

Officials Say

New Law Is Hurting Alcoholics

By MARTIN TOOMBS Southern Tier Editor

Elmira—Four professionals, a doctor, a judge, a district attorney and the operator of a sobering up facility each explained their perspectives on alcoholism at an alcoholism seminar at St. Joseph's Hospital March 3.

The primary point of agreement, especially among D. Bruce Crew III, the Chemung County District Attorney, Recorder's Court Judge John

Frawley and Jeffery Weyrauch, who manages the Chemung County sobering up facility, is that the new state law concerning public intoxication is hurting rather than helping the alcoholic.

Since Jan. 1, 1976, public intoxication has not been a crime in the state. Weyrauch suggested that the police have four options when handling inebriates on the street: arrest them on some other charge, such as disorderly conduct, take them home, take them to a

sobering up station, or nothing. He summarized the work of the sobering up station as "certainly not punitive, but we're certainly not treating anybody." He also cited costs of \$100 per admission.

Weyrauch stated that the "treatment community" feels that in order to help alcoholics, they "need a handle," something to threaten alcoholics with, to force them into treatment. Without the public intoxication charge there is no handle, he said.

Judge Frawley, noting that he has been hampered by the new public intoxication law because he no longer sees those alcoholics, explained that he tries to identify those with a drinking problem and force them into treatment. Alcoholics Anonymous says that a person must be at the bottom in order to decide to quit, he pointed out. He works to "raise the bottom," he said, by making the arrest the crisis the alcoholic needs in order to decide to quit. "Getting the treatment is the important thing," he stated, "forced referrals work."

Since public intoxication has not been a criminal offense, Judge Frawley said, he must look for alcohol problems; without the public intoxication charge, he doesn't know whether or not alcohol was involved. The result, Judge Frawley said, is that some alcoholics have been "slipping through the cracks of our system."

He also commented on the Department of Motor Vehicles' course for persons convicted of driving while intoxicated. When the course is successfully completed the person receives a regular license, but that completion certificate can be withheld until the problem drinker seeks help, Judge Frawley pointed out.

Chemung District Attorney Crew noted that "alcohol does play a very substantial part in a very substantial number of crimes." As district attorney, he must consider prosecution in terms of both what is best for the state and the defendant, he noted, with the interests of the state being most important. As for driving while intoxicated offenders, "there comes a time when they have to be dealt with," he emphasized. He pointed out that several Chemung County residents have been sent to Attica on driving while intoxicated charges, a practice he defended while admitting that the alcoholic would be no better off after three years at Attica. Such sentencing is necessary, he said, to remove the persistent drunk driver from society before he kills someone driving while drunk.

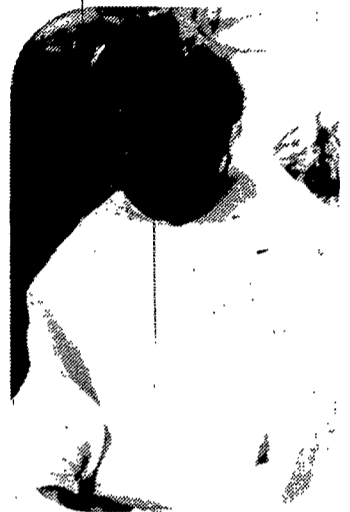
Such cases usually occur after three or more convictions, Crew said, as there is nothing in the judicial system that will help the alcoholic, leaving removal from society the only alternative.

Dr. Daniel Fisher provided a different outlook on alcoholism, estimating that 80 per cent of his alcoholic patients have never been arrested in connection with their drinking.

"Alcoholism is probably a greater burden on our society than a lot of other diseases," he noted. He added that treatment, especially in-hospital treatments such as that offered by the Southern Tier Alcoholism Rehabilitation Services at St. Joseph's Hospital, often is successful. He pointed out that many of his patients have an "underlying depression," that, when treated, removes "the need to drink again."



SISTER ELLEN



FATHER SWORD



FATHER EMERSON

'Adventure in Prayer' Set

Newark — Four local clergymen, and a steering committee of their parishioners, are among the enthusiastic people involved in bringing to this area an unusual experience in prayer this month.

