

# editorial

## Care for a drink?



When it comes to anything to do with alcohol or illicit substances, one cannot preach a message of redemption, I mean we are a university newspaper and are not adamant moralists nor should we be. All this rambling does indeed focus on a problem that is rampant among most UNB students- alcohol abuse. Perhaps the term is a bit strong, as we initially thought, but as we delved into the actual facts and statistics available at our own Health Centre, alcohol abuse seemed more and more applicable.

Naturally, the vast majority of UNBers drink. That is not a gross generalization according to statistics which point out that, per capita the students of UNB consume more beer than any other university in the country. Quite a revelation considering New Brunswick's rather strident controls on beer advertisements. According to the Health Centre which works in conjunction with a peer alcohol counselling group, the emphasis is not on discovering the effects of alcohol abuse- most of us know them- but rather on the prevention. Each Fall for the past three years, members of this counselling group discuss alcohol abuse at all residences. They do not condemn drinking, instead they try to make students aware of possible problems associated with drinking. This group has in

the past received financial support from the SRC, the Social Club, and even from one of the breweries.

This group as well as other individuals on campus promote non-alcoholic events (no that doesn't mean alcoholics can't go). Accordingly then, the newly opened Woodshed fulfill a number of the group's objectives as a casual, comfortable club where students can intermingle. Perhaps we should insist upon more dry events so that underage people can "indulge" in entertainment without the addition of alcohol.

At present the group at STU is doing according to the Health Centre, "fantastically well." The UNB group - on the other hand, seems to be suffering somewhat from a case of student apathy. As of yet, there is no male residence representative in the group- no guys, it doesn't mean you have to quit drinking to be in the group.

You probably are thinking that this is an irrelevant bit of information and that no one you know including yourself has a drinking problem. Of course you drink on weekends, and maybe a few sips here and there during the week, but there's no problem. What you probably don't know is that if you have six drinks a day for a period of two months you are physiologically addicted and are, therefore, an alcoholic. We bet you also didn't know that there is an active AA group on campus for those of you

and your friends who have discovered they do have a drinking problem.

The funny thing about it is you're not fooling anyone, least of all yourself. According to the Health Centre numerous accidents, broken arms, legs, bruises and even pregnancies are an indirect result of alcohol abuse. It's almost frightening- the influence one little habit can have on you. The only relief is that when consumed in relative moderation, alcohol is fine (no copious amounts please) In fact according to some medical reports, alcohol in moderation is even healthy. So we're not preaching, really. We're just trying to make you wake up a bit to the drinking around you whether it be excessive or moderate.

Essentially, drinking should be enjoyable, right? Unfortunately, however, it's a luxury that has a way of creeping up on you, in little ways at first until it becomes an actual sickness.

So you still don't think it concerns you. Maybe it doesn't. Just remember the next time you indulge yourself in a night of heavy drinking with the boys or girls, that you may be having an excellent time now but what about later? Maybe it's not worth it after all. Incidentally most potential alcoholics don't have hangovers so if you have a stomach like a horse you may not be as tough or as cool as you think. Real men (or women for that matter) aren't alcoholics.