

# HAPPY NEW YEAR



## Good News



January,  
1975

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By the Northern California Council of Alcoholics Anonymous

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### Why Do We Need A Conference?

Bernard B. Smith, former non-alcoholic chairman of our Board of Trustees, and one of the architects of the Conference structure, answered that question superbly in his opening talk at the 1954 meeting:

"We may not need a General Service Conference to insure our own recovery. We do need it to insure the recovery of the alcoholic who still stumbles in the darkness one short block from this room. We need it to insure the recovery of a child being born tonight, destined to alcoholism. We need it to provide, in keeping with our Twelfth Step, a permanent haven for all alcoholics who, in the ages ahead, can find in AA that rebirth which brought us back to life.

"We need it because we, more than all others, are conscious of the devastating effect of the human urge for power and prestige which we must insure can never invade AA. We need it to insure AA against government, while insulating it against anarchy; we need it to protect AA against disintegration while preventing overintegration. We need it so that Alcoholics Anonymous, and Alcoholics Anonymous alone, is the ultimate repository of its Twelve Steps, its Twelve Traditions and all of its services.

(Continued Col. 3 page 8)

### Dr. John L. Norris Reports On A New AA Survey

San Francisco, CA, Dec. 18 — Women account for nearly one in three (31 per cent) of new members of Alcoholics Anonymous in the last three years, and account for 28 per cent of AA's total membership.

This fact was revealed today in the results of the largest survey of recovered alcoholics ever made, covering 13,467 AA members in the United States and Canada. The results were reported here to the North American Congress on Alcohol and Drug Problems by Dr. John L. Norris, chairman of the board of trustees of Alcoholics Anonymous. The 1974 survey is the latest of three made at three-year intervals.

Dr. Norris also presented statistics on maintenance of sobriety. One of four members of AA at a typical meeting has not had a drink for five years or more; 91 per cent of these, each succeeding year, will enjoy continuing sobriety and will continue to attend AA meetings regularly. Of those sober in AA between one and five years, about 79 per cent, each succeeding year, will not drink and will remain active in the fellowship.

Breaking down the membership of AA by occupation, the survey placed 38 per cent in the executive-professional-technical category. Blue-Collar and office clerical ac-

count for 32 per cent. About 11 per cent say they are housewives — including two males! Among the unusual occupations named are horse-show ringmaster and deep-sea diver.

About 92 per cent of those surveyed cited an improvement in the quality of their lives since joining AA.

(Continued col. 1 page 8)

### Modesto Spanish Language Meeting

The Modesto 12 X 12 Fellowship Group now has a Spanish language meeting on Sundays at 6:00 p.m. This is a first for Modesto.

12 X 12 Group regularly holds meetings at 8:00 p.m., Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays at 407 - 14th St., Modesto. And, of course, the Spanish language meeting on Sunday evenings.

### Was Your Good News Late? Deadline the 15th

If your January Good News arrived late, it is because the contributors of some of our regular features forgot that:

A deadline means just that! The Good News deadline is the 15th of every month. Any mail received in the Central Office after 5 p.m. on the 15th cannot be included in the next issue, nor can any news be telephoned in after that time.

### ESPECIALLY FOR NEWCOMERS

#### MONDAY BEGINNERS

Speaker Meeting with  
Questions and Answers

#### THURSDAY BEGINNERS

Speaker—Discussion Meeting

Both Meetings held at 1755 Clay St., San Francisco—8:30 pm  
Coffee — Refreshments — Arm's Length A.A. after each Meeting



## The Link January '75

It becomes second nature, when writing on AA matters, to use only first names and last initials when referring to members, so when the opportunity to use a name in its entirety presents itself, it seems, in the "forbidden fruit" sense, almost wicked. Dr. John L. Norris (Dr. Jack), longtime alcoholic Trustee and Chairman of the Board of Trustees, was the principal speaker at a Public Information and General Service meeting and workshop held at the First Unitarian Church on the afternoon of Saturday, December 14. Chairman for this meeting was George D. Participants in addition to Dr. Jack were Mary Ellen U. of the GSO office in New York and Bob M., Trustee from Connecticut.

