

CALCAP, ANEF & CCAGE

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IT IS MORE THAN THE THOUGHT

Dear Friends of CalCAP, ANEF and CCAGE,

Allow me to be among the first to wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! At this special time of the year, we are often reminded of that expression “it is not the gift, but the thought that counts.” Although that is true as a first step, we know that more than just a thought is needed. We know that thoughts, ideas or visions that do not have some action associated with them remain simply good ideas or day dreams. And, when it comes to the important elements of our lives, that is not enough.

The idea of “Loving One Another”, of living a life of “Peace and Forgiveness”, of being

“Reconciled to God” without a corresponding action, usually resulting in a personal change, will deny us the joy and promise of Christmas. Christmas requires not just our thoughts, but our actions – realized through our dedication, commitment, and intentional choices to make our ideas a reality.

This Christmas, I hope you will give thought to supporting the efforts of the California Council on Alcohol Problems, and realize that working to prevent the problems associated with alcohol, other drugs and gambling is a good idea. I hope that you might share our vision of a society that is no longer deceived by the false and destructive promises of these addicting vices. Further, I hope

that you will choose to act upon those thoughts, ideas and vision by making a commitment to support our efforts with your prayers and gifts.

God has blessed our work and efforts in 2011, and we expect those blessings to continue in 2012.

Will you allow God to work through you, and help your thoughts, ideas and vision become a reality?

Will you give a gift to CalCAP this Christmas?

It is a good idea that can be more.

Rev. James B. Butler

CELEBRATE THE HOLIDAYS ALCOHOL FREE

Although there will be countless ads declaring that alcohol should be part of your Christmas and New Year celebrations, we know that a drunk relative or friend ruining another holiday is something many

would choose to forget, and the drinkers may not remember at all. Celebrate Christmas and New Year without alcohol this year, and have a holiday season that you will want to remember.

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FACE TO FACE WITH FACEBOOK

Much of the alcohol-related content on Facebook is easily accessible by the approximately one-third of users who are under the age of 21, according to a qualitative study conducted by the Marin Institute. Despite guidelines requiring age restrictions, the study found that content promoting alcohol and dangerous drinking was accessible by underage users across all five of the most popular Facebook features—advertisements, pages, applications, events, and groups.

Advertisements: Alcohol companies can buy ad space on Facebook, which allows them to access user's profile information and target their ads to specific audiences. One out of every eight ads were alcohol related and all alcohol-related ads were displayed to under-21 users.

Pages: Facebook pages are customizable profiles that can be made by an organization, product, or public personality. Facebook users can become fans of pages or "like" them, leaving the user with an affiliation to that topic. **The ten top selling beer brands had 93 pages with a total of more than 1.1 million fans, while the ten top selling spirit brands had 334 pages for spirit brands with more than 3.2 million fans.** Only 50% of the pages reviewed restricted access based on age. Six of the twelve top beer and spirit brands were accessible to under 21 users, allowing them to become a fan and receive marketing messages.

Applications: Facebook applications are designed for interactive behavior—users can play games, take quizzes and rate brands. More than 500 Facebook applications are associated with the term alcohol. Four of the six alcohol applications reviewed by the study were accessible to underage users, allowing them to send virtual alcohol shots to other Facebook friends and be a virtual bartender.

Events: Facebook events allow companies to advertise a time, location and description of special occasion. Many events are ads for night-clubs, concerts or sporting events sponsored by an alcohol brand or companies. More than **4,400 events were found associated with the five best selling beer and liquor brands.** There were no age restrictions found for these events.

Groups: Facebook groups can be created by any Facebook user about almost any topic. Once an individual user joins the group it is displayed on that member's profile. Groups have their own discussion boards, photos, videos, event listings, and web links. When searching Facebook groups **using the term "alcohol," more than 58,000 results appear.** Each group reviewed by the study advertised alcohol with hyperlinks, photos, and graphics; none of the groups were restricted based on age.

The study concludes that "Facebook's policies regarding alcohol ads and alcohol-related content in Pages, Applications, Events, and Groups do not effectively protect its users from exposure" (p. 3). The study authors recommend that Facebook stop accepting paid advertisements for alcohol products; stop allowing alcohol-related pages, applications, events and groups; and hire external monitors to enforce these regulations. They also suggest that "the alcohol industry must also question its affiliation with Facebook as a marketing tool when content so blatantly violates many of the industry's own advertising guidelines" (p. 4)

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from Mart, S., Mergendoller, J., Simon, M., "Alcohol Promotion on Facebook," *The Journal of Global Drug Policy and Practice*, 3(3), 2009. Available online at

<http://globaldrugpolicy.org/3/3/1.php>.

HOW MUCH IS ALCOHOL COSTING YOU?

Below is information excerpted from an article by the USA Center for Disease Control:

Excessive alcohol consumption is known to kill about 79,000 people in the United States each year, but a new study released by the Center for Disease Control and The Lewin Group shows that it also has a huge impact on our wallets as well.

