

This Is Alcohol Awareness Week In N.C.

Alcohol is established in our society as a food, a drug and a poison. While the majority of us enjoy occasional imbibing, some 13 million Americans are problem drinkers.

Alcoholism Awareness Week, January 17-23, is a time to focus special attention on the problems of alcohol abuse and alcoholism. Although alcoholism as an entity is well-known, it is little understood.

It is a major personal health problem as well as a burden to society, yet alcohol education is lacking and research is poorly funded in comparison with similar other illnesses, such as cancer and heart disease.

Approximately 70 percent of American adults drink alcoholic beverages with one out of every ten to twelve developing alcohol-related problems. The consequences of continued heavy drinking physical, social, psychological and economic aspects. Currently, at least 10 percent of all deaths are alcohol-related. Considering that alcohol acts as a poison in our system, it is not surprising that every vital organ in the body can be adversely affected by alcohol consumption. Brain disorders, muscle injuries and weakness, heart failure, gastrointestinal disorders and liver diseases are the major medical complications

of excessive drinking. Heavy drinking during pregnancy has detrimental effects on the developing baby and can result in mental retardation and physical abnormalities.

Alcohol's role as a drug can be either beneficial or adverse. Mild alcohol intoxication can serve as a "social lubricant" enabling shy and inhibited individuals to

loosen up a bit. Alcohol has even been utilized in retirement homes to facilitate social interaction. However, as a drug, alcohol can also be abused. Excessive drinking can lead to uncontrolled behavior. It may also be used by lonely, bored or unhappy individuals as a form of self-medication. While alcohol may temporarily relieve the

symptoms of such individuals, it is never a cure. Self-medication with alcohol may lead to alcoholism in addition to the underlying psychological problem.

Economically, problems with alcohol cost our nation approximately \$60 billion annually. Included in this amount are reduced production due to workers be-

ing absent because of alcohol-related illness, health care expenses and motor vehicle accidents; approximately half of all automobile accidents are alcohol-related.

Alcoholism is obviously a monumental problem. Scientists worldwide are examining the puzzle of why individuals react differently to alcohol.

Unsigned Flyer Criticizes Councilmen Who Took Trip

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The National League of Cities meets twice a year at different locations around the country. The same three commissioners have taken trips to such places as San Francisco, Las Vegas and Atlanta, but claim the other city commissioners have been given the same opportunity but have turned it down.

King says the trips are necessary to "keep abreast of current events, and I find it totally necessary to avail ourselves to the opportunities to better benefit the citizens of Kings Mountain."

The commissioners claim past meetings have resulted in several programs for the citizens, including the securing of federal grants and community development projects, such as the recently-completed rehabilitation of homes and improvement of utilities in the Bennett Drive area.

They said no such meeting was held in Charlotte. "That meeting," Childers noted, "was a meeting of the North Carolina League of Cities." Childers said he could not attend that meeting because he, Commissioner Grissom and Mayor John Moss were subpoenaed to court

to be witnesses in civil suits between the city and Cecil's Inc. of Spartanburg, which built the new city hall.

"I spent a week away from my business in court, and was not reimbursed one penny for that," he said.

Both Childers and King said they have often taken trips at their own expense to such places as Asheville, Greenville and Raleigh "simply because we thought they would benefit everybody in Kings Mountain."

The commissioners said the trips are approved by the entire board during each year's budget meeting. They said \$5,000 was set aside in the current budget for expenses for the administration (mayor, commissioners, etc.).

The commissioners said all six commissioners were asked about going to the meeting, but they were the only three interested in going. "The others couldn't go or didn't want to," Childers said. "They're asked every year."

Childers said Mayor Moss has never gone to one of the meetings with them. "I believe along about that same time he was attending the Winter Baseball Meetings," Childers said. "But we've always tried to bring back anything we could to benefit the citizens."

"I don't think the majority of the citizens of Kings Mountain want us to sit back and watch the world go by," Childers added.

Both Childers and King said they are glad they took the trip-

and will do it again—but the big thing that concerns them about the flyer is that it was unsigned.

"If people are so concerned, why can't they confront you instead of circulating a letter that is not even signed?" King asked. "I would be most happy to talk to them any time and anyplace."

But the biggest puzzle about the flyer is how the writer of it obtained the information about the amount of money involved.

According to Grace Wolfe of the City Treasurer's Office, no one has been into the office seeking the information, and the amount stated on the flyer—\$2,490.44—is correct to the penny.

She traced her records Tuesday afternoon, going back through checks written from August to December.

The following expense checks were issued: \$525 for room reservations; \$664.50 for plane fare; \$915 advance to the commissioners for expenses (food, bus fare, etc.); \$183 to the Holiday Inn in Detroit; \$134.20 to Grissom for re-imbursement for expenses he paid out of his pocket; \$21.30 re-imbursement to King; and \$47.44 re-imbursement to Childers.

Mrs. Wolfe said she questioned every employee of the Treasurer's Office and contacted City Treasurer Joe McDaniel at his hospital room in Charlotte to see if anyone had requested the above information. All of the employees said the information has not been given out.

"It's really a shock to me," Mrs. Wolfe said. "I'm almost speechless. I went all the way back to August 21 and looked through every check, and it comes out to the penny. I don't know who got it."

"That's interesting," said King when he learned that the information was not given out. "I can't understand how they got the exact figures when nobody's checked the records."

But both King and Childers said they intend to do everything possible to find out.

"I have no qualms when people criticize us as an administration," King said. "But when it gets personal, that's something else."

"If they want to attack me," Childers added, "let them attack me on my record."

"If the citizens don't want the commissioners to stay abreast of current events, I don't have any business being there," King said. "I'm going to keep on doing the things that will benefit everybody, not just a few."

"Our remarks aren't intended for the majority of the citizens," King said, "but to the few who did this. And we have an idea who it is."

"And we're going to work to prove who it is," Childers added.

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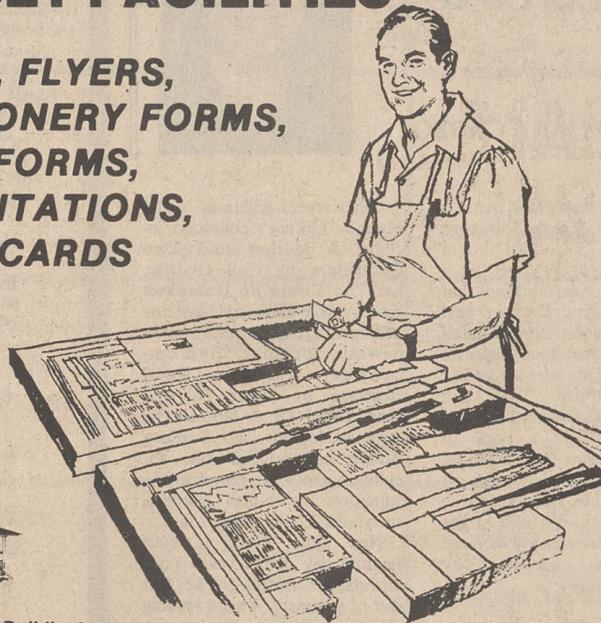
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