At some length was discussed the proliferation of alcoholic programs and the potential conflicts these can cause, especially in the job-seeking area. Paul G., secretary of San Francisco's Central Office, said that it is not uncommon for an alcoholic, sober for a few years, to feel that he or she is qualified to act as a counselor on one of these programs. The term, "two hat-ism" was used almost reluctantly, as it has a negative connotation to many, but Bob M. pointed out that everyone actually wears more than one hat in the course of normal living, and co-founder Dr. Bob himself, as a physician and an AA member, wore at least two hats.

On the subject of job qualifications for the sober alcoholic, Dr. Jack had this to say:

"A — Don't take on a job in any alcoholism treatment agency unless you have some skill on the basis of which you can be paid. Months, or even years, in AA is not enough.

B — Do everything you can do to persuade those in charge of the agency not to employ an AA member unless he has some skill which would justify a salary — or provide training which would give the person a skill which would justify his salary.

C — The AA member who works in an alcoholism agency must distinguish between his job and his sponsorship."

Dr. Jack, Bob M. and Mary Ellen U. were all here from the East to take part in the North American Congress on Alcohol and Drug Problems which was held at the Hilton and St. Francis Hotels, in mid-December. Alcoholics Anonymous had a booth at the Hilton at which members answered questions and gave out literature. This has been done at other conventions of professional people, and it is important to emphasize how necessary it is for the professional community to understand the fundamentals of AA because it is often they who are first aware of their patients' problems with alcohol. Dr. Jack added that it is also necessary to catch the medical student early in his training, before the prejudices which often accompany sophomore scientific training set in.

We remember, too, that AA doesn't sell. It attracts. It doesn't promote. But when the questions are asked, AA wants to be there with the answers. And the only question that has any real meaning is, "Does it work?". Look around you at your next AA meeting for the answer.

Ralph L.

## The Pitch

### California Northern Interior Area General Service

The California Northern Interior Area, hosted the Annual Fall Assembly on Saturday, November 23.

The assembly took place at the El Rancho Motel in West Sacramento.

Acting Chairman, Marge K. opened the assembly at 1:00 p.m. Matters vital to the area were discussed. There was a banquet held at 6:00 p.m. — More than 200 people attended and enjoyed a fine dinner followed by a tremendous message from Hal C. from Chula Vista. Hal is a past delegate, San Diego Area. Immediately following the dinner-speaker meeting, dancing was enjoyed to the music of Hal Wylie's fine orchestra.

The next California Northern Interior Area assembly will be held at the Senator Hotel in Sacramento on Saturday, January 4, 1975.

—Naydene B., D.C.M.

## Peninsula All Groups

Walter Mc. of Sacramento will be the first speaker of the month at Peninsula All Groups, January 4. The host group will be Single Men's Rehabilitation Center. The place is St. Mathew's Episcopal Church Auditorium, El Camino Real and Baldwin Ave., San Mateo. The meeting is at 8:30 p.m., Saturdays; doors open at 7:30 p.m.

Other speakers and host groups for the month will be:

January 11 — Charles G., Manteca; San Bruno Monday.

January 18 — John G., Santa Cruz; 12th Step Study, Redwood City.

January 25 — Danny and Kathy G., Salinas; San Carlos Beginners.

Coffee and arms-length AA before and after the meeting.

## Group Information Cards

The 1975 Group Information Cards have now been distributed by the General Service Office to all Areas in the United States and Canada. These cards will be used to formulate the 1975 World Directory. This year the distribution and collection of cards will be the responsibility of the Delegate in each General Service Area, as decided by the 1974 General Service Conference.

Cards for the Northern Coastal Area are now in the hands of DCM Chairmen and DCMs for distribution to individual groups. The 1975 cards are completely different in format, and ask for more detailed information than in previous years. Each group wishing to be listed in the 1975 World Directory should make sure to obtain a card from its DCM, fill it out and return it within the time limit.

