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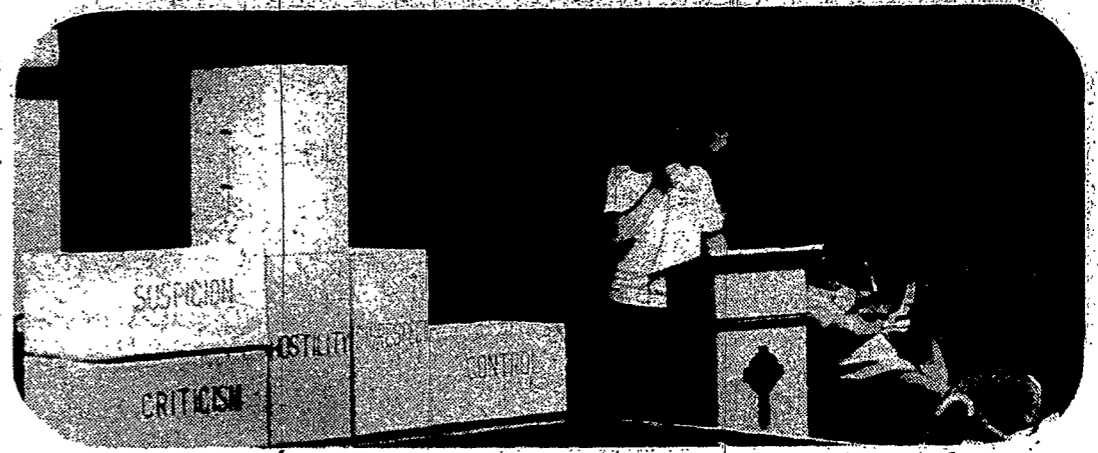
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Southern Tier-Auburn Geneva

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The Larry R. Ryan family of Bath, listening to a presentation during the Family Weekend Experience in Bath. Drawings and other things selected by the family decorate the tables, set on their sides, that set apart their space.



David Ellison, a leader of the weekend, making a presentation concerning the problems that can be damaging to the family.

Families Spend Weekend Strengthening Themselves

By MARTIN TOOMBS
Southern Tier Editor

Bath—The Presbyterian Church's meeting room presented an unusual sight during the "Family Weekend Experience" there July 7 through 9. Tables were set on their sides, forming enclosures on the floor, as temporary homes for the families participating in the program.

Each family had added sleeping bags and pillows to their space, and decorated the "walls" with posters and drawings done by the family

as part of the weekend's activities. Each enclosure had its own character, reflecting the family there.

The Family Weekend Experience involves presentations on family relationships, and activities designed to increase awareness of potential problems and of solutions within a family. The program carried beyond the presentations; the enclosures provided a haven for each family. During Saturday's lunch, family members returned to their enclosures

and ate together, in a relaxed atmosphere, without any interruptions. When the afternoon session did begin, parents and children simply turned to listen.

David Ellison, a leader of the weekend, noted that a major goal is to "build family closeness."

James Pepper added that they wanted participants to "realize how special it is to belong to a family."

Mary Lou and James Pepper, and their daughter

Ellie, and Marilynn and David Ellison and their three daughters were the team offering the weekend. From Syracuse, they hoped the Bath presentation would spur local interest in the program. It is believed to be the first time the Family Weekend Experience has been presented in the Rochester diocese.

The program was sponsored in Bath by the local Marriage Encounter group. Originally scheduled for St. Mary's Church Hall, it was moved to the Presbyterian Church due to a conflict of dates.

Anna Mae Mills, who with her husband Don organized the weekend, noted that of the 14 families that participated, 10 were Catholic, three Protestant and one Jewish. More than 60 people were included in the group, she said.

The Ellisons and the Peppers explained that the weekend is designed to make persons aware of their responsibilities as family members. Pepper noted that activities emphasizing the individuality of each person are included; his wife added that they try to help each person realize what they can contribute to the family.

Another goal, Ellison noted, is to make people aware that they also are "part of the larger family of God."

Saturday afternoon's presentation, done by Ellison, was an explanation of attitudes and reactions which can damage families, such as suspicion or criticism. He then explained how the negative actions can be converted to positive ones.

The weekend is a series of presentations, Mrs. Pepper noted, and "each presentation builds from the other."

"Families create the weekend for themselves," she pointed out, with the leaders only presenting activities

which will help the family learn about themselves.

Mrs. Ellison noted that the program should be parish sponsored and offered on a regular basis. "We want this to be part of the curriculum for a parish, she said, part of its educational program. "We see families as being the basic unit for our Church," she pointed out, and therefore strengthening families should be a parish priority.