The three-day mission, scheduled for March 25-27 at St. Michael's School gymnasium, is being sponsored by the Rev. J. Edward Putnam, rector of St. Mark's Church; Fathers Eugene Sweeney, and Peter Deckman, co-pastors of St. Michael's Church, and the Rev. Carl Roemer, pastor of the Redeemer Lutheran Church.

They described the event, "Newark Adventure in Prayer," as an interfaith approach to prayer for the

entire Newark community and state that it will consist of three evenings of very active workshops beginning promptly at 7:30 p.m. and ending just as promptly at 9:30 p.m. Sunday evening's session will be culminated by three separate celebrations of the Holy Eucharist by clergymen of the three respective host churches.

According to Father Putnam, the mission will be led by Father Carl Sword, OHC; Father John Emerson, OHC; and Sister Ellen Stephen, OSH. Fathers Sword and Emerson are monks of the Episcopal Order of the Holy Cross of West Park, N.Y. and Sister Ellen is a member of the Episcopal Order of St.

Helena from Vails Gate, N.Y.

Pastor Roemer said that preceding each evening session there will be a "bring your own bag" supper at 5:30 p.m. at St. Mark's Parish Hall.

Fathers Deckman and Sweeney added that "this will be welcomed because of the evening sessions will be 'jam-packed' with little opportunity for casual conversation."

A two-hour meditation is scheduled for Saturday morning, led by the team for clergy and lay leaders of the parishes and congregations in the Newark area.

Everyone is invited. There is no registration or fee.



Worthwhile Project

Photo by Martin Toombs

Pupils of the third and fourth grades at Immaculate Conception school in Ithaca recently made party favors which were distributed to residents of Oak Hill Nursing Home. At work are, from left, Matthew McGee, Brian Duxtater, Christine Manning, Nicky Hubble, Paul Russi and Sister Helen Therese.

SOUTHERN TIER AUBURN-GENEVA



Poor Man's Soup

Human Development Committee members Kathie Fox, Walter O'Hagen (center) and Jack Alritz, from St. Alphonsus, Auburn, practice making "Poor Man's Soup", the main course of the third annual Sharing Supper on March 22. Parishioners will bring the ingredients for the simple meal which serves as a reminder of the problems of hunger in the world.

Cape Cod Seashore To Be Classroom

Dansville—St. Mary's has been chosen as one of 32 schools in the Northeast to participate in an environmental program at the Cape Cod National Seashore. The 20 students in the eighth grade, their

teacher Maureen Sweet and 10 chaperones will spend the week of April 17-23 at the U. S. Coast Guard Station at Eastham, Cape Cod, Massachusetts.

The week of study aims at introducing the students to the need for environmental preservation. The program is human-oriented, since it is human activities that cause environmental damage. The program is conducted by the National Park Service.

The entire class is involved in all aspects of the trip. Planning includes meals, purchase of food, scheduling of daily activities and goals to be met while on the trip. Preparation also includes a pizza sale and a bake sale to raise funds.

Daily activities will include walks on the several environmental trails along the National Seashore, trips to Provincetown, Hyannis, and Plymouth as well as a visit to the Sealand of Cape Cod. Other activities will be demonstrations by the Sea Rescue Team, and, shellfishing experts; also beach cookouts and scavenger hunts.

NYPA Honors Courier, Staff Writer

A Courier-Journal series on the Moonies was honored by the New York Press Association when it announced its journalism awards for 1976 at a recent meeting in Albany.

The three-part series, "Are the Moonies in Diocese to Stay", was written by Martin Toombs and appeared in the Courier-Journal in April 1976. The press association awarded third place in the Best Feature Story category.

The association is composed of newspapers across the state, the great majority of which are secular.

ALCOHOLISM SEMINAR

Elmira—"Alcohol Metabolism" will be the topic of psychiatrist Esat Cirpili, MD, chief of the Schuyler Unit at the Elmira Psychiatric Center Thursday, March 17. The alcoholism seminar will be offered in St. Joseph's Hospital's Doctors Meeting Room at 12:15 p.m. Further information can be obtained by contacting St. Joseph's Social Work Department, 733-6541.

GODSPELL TO BE PERFORMED

Apalachin—The Celebrate Life Chorus from St. Mary Our Mother, Horseheads, will present "Godspell" at St. Margaret Mary's Parish on Sunday, March 20 at 3 p.m. The public is invited.

SOUTHERN TIER NEWS

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