Paul V., CNCA Secretary, requests that these new cards be filled out and returned to him at 1190 White Drive, Santa Clara, CA 95051, not later than January 15.

These cards will also be used to form a new mailing list for GSO. This deadline is important. Failure to receive a Group Information Card may mean your group will miss out on important GSO information.



## Secretaries' Meeting

There will be an informal get-together of group secretaries — past, present and future — at the San Francisco Alano Club, 414 Grant Ave., on Wednesday, January 15, at 8:30 p.m.

This meeting is being sponsored jointly by Coastal Panel No. 1 of General Service and Central Service Committee of the Intercounty Fellowship of AA.

All AA members interested in fellowship activities, and especially those interested in the workings and problems of the AA group are encouraged to attend.

## Alumni Group Sixth Anniversary

The San Francisco Alumni Group will celebrate its sixth anniversary Wednesday, January 15. The place is the Lutheran Church at 33rd Ave. and Ulloa Sts. The time is 8:30 p.m.; doors will open and coffee will be served beginning at 7:30 p.m.

After the meeting, there will be the usual sumptuous buffet with more coffee.

The group asks that all their friends attend, and each one of them bring a friend. In this way the group's reputation for genuine hospitality will grow.

## Friday Central All Groups

Here is the schedule of speakers for the San Francisco Fellowship Friday Central All Groups:

January 3 — Jean M., Panhandle Group;

January 10 — Jack D., Marin County AA;

January 17 — Ethel J., S.F. Fellowship;

January 24 — Sterling R., San Rafael;

January 31 — Arnold R., Park Presidio Group.

Friday Central All Groups meets at 8:30 p.m. at First Unitarian Church, Franklin and Gough Sts., San Francisco, in the Star King Room.

Coffee will be served before and after the meeting. Everyone is welcome.

## South of Market 28th Anniversary

San Francisco's South of Market Group will celebrate its 28th anniversary on Sunday, January 26, at the Ozanam Center of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, 1175 Howard St. Paul G. of San Francisco's Central Office will be chairman for the 1 p.m. meeting. Following the meeting there will be refreshments and arms-length AA from 2 to 4 p.m.

South of Market Group dates from 1946. Meetings were first held at the Hunt St. Salvation Army chapel. From 1947 until its closing, the group met at the St. Vincent day center at 235 Minna St.

Mike McG. and all the regulars of this group ask their AA friends to come and help them celebrate this anniversary.

## N.A.C.O.A.A.D.P.

Convention time again in San Francisco. A glorious affair at the Hilton with more than 6,000 visitors from elsewhere. The convention booth, manned by members of the Fellowship from around the Bay Area, was a busy place as it was positioned immediately to the left of the main entrance, so the sign, "Alcoholics Anonymous" was clearly visible.

I was fortunate to be able to man the booth on the first day in the morning. New York had sent boxes of literature and the booth itself which Nancy C. had overseen the setting up of. A little to the left and down the aisle was a booth from another organization which seemed to have a message I did not understand. The placard announced that the booth was from an organization in Denver, and the title (please read one word at a time) Education Commission of the States Task Force on Responsible Decisions About Alcohol.

Perhaps I am the only person in the world who thinks that title is funny. I am a relatively recent addition? to the Fellowship and am just wallowing in the joy of having made my decision to turn my will and my life, etc., and here, right across the aisle at the San Francisco Hilton was a Company, no less, with attestations to responsible decisions about alcohol. Wow.

## Federal Breakfast Anniversary

The Federal Breakfast Group will celebrate its second anniversary on Sunday, January 19. This group meets at 11:30 a.m. at Foster's Restaurant, Van Ness Ave. and Market St., San Francisco.

The speaker will be Gene D. of Calistoga. The chairman will be Wally W. of San Francisco.

There will be coffee and cake following the meeting.

## Sinbar Anniversary

The Sinbar Discussion Group will celebrate its second anniversary on Sunday, January 12, at 8:00 p.m.

The speaker for the evening will be Tony S. of New Horizon Group. The chairman will be Cragmont Joe.