The cost of excessive alcohol consumption in the United States reached **\$223.5 billion** in 2006 or about **\$1.90 per drink**. Almost three-quarters of these costs were due to **binge drinking**. Binge drinking is defined as consuming four or more alcoholic beverages per occasion for women or five or more drinks per occasion for men, and is the most common form of excessive alcohol consumption in the United States.

The researchers found that the cost of excessive drinking was quite far-reaching, reflecting the effect this dangerous behavior has on many aspects of the drinker's life and on the lives of those around them. The costs largely resulted from losses in **workplace productivity** (72% of the total cost), **health care** expenses for problems caused by excessive drinking (11% of total), law enforcement and other **criminal justice** expenses related to excessive alcohol consumption (9% of total), and **motor vehicle crash** costs from impaired driving (6% of the total).

The study analyzed national data from multiple sources to estimate the costs due to excessive

drinking in 2006, the most recent year for which data were available. The study did not consider a number of other costs such as those because of pain and suffering among either the excessive drinker or others that were affected by their drinking, and thus may be an underestimate. Nevertheless, the researchers estimated that excessive drinking cost **\$746 for every man, woman, and child** in the United States. in 2006.

This raises an important question:

How Can We Prevent Excessive Alcohol Consumption and Reduce Its Economic Costs?

There are many evidence-based strategies that communities can use to prevent excessive drinking, including the following:

- Increasing alcohol excise taxes.
- Reducing alcohol outlet density.
- Reducing the days and hours of alcohol sales.
- Holding alcohol retailers liable for injuries or damage done by their intoxicated or underage customers.

By implementing these evidence-based strategies, we can reduce excessive alcohol consumption and the many health and social costs related to it.

Obviously, our work is cut out for us.

TWO GIFTS FOR THE PRICE OF ONE

For those of you who do some of your Christmas shopping on-line, many of the stores you use will make a contribution to CalCAP. When you do your shopping on line, at such places as Amazon, e-Bay, QVC, Sears, Dell, Macy's, Home Depot, Staples, or more than 500 other merchants, they will make a donation to the California Council on Alcohol Problems.

All you need to do to take advantage of this opportunity is to **register at "www.iGive.com"** and

select "California Council on Alcohol Problems" to be your cause. Then every time you use one of the participating merchants on this site, that company will make a donation to our organization at no cost to you.

If you would like to help CalCAP as you do your Christmas (or year-round) shopping, register today at www.iGive.com and you will give two gifts for the price of one.



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WE'RE ON THE WEB!
WWW.CALCAP.ORG
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OUR TASK AND MISSION

The CalCAP family, which includes the California Council on Alcohol Problems (CalCAP), the Alcohol-Narcotic Education Foundation of California (ANEF) and the California Coalition Against Gambling Expansion (CCAGE), is a statewide, faith based organization that seeks to prevent the moral, economic, scientific and social problems caused by alcohol and gambling. This is done through research, education, advocacy and lobbying. Thus, we raise the awareness of these problems among the people, and address the legislature regarding alcohol and gambling issues.

We are funded entirely by gifts from denominations, churches, church groups and individuals. We do not receive any financial support from any governmental agency or political party.

If you would like to be part of our information network, arrange for a program or preaching date, or support our work through-out California, please contact our Executive Director, the Rev. James Butler, or our Sacramento office, at 916 / 441-1844 or calcap@calcap.org. Our Mailing address is 803 Vallejo Way, Sacramento CA 95818.

Because CalCAP is involved in lobbying efforts, donations to CalCAP are not tax-deductible.

Donations to ANEF are tax-deductible.

A GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING

Some Christmas gifts do not last longer than the batteries that power them. Others last only until they are out grown, worn out or are no longer in fashion. And then there are those that reflect a value for many years, and even reflect our values. A gift to the California Council on alcohol Problems is one of those lasting gifts. Our efforts to prevent the social, economic, scientific and moral problems caused by alcohol contribute to a better world for individuals, families and communities. Our efforts result in better information and education regarding underage drinking. Our efforts help keep the alcohol industry in check, and remind the legislature that they have been elected to serve the people of California, not an industry that preys on our weaknesses and exploits our chil-



dren. Our efforts give voice to those who know that an abundant life does not include suffering the devastation caused by alcohol. Our efforts result in a lasting gift to the people of California, especially the children. Our efforts are only possible because of those who are willing to give a gift that will keep on giving, and we are truly grateful to those have supported us this past year.

As you consider the various gifts that you will give this Christmas, I hope that you will join our many generous supporters and will decide to give a gift to the California Council on Alcohol Problems or the Alcohol-Narcotic Education Foundation. It will be a gift that bears the type of fruit that is truly appreciated and makes a difference for years and years to come.

Rev. James B. Butler