

# Underage or heavy drinkers guzzle half of alcohol

I wanted to share a column found in the Join Together web site. It has some interesting information parents may want to know more about.

The column is called, "Study: Underage, Heavy Drinkers Consume Half of U.S. Alcohol," is by Eric Helmuth and is dated Feb. 25, 2003. Underage and adult excessive drinking account for half of the alcohol beverage industry's sales — \$56.9 billion of the total \$116.2 billion Americans spend on alcohol each year — according to an analysis by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University, published in the Feb. 26 issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association.

The study, which analyzed three national data sources, reports that excessive drinking by adults constitutes 30 percent of all alcohol consumed in the U.S., with underage drinking accounting for an additional 20 percent.

The findings are no surprise to alcohol producers, George Hacker, director of the Center for Science in the Public Interest's Alcohol Poli-



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cies Project, said.

"They've known all along that underage and excessive drinking accounts for half of their market share," he said. "Regardless of its public stance, the industry considers underage and excessive drinking to be profit centers that need nurturing, rather than problems that need solving."

The public health community has also long known how the numbers add up, notes David Rosenbloom, director of Join Together, a project of the Boston University School of Public Health.

"This isn't news to us or to the alcohol industry," he said. "We've known for some time that over half of the booze sold in this country is consumed by a small percentage of

the drinking public."

Research has also consistently shown that an alarming portion of alcohol consumption and sales are linked with underage drinking, Rosenbloom said. He discounts alcohol industry criticism over the numbers as a smoke screen.

"The bottom line is that whether the federal government's official estimate of 11.4 percent is right," Rosenbloom said, "or the JAMA (Journal of the American Medical Association) study is right with its 20 percent figure, the beer industry remains the nation's largest seller of illegal drugs to the nation's youth."

A spokesperson for the Distilled Spirits Council blasted the study, accusing the researchers of manipulating the data and complaining that the authors defined excessive drinking as more than two daily

drinks, Reuters reported February 25.

National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse President Joseph Califano responded that the study was subjected to rigorous peer review, and said that the attack merely "reveals their interest in selling people more than two drinks a day."

Public health experts concur that alcohol — in the form of underage and excessive drinking — is by far the nation's number one drug problem, inflicting massive economic, social and health burdens on society.

But Califano, in a joint statement with former First Lady Betty Ford, charged that alcohol producers have long tried to play this down.

"The alcohol industry has consistently underestimated the cost of underage and excessive drinking in the U.S. and this JAMA study gives the American people the facts for the first time," said Ford and Califano.

"This JAMA article makes clear that alcohol is a premier drug of

abuse in America," Califano added.

Rosenbloom thinks the study also provides an opportunity to focus on another important issue that alcohol producers and sellers frequently dodge: "The alcohol industry has a financial interest in not being straightforward about defining excessive drinking — answering the question, 'how much is too much?'" he said.

To help individuals answer this question for themselves, Join Together last year launched a confidential on-line screening tool, AlcoholScreening.org.

To date more than 90,000 visitors to the web site have found out if their alcohol consumption is likely to be hazardous or harmful.

Visitors also learn what moderate drinking really is — and isn't — and are advised that drinking no alcohol is the safest choice in some circumstances and for some people.

The alcohol industry must also communicate this information to consumers, say public health experts.

Backed by statements from three former U.S. Surgeons General, the study authors call for industry-placed warnings about underage and adult excessive drinking, along with the definition of moderate drinking, in its advertising and on product labels.

Moderate drinking is defined by the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services and Agriculture as no more than one drink a day for women and two drinks a day for men.

The JAMA article estimates that if these guidelines were followed by all Americans and underage drinking were curbed alcohol industry sales — and profits — would be slashed in half.

The three surgeons general, along with Ford and Califano, called for partnerships between the alcohol industry and the public health community, including an industry-endowed but completely independent foundation, public education campaigns, and the elimination of alcohol advertising and marketing targeted to youth.

# Music club welcomes guests to meeting

The Goodland Federated Music Club met Monday evening at the Catholic Church. President Nancy Shores called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. and welcomed guests Andy Salvador of Burlington,

Kathy Briney and Helen Musil. Members also welcomed Sharon Palmquist and Jan Malpert who have been out of town for the winter months.

Club members sang the state and national theme songs accompanied by Carol Jolly. Joanna Norris Grimshaw presented the background on the hymn of the month and led the club in singing "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence," a traditional

French carol. She accompanied with guitar and Carol with piano.

Birkley Barnes, yearbook chairman, announced the program. The April theme is "Music for the Soul — Our Cup Runneth Over." Marlyn Mangus, music in poetry chairman, read "Pied Beauty," by Gerald Manley Hopkins. Andrew Salvador played "Toccata and Fugue in D-Minor," by J.S. Bach. He also played "Crown Imperial," by Sir William Walton.