After the meeting, there will be pie a la mode and coffee.

Sinbar meets at St. Finn Barr Church, Hearst and Edna Sts. (one block south of Monterey Blvd.), San Francisco.

The initials at the beginning of this article are the name of the game. A headline in a SF paper the other day said "NEW WAY TO STOP DRINKING." A friend of mine replied, "Don't go on the wagon, get a counselor." Alcoholics Anonymous began in 1935 long before the advent of tranquilizers and ups and downs and whatever, and it worked for those who are the founding friends of our Fellowship, and if it worked for them (and you, and you), it can work for me. The only initials I understand and revere are AA, and anything more complex than that is too much for me. Keep it simple and keep it plain, don't take the first drink and you'll feel no pain.

Arthur K.

A husband and wife were peering down a wishing well. The wife leaned over, suddenly lost her balance and disappeared into the dark hole.

"How about that?" exclaimed her startled spouse, "and I used to think these things were a lot of bunk."



## Carrying the Message

December 1974 proved to be the San Francisco Public Information Committee's busiest month in all areas since the committee was formed a year ago this month.

All of this activity really started at the end of November, when KRON-TV (channel 4) ran a spot videotaped in the San Francisco Central office. This was shown on Wednesday, Thanksgiving Eve, on the 5:30 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. news, following a brief clip of a Highway Patrol officer arresting a drunk driver. "Mr. X and Mr. Y" of the Marin and San Francisco fellowships were shown in very dim light from the back and side as they described what it was like to get a 502 — what happened and what it is like now.

On December 6, Eileen A., Speakers Bureau chairman, and Nancy C., P.I. chairman, taped a program for radio station K-101, to be heard on Eugene Block's Sunday morning show on civic affairs. This was an informal interview which dealt primarily with our work with the schools. Perhaps, some of you heard the show on December 15 at 9:00 a.m.

All of a sudden, we began hearing from the schools as a result of the San Francisco Progress release. Surprisingly, students requested that their teachers call AA for "real live drunks" from our Speakers Bureau to talk to them — rather than the teachers picking up on the article.

One school in particular was so pleased with the response of over eighty students to two talks by Eileen A. and Arthur K. that we have been invited back in January. This particular teacher was frankly skeptical that an AA speaker could "get through" to her "super-sophisticated con artists" in the 11th and 12th grades — but now she wants more help from us and "cannot get over the instant rapport".

In the midst of the flurry of interest from several schools, almost 4,000 people arrived for the North American Congress on Alcohol and Drug Problems, with headquarters at the San Francisco Hilton. AA had a prominent booth in the exhibit area, which was manned

by twenty members of the fellowship, mostly from P.I. Committees of Marin, Santa Clara and San Francisco Counties.

In addition to many convention activities open to us, Area General Service held a Public Information seminar at the First Unitarian Church on Saturday, December 14. Mary Ellen U., of the New York General Service Staff, Dr. John L. Norris, Chairman of the Board of AA World Service, and a trustee, and Robert M., Treasurer of AA World Service, and a trustee, answered questions from P.I. committee members from as far away as Woodland, CA.

Host for the group of about 50 AA members was George D., new delegate to the National General Service Conference, and outgoing delegate Merle G. For more information on this meeting, see "The Link".

The next San Francisco Public Information meeting will be held January 6, at the Alano Club, at 8:00 p.m. At that time, we hope to discuss thoroughly what we can do to improve our work with schools and radio stations, so that these assignments can be set up further in advance, and in a more orderly fashion. December has proven that we in San Francisco can meet almost any last minute demand — but it would certainly be preferable to have a less "last-minute-crisis" situation, day after day!

Nancy C.

P.S.: As this was being written, The Pacific Telephone Co. just telephoned for speakers for later this week....hopefully, we'll be there.

## Need A Meeting Topic?

"Surrendering to Victory" and the paradoxes in it ... start a discussion on this topic, a key to a happy, serene, sober life. "Fear, Greed and Ignorance" discuss some of the conditions of our lives outside of AA that create pressures, tension, unhappiness. Can we remedy these conditions? Or alter our attitudes toward them?

