

# Barter System Makes Elderly Equal Partners

By MARTIN TOOMBS  
Southern Tier Editor

**Watkins Glen**—Setting up a project which didn't end when the grant money did was the goal of Beverly Stearns when she started Project Share in Schuyler County.

The project, designed to aid those over 60 years of age, was sponsored by the Statewide Senior Action Council in Syracuse for the county, and has been operating with \$3,250 grant from the Campaign for Human Development.

The concept is based on the idea that people over 60 have a skill they can use "for a form of barter for what they need," Ms. Stearns explained.

Project Share matches two people who then trade services, she said, with one of the pair over 60. Both persons can, of course, be elderly. Once matched, the pair can continue their relationship on a long term basis, she pointed out, without any further help from an agency.

The project therefore can continue after the

funding period. Otherwise, Ms. Stearns said, it would just be "using up some money, and when my job ends, the project ends."

The barter concept grew from a 12-week study she did under a separate grant last winter, she noted, which included a needs assessment of those over 60 in the county. That resulted in the idea for the barter system to fill those needs, and a proposal from Statewide Senior Action Council was funded for a six-month period by the campaign.

"The only requirement" for the matches, she said, is that both persons "must be willing to swap something."

Ms. Stearns noted that she has used the local radio stations and weekly newspapers to interest people in the program, but pointed out that spreading information in Schuyler County is difficult, as the county has no daily newspaper and many persons work and shop outside the county.

She recently reported that 16 pairs had been

matched, six on a temporary basis; two others had failed. She added that she expects several more persons to begin participating partnerships after the holidays.

Examples of pairs now working include an elderly woman who is unable to walk down her long driveway to get her mail. Each day, a local boy takes her mail to her, and in return receives a batch of cookies each week.

Another woman needs transportation from Mecklenberg to Watkins Glen, and is willing to provide piano lessons in return. Ms. Stearns noted that that is an ideal situation, as the ongoing needs of both persons will enable the pair to stay matched.

The survey last winter showed that many of the senior citizens in the county have "a great deal of pride," and are "very distrustful of government agencies," Ms. Stearns noted; she added that some are not getting benefits they are entitled to because of their feelings toward the programs. But with the

barter system, the senior citizen "pays" for the service, and after the match is made, the agreement continues without outside interference.

In addition to the work matching barter pairs, the contacts with senior citizens have provided information for other organizations. Ms. Stearns reported that she gave a list of persons she contacted to the local Retired Senior Volunteer Program, which now sends its newsletter to them. She also distributed 120 "vials of life," a system of keeping medical records so that ambulance staff can find them easily if necessary, to local senior citizens.

A goal now, she said, is "pairing of the 16 to 20 age group with the 60 to 80," noting that many young people have had no opportunity to get to know older persons. She noted that ignorance about aging and the problems of aging are common, and she feels that contacts through a program such as Project Share would help persons to better understand aging.

## Cenacle Sets Overnighter

An overnight retreat for women will be conducted Jan. 5 and 6 by Father William Graf at The Cenacle Renewal Center. Father Graf, pastor of the Church of the Annunciation, will develop the theme of Gospel Living, with special focus on its application in the family.

The program will open at 7:30 p.m. on Friday and will close with Mass and supper on Saturday. Reservations may be made through Mrs. Ann Steinkamp, 671-3278, or the Cenacle, 271-8755. The program was initiated by St. Rita's Society of West Webster.



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## BUYER'S GUIDE

# CCGEB Approves Capital Expense Policy

By MARTIN TOOMBS  
Southern Tier Editor

**Elmira**—The Chemung County General Education Board (CCGEB) approved a capital expense policy at its meeting Dec. 14.

The proposal establishes guidelines for the school system to make capital improvements and repairs to the schools and convents. Included are the four school buildings used by the system, the three not used, and the three convents the system operates.

The proposal, first given to members at the October

meeting, was discussed in November, with the vote being delayed for further study by parish councils.

Appearing at the meeting were representatives of the St. Peter and Paul Parish Council, who requested further information on the policy. Martin Tracy, chairman of the committee that wrote the proposal, tentatively agreed to meet with the council in January.

Tracy and Thomas Santulli commented that they felt the board was ready to vote, and had allowed sufficient time for discussion. The vote of the six

members present was unanimously in favor.

The CCGEB also received a check for \$7,000 from the Ways and Means Committee as their support of this year's budget, and a report from Robert Carges of the committee that the 1978 Walkathon netted \$5,733.20 for the system.

The board also discussed the position of the Ways and Means Committee, which currently has no chairman. Lawrence Stephens, board president, said that he would raise the subject with the committee at their next meeting.

The board also discussed a letter from the Rochester chapter of the state Federation of Catholic School Parents, and decided that they needed more information, and to invite a chapter representative to speak to the board.

In other action, the board approved the purchase of a new oven for Our Lady of Lourdes Convent; approved a motion allocating proceeds from the Pudgies promotion to the tuition assistance fund; and heard the final report of the ad hoc Facility Review Committee, which recommended that no changes be made in current building use.

## Food Pantries Helped By OHD, Charities

**Auburn**—The House of Concern Pantry in Seneca County and five Cayuga County Emergency Food Pantries re-stocked their shelves for Christmas through financial donations collected by the Office of Human Development (OHD) and Catholic Charities.

A check for \$500 was sent to the House of Concern and \$100 each to the Auburn Interfaith Ministries (AIN) Emergency Food Pantry, St. Alphonsus Pantry, both in Auburn; the Northern Cayuga County Food Pantry in Cato; the Western Cayuga County Food Pantry in Union

Springs and the Southern Cayuga Community Pantry in Aurora.

The money was part of that contributed by the diocese to the COURIER-JOURNAL's annual Christmas Fund. The money was used to supply food and Christmas baskets to the poor.

Checks for these amounts were forwarded by Sister Anne Urquhart, SSJ, and Father William Spilly, Northern Tier staffpersons. The Office of Human Development and Catholic Charities are agencies of the diocesan Division of Social Ministry.



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