

Bush tells of battling addiction

He says recognizing a 'higher power' helped him quit drinking.

By Jennifer Loven
Associated Press

BALTIMORE — President Bush is talking more openly lately about his old drinking habit, and on Tuesday he offered perhaps his most pointed assessment yet by saying plainly that the term "addiction" had applied to him.

"Addiction is hard to overcome. As you might remember, I drank too much at one time in my life," Bush said during a visit to the Jericho Program, a project of Episcopal Community Services of Maryland that helps former prisoners deal with problems such as drug addiction so they can find jobs and reintegrate productively into society.

Bush spoke to reporters after meeting privately with two men who have graduated from Jericho's program and dealt with drug problems.

During that session, which the White House allowed one reporter to attend, Bush spoke frankly about himself.

"I understand addiction, and I understand how a changed heart

can help you deal with addiction," he told the two men. "There's some kind of communal-ity."

He asked Adolphus Mosely and Tom Boyd how they stopped using drugs — and then answered his own question.

"First is to recognize that there is a higher power," Bush said. "It helped me in my life. It helped me quit drinking."

"That's right, there is a higher power," Mosely said.

"Step One, right?" Bush said, referring to the Alcoholics Anonymous 12-steps program. Actually, it is the second step.

When the president spoke publicly, flanked by both men, it was plain that it was a powerful subject for him personally. Bush grew unusually somber and fixed an unbroken gaze on the cameras as he related the similarities between himself and the men in this sketchy East Baltimore neighborhood who are struggling to put their lives back together.

"These are men who were, in some ways, lost, and lonely, and found love and redemption at Jericho," Bush said. "Proud to be with you."

He hailed them for now being "reunited with their daughters."

"Girls love their dad, espe-



PRESIDENT BUSH

"I understand how a changed heart can help you deal with addiction," he said in Baltimore.

cially a redeemed dad," said Bush, father of 26-year-old twins Jenna and Barbara.

The 61-year-old president decided to quit drinking the day after a particularly boozy 40th-birthday celebration — July 6, 1986. He has often credited both his Christian faith and vigorous exercise with giving him the discipline he needed to execute that decision and to keep it in place, with nonalcoholic beers the only indulgence he says he allows.

But when he was first running for president in 2000 and during his earlier years in office, Bush stuck to almost quaint code words when on the topic. He has never said publicly whether he was an alcoholic.

His checkered relationship with booze does come up frequently in his conversations, often as a joke or an aside. Bush is known to have said that the subject is never too far from his

mind.

Recently, his talk has grown more revealing. Whether it's because he has no more elections to worry about, or has grown more convinced of the positive impact he could have, or some other reason, they are likely to be welcome words for those facing similar problems, coming from the most powerful man in the world.

In December, Bush cited his experience with alcohol as he encouraged young recovering addicts visiting the White House to stick with their fight.

"Your president made the same kind of choice and I had to quit drinking, and addiction competes for your affection ... you fall in love with alcohol," Bush said during the meeting, according to a behind-the-scenes account from ABC News.

His statements at Jericho seemed to go a little further. White House aides would not discuss the evolution.

Nora Volkow, director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse, said research shows that frank talks about addiction from prominent people help enormously. Any kind of substance abuse is still so stigmatized that 85 percent of addicted people don't seek treatment, she said.

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U.S. Navy Announces Alternative Arrangements for Implementing the National Environmental Policy Act and Requests Public Input

On January 15, 2008, the Department of the Navy accepted alternative arrangements, approved by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). These alternative arrangements specifically address the use of mid-frequency active (MFA) sonar and its effects on marine mammals during Navy exercises in the Southern California (SOCAL) Operating Area. These exercises include Composite Training Unit Exercises (COMPTUEXs) and Joint Task Force Exercises (JTTEXs) scheduled to occur between January 15, 2008 and January 23, 2009. A Decision Memorandum documenting the Navy's acceptance of these alternative arrangements was published in the Federal Register on January 24, 2008.

Information on the Navy's proposals for the SOCAL Operating Area including the full text of the Decision Memorandum is available at www.SOCALRangeComplexEIS.com.

The Navy will prepare a post-exercise assessment after each exercise. By this Notice, the Navy requests input from the public on the process for reviewing the post-exercise assessments. The Navy is also offering the public the opportunity to discuss the implementation of these alternative arrangements. Input on reviewing the post-exercise assessments and any requests to meet with Navy and CEQ representatives about the alternative arrangements may be submitted by contacting Mr. Alex Stone at (619) 545-9128 or in writing to:

Naval Air Station, North Island
Attn: Alex Stone, CPE Environmental
McCaig Boulevard, Building 676, Room 218
San Diego, CA 92135

For more information about the Navy's Decision Memorandum, visit www.SOCALRangeComplexEIS.com.

Asteroid in Siberia now believed smaller

Better understanding will help determine risks, scientist says.

Associated Press

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. — An asteroid that exploded over Siberia a century ago, leaving 800 square miles of scorched or blown-down trees, wasn't nearly as large as previously thought, a researcher concludes, suggesting a greater danger for Earth.

According to supercomputer simulations by Sandia National Laboratories physicist Mark Boslough, the asteroid that destroyed the forest at Tunguska in Siberia in June 1908 had a blast force equivalent to one-quarter

to one-third of the 10- to 20-megaton range scientists previously estimated.

Better understanding of what happened at Tunguska will allow for better estimates of risk that would allow policymakers to decide whether to try to deflect an asteroid or evacuate people in its path, he said.

"It's not clear whether a 10-megaton asteroid is more damaging than a Hurricane Katrina," Boslough said. "We can more accurately predict the location of an impact and its time better than we can a hurricane, so you really could get people out of there if it's below a certain threshold."

On Tuesday, an asteroid at least 800 feet long was making a rare close pass by Earth, but scientists said there was no chance of

an impact. The closest approach of 2007 TU24 will be 334,000 miles — about 1.4 times the distance of Earth to the moon. An actual collision of a similar-sized object with Earth occurs on average every 37,000 years.

Although the computer simulation shows the Tunguska asteroid was smaller, its size isn't known. It would depend on such factors as speed, shape, how dense or porous it was and what it was made of, Boslough said.

Smaller asteroids approach Earth about three times more frequently than large ones. So if large asteroids approach about every 1,000 years, a smaller one would be about every 300 years, Boslough said. "Of course there's huge uncertainties," he said.

The three-dimensional com-

puter simulations were done last summer. Boslough presented the findings at scientific meetings in September and December. A paper on the phenomenon, co-written by Sandia researcher Dave Crawford, has been accepted for publication in the International Journal of Impact Engineering.

The simulation, which matches what's known of Tunguska better than earlier models did, shows that the center of the asteroid's mass exploded above the ground, taking the form of a fireball blasting downward faster than the speed of sound.

But the fireball did not reach the ground, so while miles of trees outside the epicenter were flattened, those at the epicenter remained standing — scorched, with their branches stripped off.