—Thanks to Ed A., The Sonoma County Intercounty Fellowship Newsletter.

## Alanon Intergroup

On Saturday, December 14, the Alanon Area Intergroup held an open meeting at St. Mary's Cathedral in San Francisco. Approximately 1,000 members and guests of Alanon members (including many AAs) heard a paper read by the Reverend Joseph L. Kellerman.

The Reverend Kellerman is director of the Charlotte, North Carolina Council on Alcoholism and an Episcopal priest. One of his earlier speeches to an Alanon group is widely distributed as Alanon approved literature under the title *Alcoholism, A merry-Go-Round named Denial*.

The theme of the Reverend Kellerman's speech at St. Mary's was that alcoholism is a family disease, and he urged Alanon to get more active, form more groups, and help more families.

His description of the disruption alcohol can cause in a marriage, and the subsequent effects on all of the people in the family, pointed up the importance of treating the whole family, not the alcoholic alone.

The speech was taped, and hopefully will be made available in printed form at some future date.

## Alateen Pot-Luck

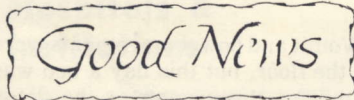
San Francisco Alateen is having an open pot-luck dinner, Saturday, January 18, at Hope Lutheran Church, 55 San Fernando Way, Daly City.

The dinner begins at 6:30 p.m. A speaker meeting will follow at 8:00 p.m. The speaker will be announced later.

## Santa Clara Flash

The January All-Groups meeting will be held Saturday, January 11 at 8:15 p.m. at the Santa Clara County Alano Club, 1122 Fair Ave., San Jose. The Lakewood Group of Sunnyvale will be the host and they will supply a guest speaker.





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## Good News Audit

At a special Good News meeting, which was held the day after Thanksgiving, with Ann S., chairman of the Northern California Council of Alcoholics Anonymous, Ed S., Rollin W., Ed C., Nancy C., Arthur K., John F., Jim A. and Ralph L., discussed ways and means to make the business and circulation operations of the paper function more efficiently.

Merilyn W. resigned as Business Manager. She had been handling updating subscription cards and all financial transactions from her home on the Peninsula.

It was decided that it would be more efficient to consolidate all of the functions in San Francisco. The subscription cards and checkbook were turned over to Rollin W. who is currently completing an audit.

Ed C. was elected Business Manager with Ralph L. to assist him with the books. It was decided that any checks written will henceforth require two signatures instead of the one previously needed. These signatures will be duly registered with the bank when the audit is complete. They will be those of only Jim A., Ed C. and Ralph L.

Rollin W. is also setting up a complete and new streamlined bookkeeping system and subscrip-

tion renewal system which will be put into effect as soon as the audit is completed.

It is hoped that with these changes in procedures, Good News will be able to give its readers better service in the future. A regular financial statement in detail will appear semi-annually.

Please remember that all correspondence regarding stories or subscriptions should be sent to Good News, 166 Geary St., Room 84, San Francisco, CA 94108, and never to a member's home.

## Letters to the Editor

### Thy Will Be Done....

This is my daily prayer, if you can call it one. Not one word more. I cannot define those words any more perfectly than anyone else on the program of Alcoholics Anonymous, but it works for me. I really don't like the rest of that prayer (or any other prayer for that matter) because that's where I am coming from — making choices, preferences, assuming positions, seeking a new status, grabbing, pushing, pulling, yanking and pinching. All that is gone. Or going. One day at a time. It is very simple. It is all very simple. I used to be afraid of going to sleep, and then I became afraid of waking up, and now it is all coming naturally, slowly and beautifully. One day, one minute, one second, it is all one to me.

