

Flood Aid

Schools Still Waiting

By DICK BAUMBACH

Elmira — Gov. Nelson A. Rockefeller told some 600 persons, most of them students in the Chemung County Catholic School System, a week ago Monday that he would have an answer on when the school system should expect to receive \$300,000 in flood relief within 24 hours.

It has been nine days and the answer still is not forthcoming. Rockefeller made the statement when he arrived at the Chemung County Airport to hold one of his town meetings.

The governor, in response to a question on when the state funds would be made available locally, said, "I will have an answer to your problem this afternoon or tomorrow. I want to help you."

Catholic school officials are now trying to determine ways to make the governor keep his promise and are seeking other alternatives to alleviate a basic political situation which has occurred between the governor's

office and the offices of the state comptroller and attorney general.

The Catholic school officials have been waiting for four weeks for the promised money.

The funds would be used to rebuild several schools which were heavily damaged in June by Hurricane Agnes and subsequent flooding.

Under the state constitution direct aid cannot be given to private schools, but Rockefeller says the aid is not for school programs but to help in flood relief efforts.

At a local restaurant, where the governor held the town meeting, Rockefeller's first statement concerned the need for providing the much needed funds.

Just prior to the end of the town meeting Dr. Thomas R. Curren, a representative of the Chemung Catholic School Board who has been trying to obtain funds for the school system, again brought up the question

of when the funds might be available.

An aide from the comptroller's office responded to Rockefeller and Curren saying he had just been informed that the vouchers for the funds were sitting on the desk of the comptroller.

Curren pointed out to Rockefeller that the federal government has come up with capital funds to bring the school system back to a pre-flood level and said there is no ruling to not give the funds on a one-time basis for flood relief.

Curren told the Courier-Journal the situation is the same as it was four weeks ago. "We don't have the money. The thing is still where it was at several weeks ago with the comptroller saying he wants a constitutional opinion on the legality of giving out the funds from the state's attorney general and the attorney general saying he doesn't want to get into the situation."

Curren also told the Courier-Journal a similar situation occurred last June with the comptroller and the attorney general. The school system was eligible for its second payment for mandated services but never received it. "Those two men held it until the courts ruled against it. They could have given it to us since there was no ruling against it, but they didn't. They just held the funds until the opinion said we couldn't get them."

Curren also said that a U.S. Justice Department ruling said that capital funds distributed on a one time basis to private schools was not unconstitutional.

When the money will ever be made available to the school system is not known, but local school officials plan to keep pushing for the funds needed to help the school system defray the costs of rebuilding the centers of learning.

On the subject of the students being assembled at the airport to meet Rockefeller and to pin him down on when the funds might be forthcoming, Curren said school was not closed for the day.

"We permitted the students to go to the airport if they were taken by their parents or other adults. No school transportation was used, all those at the airport went in private cars and we had 120 automobiles that were driven to the airport for the rally. We understand that five or six occupants were in each vehicle which gave us a showing of 600 concerned parents and students," Curren said.

None of the students attended the town meeting, but various adults interested in the plight of the Catholic schools were there.

Although the majority of the supporters at the airport and town meeting were from the Chemung County Catholic School System there were also individuals representing the Corning Catholic School System.

Both school systems would share the \$300,000 for flood relief when and if it becomes a reality.



Uniform Exchange

Candy Jo Heater (left) and Linda Spiraw (right) turned in their Explorer Post-Health Club uniforms recently for those of the St. Joseph's Hospital School of Nursing. They were told how to fold a nurse's cap by Sister M. Remigia McHenry, director of the school of nursing. The two girls were members of St. Joseph's Hospital Health Careers Explorer Post 91 before joining the nursing school's freshman class.

Elmira Area Notes

Elmira Heights — St. Charles Borromeo Church's annual Thanksgiving Clothing Drive will continue until Sunday. Clothing for men, women, children, blankets, bedding, yard goods, sewing material and used shoes are urgently needed. The donations should be brought to the north side entrance of the church.

West Elmira — Persons interested in attending the joint Christmas Party for Our Lady of Lourdes Mothers Club and Rosary Altar Society have until Nov. 30 to make their reservations for the affair. The program will be held Dec. 5 at Pierce's Restaurant in Elmira Heights. Tickets are \$5.75 per person and

can be obtained by calling 607-734-7268 or 607-733-7973.

Elmira Heights — St. Charles Borromeo Church's Altar and Rosary Society will hold a fashion show on Nov. 30 in the church hall. The affair will begin at 8 p.m. Tickets may be obtained from members of the society or at the rectory.

Apalachin — St. Margaret Mary Church Rosary Society Christmas Party will be held Dec. 3 at 6 p.m. in the Church Hall on New St. Reservations may be made by calling 607-625-2032 or 607-625-4777.

Eucharistic Devotion Scheduled

Elmira — In connection with the Diocesan Year of Renewal St. Casimir's Church will hold a Pre-Advent Eucharistic Day on Dec. 1.

The Blessed Sacrament will be exposed after the 8:30 a.m. Mass until closing services for the day scheduled for 7:30 p.m.

All Catholics in the Twin Tiers are invited to participate in the special program.

Courier-Journal

Corning Gives Thanks For 'The Unity of June'

Corning — The flood that hit the Southern tier last summer forced residents of ravaged areas to become closer communities, and Corning doesn't want to forget that closeness.

Remembering how people helped each other, how strangers worked together, Father Eugene Sweeney of St. Patrick's, and the Rev. Thomas Steen, of First Methodist church agreed there was a lot to be thankful for. They decided to hold an ecumenical scripture service to bring the people together again.

"The community worked to-

gether so well and the barrier of churches broke down so much, giving way to a real unity," recalled Father Sweeney while discussing preparations for the prayer service. "We want this joint scripture service to be an opportunity to come back again in the same spirit and unity that we exhibited in June, to thank God for his blessings."

All the churches in Corning participated in last Sunday evening's ecumenical Thanksgiving celebration, which was followed by a social hour in St. Patrick's parish hall.

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