

St. Joseph's OB Unit Wins Support

By MARTIN TOOMBS
Southern Tier Editor

Painted Post—The continuation of St. Joseph's Hospital's obstetrical service received the support of the Southern Tier Subarea Council of the Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency (FLHSA) at its meeting here June 6.

The council recommended that St. Joseph's obstetrics unit be retained until discussion between the state Catholic Conference and the state health commissioner resolves the status of religiously-sponsored obstetrical units. The subarea's Hospital Council had recommended that St. Joseph's unit be closed.

The Southern Tier Subarea Council's recommendation will be sent to the FLHSA's executive committee for its analysis. The final opinion will be referred to the state Health Department for action.

The recommendation's approval came after nearly five hours of public discussion and deliberations by the board. Vocal support for the retention of St. Joseph's obstetrical service was expressed during the public forum preceding the business meeting. Of the 43 persons who testified, 39 spoke in favor of retention of service at St. Joseph's, three spoke for retention at Ira Davenport Hospital in Bath, and one for the importance of quality care.

The Hospital Council called for St. Joseph's unit to close, with the Arnot Odgen Hospital unit continuing in operation. The recommendation also called for the continuation of service in the Corning Hospital, Schuyler Hospital, and in Bath, to be reviewed after one year; and for the Hornell hospitals to be allowed 18 months to establish a single unit as part of their merger.

Several health planning groups also made statements to the board:

only one supported the position of the Hospital Council. That was the FLHSA staff recommendation, as reported by Christopher Rush. Rush noted that the staff report "does not take into consideration the religious issue," because the "religious issue can not be considered a health planning issue, per se."

Joanne Beecher reported on the Chemung County Advisory Council's resolution calling for retention of obstetrical service at St. Joseph's. The motion was approved seven to one, at a non-quorum meeting.

The Southern Tier Health Management Corporation executive committee reported their support for the continuation of service at St. Joseph's, with a 10 bed unit instead of the current 15 beds, and proposed a reduction from 20 to 10 beds at Corning Hospital. The group also suggested a rotation for nurses among area hospitals so that those at a hospital with few births would be able to gain increased experience.

The closing of obstetrical units is being considered due to a state mandate designed to cut costs. Cost savings and quality of care were the primary issues in the discussion, which dealt primarily with the situation in Elmira. No opposition toward the other sections of the Hospital Council's recommendation was expressed.

Ms. Beecher, a member of the subarea council, asked the Hospital Council if it had a projection of cost savings that would be made by closing St. Joseph's obstetrics. David Fletcher of the Hospital Council replied that "cost savings was not the primary consideration," and offered no figures. He noted that quality of care was the primary consideration. To support the decision to close St. Joseph's, Fletcher cited the opinion of Dr. Willard Helmuth, director of the Arnot Odgen neo-natology

unit, that a hospital with few births has a "potential for deleterious impact" on the quality of the nursing service at that hospital, Fletcher reported.

Dr. Thomas Curran, an Elmira dentist, refuted claims concerning the value of a hospital having many births, noting that a report prepared on the subject showed that "bigger isn't necessarily better." He also pointed out that two of the obstetric units designated to remain open have fewer births than St. Joseph's.

Sister Martha Gersbach, St. Joseph's administrator, read the statement of the hospital's Board of Directors, which asserted the importance of freedom of choice for pregnant women, and appealed for exemption from closing based on the hospital's religious ideals. She also called "rather naive" the recommendation by the Hospital Council that obstetric beds be recertified for other purposes. She doubted that the state would do that.

Immediately after the motion was made calling for endorsement of the Hospital Council's recommendations, a motion was made for the vote to be taken by secret ballot. After strenuous objections by Theodore Bennet, noting that a secret ballot might be contested, and Dr. Morris Blostein, on grounds of accountability, the motion was defeated, with 13 voting in favor, 16 against and one abstaining.

Blostein, the Chemung County Executive, made the amendment, seconded by Sister Martha, adding statements to the recommendation calling for the retention of obstetrics at St. Joseph's, with a 10 bed unit, until the discussion of the religious-sponsored units is completed on the state level, and that neither Arnot Odgen nor St. Joseph's be subject to fiscal sanctions in the interim.

A roll call vote on the amended motion was approved, with 18 voting in favor and 12 against.

The amended motion was then approved 23 to 6 with one abstention.

Ovations frequently interrupted the speakers during the public forum, and twice the crowd of about 150 persons, overflowing the seats and surrounding the board's tables, gave standing ovations to speakers.

Dr. James Mark, an

DeSales '37 Class To Meet

Geneva — The class of '37 from Geneva DeSales will hold its 40th year reunion on July 9. Bishop John McCafferty, a member of the class, will celebrate Mass at 5 p.m. in the school chapel. A dinner dance will follow at the Geneva Country Club. Donal Kuryla is in charge of local arrangements.