Any question I may have can always be answered with my pared-down version. It seems to be centuries when I was locked in behind my iron mask of alcohol managing my ill fate in a more outrageous fashion daily. I don't have to any more. I now have a life to live (and I still don't know what's going to happen) that is nothing but surprises — a spiritual awakening every minute. Sometimes it seems too good to be true, and then it turns out that it is true, and the good feeling just gets better. I gorged myself on a bunch of oranges the other day and I realized that never in my drinking days, even though I was careful about three meals a day, did I treat myself so good. I was

## Contra Costa Intergrupp

The Contra Costa County Service Center Intergrupp speaker meeting will be held at the Willow Creek School, 1029 Mohr Lane, Concord on Saturday, January 18. Florette will be the guest speaker.

Bud C. is scheduled to be the speaker at the Diablo Group's monthly speaker meeting, Saturday, January 4. This group meets at 1550 Diablo Rd., Danville, at 8:30 p.m.

The Al-Anon Service Committee hosts a speaker meeting on the first Saturday of each month, at Williams Elementary School, 2895 East St., Concord. At this meeting there is an AA, an Al-Anon, and sometimes an Alateen speaker.

## New Sacramento Central Office

As of January 6, the Central California Fellowship of AA Central office in Sacramento has a new home. The office is moving to 1016 - 23rd St., Suite A, Sacramento, CA 95816. The telephone number is (916) 443-8138, the same number as at the old location.

The new office is much larger and more attractive. It should enable the staff to serve the needs of the ever-increasing number of groups in the Central California Fellowship better.

An open house is planned for sometime in February.

eating three meals a day and suffering from abject malnutrition of the spirit, and starving from an emotionless and feeling-less existence.

I now find myself in the position of not envying anyone else for having it better than I because I couldn't have it any better ... today. "Thy will be done." That seems to be enough for me.

Suzanne O'C.



## The Drunks Nobody Wanted

In this age when the country is caring for its troubled from the cradle to the grave, it is surprising when someone does not qualify for help in an emergency.

The call came at 7 p.m. to Alcoholics Anonymous. A man and woman, almost paralyzed from two weeks of steady drinking, mumbled for help.

Gary R. and Lois H., both six months sober and "on call" for AA, responded. The AA does not ask to help a drunk; from experience members know that with an alcoholic this is a waste of time. The words "I need help" are the foundations on which sobriety begins.

"We could smell their living quarters 10 feet away," Gary remembered. "The place was knee-deep in trash, garbage, bourbon bottles, vodka bottles, beer cans — you name it," he said, even now cringing. "Their toilet was black, the sink filled with sour water, there was urine on the chairs, and clothes piled even with the bed."

The drunk woman was in her mid-40s, raving, kissing the Bible — dying she said. The man in his 70s was crying, wanting sympathy.

"We knew we had to get them out of this," added Lois. "She was just out of the hospital (pneumonia) and couldn't walk. She didn't have the slightest idea what medicine she was gobbling down. It was a nightmare."

7:30 p.m. — "I called the detoxification center. They said they were full with two men on the floor. I pleaded and begged," said Lois. "I called a friend who tried, but they wouldn't budge."

The two AA members carried the woman to their car and helped the old man out and drove them to the emergency entrance of Dominion Hospital.

The woman was wheel-chaired into the ward and put on a bed. She was examined but admittance was refused.

Lois was sure there was something wrong, physically and mentally.

An employee of the emergency ward remembered that the hospital was full that night and that the doctor had to make a determination on the woman's condition. He ruled that she could not be admitted.

And so, with the drunk woman raving and the drunk man raising general hell, this ungainly troop moved out of the hospital and drove to the Crisis Intervention Center, the psychiatric ward of the mental health department at the old county hospital complex.

9 p.m. — "That woman had had two convulsions during her two-week drinking bout," said Gary. "We were scared that she was going to have another. We carried her bodily, 50 yards, to the center where she sat throwing up her legs in the air, yelling that she didn't care if she died in one breath and that she wanted help in the next — rolling her eyes and smacking the Bible."

The upshot: they were refused. It was determined, said Gary, that since no psychiatric problem was discernable, she could not be accepted.

"By this time the two wanted to go home. They were tired of the whole mess," exclaimed Gary H. "So we called their minister and took them home."

