

## County Commissioners proceedings cont.

Lois Koch: Per capita Wyoming has more alcoholics than any other state and Sublette County has more per capita than any other county so I think this is exactly the place the detox center should be and having come from a family that has some alcoholics in it I know what it can do to you. From a family that was one of the richest in Teton County, at one time, my uncle led to begging drinks for a quarter in the bars. It ruins families and the place where you need the detox center is where the families are. All the State Hospital does is detoxify a person it doesn't rehabilitate them. It doesn't help them get back into the community. They are off work so the family is probably on welfare which is costing us just as much. If you put a person in jail and put him through the tank you have to hire someone to stay with him so he doesn't hang himself or cut his throat and that costs us just as much. I think this is the greatest program I have seen.

Larry Looney: May I say something? I think Mrs. Koch made some fine points that everybody had really ought to let soak in a little bit. And while we're on the subject of passing this down to Evanston I'd like to direct a question to Dr. Johnston- don't they have more than they can take care of now?

Dr Johnston: They have been full for quite awhile now.

Larry Looney: So you see, it is hard to take care of these people if you send them where they can't get care and I think that a treatment center like this would be an asset to the County.

Ted Hiner: Not too long ago I came down with diabetes, a very bad illness, of which I imagine in comparison where I didn't know where the breakover or where the comas start and thank God for someplace like a hospital and doctors to bring me back on my feet and help get me out of depression. And I, as far as my part in the detox center, I believe that it is putting a lot, from the figures, into the community and into Sublette County and I think we should take a good look at it and see if maybe this isn't a step toward improving our living and getting people off welfare and helping support their own means. Thank you.

Terry Steele: I have no idea just exactly what alcoholics go through but from the alcoholism I have seen around town they don't get help, even if they are taken to the treatment center unless they want it and the majority of them that have been taken there didn't want it you can tell because they are back on the streets drinking just like they were before.

Bobbie Robertson: Well in communities like this well with any alcoholics, I mean, we can't just go out and soner them right and left if they don't want too. So the first thing they have to get into the belief themselves and admit they have it and be willing to fight for their health and if they don't do that they don't stand a chance.

Terry Steele: The way they have taken some in though. I know of a case where they have said you either go to jail and pay a fine or go to the detox center, so of course they're going to go to the detox center and it is not going to help them if they didn't want to go.

Bobbie Robertson: I hate to say it but it might help them. But all the people that go whether picked up in court or whatever, they aren't going to come out sober either but the percentage of 20 some percent that has gone through has come out and tried to maintain their sobriety. I mean if their going to have D.T.'s and things like that it's better to be where someone can take care of them than in jail where they might die.

Terry Steele: But the ones that have been helped have eventually realized that they do need help but most of them don't realize this.

Herman Genetti: As far as being needed or doing any good, I'm satisfied it's needed and doing some good, but like has been stated before this money ought to come from the place this mischief comes from.

When it comes to being an alcoholic there's many kinds. I was born with a natural taste for it. I don't care where I'm at I can have the taste for it any time. God gave me the guts to leave it alone. Dad told me you'll never be troubled with it if you leave it alone. So if you want to pay for somebody's sickness I've paid thousands of dollars in doctor bills. If we're going to take on paying people's bills for being sick why not consider them all, otherwise make them pay it from the ones that are guilty of putting it out, the people who make and sell it. If I did not have backbone enough it would be easy for me to become an alcoholic and you to take care of me.

Tracy Thompson: I'm another alcoholic from the center and I had an opportunity to visit Evanston and see what their program is. I have a good friend over there and she says they get about two hours treatment a week and the rest of the time is spent keeping busy. As far as getting sentenced to go there we had a young man in the center who probably spent half of the last seven years in and out of jail and he's still sober since he came out. He was pretty violent before he came in there.

Gary Wilson: I was curious, Does anyone know the percentage of cured people who come out of Evanston as compared to the 20% here?

Don Coppinger: The national average is about 15%.

Gary Wilson: I'm talking about Evanston.

Don Coppinger: I don't know about Evanston, the ones from Sublette County, that I've taken care of, isn't too high.

Gary Wilson: I was curious about the state, we're serving the state since we're using their funds. It seems to me that the 20% who want to be cured can just as well be cured through AA or through Evanston whereas you are spending good money for people who will be out in 2 or 3 weeks drinking it up again and all you may have done is prolong their lives another 3 weeks. Cancer and mental health and heart disease and very especially old age aren't voluntary diseases which I think alcoholism is.

Chuck MacIlvaine: In going over these figures Sublette County alcoholics was 30% of the total and out of that 45 patients, apparently 20% of them was referred by the law. That's almost half and you are curing 20%, that's nine, so you've spent \$65,000.00 to cure 9 people if we're going to believe these figures. We have a 73 billion debt and I am sure somewhere in there we're going to find this \$90,000.00 and one way or another we're all going to pay for that. We're not just talking about \$11,000, we're talking about the whole \$101,000. or whatever. My understanding is that the county share has been asked to be increased this year from what it was last year by almost 50%.

Bill Alexander: \$10,800. they're asking.

Dave Dillingham: I'm very emotional about this situation and the fellows who had been through it, cause I work very closely with the center and feel very strongly about the people who work there and the people who have been helped. I do an evaluation on each of the clients that goes through the center and group therapy with the people at the center on a once a week basis. I think I'm in a position to be a fairly impartial observer. I've been associated with about 8 different alcoholic programs in the last 8 or 9 years and without a doubt this is the most efficient program I've been affiliated with compared to the amount of money that's spent in terms of the people that are helped and in just about every way. The problem of alcoholism is not voluntary as was suggested it's a mental health problem. He no longer has good mental health who has alcoholism and I think that vice versa is true also. I hope people in their choice tonight, if it comes down to that, will consider that this is a human problem. Maybe we should also be concerned with some of the other illnesses that have been brought up also but we have to start somewhere and I think this is the place to start.

Larry Lozier: I believe that on any program that you use tax money on, that before 3 people decide if we need it or not, whether it's good or bad, that the people should be able to vote on it. Then if we want to spend the taxes to pay for it good enough, if we don't then we don't have to live with something like we've got sitting next door there.

Hazel Bloom: I was wondering how many of these people paid any thought at all for the upkeep out there. They're paying some terrific wages. I noticed that Coppinger gets \$1,842.91 and I presume that's take home pay.

Don Coppinger: That's not all take home pay.

Paul Hagenstein: Hazel would you just wait a moment. We'd like to get these other statements and then we'll go into questions and answers.