FR. O'MALLEY TO BE FETED

Bath—Parishioners of St. Mary's will honor Father John P. O'Malley, St. Mary's pastor, at a reception in the parish hall Sunday, June 19 from 2 to 5 p.m. Father O'Malley will become pastor of Holy Cross Church, Rochester, on June 28.

obstetrician at both Arnot Odgen and St. Joseph's, noted that "I don't think that there is any difference in the quality of care at either hospital." He also said that "sometimes when the Arnot is really busy...they are not able to handle extra deliveries." When that happens, he stated, "the quality of care can suffer."

Father Cyril Guise, St. Joseph's chaplain, spoke of the importance of freedom of choice, telling the council "I hope and pray that when you weigh this out, that you will have discernment and not give mere lip service to these ideals."

Stanley Douglas, public relations director at St. Joseph's and chairman of the Chemung County Legislature, spoke of increasing government interference, and emphatically stated that "I'm here to say, that if you, as members of the Subarea Council, pass a resolution contrary to what you heard tonight...if you allow this to go through to the executive committee of the Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency, to review and planning and Commissioner Whelan, I think the Subarea Council is derelict in providing that influence to the state level from what you have heard here this evening."

Church Bells Dedicated In Memory of John Reed

Bradford — Church bells and a carillon given to St. Stanislaus parish in memory of John M. Reed were dedicated June 5 by Father Gerard J. Guli "to the blessing of all the people of this lovely community."

Naming them the Bradford Bells and Carillon, Father Guli said "Even as these bells are given as a memorial to John Michael Reed for his love of the children of Bradford Central School, so are they intended to reflect the love for all the people whom this idealistic and exemplary teacher generously served for the 27 years that he taught at Bradford."

About 300 people from throughout the school district attended the Sunday afternoon ceremony. Mrs. Reed, the donor, was represented by her late husband's sister, Adelaide Reagan, who sounded the bells for the first time. Rod Fries, Bradford Central valedictorian, accepted the gift in the name of all who ever attended, or will attend, the school. A specially assembled choir included singers from Tyrone Methodist Church, Weston, Monterey and Bradford Baptist churches and St. Stanislaus Rhoda Sutryk directed the choir, Phyllis Howell was organist and Gary Howell, soloist. A member of each class, kindergarten through 12th grade, presented a rose in memory of Mr. Reed. The Rev. Paul De Meurers, pastor of Tyrone Methodist, gave the closing prayer. A lawn social followed.



Father Raymond Wahl, pastor of Sacred Heart Parish, Auburn, and St. Ann's Parish, Owasco, observed two anniversaries recently. Father Wahl marked the 40th anniversary of his ordination and his 20th year at Sacred Heart. At a reception, held in his honor, he was "assisted" in cutting the cake by several parish children. Father Wahl was ordained June 4, 1937 and came to Sacred Heart in 1957.

SOUTHERN TIER AUBURN-GENEVA

In addition to Principal Anthony J. Savino, three former principals were in the audience, with present and former teachers and students, school board members and officials of surrounding towns and of the Bath Knights of Columbus.



Father Henry Adamski's 35th anniversary was marked by a party in Elmira. Pastor of St. Casimir's, Father Adamski is at the lectern. Representatives from former parishes in Clyde-Savannah, Bradford and Rochester were among the more than 200 who honored the priest.

Father Adamski Feted On 35th Anniversary

Elmira—Father Henry Adamski was honored by more than 200 current and former parishioners for his 35th anniversary of ordination at a dinner at St. Casimir's June 5.

Among those attending were parishioners of St. Stanislaus, Bradford, St. Joseph's, Campbell, St. Stanislaus, Rochester, St. John the Evangelist, Clyde, and St. Patrick's, Savan-

nah, all former assignments of Father Adamski's. He has been pastor of St. Casimir's since 1970. Several members of Father Adamski's family also attended the dinner to pass dinner.

Master of ceremonies was Father Richard Murphy, a former associate at St. Casimir's. Father Adamski thanked all those who attended the dinner for coming.

A. W. BEILBY & SON
Funeral Home
James Rotsell
Darrell O'Brian
139 Walnut St.
Dial 936-9121
Corning, N.Y.

M. L. ALLEN & SON
Corning, N.Y.
Quality Furniture
62 Bridge St.
Phone 936-8431



Father Joseph Egan, standing, was honored at a reception in Elmira on his 35th anniversary. More than 200 attended the reception which followed a Mass celebrated by Father Egan.

Father Egan Honored by Parish

Elmira—More than 200 parishioners and friends of Father Joseph M. Egan attended a Mass and reception honoring him for his 35 years as a priest, and for his service as pastor of St. Patrick's Parish, a post he is retiring from.

Father Egan celebrated the Mass, and was assisted by Joseph and William Danaher, who were the altar boys for his first Mass in 1942. Homilist was Father Egan's associate, Father Paul Ryan.

The reception included talks by several of Father Egan's friends, including Father Foster Rogers, a former associate. Father Robert McNamara, a former teacher and fellow faculty member at St. Bernard's Seminary, and Father Albert Ryan, a former student, now pastor of St. James the Apostle in Trumansburg.

Several parish groups gave Father Egan gifts, in addition to a parish presentation in recognition of his service.