



Photo by Erich Boekelheide

# Sobering up

## Halfway house helps public drunks

By SHEILA SCHMITZ  
Of the Emerald

Last year, more than 1,200 public drunks were spared from sobering up in the local drunk tank.

Because of a law that forbids jailing drunks when a halfway house is available, public drunks now are taken to a local detoxification center.

The Buckley House Inc., at 707 E. 17th Ave., is the only public organization in Lane County that deals exclusively with drying out alcoholics, director Nick Isaacson says.

The drying-out process involves no medicine or magic cures. The client rests in bed, and the body slowly rids itself of alcohol and drug toxins.

Because severe side effects — delirium tremens, seizures and "the shakes" — usually accompany withdrawal, a trained staff supervises recovery.

Clients stay in bed for about three days before venturing outside for short, supervised walks. Most leave in four or five days, Isaacson says, although older, heavier drinkers sometimes stay as long as two weeks.

But some people leave before they get sober, Isaacson says. So to avoid a "revolving-door syndrome," Buckley House does not readmit clients for 15 days after they have refused the house's services.

Not all clients are brought by police, Isaacson says. The Lane County Council on Alcoholism also refers patients.

Because the building's 16 beds limit the number of patients, the organization operates on a first-come, first-served basis.

Most of the staff are recovering alcoholics who understand what their clients are going through — and what mind games they may be trying to play.

"The best training for this job is to have been an alcoholic yourself," Isaacson says.

But Buckley House does not offer long-term alcoholic treatment. After initial detoxification, patients who want further help are referred to other agencies, such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Eugene's Behanna House (for women), Carlton House (for men) and the Stump Ranch near Triangle Lake.

Like many public-service agencies, Buckley House faces a 10-percent cut from its \$150,000 annual budget, Isaacson says. Most of that budget comes from taxes, although the United Way and patient fees ranging up to \$26.50 daily contribute some income.

The center may have to cut some services, Isaacson says, which could mean some drunks may wind up in jail.

If the jails become too crowded for them, Isaacson says he fears the problem drinkers may end up back on the street.

# Survey reveals inflation worries rich executives

NEW YORK (AP) — Struggling to get along on \$20,000 a year? A new survey of executives making up to 10 times that much shows that a big salary is no guarantee against the worries of inflation.

The Survey shows "executives are not only genuinely concerned about inflation and the erosion of their wealth, but also are uncertain what steps to take to preserve it," said Edward D. Ryan, a partner in Ernst & Whinney, the accounting firm that commissioned the survey.

The research organization Audits & Surveys interviewed 200 executives with incomes ranging from \$40,000 to \$200,000 a year.

Just over half of the executives — 55 percent — said they didn't expect a higher standard of living in the future. More than one-third of this group said inflation was the reason for their lowered expectations.

The median age of the executives was 54. The median

annual income was \$88,500 — almost four times as much as the government says it takes for a family of four to maintain an intermediate or moderate standard of living. Ninety-seven percent of the executives surveyed were male, and 90 percent were married. The majority said they were presidents or vice presidents of the companies they worked for.

The survey found that 14 percent of the executives — about one in seven — had absolutely no strategy for fighting inflation. Twenty-three percent — about one in four — said they were battling the rising cost of living by cutting back spending.

Sixty-two percent said they used investments like real estate and stocks to hedge against higher prices. But 36 percent of the executives had no confidence that the return on their investments would equal or exceed the rate of inflation.

Eleven percent of the executives said they did not manage to save or invest any of

their income. Another 11 percent said they saved or invested 10 percent or less of their annual earnings. And 27 percent said savings and investments accounted for between 10 percent and 19 percent of their incomes.

Despite their financial problems, the executives indicated they were satisfied with their jobs. Asked to rate their job satisfaction on a scale of one to 10 — with 10 at the top — 39 percent voted for 10, 19 percent gave their jobs a nine, and 24 percent rated their jobs as eight.

About half of the executives with children under 21 said they wouldn't want their sons and daughters to follow in their footsteps, but the majority of these people said the only reason for their reluctance was that they didn't want to interfere with the youngsters' decisions.

The executives interviewed for the survey worked in New York, San Francisco, Atlanta, Houston, Los Angeles and Chicago.

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