Mrs. Pepper noted that the weekend also is an opportunity for families to concentrate on themselves, without outside interruptions.

As for long-lasting benefits, Ellison noted that the weekend is "a beginning." For the experience to be valuable to the families, he commented, "it's really up to them to put" what they have learned "into practice and continue" using it.

Auburn Youth Center Preparations Underway

By MARY ANN GINNERTY

Auburn—A youth center for Auburn came closer to a reality at a meeting June 22 at St. Mary's Rectory of youth representatives and interested community groups.

The site for the proposed center, scheduled to open in the fall, is in the basement of the former Fulton Street School.

The gymnasium of the property, recently acquired by St. Mary's Parish, has been renovated for parish use, with the full basement to be made available for the youth center. The proposed center will be a community effort and will be open to all teens.

"There has been an observable need for a place youth can call their own. It is our vision that the center will provide such a place with a

low-keyed, full-time program accessible to all youth. It will be a place youth can feel they belong, and where, after they get there, they can begin to realize their own abilities," Father James C. Enright said in his report.

Jacqueline Tubbs, a member of the Children's Committee of Cayuga County and the Auburn Service League assumed chairmanship of the building committee. She will be assisted by Esther Orioli, Confidential Help Alcohol Drugs director; Rev. Alton Stivers, St. John's Episcopal Church rector, and a representative from Auburn Interfaith Ministries. They will report on building codes and remodeling sketches at a July 25 meeting in the proposed center.

Detective Carl Festa from the Auburn Police Department and WMCA-WEIU representatives Al Hastings and Peggy Kolo also spoke.

Albert Nicoella, incoming Grand Knight of the Auburn Knights of Columbus, assisted by K of C members and Michael Fitzsimmons, a 1978 graduate of Auburn High School, will explore incorporation procedures and refine by-laws.

Ronald Loewenstein, an Auburn High School student, will serve as liaison with the high school population.

Organizations which have affirmed their support of the project but whose delegates were unable to attend include the Sons of Italy and the Auburn Jaycees.



Photo by Mary Ann Ginnerty

Special Gift

The Owasco Vacation Bible School, sponsored by St. Ann's Catholic Church and the Owasco Reformed Church, concluded this summer's activities by thinking of the needs of others. Shown above is Michael Ward looking over some of the canned goods the Bible school students contributed to the Auburn Interfaith Ministries Emergency Food pantry in Auburn.

Sobering-Up Facility Changes Sponsorship

Elmira—Sponsorship of the sobering-up facility previously operated by the Elmira Psychiatric Center transferred to the Salvation Army July 11, according to Manuel Panosian, Salvation Army advisory board chairman.

Captain Charles R. Butts, local Salvation Army commander, said the new sobering-up facility will make procedural changes to attempt to resolve the problems the psychiatric center had.

An agency-owned vehicle to transport intoxicated persons to a hospital for medical care, if necessary, and then to the facility will be an important change for the new service. Police officers previously were responsible for transportation, Butts noted.

Actual operation of the facility will be transferred to the Salvation Army's 414 Lake St. facility when renovations are completed at that site.

Festival Aug. 3-5 In Dansville Parish

Dansville—St. Mary's Parish Festival will be a three-day event including rides, booths and refreshments.

The festival, at the Dansville Rotary Field Thursday, Aug. 3, Friday, Aug. 4, and Saturday, Aug. 5, will feature Ketch Rides of Rochester. The festival will begin at 6

p.m. on Thursday and Friday, and at 1 p.m. on Saturday. A special \$3 ticket which will allow children to ride the rides from 1 to 5 p.m. Saturday will be available.

A variety of food and refreshments will be available. A special feature will be a "car smashing," an opportunity for persons to "take out their aggressions" on an old car.

Dancing also will be available Saturday evening, with music provided by the Dan Soles Band.

DCG Sets Family Picnic

Elmira—The Elmira Divorced and Separated Catholics Group is sponsoring a family picnic Sunday, July 23 at Grove Park, between Walnut and Grove streets, Elmira at 1 p.m. Families of any faith are welcome, and asked to bring their own supplies for the picnic.

The DCG notes that swings, horseshoe pits, basketball courts, a sandbox, wading pool and covered pavilion are available at the park.

DCG Mass July 20

Auburn—Members of the Auburn Divorced and Separated Catholics Group are invited to a Mass Thursday, July 20 at 7:30 p.m. at St. Peter and Paul's Church on Washington Street. Father Roman Golemba, pastor of the Ukrainian church, will explore the richness of the Ukrainian tradition.

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