

Alcoholic rehab centers help most serious disease victims

North Carolina has three residential centers for alcoholic rehabilitation which are funded by the state and administered by the Department of Human Resources. The centers are located in Butner, Greenville and Black Mountain.

These centers are designed to help people who have reached the most serious stages of alcoholism, marked by long periods of severe intoxication and emotional disorders.

The Alcoholic Rehabilitation Center (ARC) in Butner serves 26 counties in the north and south central parts of the state. Like the other two ARC's, it provides an intensive 28-day residential treatment program to deal with both the medical and psychological problems of the alcoholic. Access to treatment is open to anyone regardless of race, sex, religion, age, ethnic background, or handicap.

The center, which is located on a 10 acre wooded campus, contains three dormitories, an infirmary, and three buildings for counseling, lectures, activities, and administration. The center can house up to 86 people in single and double rooms. The ARC at Butner will celebrate its 35th birthday in 1985 at its annual "Celebrate Sobriety" reunion.

Phyllis Grubb, a substance abuse counselor, believes the ARC is very valuable for the chronic alcoholic. "First of all, it gives the families of alcoholics time to get

their lives back together," she said. "It also gives the individual intensive therapy and it prepares the person to get his or her life back in order and to re-enter the working world."

The purpose of the ARC is to give problem drinkers the therapy necessary to return to sobriety, to feel better about themselves both mentally and physically, and to return to their communities and jobs, Grubb said. The ARC encourages its clients to continue treatment through community programs after their discharge. These community programs are an important step in the long road to recovery for an alcoholic, she said, because they help the alcoholic readjust to his surroundings and cope with the problems he or she might face in the community.

The ARC provides a comprehensive program of diagnosis, medical care and rehabilitation that is individually programmed for each person's needs. All of these needs are met 24 hours a day by a staff of about 100. The staff includes substance abuse counselors, nurses, physicians, psychiatrists, psychologists, activity therapists, vocational therapists, and dietary consultants.

"Our clients suffer from a variety of problems when they are admitted," Grubb said. "The average patient is unemployed, separated or divorced, and suffers from two or three medical problems. Most of the clients have been

heavy drinkers for 10 or more years, which can cause lasting harm to the body."

Program Director Deborah Giles described the average day of the client at the ARC. "It provides eight hours of treatment," she said. "The treatment varies for each patient, but every day is filled with therapeutic activity and counseling."

The day begins with a lecture and group therapy for everyone. After lunch the clients are involved in self-help activities, recreational therapy, vocational rehabilitation, discussion groups and individual counseling. The self-help activities teach the client skills such as cooking and job hunting that will help them live more productive lives when they return to the community. Medical appointments and family counseling also enter into the schedule according to each patient's needs.

The evenings at the ARC consist of AA meetings and relaxation such as card games, ping-pong, or a walk on the grounds.

A recent study revealed that 60% of the Butner ARC's clients were sober and not drinking six months after leaving the center. Grubb said that for a person who has been drinking heavily every day for 10 years or more, that is a great achievement.

The ARC staff and counselors encourage clients to become involved in community programs after leaving the center. During

their stay at the center counselors from the client's local community program come to the ARC to talk and encourage them to continue their treatment with the local program. Sam Andrews is a good example.

Andrews fought a long and difficult battle with alcoholism and credits the ARC and Phyllis Grubb, his individual counselor, with his recovery. He now serves as a volunteer at the Butner ARC, and this past spring was a keynote speaker at the center's annual "Celebrate Sobriety" reunion.

"The story of the wonderful work that the ARC does has never been told," Andrews said. "I'm not ashamed to tell my story if it will help anyone to stop drinking and to seek help. Because of the ARC I was able to see what was really troubling me and regain my self respect."

Andrews, now 59, began drinking when he was 15 years old. For 35 years he followed a common pattern of moderate drinking followed by heavy binges. During one period of several years he remained sober, but then he began "social drinking," and gradually he slipped back into his previous self-destructive habits.

"I was meshed in the denial syndrome," he said. "In retrospect I see that all the signs of actual dependence were there. I just didn't want to admit it."

Finally, through the pressure of family and friends, Andrews

sought help from the Alcoholic Rehabilitation Center in Butner. Andrews says that although he sought help, he wasn't mentally prepared. "I was seeking help, but inside I didn't care if it worked or not; I still wasn't openly admitting that I was an alcoholic."

