



Paige and Ron Namuth stand outside their historic home at South Street and Sheridan Boulevard, which has been turned into a meeting place for Alcoholics Anonymous.

# A place of recovery, hope and healing

Story by Nancy Hicks  
Photo by William Lauer  
Lincoln Journal Star

**I**t was love at first sight.

When Paige Namuth and her father, Ralph Fox, walked through the front door, they knew the house was special.

"You walk in the door, and it just feels like good spirit," Namuth says of the house her parents, Ralph and Barbara Fox, bought in 1981, and that her family turned into a place of recovery, hope and healing.

They call it Antlers: Alcoholics Need Treatment; Let Everyone Recover Successfully.

The house at South Street and Sheridan Boulevard originally was a rich man's home, 8,500 square feet on four floors with Filipino mahogany stairs, red oak floors and gold leaf painted on glass in hallway ceilings.

It had a ballroom for dancing parties and an L-shaped living room built for entertaining.

It was built in 1912 by Mark Woods, who started Woods Brothers Realty.

"It's a show house, to bring people in and sell the neighborhood," Namuth says.

The central vacuuming system and intercom no longer work. The elevator, a gift from Gen. John Pershing for Mrs. Clarke Pace Woods when she was too old for the stairs, is a conversation piece only.

Lincoln's wealthiest no longer party there.

But the house is rich in spirit.

Seventy-plus people fill the living room for a Saturday night AA meeting.

The seven second-floor bedrooms are for people participating in the 24-hour addiction treatment program.

Classes and therapy are held in the basement.

The single room at the

top — all windows and views — once a sleeping porch now an art studio and study, quiet as a chapel.

The third floor, the ballroom, is Namuth's special creation.

As a little girl, Namuth dreamed there was a door leading from her bedroom to a large attic room filled with toys. She tried to get her mother to take down the wallpaper and find the door, Namuth says.

The room on the third floor is her dream made real. Full of toys and crafts and a Mad Hatter's tea party table, it is a playroom and sanctuary for children who hope Mommy or Daddy will not drink or use any more.

This house, with its faded elegance, welcomes and comforts.

"This is the spirituality of William James, Carl Jung and Bill Wilson (co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous)," Namuth says.

"It is a spirituality that excludes no one," she says.

Reach Nancy Hicks at 743-7250 or nhicks@journalstar.com.

**LONG**  
*Story*  
**SHORT**

period were being ironed out, public acceptance of A.A. grew by leaps and bounds. For this there were two principal reasons: the large numbers of recoveries, and reunited homes. These made their impressions everywhere. Of alcoholics who came to A.A. and really tried, 50% got sober at once and remained that way; 25% sobered up after some relapses, and among the remainder, those who stayed on with A.A. showed improvement. Other thousands came to a few A.A. meetings and at first decided they didn't want the program. But great numbers of these—about two out of three—began to return as time passed.

Another reason for the wide acceptance of A.A. was the ministration of friends—friends in medicine, religion, and the press, together with innumerable others who became our able and persistent advocates. Without such support, A.A. could have made only the slowest progress. Some of the recommendations of A.A.'s early medical and religious friends will be found further on in this book.

Alcoholics Anonymous is not a religious organization. Neither does A.A. take any particular medical point of view, though we cooperate widely with the men of medicine as well as with the men of religion.

Alcohol being no respecter of persons, we are an accurate cross section of America, and in distant lands, the same democratic evening-up process is now going on. By personal religious affiliation, we include Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Hindus, and a sprinkling of Moslems and Buddhists. More than 15% of us are women.

At present, our membership is pyramiding at the rate of about twenty per cent a year. So far, upon the

total problem of several million actual and potential alcoholics in the world, we have made only a scratch. In all probability, we shall never be able to touch more than a fair fraction of the alcohol problem in all its ramifications. Upon therapy for the alcoholic himself, we surely have no monopoly. Yet it is our great hope that all those who have as yet found no answer may begin to find one in the pages of this book and will presently join us on the high road to a new freedom.