Lois made one more try. She called a private alcoholic lodge. They refused to take them without \$300 cash deposit.

This, then, is the grey area of the human in the lowest stages of alcoholism. Both had serious medical problems, but they were probably too drunk to have either mental or medical conditions properly diagnosed.

There is a postscript to this.

The next morning Lois went back with groceries. Both were sloppy drunk again. It took 15 minutes for the woman to crawl on her back to the door.

Vomit and bowel movements were on the floor, but this day a bed was found for the woman at the detox center and, according to Gary, she is now in the hospital.

It was a traumatic experience for both Gary and Lois.

"Our role is not to baby-sit, but to be tough with the alcoholics, but what we experienced were two humans who really needed to be admitted some place that night.

"But they just didn't fit," said Gary.

—From Wally Trabing's  
Mostly About People,  
Santa Cruz Sentinel

*The following is a verbatim news release from the Rutgers News Service, New Brunswick, N.J.*

Richard Zylman has learned to his utter surprise that myths abound in his family. It's especially ironic that one myth — that beer is a beverage of moderation — held sway in the home of Zylman, an authority on alcohol as a factor in traffic safety.

"When my son Paul told me that his late return from work one evening was caused by his stopping for 'just beer,' I realized that my own son shared a common misconception about alcohol content," Zylman said.

As a research specialist at Rutgers University's Center of Alcohol Studies, and with 20 years of work in the field, Zylman has been active in the effort to enlighten the drinking public. But he somehow missed delivering the message at home.

"It seems to be widely believed that when one gets down to serious beer drinking, urinating regularly allows the beer to 'go right on through' without any effect. That's not true.

"It's only the excess water and just a small portion of the alcohol that's passing through. As the beer passes through the system, the alcohol is absorbed into the blood stream through the stomach wall and small intestine," Zylman pointed out.

(Continued col.3 page 7)



## Hospitals & Institutions

We alcoholics must be made of some kind of sponge or something (or at least, I must be) because I am perpetually confronted with drunks looking for automobiles, staggering up and down streets looking for their cars, wobbling up to their vehicles trying to find the keyhole to the door. I feel then most helpless (powerless), and the word "But..." pops into my mind and I continue.

Hospitals and Institutions is that part of Alcoholics Anonymous where I get to see, share with others in the program and hopefully "Carry the Message" to the alcoholic who still suffers. And they are suffering. I walked into the ward (detox) of a hospital about an hour before a meeting. A patient was sitting on a chair feeling just awful. I identified myself saying, "My name is George and I am an alcoholic," and we began to talk. He told me he was feeling rotten, and I replied, and before I knew it, he was sitting in a chair with about 9 members of the Fellowship, the meeting was beginning and perhaps, and only perhaps, that person (I've forgotten his name), was sitting in his first meeting and perhaps, and only perhaps, he was getting something.

I was taken to my first H & I meeting by my sponsor about two months on the program. My own drunk story includes a short sojourn to a psycho ward, but, fortunately or unfortunately there was no one from Alcoholics Anonymous except the person who was to become my sponsor when I was there. At first, when the fumes were clearing, I wasn't too sure where I was, and I couldn't identify with any of the people either from the Fellowship or from the hospital, but after a while, I did discover that I was in the right place.

I began to stay away from hospital meetings for a while after my initial encounter there, preferring, somehow, to spend my time in regular downtown, uptown, neighborhood and speaker meetings. Soon, however, I found myself in that situation where in "following these principles

in all my affairs," I was holding back on "we tried to carry this message to alcoholics," not realizing that in living the AA Way of Life, I was not allowing myself to be placed in the position of carrying the message. In other words, I was hiding away in good old-fashioned, secure, comfortable AA without doing anything in the way of following all of the principles in my affairs, especially in Alcoholics Anonymous!

