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# COURIER-JOURNAL

## Southern Tier-Auburn Geneva

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### Volunteers, CHD Grant Open Rural Clinic

By MARTIN TOOMBS  
Southern Tier Editor

**Berkshire**—The beauty of northern Tioga County has drawn many new residents, who have built suburban-style homes on the county's roads. They live alongside long-time local residents, some of whom trace their ancestors to the time when Tioga County was a logging center, with the wood being sent down-river to coastal cities.

But the area's sparse population, shown by the fact that the northern section of the county is served by a single priest, Father Eugene Weis, pastor of St. John the Evangelist, Newark Valley, and St. Francis, Catoonk, means that residents have few medical services available locally.

A trip to the hospital requires a journey to Ithaca, Waverly, or to Broome County. Few doctors practice outside the county's three larger communities, all in the southern section, and dentists are even more scarce.

Combined with financial and transportation problems, it is possible that persons will not seek the advice of a doctor when they should. And problems in children, not treated, can harm a child's development and educational prospects.

That is the foundation for the Well Child Clinic Project in Tioga County, which began

operation in October. Funded primarily through a \$4,930 grant from the Campaign for Human Development, the project is now operating two well-child clinics each month in the Berkshire Congregational Church, and two in the Halsey Valley Methodist Church, in western Tioga County.

Rose Marie Kushner, the project's organizer, said that "I've been waiting to do this here for years."

Screening tests are the clinic's primary work; "in a way, we're getting ready for a child to go to school," Mrs. Kushner said. Tests of development, hearing, speech, articulation, glucose, protein, vision and teeth are given. Immunizations also are available.

"Our emphasis is on keeping the child well," she explained.

The clinic's clients so far have primarily been people "who don't know when to go to the doctor," she said. If the screening does find something abnormal, she explained, they refer the family to their doctor. If the family has no doctor, the clinic has a list of doctors who are accepting new patients.

During the first clinic, she reported, two children were referred to doctors, and cases of anemia also have been detected.

The clinic also keeps growth, immunization and test result records on each child.

The area has needed "one place where people can have access to care without problems," such as transportation or babysitting, which is provided on the site, she said. The clinics also are "a chance to bring people out of isolation."

During one examination, another value of the clinic became apparent. While Mrs. Kushner examined a three-year-old girl, her mother asked that her feet be checked. She noted that her husband had a club foot, and she worried that the girl also will have one. Mrs. Kushner examined the child's feet, as the doctor had done a few days earlier, and showed the mother that the bone structure and the way the child is walking are normal. The mother, hearing the same thing the doctor told her, nevertheless appeared reassured to hear it again.

The project also has "found an untapped source of energy" in its volunteers, Mrs. Kushner said.

A licensed registered nurse herself, Mrs. Kushner said that the project's 18 volunteers are extremely well qualified for the clinic. "We have people who have degrees," she said, including several registered nurses, a social worker, teachers, former Head Start teachers, and a dental hygienist with 22 years experience in schools.

"I think we found a source of energy" in the volunteers that no one knew was there, she said. "This gives us a few days a month when we practice as professionals," she noted, adding that "we ourselves are a powerless group who are helping ourselves and others at the same time."

In addition to the human development grant, the project has received donations from some local individuals and organizations, Mrs. Kushner said. Future funding is uncertain. Mrs. Kushner expressed her wish that the county would take over the program, and operate it with federal funds, as nearly all well-child clinics in the country are operated. But she questioned whether that was politically possible in the county.

### Pancake Breakfast In Corning

**Corning**—St. Mary's Parish Life Committee will treat the parish family to Christmas music during their Sunday, Dec. 17, pancake and sausage breakfast in the school gym from 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tickets, at the price of \$1, will be available from Jim Roach, 143 W. Second St., through Saturday, Dec. 16. The pancakes will be prepared by staff from Sambo's Restaurant.



### Family Life

Frank Staropoli (left), co-director of the Office of Family Life was in Auburn recently for a sharing session with Father Louis Sirianni and Ardie and Kathy Dandino, coordinators of the Family Life team in Cayuga County.

### Medical Information By Telephone Begins

**Elmira**—A medical information service provided over the telephone has been made available by the Arnot Ogden Hospital Auxiliary.

Beginning Dec. 4, persons have been able to telephone 733-7101 and have played for them one of more than 200 tapes on a wide variety of medical topics. Brochures listing the titles are available in area public buildings and can be requested by telephoning the same number.

The tapes provide basic information, and are not intended to replace professional care or for use in emergencies. The content of each tape has been approved by the Arnot Ogden medical staff.

The service, staffed and funded by the auxiliary, is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.,

### DSG Sets Supper Dec. 17

**Elmira**—The Elmira Divorced and Separated Group is sponsoring a dish-to-pass supper Sunday, Dec. 17, from 4 to 7 p.m. in St. Patrick's Church Hall. Those attending will make decorations for the Christmas tree in church, and participate in a ceremony blessing the tree.

Divorced and separated persons of all faiths are invited. Further information can be obtained by contacting Sister Barbara or Sister Dorothy at 732-3109.

