

... Still Working

Ethel Schmidt had spent 27 years working as a bookkeeper until hip surgery forced her to give up her job.

"I spent a lot of time on my feet while working and after the operation I just couldn't keep up the same pace so I had to leave my job," said Ethel. "It was very hard to work for so many years with so many people and then to get cut off like that."

Ethel had been out of work for about a year when she saw the advertisement for SCSEP in a local newspaper. After investigating the program and being assured that the position would suit her physical capabilities, Ethel began working for Bradner House, Inc., in Dansville, as a dispatcher for the Bradner Express, a senior citizen passenger bus.



Dispatching the bus is not Ethel's only duty. She also keeps the books for the van and acts as the in-office navigator, planning the routes that the van must take to pick up the average 20-25 people a day.

"We pick up and take people to the hospital and to their doctors for appointments, bring them in to the stores so they can do their shopping, and then arrange their return," said Ethel.

"The service we offer is very helpful especially during the winter months because so many elderly people don't want to come out by themselves in the bad weather."

Text and Photos
by Terrance J. Brennan

"We have had doctors tell us that they feel the program will help to extend the lives of many enrollees because they will once more enter the community as active members," said Molly.

The types of jobs available range from cooks, nutrition aides and home-service aides to teacher and library aides, receptionists, and dispatchers, to name but a few. All positions are part time, 20-25 hours a week and enrollees are paid hourly wages from a minimum of \$2.65.

There are a maximum of 88 jobs to be filled in Livingston County and at this time, about two-thirds of the positions are taken. Molly said a major reason why more jobs are not filled is the problem that transportation poses.

"Unless the enrollees live within the village or town itself, or have a car of their own, I can't help them; unless, of course, they can get a ride with somebody else. I may have jobs for them, but if there's no transportation, they are more or less stuck. That bothers me a lot."

George Ryan spent more than 50 years as an active member of the carpenter's union.

Now, at age 81, Ryan is retired from the union.

Out of work for the last five years, he has spent much of his time making summer lawn furniture.

"I couldn't stop working completely," said George. "I had to get busy again. I just couldn't sit around."

Then, when Ryan read a newspaper ad for SCSEP, it was too good to turn away from. He immediately contacted Molly Cole, project director — SCSEP.

Within days Ryan found himself working for the Avon Central School District. Now, he spends five hours a day as a carpenter-handyman and keeps very busy working with the limited materials at hand.

"There's no sense in throwing out old lumber scraps when they're still perfectly usable," said George.

His completed projects have included benches for the football field, tables, steps, and most recently, a multi-shelved bookcase where youngsters can keep their textbooks and papers.

Even Mrs. Ryan has expressed her happiness that George is back to work because it "gets him out from under my feet during the day."