This is where I got my sobriety. I don't have to be a secretary, a coffee maker or anything (although I do enjoy it) but just going to a hospital, sharing whatever it is with those drunks who are hot right out of the gutter — they look as if they were recently rescued from a boiling cauldron, is my most rewarding activity in the Fellowship. We know that all the counselors, pills, psychiatrists and pampering won't matter much to the drunk if he knows he has to go out into the same world he came out of and has no better place to go. With the H & I meetings, the feeling is really good; sometimes it gets absolutely electric, and I know that whatever happens, only good can come from it.

I have a feeling, also, each time I go to one of those meetings, that we are sharing with another drunk driver who may get the message. It's only my hope. I read somewhere that in one of the Scandinavian countries, drunk drivers are thrown into the bucket for a year to break up frozen rocks, and in my own way, I am trying to develop some sort of curse (will a prayer work for all drunk drivers?) that drunks won't find their cars. I see no humor in drunks or drunk drivers, hospitals, detox wards and clinics, but knowing that I am an alcoholic affords me so many benefits that I don't worry about feeling any ill will toward drunken behavior. It is all pretty ugly and sad, and any suitable curses, or spells suitable for hexing drunk drivers will be gratefully accepted (and cast) at the nearest full moon.

Aren't you glad to be alive? Don't you wish everyone was?

George S.

## POINT OF VIEW

When the other fellow acts that way, he's ugly — when you do, it's nerves. When he's set in his ways, he's obstinate — when you are, it's firmness. When he doesn't like your friends, he is prejudiced — when you don't like his, you are simply showing good judgment. When he takes time to do things, he is exasperatingly slow — when you take ages, you are deliberate. When he picks flaws, he is cranky — when you do, you are discriminating.

## Rutgers

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He went on to explain that about 90 per cent of the alcohol is oxidized by the liver and about 10 per cent leaves via the breath, perspiration and urine. The alcohol leaves the body at a rate of about a third of an ounce per hour, or the amount in two cans of beer in three hours.

"If a 160-pound drinker consumes more than two cans of beer in three hours, the concentration of alcohol in the blood begins to accumulate, despite regular urination. That blood-alcohol concentration increases faster in a thinner drinker. A heavier drinker takes a little longer to accumulate alcohol in the blood," he added.

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## Survey

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The method of the 1974 survey was quite similar to those used by the AA General Service Board in its 1968 and 1971 studies. Ninety-one elected delegates to the U.S. and Canada AA General Service Conference, an annual representative assembly of the movement, were sent enough questionnaires to cover the membership of 3 per cent of the AA groups (excluding those in institutions) in each state and province.

Choosing the required number of sample groups, each delegate made an appearance at a regular meeting of the group and asked each member present to complete one of the 12-item questionnaires.

Questions had been prepared by the board's Public Information Committee and its Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community, with technical assistance from scientists not in AA, as well as from research experts who are AA members.

Responses were received from 87 (96 per cent) of the 91 AA Conference electoral areas.

Dr. Norris noted that, in general, the results of the 1974 survey of AA membership show remarkable stability when compared with those of previous surveys, in spite of the facts that AA has averaged more than 10 per cent annual growth for several years, and that the selection

### SATURDAY, JANUARY 4—

NEW SOUND — DON BELL & COMBO — 9 p.m. to 12 p.m. ....  
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BIRTHDAY DANCE — to music on tapes. No donation. This is on the house. Have a birthday in January, or know someone who does? Come & share with us!

The Alano Club is open from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Sunday through Thursday. Closing time on Friday and Saturday is 12 midnight.

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of participants was done independently for each survey. Almost half the alcoholics responding to the 1974 questionnaire had not come to AA by 1968, which makes the stability of the results even more significant.

The above is an excerpt from "About AA", a newsletter for professional men and women, published by the General Service Board of AA in New York. It was handed out after Dr. Norris' talk to the above mentioned convention.

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## Conference

(Continued from page 1)

"We need it to insure that changes within AA come only as a response to the needs and the wants of all AA, and not of any few. We need it to insure that the doors of the halls of AA never have locks on them, so that all people for all time who have an alcoholic problem may enter these halls unasked and feel welcome. We need it to insure that Alcoholics Anonymous never asks of anyone who needs us what his or her race is, what his or her creed is, what his or her social position is."