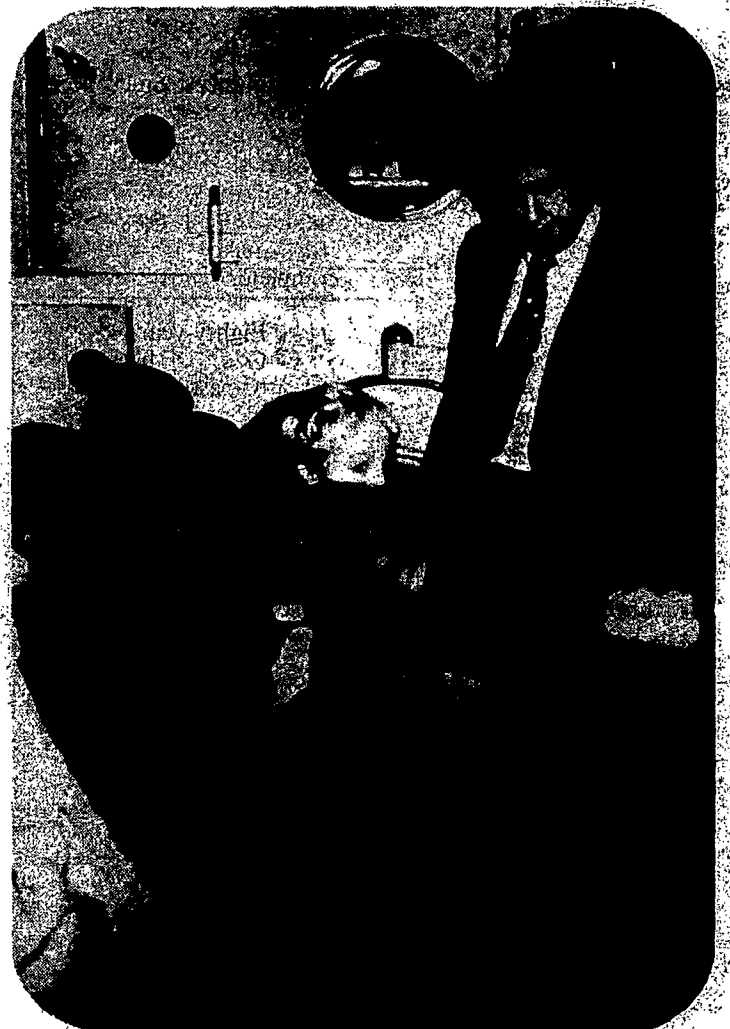
### Alcoholism Seminar Dec. 21

**Elmira**—Forrest Stebbins, community coordinator of the Southern Tier Alcoholism Rehabilitation Service, will speak on "The Two Hatters" at an alcoholism seminar at St. Joseph's Hospital's Doctors Meeting Room, Thursday, Dec. 21 at 12:15 p.m. Further information can be obtained by contacting the Social Work STARS Department at St. Joseph's, 733-5519.

and from 6 to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday.

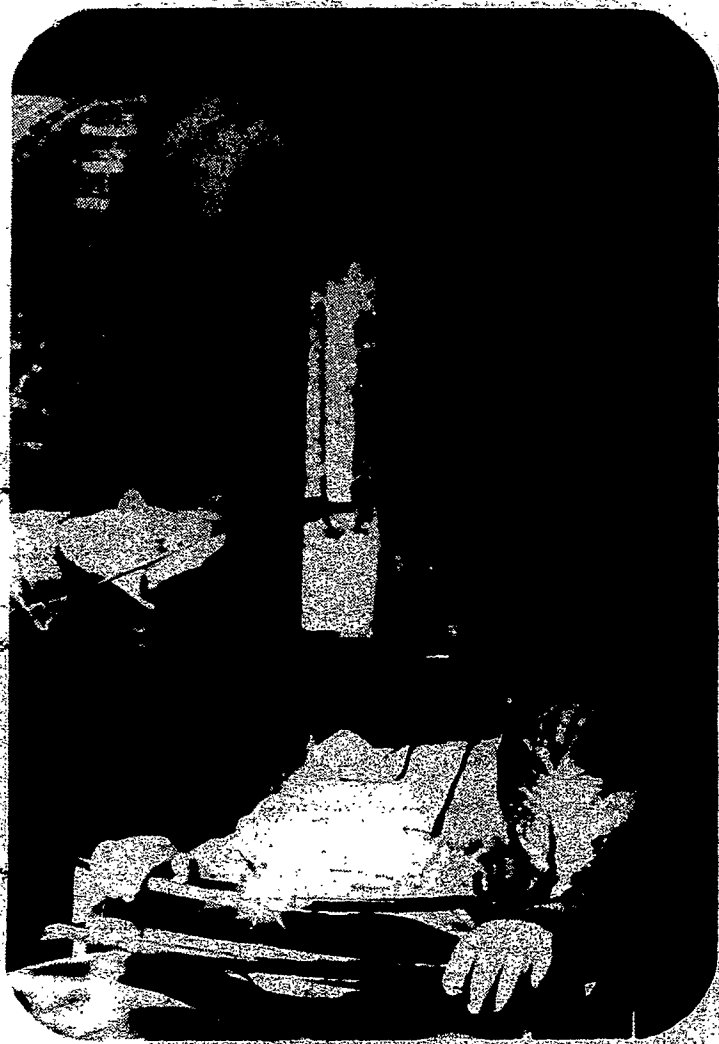
### Absolution

**Seneca Falls**—A Penitential Service with general absolution will be held at St. Patrick's Church at 7:30 p.m. Monday, Dec. 18.



### See the Money!

Robert Burns, a member of the Auburn Savings Bank, shows kindergarten students from St. Mary's School the interior of the bank vault and the neat packages of thousands of dollars the vault contains.



Juliette Emmett says "aah" for Mary Alice Wolcott, a dental hygienist at the clinic.

**Gerould's  
Pharmacies**

S. Main St. and  
Church & Hoffman  
Elmira

Delivery Service  
**733-6696**

### Services Announced

**Big Flats**—Father Martin Boler, OSB, has announced that there will be vespers Christmas Eve, Sunday, Dec. 24 at 6:30 p.m., and Christmas Day Mass at 9 a.m. at Mount Saviour Monastery. The public is invited to both liturgies, he noted, adding that there will be no midnight Mass this year.