

# on the MOVE

## DRINKING AND

# A DREAM ONLY Decision

Okay, so you've had it up to here with adults warning you, "Don't do this, don't do that." Perhaps you'd like to get back at them by rounding up some friends, cruising to a vacant parking lot, and breaking a favorite "Don't do that" by knocking down a case or two of Budweisers.

Well, if you're in the habit of tuning your parents out when it comes to drinking, maybe the words of Marissa Delorey and Maureen Markham will make you think twice about what you're contemplating.

You see, these two 17-year-olds are more familiar than they ever imagined they'd be with the realities of drinking and driving.

Marissa's ordeal began in July 1989, when her aunt was killed in a two-car accident. Only 22 months later, the nightmare was repeated when a vehicle struck the car her grandfather was driving, killing him and severely injuring Marissa's grandmother. Both accidents were caused by men eventually convicted of driving while intoxicated.

"This was the second time it was happening, and you can't believe it. It was just horrible," Marissa recalled.

Maureen's exposure to DWI-related tragedies was even more direct: She was a passenger in a car driven by her mother, Angela Markham, that was hit head-on by a tractor-trailer. That accident took place March 10, 1993, on Route 31 in Ogden, Monroe County.

Maureen and her brother, Joe, suffered injuries but eventually recovered.

Other family members were not so

fortunate.

Maureen's sister Brigid, 5, and brother Ryan, 8 — the two youngest of nine children — were killed. The tractor-trailer's driver, Harold Case, was eventually sentenced to a year in jail for driving while intoxicated.

"He was obviously drunk. He was stumbling all over in the snow bank," Maureen recalled in a recent interview at her family's Brockport home.

As Maureen spoke, her mother slept in an adjacent room where she spends most of each day in bed. Though Angela Markham has healed physically from some of the severe injuries incurred in the crash, Maureen said she's never recovered from the emotional trauma of losing two children.

"She doesn't know what my name is," Maureen said as she began to sob.

"Three years after the fact, people act like this doesn't affect us anymore. It affects us every day. I lost my brother and sister. They were the smartest kids, the most beautiful kids. And, really, I lost my mother."

The aftereffects of such accidents, Marissa noted, can also cast a shadow over other aspects of everyday life.

"When you're driving and somebody swerves, you say, 'Oh, my gosh, they're drunk.' It stays with you," said Marissa, a parishioner at St. Paul's Church in Webster and a senior at Webster High School.

These accidents have prompted both Maureen and Marissa to try, Maureen said, to "make something positive out of something tragic."

They met and became friends through

their work with Students Against Drunk Driving (SADD) and Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD). Both teens make frequent appearances at Rochester-area high schools, sharing their stories in an effort to raise awareness about drinking and driving.

In addition to these talks, many high schools promote anti-DWI activities such as SADD and the "Prom Promise," in which students make pledges not to drink on prom night.

And on June 6, seniors at Bishop Kearney High School will take part in the 11th annual People Aware of Chemical Excess (PACE) Party. The night will include athletic activities at Bally's Total Fitness Club in Irondequoit, a midnight buffet, and dancing and karaoke at the Irondequoit Moose Lodge.

Kearney senior Marisa Pace noted that all participants must sign a contract prior to the event, saying they will not drink alcohol. She added that alcohol isn't really needed to have fun at the PACE Party.

"I think it's the furthest thing from anyone's mind once you get there," remarked Marisa. Her brother, Marcus, took part in the same event three years ago, and her parents have served as organizers both times.

Sadly, despite all these well-meaning efforts, Maureen said that some teens still ignore all warnings about drinking and driving.

"It's hard to speak at high schools sometimes, because you get those cocky teenagers who think they are so invincible. But they're not," said Maureen, a parishioner at Rochester's Corpus

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