

# Alcoholism: A Major Problem Of Today's Society

by Lisa Atkins

One of the most serious problems encountered by our society today is alcoholism. The disease of alcoholism may be encountered by young and old, male and female, black and white. In short, alcoholism knows no boundaries, and unfortunately, this includes the college student. This two-part series will attempt to focus first on the problem of alcoholism, and second on the solution to the problem.

In looking at the issue, the first question that needs to be answered is why alcohol is considered such a serious problem in our society. According to Mr. Charles Gibbons, Alcohol Education Counselor at Brevard College, "Alcohol is the source of the single greatest amount of suffering our society endures today. (It) is directly and indirectly associated with the greatest percentage of deaths that occur among college age people, not just in the U.S., but in the whole world."

A second question that must be answered is why people drink. There are many reasons, but Mr. Gibbons cited the main one as "societal pressures." He commented, "The cocktail party, etc., are social norms." Along these lines, he gave some statistics: "while alcohol use in the over-25 group is fairly consistent, there has been a very decisive increase in the use of alcohol among teenagers and pre-teenagers." He stressed, "Alcohol is a depressive, addic-

tive drug. The more you drink, the more you're likely to drink—Alcohol kills."

Before going any further, it is important to define the concept of an alcoholic. Mr. Gibbons defined an alcoholic as a person who is constantly drunk and who experiences a loss of control over his drinking. This includes the quantity of alcohol consumed, the location in which it is consumed, and the frequency of consumption. He stated, "You do not have to drink seven days a week to be an alcoholic."

Just what can be done, then, once a person takes the all-important first step of admitting that he has a drinking problem (or that he is a full-fledged alcohol)? There are several steps which follow, but Mr. Gibbons focused on the ability to say no to drinking, to avoid places which focus on drinking, and to control the amount consumed. He said, "If one can go without alcohol for one month, (that person) get(s) an A-." But he added, "Many young people are appalled to discover that they cannot go for four weeks without alcohol. (That person) is in trouble. (Such) consistent problems are inviting chronic alcohol-related problems. These may be long-range and do not have to occur right away. Teens and young adults may drink for many years, and we have no way of knowing when that disease will develop into full pathology."

When asked if he felt that there was an obvious alcohol problem on the Brevard College campus, Mr. Gibbons replied, "There are students on this campus who have problems with alcohol.

(Brevard) is probably about as normal as we can be (when compared to the colleges). There are no more (problems), no less."

"Brevard has its proportionate share of students with alcohol-related problems," he pointed out. "Alcohol can be considered a problem if a person (who consistently drinks) is constantly in trouble." Another point stressed by Mr. Gibbons is that alcohol must be identified as the cause of problems. Among these problems, where college students are concerned, are tardiness, truancy, absence from classes, and traffic problems. Another problem which may be alcohol-related is a general attitude of total apathy toward anything not associated with alcohol. The person who feels that he cannot make it through the day without that first drink, or who lives and breathes for the sole purpose of consuming large amounts of alcohol, definitely has a problem. When the alcohol cannot be consumed with reasonable moderation, that person — be it a college student, school teacher, doctor, lawyer, or gentle old man - needs help.

Just what kinds of help are available, and what steps are taken to rehabilitate the alcoholic, will be examined in the next issue. Also in the next issue will be the alcohol situation as it exists on the Brevard College campus, including a look at the changes in the Uniform Guidelines concerning alcohol, and a focus on the Alcohol Education Seminars which were introduced during summer school.



Whether the problem is within yourself, a family member or friend, alcoholism is a lonely disease. (Photo by Steve Rabye).

## PTK Vital Part Of B.C.

by Sandra Hulbert

What group on Brevard's campus tries to expose the active intellectual segment of the student body? PTK does! Phi Theta Kappa is the national honorary scholastic fraternity for Community and Junior Colleges and a vital part of B.C. life. PTK got off to an excellent start this year by conducting one of the most successful book sales in years. A cookout at Dr. Wood's house provided a warm welcome for freshmen provisionals also. Rafeal Gasti, President of PTK, stated that he wants "to make PTK visible on campus this year." He hopes to achieve this through future PTK projects which will be carried out through the school year.

One of the projects PTK sponsors and hopes will continue is Staff Appreciation Day. During this day "in order to show appreciation toward the administration, faculty, and

maintenance," PTK will serve them doughnuts and apple cider. Another project which PTK sponsors goes along with their theme for the year--The Short Story: Mirror of Humanity. A short story contest for all interested students will be held later in the year.

When asked what he hopes for PTK this year, Rafeal Gasti stated, "We don't want to be depicted as an elite group, but instead a group that wants to have fun and serve the Brevard College Community."

PTK Officers and Sponsors  
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## Singers Tackle Rafts, Falls

by Regina Wortman

Exciting ... COLD ... fun ... COLD ... scary ... COLD ... scenic ... COLD ... adventuresome ... COLD! September 19th was all of this and more for the forty-one members of the Brevard College Collegiate Singers and their director Mr. Lee Bratton, and his wife Wendy, as they all attempted to tackle eight miles of the Nantahala River near Bryson City, NC. This memorable rafting excursion lasted three and one-half hours!

A caravan of eight rafts, each carrying four or five singers, began the trip in smooth water. Three guides accompanied the group for safety reasons. The singers tried to get the feel of rafting and controlling the boat at the beginning because they knew that near the end they would face THE FALLS.

But, before the small caravan made it that far, they had to avoid rocks and in some cases the bank of the river. Most of the singers steered their rafts away from the rocks by skill or luck. A few others, though, managed to get their rafts stuck.

The merry party rode down the river talking, laughing, singing,

and waving at different people on the river bank. When they stopped to pour excess water out of the rafts, they discovered that they could not feel their feet, although they could see them. It was a relatively cool day and the water was a cold 42° F.

Then, the caravan passed the sign which read "Hazardous Falls Ahead." The singers stopped to listen to one of the guides give them some helpful hints about how to safely take on THE FALLS. The caravan of rafts then proceeded toward THE FALLS. There were a few screams as each raft went over; however, not one person fell out of his raft as it bounced down the falls.

LOEW SAGA TRA  
INTACTNESS CHUM  
BANGLADESH UREY  
STAGERY LESTERS  
LAS TIPPLE  
ALGER RAPHAEL  
LOOS SERPENTINE  
EBB SIFTERS NEA  
COASTGUARD GEAR  
COUNTRY FASTS  
KANSAS ALL  
IFORGOI ARIETTA  
CAVE FINGERNAIL  
EKED FORESTALLS  
DER NAST SILO

One or two rafts went down the falls straight, but most of the singers seemed to enjoy going down sideways. The group then finished the remainder of the trip and changed into some warm, dry clothes.

The Nantahala River is a dam controlled river that can be enjoyed by even the most inexperienced raftsmen. The only requirements are to be in good physical condition and not be afraid of water.

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