

RAP AROUND

Joan M. Smith, Editor

Equal Time

Do you think there is a drinking problem with teenagers?

NAZARETH

CHERYL SHANK
Senior
Student Council president



"For sure. I think the problem nowadays is that it's the thing to do — go out and drink. People feel that if everyone else is drinking, they have to and if they don't they'll be rejected by their crowd. What they have to realize is that it's their choice and if their friends base their opinion on them by whether they drink or not, I don't think they can be truly called friends. The basis of the whole problem is the fear of being independent. Yes, I do know some who have a drinking problem and most of them won't admit it. They say they can stop if they want to, but you see them drinking more and more."

ANN STEVENSON
Sophomore
class president



"I think there is, and it's growing. Now, people aren't just drinking because of the problems but because they want people to think they're funny and then it isn't funny anymore. I know a few who drink before school and before going out. I think what constitutes a drinking problem is when they need a drink to feel good about themselves. Those with a drinking problem think it's normal and that they don't have a problem. The legal drinking age doesn't make any difference."

PAULA LEUZZI
Senior
yearbook staff



"Somewhat. It depends. Some kids drink as a way of comfort, especially if they can't talk to someone about their problems. Yes, I do know teens with a drinking problem. I think a problem is when they continuously drink and they know they're going to get drunk. They drink knowing they are going to get stoned and that is what they want."

ROSEMARIE JACOBS
Senior
ski club



"Yes, and peer pressure has a lot to do with it. I don't know of any teenagers who have drinking problems, but I think more and more teenagers are taking to drink. Teenagers will drink regardless of what the legal drinking age is set at."

RENEE BRADY
Junior
ski club



"Yes, because a lot of them are going out and drinking all the time and many problems are being caused by this. I know of a few who drink all the time without a reason. A drinking problem is when they continually drink. There are many reasons why teens drink — pressures in the home, and peer pressure to drink. I don't think raising the legal drinking age will have any effect. I know of little kids, seventh graders, who drink. I feel this is caused by putting their age group into school with an older age group."

DOREEN BELL
Junior
softball



"I think there is. They think they have to get drunk to have fun and they want to impress their friends. I know of some with drinking problems. They don't think they have a problem; they think everyone drinks like they do. I think drinking becomes a problem when someone drinks all the time. I think teenagers and drinking is a growing problem. I think it's easy for those under 18 to obtain liquor. They're drinking, so they have to get it somewhere."

AMY POWARZYNSKI
Sophomore
math club



"Yes, and it's getting worse. I know some teens with drinking problems and I think one problem is putting junior high kids with senior high students — that starts their drinking earlier. The ones I know who drink are minors and they drink to have a good time — it isn't an alcoholic problem. I feel, however, that starting at such an early age, they could develop a dependency on alcohol."

VICKI HARRIS
Senior



"I think there is a problem because the teens are out to impress each other. Yes, I know some teens who have a drinking problem. They start out drinking and then become dependent on it. I think the people who drink like that feel insecure and can't cope with their problems."



Winner's Circle

RapAround weekly will run a photo of a group of students taken somewhere in the diocese. One person will be circled and if that person brings the clipping to the Courier-Journal before noon of the Tuesday following our publication date, he or she will receive \$5. This week's photo was taken at St. Agnes at assembly. The person circled should bring the clipping to Joan M. Smith, Courier-Journal, 114 South Union St., by noon, Tuesday, Feb. 16, to receive \$5.

Students Advocate Dealing with Problem Before It's Too Late

Young adults are becoming increasingly aware of the teenage driving and drinking problem. Among them are those who believe in facing the problem square in the face and impressing upon their peers the disastrous power they wield when they drink and then put themselves behind the wheel. One such young adult is David Albee who wrote the following article which appeared in the November issue of the Aquinas Maroon and White.

Today, many of America's youth seek to obtain driver's licenses each year through their state's Department of Motor Vehicles, and each year, more than 4,000 teens will die in alcohol-related deaths. More than 2,000 teenagers will be arrested, lose their driving privileges and will have to deal with the staggering insurance rates that follow.

Ritz Sparks Swim Record

The Aquinas swim team, under the coaching of Dan Zimmerman, finished its season with a 5-5 record. According to school sources, with performances from freshman John Ritz, who broke school records in the backstroke and fly, the team recorded one of its best seasons ever. Also turning in outstanding performances were junior Pat Rule, sophomore Mike Considine, and freshman Jim Callerame.

Senior Bob Carrol, team captain, was pleased with the enthusiasm of this year's squad and is confident about the team's future. Other team members include senior John Rosica, juniors Greg O'Sullivan, Guy Turchetti and Rick Wilson, and freshman Greg Kerrik.

The subjects of the required driving age and required drinking age have come under great speculation over the years. There have been no real answers found to the question of why teenagers persist to drink and drive.

The required driving age of the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles is 16. This has always presented a problem because many people feel that teenagers are still too immature to drive. They see no significant place important enough for a teenager to drive at age 16.

On the other hand, many people side with the teenagers and figure that if they are old enough to seek employment, then they are old enough to commute to and from that place of employment.

The drinking age required by New York State law is 18. Many teenagers under 18 years of age drink, though. This is a major problem among licensed teenagers. Many alcohol-related deaths are due to the fact that many teenagers do not know some of facts that surround drinking and driving. Do these individuals ever stop and think that it takes the body more than one hour to get rid of one shot of whiskey, or four ounces of wine, or twelve ounces of beer? Do they know that two or three beers in an hour lead to an increase in the feeling of self-confidence, and that eye reaction becomes 15 to 25 percent slower?

These statistics are usually ignored by teenagers as a result of peer pressure. Even now, there is proof that the National Public Research Institute has concluded that

more than half of the teenagers involved in alcohol-related accidents had a blood alcohol content equal to the effect of one drink, which makes them legally sober under New York State Law. After all has been said about drinking and driving ages, lawmakers still have found no answer to the question of what makes a person mature enough to drive or drink. Maybe the answer could be found in safe driving courses or brutally strict driving-while-intoxicated laws.

Still, many thick-headed teenagers will ignore the statistics, the percentages, and studies performed on drinking and driving. They will continue to drive under the influence of alcohol until all the facts and figures become a reality ... at which time it may be too late.

St. Agnes Gives Call For Actors

The St. Agnes Drama Department, under the direction of Sister Ann Patrice Carrigan, will conduct auditions for its Spring play, "Godspell." Auditions are at 3 p.m., Wednesday and Thursday, Feb. 24-25, at St. Agnes and all young actors invited to try out.

The play will be presented on May 13, 14 and 15. For further information contact Sister Ann Patrice at 424-1330.

'Project Leadership' Set For Vocation Weekend

"It's a 'come and see' weekend," said Father Thomas Valenti, director of vocations, when describing the upcoming Project Leadership weekend on Feb. 19-21 at Becket Hall, St. John Fisher College.

The program, a joint effort of the Diocesan Vocations

Office and the community at Becket Hall, is offered each year for high school junior and senior men who are considering a vocation to the priesthood. It provides them with an opportunity to live in the seminary community and to learn firsthand about the Becket Hall, Diocesan/College Seminary Program.

According to Father Valenti, some of the 22 young men who participated in last year's program entered the freshman class at Becket Hall last September. The seminar will include time for discussion, recreation and prayer.

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