



Learning to pronounce your name is made fun by teacher Kristen Van Keuren.

Photos by Dave Witbeck

# Center Is 25

BY PAT PETRASKE

At this school, the teachers openly admit that one of their chief goals is to get the students out of the classrooms as quickly as possible.

The Day Care Training Center for Handicapped Children puts the emphasis on self-help. Stress is placed on preparing each child for the normal stream of life.

Celebrating their silver anniversary this year, the Training Center has helped more than 2,000 retarded and multi-handicapped children from Monroe County. No longer do these exceptional children have only the choice of remaining at home or being placed in an institution. A three-month program which is evaluated and revamped periodically has been outlined for each child to allow him to reach his highest potential.

Part of the center's aim is that no child be allowed to stay home and sit, explained Geraldine Werner, the supervisor of teachers at the center. Her interest in training programs for the retarded was launched 32 years ago after the birth of a Mongoloid son.

Initial parental reaction is one of wonderment and confusion, she reflected. The school with its field trips to parks, restaurants, stores and zoos prepares the children for outings with their parents to help them feel at ease together. "Parents accept their children but they need help with handling them," Mrs. Werner said.

Excitement runs high at the Training Center. A child has finally learned to sit up and his world, formerly limited to the ceiling, is suddenly transformed and expanded. A parent's prayer is answered with a purchase of a special device that allows a child to learn to feed himself.

The Day Care Training Center is located in the Al Sigl Center, 1000 Elmwood Ave. Seven rehabilitation agencies are housed in the building, allowing for interaction and sharing of facilities.

Programs provided by the training center include day care, pre-school, temporary and home



Comfort is found in the arms of Penny Barns, teacher for the blind, who assists at the Training Center.

care programs. The home care worker is a coordinator for child and family needs. Besides supportive and evaluative services, parents have access to a nursery located in the Central Presbyterian Church for counseling and respite, and for the physical, emotional, verbal and social training of the children. Foster homes provided by the Catholic Family Center and other places, offer families temporary relief from constant care.

Center because age or degree of mental and physical handicaps makes them ineligible to attend any public school special education program. Their classrooms have four areas: academic, grooming, listening and the kitchen. Afternoons might be spent learning how to brush their teeth or wash their hair, distinguishing concepts like big and little or visiting with a local policeman. Older children plan a meal once a week and do the shopping, cooking and cleaning up chores themselves.

Children attend the Training

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## Two Parishes Continue School Consolidation

The General Committee of Consolidation composed of members from St. John the Evangelist, Humboldt Street, and Blessed Sacrament has agreed on a plan to consolidate their schools although a third parish had defeated an earlier plan for a three-way merger.

The decision for the 1974-75 school year is basically a continuation of the year of cooperation undertaken by the two parishes last year. St. Boniface voted in March not to join the merger. St. John's will continue to house the Bishop Hogan Junior High School for seventh and eighth graders from both schools. In addition, kindergarten pupils from St. John's will attend Blessed Sacrament.

A meeting of the General Committee of Consolidation April 30 aired a proposal for the committee to work towards a single consolidated school committee to share responsibilities for all K-8 grades between the two parishes. The single school board would be

responsible for the formulation of a long range consolidation plan to be completed by December 1974.

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### FIREMEN SET RECOGNITION DAY

Fire Service Recognition Day will be sponsored Saturday, May 11, by the Monroe County Fire Chiefs Association. Antique and modern firefighting equipment will be displayed at Long Ridge Mall in Greece from noon until 4 p.m. The Barnard and West Webster fire department championship bands will perform. The program will start at noon, with paid and volunteer firefighters from the various departments throughout Monroe County participating. County and city officials, women's auxiliaries and members of the Explorer posts sponsored by various fire units also will take part.

FIND OF THE WEEK



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