

Editorial

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Op Ed: How to tackle alcohol abuse on campus by Judy Adrian

We've got to do more to save our young people from alcohol abuse.



It's a killer

More than 1,800 college students die each year from alcohol, and 500,000 students are injured by it, according to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism.

By day, these students have curious, textured, challenging minds. By night, too many are getting black-out drunk, mixing shots with potent drugs, and randomly hooking up.

The students say, "That's what we aim for: black-out drunk." And they often mix alcohol with prescription drugs like Adderall.

What can be done?

Campus administrators know there is no single solution to the puzzle. But there are a lot of different pieces.

Reflection is a piece.

Ask students what they seek to gain from drinking. If it's to be more socially at ease, suggest that the same goal can be achieved with fewer drinks. Emphasize side benefits, like saving money by drinking less and avoiding a hangover or a reckless sexual encounter.

Social justice is a piece.

Ask students if they are playing into alcohol industry goals. Ask them if they really want to be so heavily subsidizing an industry that kills 85,000 Americans a year.

Knowledge is a piece.

Honestly talk about what a safe blood alcohol content level means, depending on a person's size and weight. Discuss the research showing that women may be more vulnerable to alcohol abuse, achieving higher blood alcohol content levels on comparable amounts of alcohol. Differentiate between abuse and drinking. Point them to www.echeckuptogo.com, where they can evaluate themselves.

Adrian, of McFarland, is co-director of the Dane County Coalition to Reduce Alcohol Abuse. Her column was distributed by the Progressive Media Project; pmproj@progressive.org.

Letter to District 8 from Supervisor Carousel Bayrd

Happy Spring and Summer! Here is an update of what we have accomplished on the county board:



Dane County Task Force on Poverty: The task force issued its final report in November. The summary of the report: Poverty is on the steep rise. Here are the statistics for 2008. Food pantry usage is up 20%; individuals receiving food stamps is up 50%; 47% of Madison school children receive free or reduced lunch; 7,000 individuals sought shelter. I co-sponsored a resolution to make the task force on poverty a permanent committee, so it can continue to monitor the issue in Dane County.

Fair Housing Ordinance: I was a lead sponsor of a redraft of the county's fair housing ordinance. The redraft expanded

legal protections to renters by making several important changes, including: 1) Protecting your identity by prohibiting landlords from requiring your social security number; 2) Streamlining the county's process for investigating housing discrimination, making it easier to file a complaint and have it investigated; 3) expanding protection to victims of domestic violence, union members, gays and lesbians, and other groups.

Middle School Alcohol Programs: The County began a pilot program in two middle schools to address alcohol problems with students and families. Alcohol use in middle school is on the rise in the county, and usage at that age is predictive of future addiction. I lobbied strongly to have the pilot at Toki Middle School, but Toki was not selected. Fortunately, the plan is to expand these programs in the future.

Reducing Infant Mortality: A front-page New York Times article on November 27th featured the county's success in reducing infant mortality among African Americans. The story highlighted the county's work to provide pregnant women with prenatal care, pregnancy education, moral support, and more. The results are astounding! Our African American infant mortality rate dropped from 19 deaths per 1,000 births in the 1990s to less than 5 deaths per 1,000 births in the 2000s. This decline brings the African American infant mortality rate in parity with the white infant mortality rate.

Access to Public Records: I was the lead sponsor of a bill expanding public access to information by allowing electronic (email) requests of county records and documents. Prior to my bill, the county required all open records requests to be in paper writing, and email requests were not accepted.

RTA: I supported creating a Regional Transit Authority to determine Dane County's mass transportation needs. The RTA committee will now investigate-Do we need regional bus service? Express bus routes? Improved roads? And how will we pay for these changes? A countywide referendum must pass before any tax is created. The referendum may be on the ballot as soon as November 2010.

I am honored to have been reelected to my 3rd term this past April. Thank you for your support, and I look forward to continuing to serve you. Please contact me with any thoughts or questions. Email is bayrd@co.dane.wi.us; phone is 658-7333.

Help Our Neighborhood Win \$1000 through MG&E's Green Power Challenge

by Mary Mullen

(first printed in the 1-4-10 Dunns Marsh Neighborhood Association e-newsletter)

Our Dunn's Marsh Neighborhood Association has a chance to win \$1000 in Madison Gas and Electric's Neighborhood Green Power Challenge. The DMNA Council voted to register for the challenge at its December 15 meeting.

How can we win? By becoming the neighborhood with the largest percent increase in Green Power Tomorrow participation.

But what does this really mean? Green Power Tomorrow is a sign-up to buy green power - mostly wind power - for your home to offset a portion or all of your electricity-generated carbon dioxide emissions. Residential customers can select a fixed 300-kWh block of green power per month or 50% or 100% of their monthly energy use. Under this program each

kWh of electricity costs 1 ¼ cents more than it would normally cost and the excess goes to support green power (wind and solar power). For the average household, this would mean an extra \$7.50 a month if the household signed up for 100% green power.

For this writer's household, my 481 kWh average use would mean an increase of \$6.01 per month at 100% green power. You can find your own average cost by going to https://www.mge.com/my_mge/ServiceForms/WindPowerRes.htm and putting your address into the form and hitting the search button.

But the cost for many of us may be well worth it. As publicity for the program notes, by adding more renewable energy to our electricity supply, we can:

- o Reduce global climate change.
- o Reduce the environmental impacts of developing fossil fuel resources.
- o Reduce our dependence on scarce energy sources.
- o Reduce our dependence on foreign energy resources.

The winner is determined at the program deadline on September 30. Green Power Tomorrow participation from the baseline found at the beginning of the challenge period will be compared to that on September 30.

As part of the challenge program MG&E will also provide support and materials for green power marketing as needed and support and materials for improving energy efficiency in homes and businesses.

Watch for more information, and consider becoming one of the households that may make us the winner of this challenge. Want more information right now? Go to https://www.mge.com/my_mge/ServiceForms/WindPowerRes.htm

Mary Mullen is the Dunn's Marsh Neighborhood Association Communications Coordinator. She can be contacted at (608) 271-5192 or email: mmullen@chorus.net



See the MG & E ad on page 8 for additional information.