His treatment at the center did begin to help slow down Andrews' drinking habits. The periods between sobriety and drinking became longer and the length of his drinking became much shorter.

In the mid 1970's Andrews says that he finally admitted to himself that he was an alcoholic and sought treatment at the ARC once again. Sam Andrews has not had a drink since 1976.

Andrews credits the ARC with turning his life around, and not a moment too soon. "My last treatment at the center had the right combination of things," he said. "I was ready to admit I had a problem, and I was involved in a

wonderful follow-up program in Durham."

Andrews noted that stopping destructive drinking patterns is just the first step in dealing with the problems of alcoholics. "The hardest part is quitting and learning to cope with problems in your life, which I hadn't done before."

The group and activity therapy that he experienced at the ARC made him realize that it is important for every individual to have a creative outlet. Andrews' form of self-expression comes through his music. He composes, arranges, and plays in several jazz bands that entertain throughout the Triangle Area.

"Everyone needs an outlet, especially those with drinking problems," he said. "Everyone who recovers from this kind of thing suffers from a lack of self-respect. It's so important to make contact with others -- you can't do it by yourself."

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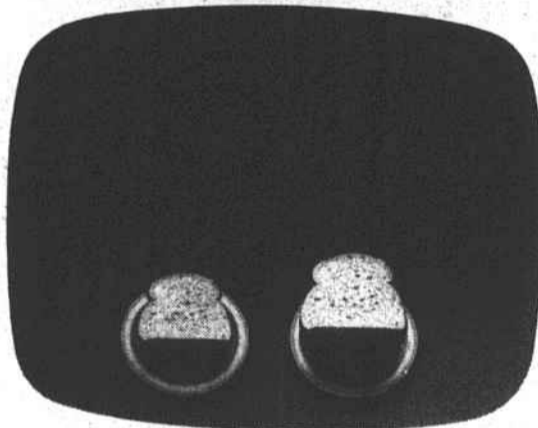
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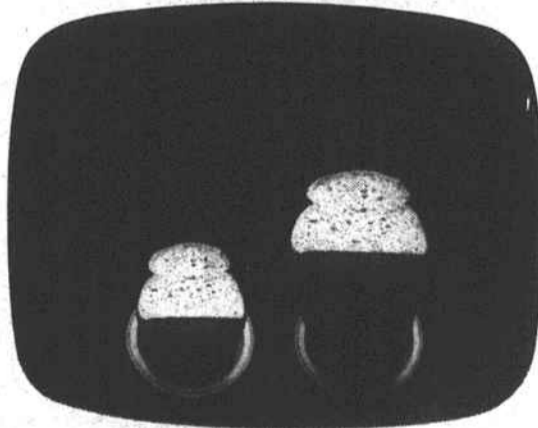
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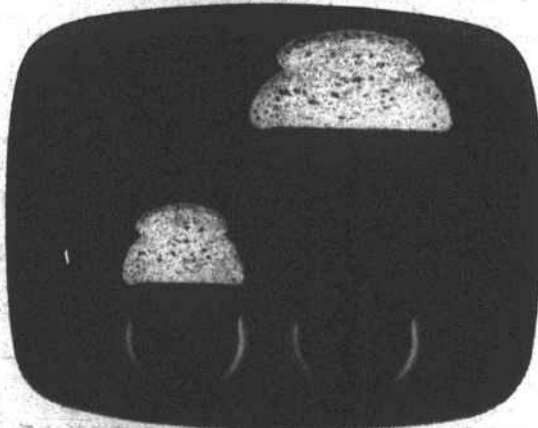
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Notice is hereby given that pursuant to Article 21, GS 105-322 of the Machinery Act, a meeting of the Board of Equalization and Review will be held:

MONDAY, MAY 6, 1985
beginning at 9:00 a.m.
by appointment only

After notices of new property values have been received, these values can be reviewed at the Tax Supervisor's Office.

You are urged to check your property values and in the event you are dissatisfied, complaint procedures will be furnished at the Tax Supervisor's Office and if requested, an appointment will be made to appear before the Equalization and Review Board.

NO COMPLAINTS WILL BE HEARD BY THE BOARD EXCEPT BY APPOINTMENT.

All meetings will be held at the Hoke County office building at 227 N. Main St. in the Commissioners conference room.

The Board expects to adjourn May 6, 1985. In the event of later adjournment, notice to that effect will be published in this newspaper.

HOKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS