

Bloodmobiles make rounds this month

The following is a list of bloodmobiles in the area for the month of March:

Rochester: March 14 — Rochester High School on Livernois, 8 a.m.-2 p.m., (810) 651-5590.

Farmington: March 15 — Universalist-Unitarian Church of Farmington on Halsted Road, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., (810) 478-7272.

Southfield: March 15 — 6664th USA Garrison on E. Eleven Mile, 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., (810) 799-8988.

Bloomfield Hills: March 16 — Temple Beth El on Telegraph, 8 a.m.-2 p.m., (810) 364-2500.

Bingham Farms: March 17 — Rock Financial Mortgage Company on Telegraph, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., (617) 545-7112.

Franklin: March 17 — St. Owen Church on Normandy, 2-8 p.m., (810) 851-0260.

Troy: March 17 — Schroeder

Elementary School on Jack Drive, (810) 643-8082.

Troy: March 20 — Standard

Federal on Big Beaver, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., (810) 643-9800.

Southfield: March 21 — Motors Insurance Corporation of W. Ten Mile, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., (617) 545-7112.

Southfield: March 22 and 23 — Comic Book Conventions on W. Twelve Mile, 10:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., (810) 950-2833.

West Bloomfield: March 23 — Temple Israel on Walnut Lake Road, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., (810) 661-1307.

Southfield: March 25 and 26 — EDS Travelers on Evergreen, 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., (810) 792-5407.

Troy: March 25 — Beaumont Hospital in Troy on Dequindre, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., (810) 828-5049.

Southfield: March 26 — Providence Hospital on W. Nine Mile, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., (810) 424-2875.

MADD seeks victim's advocates

By JENNIFER PLACINTO
STAFF WRITER

You may not know any victims of drunk driving, but that doesn't mean they don't need your help.

Mother's Against Drunk Driving in Oakland County is short on victim's advocates and they are looking for residents willing to volunteer. The local chapter's 16 victims advocates has dwindled to seven this year.

"We have to do this to replenish our sources," said Carole Ravichio, president of the Oakland County Chapter of MADD and a sixth-year victim's advocate. "I'm available to go to court during the day. I'm lucky. A lot of people can't do that."

MADD victim advocates offer emotional support, guidance through the criminal justice system, and assistance finding other support groups for victims of drunk driving and their families.

"We train people how to talk to victims, what to say, what not to say," Ravichio said, adding, "We learn the whole judicial system so we can walk them right through it. It helps them understand they have rights."

While many volunteers are victims of drunk driving themselves, any responsible adult who would like to help others is welcome to register for the statewide MADD Victim Assistance Institute, a two-day intensive training session April 25-27 in Midland. Beginning and advanced training will be offered during the 40-hour a day program

designed for volunteers and professionals interested in victim advocacy and assistance.

"It's really an important thing and such a satisfying experience to know you can help someone," Ravichio said. "It gives you a whole different perspective of the grieving process."



Carole Ravichio

After training, volunteers are asked to read books on the subject and write a report demonstrating their knowledge.

When a call for assistance is received, volunteers have the opportunity to help victims on an individual basis in their area. Advocates

are on-call 24 hours a day to lend

an ear to the family they are assisting. "We are not counselors," Ravichio said. "You are just there to listen and they need to be able to vent. We don't want to ever make them feel we don't have time to listen."

The victim-advocate relationship can last up to one year.

Troy resident Donna Brokenshire knows

the value of the program. Her daughter, Katie, was killed at the age of 17 before she had the chance to start her senior year at Athens High School. MADD helped Brokenshire and her husband, Bob, and their other children deal with the loss.

The Brokenshires wanted to repay that kindness, so for the past 9 years, Donna Brokenshire has served as a victim's advocate and Bob Brokenshire served as a MADD state chairperson for three years representing the Oakland County Chapter. "I don't think I'd ever be able to give as much support back as I received," Donna Brokenshire said. "I know how important it was for us."

She said that often times friends become distant when there is a loss because they don't know what to say. That's where advocates fill in the gap. "Sometimes all you need is somebody to say 'hi' to you," she said.

Advocates walk victims through the legal system, alerting them to all of their rights and helping bring closure to the accident. One of the rights that MADD stresses is impact statements delivered before sentencing.

"We can ask some of the questions they might not be aware of," Brokenshire said. "These extra people do hold you up."

In 1995, 512 people were killed in alcohol-related accidents, according to Michigan State Police.

MADD works to prevent drinking, supports victims of violent crime, and opposes underage drinking.

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