KFADD Newsletter
Kiwanis Family Against Drunk Driving
News from around the Barbourpole
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## Common Threads

What do these things have in common? 15, 16, 18, 20 and two weeks in February, 2005.

Our beautiful false Spring has brought out the best and the worst in our local communities. The best...warmth, sunshine, and flowers. The worst...risky driving. It is great to feel the warmth of the sun coming through the windows of our vehicles, to feel the rush of the wind blowing through our hair as we drive down country roads with the windows down. Unfortunately, we forget that night brings lower temperatures and patches of ice, and gravel still covers many of our roads. Driving conditions can change in the blink of an eye.

We all complain about drivers who seem to go too slow for us. We get impatient, tailgate, pass without sufficient clearance, exceed the speed limit, make obscene gestures at other drivers, and generally take unnecessary risks that endanger ourselves, as well as those who share the road with us. Add to the mix, the “need” to multi-task with such things as cell phones, cd players, and in some cases, computers in our cars, and we create even more risk. These are all common threads of our lives that we see every day...part of the “fabric” of our daily existence.

Now add some other major “snags” to the mix - alcohol, inexperience, and youth and you see the threads beginning to unravel.

During the second half of February, the fabric shredded in Columbia County. In less than two weeks, the lives of five people were lost on our roads, four under the age of twenty-one. In two weeks, the total number of fatalities for 2004 was exceeded. This is the common fiber that wove all their lives together.

The “snags” differed in each incident, but all could have been prevented by not taking driving risks, be it speed, alcohol, or poor decision making. Now the lives of many families have been changed forever.

How can we as citizens of Columbia County help to keep the “fabric” whole? As parents, we need to examine our roles in the lives of our young people. The decisions we help them to make by the examples we set can change all of our lives. How do WE drive? What do our children see and hear when they ride with us? Do we turn a blind eye to adults who furnish alcohol to youth that then leads to injury and death. Do we furnish places for families to “safely” party without alcohol?

How many times have we heard parents say that 'Kids will be Kids"? Yes, they will! But we as adults need to realize that because they are kids, they do not have the physiological, emotional and neurological development to make smart decisions. Alcohol and other drugs interfere with that development and can cause irreversible harm. New research is pinpointing actual damage to developing brains in the very portion of the brain that is used for decision-making. When speed, distraction, poor decision making, and alcohol are added to youthful driving inexperience, the fabric is torn and we lose our community members.

Parents and other community members, help us to weave healthy "fabric" by being the best example for our youth.

Lynn Chiotti
President Columbia County MADD
St. Helens, OR

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There is an old saying –

*"As you travel down life's highway, may this ever be your goal – keep your eye upon the doughnut and not upon the hole."*

All of us tend to dwell on the trials of life and not on life's blessings.

Count your many blessings – count them one by one. Count your many blessings see what God has done.

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## HAVE FAITH

Corrie Ten Boom saw mans inhumane acts to man. She lived thru the German concentration camp by sheer faith.

She quoted, "If you look at the world, you will be distressed. If you look within yourself, you will be depressed. But, if you look to Christ, you will be at rest."

I'm sure that all of us can take this to heart. We all have our own crosses to bear.

When you are drinking and feel you need to drive home, I pray that you will think of this quote and remember the suffering that victim's families of drunk driving fatalities have to bear the rest of their lives.

Everybody is affected by a drunk driving accident with increased health and insurance costs.

## Don't Be A Statistic

(Roger Barbour, editor)

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## Are We Learning?
## Does KFADD & MADD Matter?

Two powerful questions with two different answers.

1. DUII citations increased from 23,106 in 1993 to approx 25,000 in 2003. Are people learning? When you see this type of rise in citations, one would say NO!!

2. Alcohol-involved deaths have declined from 215 in 1993 to 184 in 2003.

3. Third and subsequent convictions have declined from 801 in 1993 to 502 in 2003.

4. Total DUII convictions declined from 1993 to 1999, but have held about the same until 2003 at around 10,000.

There are several new bills in the Oregon House and Senate for 2005.

Any bill that will put a drain on Oregon's meager finances will have a hard time getting out of committee, let alone go for a vote. This is unfortunate, but a fact of today's economy.

Many of the bills will increase fines and increase sentencing guidelines, plus no diversion program for repeat offenders.

MADD and KFADD are working hard to try to get our representatives and senators to make this a high priority this year.

You can help. No matter what State or Province you live in, get involved. Call your House Representative or Senator and let them know you want stronger laws to reduce this senseless loss of life.

**DRIVE SMART – SAVE A LIFE**

(Roger Barbour, Editor)

**TO ALL KFADD COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND ALL MADD CHAPTERS**

UPCOMING EVENTS:
(Please advise any upcoming events you have scheduled for the next couple of months, and I will list them here in the next newsletter).

June 22-25, 2005 MADD Alaska Youth Leadership Power Camp, University of Alaska, Anchorage campus
(Contact: Lara Middaugh - yia@maddalaska.com)

NEWS ITEMS:
(I need your help to put out an informative and interesting news letter. Please send me stories or news flashes that can be reproduced in the news letter. Your help will be greatly appreciated.)

e-mail to: barbourpole@ados.com