

what they tell you is false," "Jabberjacks," better known today as telephone solicitors, will actually lie to get you to give money, maybe because their job depends on how much money they collect in an evening of calling," Granholm said.

Those who receive calls from

charities are advised to ask a number of questions:

- Is the caller a volunteer or a paid fund-raiser?
- Does the caller work for a professional fund-raiser or the charity?
- Where is the organization located?

■ How much of the donation will go for the charitable cause?

■ Make complaints about charities to the Attorney General's

Charitable Trust Section at (517) 373-1152.

Traffic from page B5

COG concluded in the report.

Other conclusions reached in the report:

■ Injuries occurred in 25.3 percent of all accidents in the region. That's a decline for the third year in a row. Overall, southeast Michigan accounts for 61.8 percent of all injury crashes in the state.

■ Alcohol-related accidents are on the decline. There were 8,163 crashes in the region involving alcohol, a drop in the number for the fifth year in a row.

■ But alcohol-related accidents are more severe. In accidents not involving alcohol, injury results about a quarter of the time. In alcohol-related accidents, injury results 46.6 percent of the time.

■ Injuries also occurred more frequently when seat belts were not used. Only 14 percent of drivers overall are injured in accidents. But when belts are not used, the injury rate jumps to 42.9 percent. Some 7,100 men were not wearing belts when they got into an accident, twice the number of women who failed to wear restraints.

■ Younger drivers were involved in more accidents. Drivers age 21-34 were involved in 27.9 percent of accidents, compared to 24.2 percent for drivers between the ages of 35 and 49.

■ The number of elderly drivers involved in accidents dropped in 1998, from 22,663 in 1997 to 21,523 in 1998. But the

proportion of crashes involving the elderly was slightly higher, 11.6 percent versus 11.1, the previous year. Nonetheless, the statistics showed elderly drivers were more likely to be hurt in an accident, 16.6 percent were hurt or killed in accidents compared to a percentage of 13.9 for all drivers.

■ Monroe County is the safest place to drive, according to statistics. The accident rate per million vehicle miles traveled there is only 2.5; Livingston County had the second lowest rate, 3.11.

■ Oakland ranked fifth with a rate of 4.01 per million miles traveled. Wayne County was in last place with a rate of 4.99.

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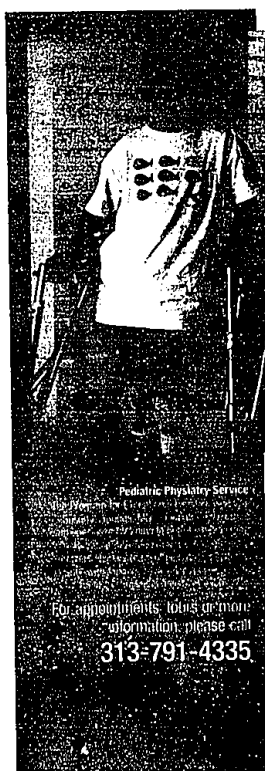
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