

MAKING US ALL LESS

The Campaign for Human Development means 1.) solving some of the 366 cases of deterioration that plague Geneva; 2.) prompting an elderly volunteer to leave his fishing to deliver a meal to an old friend; 3.) helping a Spanish speaking community have a place of their own "where everyone can be friendly together;" 4.) all of the above; 5.) none of the above.

Fortunately the answer is number four thanks to the annual collection which takes place this year on Sunday Nov. 18. Until three years ago, when the National Campaign for Human Development was launched by the U.S. Bishops, the answer had been number five.

From the diocese's 1972-73 collection eleven self-help projects received money from local funds and two projects received national funding. Each year, 25 per cent of the collection is retained locally and the remainder is distributed by the national office.

"Making us all less poor." This year's theme shows how the campaign attempts to attack not only economic poverty but "poverty of spirit, of mind; poverty of love, of friendship," according to the resource information supplied to every parish by the Office of Human Development.

The gamut of projects funded is wide, covering groups that champion for welfare rights to a loan fund sponsored by Newark Valley's Project Neighbor. The Rochester Action for Welfare Rights attempts to secure the legal rights of welfare people and to change people's attitudes on welfare. Project Neighbor is an ecumenical effort to meet community needs which includes a storefront to sell used goods. The grant from the Human Development Office will be used for a loan fund.

In rural Wayne County four grants gave aid to an area that has few social agencies. Answering local needs are the Ridge Day Care Center, in Sodus, the Community Center in Williamson, the Clyde Federal Credit Union and Community Action Self-Help for housing, also in Sodus.

The Center of Concern Bail Fund in Geneva and The Yates Day Care Center in Penn Yan also received funding.

ALPHA DAY SCHOOL

In back of the First Presbyterian Church in Seneca Falls is a new learning disabilities center where unusual activities such as eye tracking and walking the balance beam are fitted in with the usual grade school curriculum.

The Alpha Day School offers a program for students who are neurologically handicapped. "Their learning has been retarded but these kids are really clever," said Mrs. Irene McAuley, director. She added that only one of the 16 students, who range in age from 6 to 14 years old, is not emotionally disturbed.

"The emotional disturbance occurs when the kids realize they are not learning at the same rate as their peers," Mrs. McAuley noted.

A special learning disabilities school provides the facilities that the public schools do not have. Its main objective is "to return the students back into the main stream of education," the director maintained. She believes all the students will eventually return to the public schools.

A regular classroom situation is combined with visual and audio programs, fine and gross motor coordination exercises and eye and hand coordination programs.



Students who cannot take the distractions of a classroom and all students when they first enter, are taught individually by aides.

Funding money, which totals \$1,000, will be used to hire another aide. "The students do not take well to changes so we need aides. It is better to use an aide who can take over a classroom than a substitute," Mrs. McAuley explained.

Tuition per child is \$6,000, but approximately one half of the students cannot afford to pay anything. The school qualifies under the Bill for Aid to the

Handicapped which pays \$2,000 per child. Mrs. McAuley stated that in spite of state and federal aid, the teachers, all of whom are women, are being paid "half of what they could get in a regular school."

The most "desperate" problem facing the Alpha Day School is the need for a larger building. "We require more room because of the individualization of the program," she said. The hunt for more funds and a new building continues but in the interim, Mrs. McAuley is investigating the possible acquisition of land and portable classrooms.

SPANISH ASSOCIATION OF THE FINGER LAKES

It doesn't look like much now . . . a huge airy concrete building with exposed pipes and paint-peeled walls. But for the more than 500 Spanish speaking people in Geneva, it will be "the first thing for our people," explained Laila Leon, secretary of the Spanish Association of the Finger Lakes.

The "club," as members call the association, received \$25,000 from the National Office of Human Development to establish a cultural center that will house job opportunities and adult education resources. Miss Leon feels the center will serve many purposes, from hosting intercultural events in order to understand other cultural groups to providing gym facilities for youngsters.

"It will be open to the whole community but will give a sense of worth and a better image to the Spanish people. They will not always be in the position of a recipient but can now be contributing to the community," said Jose Serna, former president, who was instrumental in obtaining the funding.

A lack of concern for the Spanish community in the town prompted Serna to establish the association last year. "In the limited survey that I conducted I found that the Spanish people have been attending school in

Geneva for 22 years. In that time I can account for only 13-14 graduates," Serna observed. He noted that over 65 per cent of the Spanish people cannot speak English.

"We have nothing here, not a grocery store or a theater," said Justina Merced, who was born and raised in Puerto Rico and serves as the treasurer of the association. It began as a get-together in various homes for people who were "finding it hard to blend into a white society," Miss Leon said.

"Right now the people are finding it hard to believe the money was given with no strings attached," she beamed.

Funding money will be dispensed quarterly and will be used to rent the one-story structure. A general coordinator will also be hired to act as a liaison between state, local and national agencies as well as exploring and making available various job opportunities.

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GENEVA HOMES

The house with smooth new pine supports for the porch is settled among the middle class houses on the street. Its roof is warped and the windows are "miserable" but through the efforts of the Geneva Homes Improvement Corporation (GHIC) it will soon fit into the neighborhood.

The GHIC battle for scattered housing — the careful location of families in various parts of the city — has enabled the occupants to live in a pleasant neighborhood rather than be pushed into low income housing that too easily becomes a slum.

Robert Camera, the boyish looking executive secretary for the corporation, explained that the funding will be used not only to rehabilitate four homes but provide a rotating pool of funds for interest free loans to help families meet closing costs.

In 1968 the corporation was formed by a group of citizens concerned about the lack of decent housing for low and moderate income families. Since then GHIC has helped 16 families buy houses and has purchased 19 house lots on which it is building new houses.

Geneva faces many racial problems, according to Camera, and part of the funding will be used to hire a black lawyer to become a liaison between the black community and the court system. Classes will be conducted to train members of the community in paralegal services.

ST. LUCY'S

Seven weeks of the hot Rochester summer were spent by the neighborhood youngsters around St. Lucy's Parish in a black cultural awareness program. Through Project Act, which received approximately \$5,000 from the collection, Father Stan Farier hoped to teach "the kids that they have a history that is respectable."

"We were helping the children realize that they have a potential whether it be in sewing, cooking or art," explained Father Farier. Two hundred participants ranging in age from 6 to 20, tried their hand at painting, sewing, working with clay and plaster, and whipping up easy recipes.

Black awareness was emphasized through three days of classes on black history and a two-day dramatic workshop. Students performed short skits with readings and poems by black authors and portrayed such characters as Harriet Tubman and Malcolm X. Father Farier added that dancing to the music provided by the older students was one of the most popular parts of the program.

