

# CWU: Promoting Christian Citizenship

By MOLLY JUDGE

If you are a woman church-goer, you are potentially a member of an enterprising national organization dedicated to promoting Christian citizenship through involvement in areas of social concern.

Church Women United is an ecumenical group with members pooling their efforts to develop a wide variety of programs concerning world relations, intercontinental missions, community concerns and civic responsibility.

Although CWU considers every Christian woman, regardless of religious denomination, a member, there are only 370 women on the mailing list for the local CWU newsletter. The number includes two representatives from each church or parish group that wishes to take an active part in the organization.

CWU is a national body, with each state sending representatives to national meetings in New York City. Members of the state group represent local organizations. Of the 2,000 local groups, the Rochester CWU is one of the largest because it has staff members as well as volunteers.

"Although we consider every church woman a member, a lot of Catholic women aren't aware that they are members too. We want to get more Catholic women involved. We do have a few nuns that are helping us and they are doing a marvelous job but it's hard to get the laywomen interested," said Mrs. Helen Telfer, the administrative coordinator of the Rochester group.

"Since Church Women United is involved with so many important projects, we need more women volunteers. Working for this group is one of the best ways

to become involved in the community, since we have our foot in everything," she said.

The CWU is responsible for the organization of such projects as the Rochester International Friendship Council, which acquaints foreign college students with local families.

Literacy Volunteers, a program designed to help illiterates learn to read, also was developed by CWU. Organizations such as Motor Service Corps, Christmas Bureau and the Women's Human Relations Council of Rochester received their start in the CWU.

Currently, the CWU is sponsoring community projects designed to aid underprivileged Rochesterians. The task force on Courts explores and presses for reform in the community court system.

Elderly persons who live alone may receive a daily telephone call from a CWU volunteer. This volunteer calls each day at a designated time to chat and see if everything is all right with the older individual. "If she doesn't get an answer, she will call that person's relative or a visiting nurse and suggest they stop over and see how everything is there," Mrs. Telfer said. "Quite a few times our volunteers have discovered a problem at the older person's home."

At the main waiting room at the Monroe County Department of Social Services, a CWU volunteer staffs an information desk which provides welfare assistance to the poor.

A School Lunch Program for the Elderly, a Day Care Council, Welfare Coalition, and an Attica Defense Coalition have their roots in the CWU.

"Our projects usually get their start with the women themselves,

although some ideas originate in the state or national boards," Mrs. Telfer said. "If a woman has an idea, she would give us a call and our executive committee would then discuss that idea. We would work together to schedule a program, if the idea was approved."

The first Friday of each month is meeting day. A few months have programs designated by the National Board, such as May Fellowship Day, World Community Day, World Day of Prayer and a Legislative Institute, which explores national issues.

The daytime meetings are held in various churches but the CWU sponsors a "Nightclub" where working women can participate. Each program offers contemplative and study periods followed by discussions.

Besides sponsoring projects in



MRS. HELEN TELFER

response to special needs, CWU works in cooperation with the Genesee Ecumenical Ministries and other community organizations with mutual

concerns. Church Women United headquarters is on 17 S. Fitzhugh St. in Rochester. Women who would like to volunteer to help the group can call 454-6443.

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CONFERENCE table for meeting room. Call 607-776-6945 after 4 p.m.

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## ALL IN THE FAMILY



Sarah Child

The new seed catalogues have been arriving and for the past couple of weeks I have been poring over them in delight and anticipation.

There is something very therapeutic in gazing at pictures of lush green bushes and wild colorful flowers when outside the landscape is dotted with leafless dormant trees, and patches of ice and snow with only a tiny white pine here and there to relieve the bleakness.

I love reading the copy under each specimen. The garden catalogue people have taken a tip from the real estate brokers and now deal in rhapsodic phrases and impossible dreams.

Here is something called Fabulous Pink Deutzia. It promises: "Bloom, bloom — nothing but blooms. Branches are covered with an abundance of delicate pink flowers starting in late May. Electrifying in its beauty, this is the most graceful and prettiest of the deutzias."

I forgive them their hyperbole and move to the next page where pictures of the dainty pink Mountain Laurel make me homesick for my Pennsylvania hills. At home on our hikes through the mountains we could not pick them because they are the state flower and are protected by law. Somehow I cannot imagine these beautiful bushes of the rhododendron family

anywhere but in the shady coolness of a wild woodland. Certainly it does not seem fitting to use them as a screen to cover the concrete ugliness of a foundation.

I turn to the trees and wish again for a new miracle species which would grow 20 feet the first season, branching out into a gigantic green leafed umbrella. No such luck. But wait a minute, here is a new hybrid poplar developed by the U.S. Forest Service which supposedly grows eight feet a year and has "an unusual wide-spreading habit for poplars." My skepticism is sizeable. Besides I've been trained to think of poplars as weak, messy trees. Well, I don't suppose there's any harm in trying one. A 4-5 footer sells for \$3.95.

What I really want is a pin oak. This past year I noticed that both Allegany and Letchworth State parks have planted a great many of them in their picnic and bathhouse areas.

I gloat over the copy: "Quercus palustris. Fastest growing of the sturdy oaks. Grows 30-40 ft. in pyramidal, symmetrical form with drooping branches. Handsome, green, carved leaves turn copper — salmon each fall." I'll take 10, 20 — well one, anyway.

I leave the flowers for last. Clematis, I read, is the "queen of the flowering vines." I'll go along with that. We had six or seven different ones at our old house planted by a previous owner. None here and that must be remedied.

Dahlia, glloxinias, ranunculus, fairy lily, the rugosa rose. I love the names. I love the colors. Some dainty and delicate. Some brassy and bold.

I turn on the radio. The weatherman is predicting temperatures will fall below zero. Let them. I've got my catalogues to keep me warm.

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