Joanna Norris Grimshaw, flute, and Linda Koons, piano, played "God Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens," by W. Walker, arranged by Mark Albrecht. The tune, "Holy

Manna," is from the "Southern Harmony Hymnal."

Martha Gunderson, piano, played "As the Deer," by Martin Nyström. Pat Schiefen, bass recorder; and Martha Gunderson, piano, played "Suite in E Minor," by Daniel Demoivre.

Jan Malpert and Sharon Palmquist, sopranos, sang "A Medley of Shaker Tunes: Oh, the Beautiful Treasure, I will Bow and Be Simple and Simple Gifts." They were accompanied by Mary Ann Briney, piano, and Joanna Norris Grimshaw, flute.

The program concluded with "Sicut carvus and Sitivit animamea (secunda pars)," by Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina. It was played by the Goodland Recorder Ensemble. The ensemble is Marlyn Mangus, soprano recorder; Birkley Barnes, alto recorder; Martha Gunderson, tenor recorder; and Pat Schiefen, bass recorder.

Following the program, President Shores conducted a short business meeting. Treasurer Marlyn Mangus called the roll, which was answered by twelve members: Birkley Barnes, Martha Gunderson, Carol Jolly, Linda Koons, Jan Malpert, Marlyn Mangus, Joanna Norris Grimshaw, Sharon Palm-

quist, Pat Schiefen, Nancy Shores, Isabelle Hellerud and Eva Lou Selby. Secretary Martha Gunderson read the minutes of the last meeting, and Marlyn Mangus gave the treasurer's report.

The president reviewed the activities for the past year and reminded members of the plans for May 4.

The program that was originally scheduled to be played at the artist reception in March will instead be played at 1:45 p.m. on Sunday, May 4. The junior/senior recital will fall on the same day at 7 p.m. at the Methodist Church.

Linda Koons reported that the Margaret Martin Piano Award would be presented at the junior/senior recital. Nancy Shores reported that the National Choral Award will be presented at the high school vocal concert.

Officers for 2003-04 were elected. Eva Lou Selby is the president; Sharon Palmquist, vice president; Joanna Norris Grimshaw, secretary; and Carol Jolly, treasurer. They will be installed at the May meeting.

After the business meeting, hostesses Linda Koons and Carol Jolly served refreshments of pie and a variety of tea flavors.

## Children's group to perform

A children's group will perform a variety of musical styles in a 90-minute program next week in Colby and will conduct a workshop with Colby elementary students.

The Colorado Children's Chorale will perform at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, April 24, at the Colby High School Auditorium.

The group will teach Colby elementary students singing, dancing, acting and stage movement.

The Colby students will show off their new skills on stage at the concert.

The chorale is known for its energetic style, impressive vocal harmonies and complex choreography. They will perform American musical theater, classical, folk and international music along with audience favorites. Admission is by Western Plains Arts Association season tickets or may be paid at the door.



Brandon Linden and Ben Kluyskens worked on a banner for the Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Youth Organization at the diocesan youth organization convention in Salina.

Photo by Roberta Pianalto

## Catholic youth group wins diocesan award

The Catholic Youth Organization of Goodland's Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church has earned the Outstanding Catholic Youth Organization of the Year award for the Diocese of Salina.

Twenty youths from the group attended the diocesan youth group convention in Salina on Sunday, April 6. The Goodland group was chosen from over 53 other units from across the diocese.

Each youth group is judged on a combination of service projects, activities and spiritual events. The Goodland group beat groups from larger churches that have full-time paid youth ministers running their groups.

Burton and Roberta Pianalto have volunteered as youth sponsors for seven years and have developed an active group. The group went to

World Youth Day in Toronto, Canada, last summer to see Pope John Paul II.

Members who attended the convention are Donald Raymer, Kyle Schulte, Kevin Schulte, Brandon Linden, Mark Pianalto, Ben Kluyskens, Corey Schulte, Lauren Gray, Jake Johnson, Abby Murray, Derrick Raymer, Matt Pianalto, Jenna McGinley, Chelsea Gray, Melissa Swager, Megan Stefan, Kali Rietcheck, Brittney Espinoza, Katrina Cotter and Janelle Wolak.

The Goodland group also received the "Scrapbook of the Year" award, and Matt Pianalto was elected to the Diocesan Youth Council. The council will meet with the bishop and the diocesan youth director to help develop programs for the youth in the rural areas.

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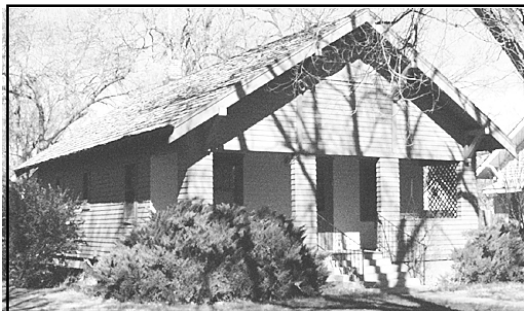


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