

A club for recovering alcoholics

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"It's a social club for recovering people," said Westlander Bob McCliment who is currently chairman of the club's board of directors. "A lot of people go through the 12-step program and after the meetings there was no place to go. The club fills that gap." The club had its start in downtown Detroit, but 10 members left to open at club in the suburbs. They pooled their money and their talents to remodel a building on Joy Road in Westland. The Northwest Alano Club opened in 1970 in what became known as the Alano Building.

IT STAYED there until eight years ago, when, in need of more space, the club leased the entire Perrinville School building from the Livonia Public Schools. However, financial difficulties forced it to scale down the space it had and now it shares the building with the school district's curriculum department.

McCliment discovered the club 20 years ago. He started drinking at 16 and continued for 15-16 years before he got into the 12-step recovery program in 1968.

"A judge sent me," he said. "I had a choice between jail and meetings, and I'd already been in jail so I took the meetings. I saw people who had something I didn't have, but I didn't stay."

He did decide to go back in 1975 and managed to stay sober for six years. He married and had a family, but when the marriage fell apart, he turned to the club to "help get through it without having a drink." He has stayed sober since 1988.

"If there's a problem, we encourage people to come in because there's a lot of people here to help," McCliment said. "The judicial system knows about us. They send people here who need to work off



Club members Bill McCliment (left) and Randy Vertanian show off the eight rows of mug pogs that line the hallway of the club.

time in an atmosphere where they see people having fun without alcohol.

"WE LET them know that there's a life after alcohol, but they have to be willing to work at it."

While the members share a common goal — life without booze — they also share a common feeling. They care about each other. When one member couldn't afford her mother's burial expenses, club

members passed the hat and collected enough to cover the cost, McCliment said.

Although the club doesn't maintain a hotline, it does get "a lot of people calling in for help." Admittedly, it can be a hassle for the caller, but members ask only that "you give us a chance," McCliment said.

"No matter what, our goal is to help people in recovery," he said. "And they need to know that they got

a place to come to if they're in trouble. A lot of activities start in here, but end up out there in the real world.

"Hey, where else can you go for \$10 and get all this companionship and friendship?"

The Northwest Alano Club is at 33344 Ann Arbor Trail, Westland. For more information, call 421-9790.

club circuit

LIVONIA CHILD BIRTH EDUCATION ASSOCIATION offers a six week class for new parents, the choice of a two or four week class for refreshers and a monthly breast feeding class. The classes are given in Livonia, Garden City, Redford and Novi to service all the surrounding communities.

For registration information call the registrar at 937-0665.

FARMINGTON SINGLE PROFESSIONALS meet for dinner at 8 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 17 in Moose Preserve Bar & Grill, 2395 Woodward, near Square Lake Road. Reservations are made by calling the group's information line, 478-9181. Newcomers can call that same number to obtain a complimentary copy of the singles' newsletter which lists all the activities planned for the month.

VOYAGERS who plan to bowl with the league this season meet at 1:30 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 18 in Merri-Bowl Lanes, Five Mile and Merri-Bowl Road, Livonia. The mixed singles league will resume for the season at 2:30 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 8.

Anyone 30 years or older interested in joining the league or being a substitute are asked to call Ann Anderson, 591-1350.

SINGLE PLACE opens at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 21, in First Presbyterian Church of Northville, 200 E. Main Street.

Program for the evening is "Light and Lively" with pot luck picnic and Single Place Comedy Club featuring Don Tersigni, Gary George and Jim McClain of Comedy Castle.

Participants should call 349-0911 to find out what to bring to the pic-

nics, and the location. Admission is \$3.

All club news and announcements for this column are to be addressed to: Club Circuit, Farmington Observer, 21088 Farmington Road, Farmington 48336. The information must arrive before noon on the Monday before Thursday publication.

new voices

CAROLYN and CHARLES KELLEY of Canton announce the birth of their daughter, Christina Marie, born July 2.

The infant's grandparents are Anna and Charles Kelley of Westland and Barbara and Joseph Brish of Farmington Hills.

YVONNE BUCHLER and AL GUNTZVILLER of Southfield announce the birth of their daughter Ashley Marie Guntzville, born July 16.

The infant's grandparents are Howard and Donna Buchler of Farmington and Dorothy and Jim Guntzville of Redford.

RAE ANN PETERSON and DAVE SEMBORSKI of Southfield announce the birth of their son Brian David Semborski, born July 17.

His grandparents are Howard and Donna Buchler of Farmington and Evelyn Semborski of Westland.

Non-alcoholic drink contest is under way

Contestants who can turn images of Bavaria's snowcapped mountains and fairy-tale castles into non-alcoholic drinks could win \$10,000 in AAA Michigan's 11th annual "Zero-Proof Mix-Off" competition.

"A Bavarian Holiday" theme has been selected for the contest. Entries are due Sept. 13. The competition spotlights AAA Michigan's "First A Friend, Then A Host" alcohol-awareness campaign stressing safe gatherings during the Christmas and New Year's holidays.

The non-alcoholic drink that best captures the culture and folklore of Bavaria — the region of Germany that includes the Alps and Danube

River — will earn its creator \$1,000. Cash prizes also will be awarded for second- through fourth-place finishers.

DRINKS WILL be judged on taste, appearance, originality of name and adherence to the Bavarian theme. Winning recipes will be featured in the 1991 "Great Pretenders Party Guide" distributed free statewide in December.

Preliminary judging of written entries will be conducted at AAA Michigan headquarters in Dearborn. Twenty finalists will compete in person at the mix-off, Thursday, Oct. 3,

in the Bavarian Inn in Frankenmuth. The contest is open to Michigan residents 16 and older. AAA Michigan employees and their families are not eligible. Previous winning recipes are not allowed. Only one entry per person and one person per entry are permitted.

Entries should be typed or neatly

printed and include name, address, daytime telephone number, name of drink, ingredients and mixing directions. No alcohol or flavor extract containing alcohol is allowed.

Mail entries to: "Zero-Proof Mix-Off," AAA Michigan Public Relations, 1 Auto Club Drive, Dearborn 48126.

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