

# SADD reaches out locally

The writer is a senior at Harrison High School.  
Matt Calina

One out of every three teenagers will become intoxicated this weekend.

About half of the car accidents in Michigan were alcohol-related last year.

The statistics are frightening: the deaths shocking. Both are the result of people driving while under the influence of alcohol.

One way to fight this ongoing battle is to reach out to high school students, which is why Students Against Driving Drunk, or SADD, was created. The SADD chapter at Harrison High School, with 40 members, is one of the most active in Farmington Hills.

"This organization benefits the whole community," said Harrison SADD president Mary Deleka. "It

makes people aware that there is a problem in our city and gives them different ways of conquering it."

Developed more than four years ago by Harrison language teacher Maria Schneider, SADD is currently involved with three projects: The Big League Challenge, "tie one on for the holidays," and running the concession stand for all Harrison basketball games this year.

IN THE Big League Challenge, an effort done in several counties, students each write a paragraph stating why they do not need drugs or alcohol. "It was nice receiving an honorable mention in Oakland County last year," Schneider said, "but our main goal (this year) is to finish in first or second place."

The Harrison chapter is also working with Mothers Against Drunk Driving in a red ribbon "tie one on for the holidays" campaign.

"In this campaign, each individual takes a red ribbon to tie around the antenna or rear view mirror of their car," explained SADD vice president Tracy Genschoreck. "This is another way to help bring people home safely for the holidays."

SADD secretary Rosemary Bar-samian said she is proud to be a member of the student group. "If we stop even one person from drinking and driving, we've done our job." As for the future, Schneider would like to increase membership and start SADD clubs in the middle schools. "It has been one of my long-time goals to inform today's youth of the horror or driving drunk," Schneider said.

GARY BOUBARY of the Automobile Club of Michigan's safety and traffic department said the number of deaths due to alcohol has decreased because people have grown more aware of the problem.



SADD representative Sue Verlinde (left) snaps a picture of fellow Harrison High students: seniors Jenny Rick and Mary Deleka, Harrison's SADD chapter president; and junior Shannon McCormick. The students were charged \$2 to have their picture taken with Santa as part of a SADD fund-raising effort. Verlinde is a sophomore.

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