

Motorcycling Secretary of State stresses safety

(Submitted by Michigan Department of State)

It's May and Ruth Johnson, Michigan's motorcycling Secretary of State, is riding a gleaming Harley-Davidson Sportster to spread the word about motorcycle safety and the importance of sharing the road.

Johnson kicked off May as Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month by riding with a cadre of motorcyclists to a news conference at the MotorCity Harley-Davidson dealership in Farmington Hills.

"Eighty percent of motorcycle crashes result in injury or worse for the motorcyclist," said Johnson, who was one of the first women in Oakland County to receive a motorcycle endorsement. "That is why sharing the road safely is so important. Motorists are encouraged to look twice for motorcycles. Motorcyclists are urged to get trained, get endorsed and wear the proper safety gear."

Looking twice for motorcyclists is important because motorcycle-vehicle crashes are most likely to happen at intersections and left turns.

Road conditions that don't bother cars and trucks can pose real threats to motorcycles, so motorists are urged to give motorcycles extra space.

State law requires a motorcycle endorsement on the driver's license to ride legally on Michigan roads. Rider training classes provide an excellent foundation for developing safe riding skills and obtaining the endorsement.

The popularity of motorcycling continues to grow. In 2012, the Secretary of State had 561,878 endorsements on file. By 2013, the number of men and women with a motorcycle endorsement had grown to 572,441.

The Michigan Secretary of State's office administers the Michigan Motorcycle Safety Program, overseeing the public and private motorcycle safety course providers and training motorcycle instructors. Courses include basic, advanced and refresher courses. More than 120,000 students have attended training since 2001. •

New health insurance for Michigan residents

(Submitted by the Ottawa Department of Public Health)

Have you heard of the Healthy Michigan Plan? It's a new, low-cost health plan designed for low-income Michigan residents. Nearly half a million Michigan adults between the ages of 19 and 64 are now eligible for coverage. Available through the state of Michigan, the Healthy Michigan Plan covers those who make up to 133 percent of the federal poverty level. That works out to roughly \$16,000 a year for one person, or \$33,000 for a family of four.

The Healthy Michigan Plan covers everything from doctor visits to hospitalizations to prescriptions at a low cost. To apply, there are three options for Ottawa County residents:

- Apply online at www.michigan.gov/mibridges
- Apply by phone at (855) 789-5610
- Visit the Department of Human Services Office, 12185 James Street in Holland

The Healthy Michigan Plan includes most benefits associated with traditional health insurance plans at a more affordable cost, based on household income. Those who make between 100 and 133 percent of the federal poverty level will contribute up to 2 percent of their income to a health savings account, which can be used to pay for out-of-pocket medical expenses. The plan offers incentives for healthy behaviors such as losing weight, quitting smoking, and preventive measures such as getting a flu shot.

The 10 essential health benefits covered in the Healthy Michigan Plan are: ambulatory patient services, emergency services, hospitalization, maternity and newborn care, mental health and substance use disorder services and devices, laboratory services, preventative and wellness services, chronic disease management, and pediatric services including oral and vision care. The Healthy Michigan Plan will cover other medically necessary services as appropriate.

For more information about what the healthy Michigan Plan covers, who is eligible, and to apply, visit www.HealthyMichiganPlan.org. •

Parkinson's support group meetings announced

(Submitted by Angela Maloy)

The Parkinson's Power Support Group invites persons with Parkinson's, their families and caregivers to meetings to be held on the first Wednesday of each month at the Norton Shores Library Community Room, 705 Seminole Road. The event is free and will also include time for socializing and a brief period of exercise designed specifically for persons with Parkinson's.

For more information, call (231) 737-4374. •



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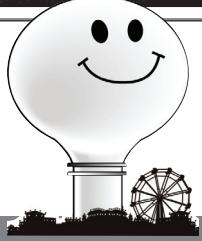


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