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# COURIER-JOURNAL

## Southern Tier-Auburn Geneva

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In Tompkins County:

### Area Congregations (are) Together

By Martin Toombs  
 Southern Tier Editor

Ithaca — A recognition of the realities of inter-faith associations is probably one factor in the success of Tompkins County's Area Congregations Together (ACT), which claims 48 member congregations.

ACT president the past two years, Rev. Robert J. McCune of St. Paul's United Methodist Church, notes that the group doesn't expect all its member congregations to support every activity of the 10-year old association.

And, while McCune

acknowledges that participation in inter-faith activities is not high, the organization is the parent group for several successful organizations which operate independently and report to ACT's 15-member Board of Directors.

ACT, primarily a lay group, depends on volunteers for its programs, but also employs a part-time executive director, Georgia Coffin.

Participating parishes name liaisons to ACT, and are asked for donations. Mrs. Coffin reported that of the 78 churches in Tompkins

County, 48 have representation. Among those participating are Catholic parishes Immaculate Conception, Ithaca; St. Catherine of Siena, Cayuga Heights, St. Anthony's, Groton, and Holy Cross, Dryden.

McCune reported that in the past, the group avoided issues on which member congregations could not agree. He commented that he felt that was a "bad way to do it." Now, he said, ACT will list to a proposal by "any constituent group," and the congregations which feel they can't support a program don't Churches in ACT don't have

to "come right down the line together," he said, adding that "when we can, we do," but it is not necessary.

Differences on specific issues are less of a problem, he noted, because "the more we get together, the more we realize that we share something basic, something important."

The procedures, for example, make it possible for ACT to sponsor Christian celebrations without embarrassing the Jewish congregation that is a member.

Mrs. Coffin noted that while "we don't expect everybody to agree" on each issue, members seem to be interested in making everyone feel comfortable. This results in "some tip-toeing," she commented but it is because "everybody is so happy to be working together" they don't want to endanger the relationship.

McCune noted that there has been a change in focus of ACT lately, as the group now is co-sponsoring programs and supporting the work of other groups rather than presenting its own programs. The board now is "trying to plug into the

issues and areas" in the community, and "give support" to emerging programs, he noted.

ACT is the parent group for other programs. Kitchen Cupboard, operated from the Immaculate Conception rectory basement, supplies food aid for Tompkins County, and McCune pointed out, is about the only place where such aid is available on weekends.

The Bib and Tucker, which operates in the Masonic Temple, handles used clothing, working primarily with needy families.

The Friends of Chile aids Chilean refugees in the Ithaca area.

The Religious Workers Association also operates closely with ACT, McCune said, and ACT has been taking over some of its functions, including the provision of a part-time employee at the Tompkins County Hospital who maintains patient lists for the county's churches.

Annually, ACT sponsors a Thanksgiving celebration, McCune noted, adding that the attendance is not con-

sistent from year to year, but seems to depend on the quality of the committee's work. He cited the clothing drive for Church World Service as being an especially well-received program. The organization is planning a hunger program for October.

Mrs. Coffin noted that her duties, on which she said she spends 10 to 20 hours each week, include attending meetings as a representative of ACT, working to get to know as many congregations in the county as possible, and working on communications. As soon as ACT gets approval for a mailing permit, she reported, a regular newsletter will begin.

Mrs. Coffin sees as valuable the association's county-wide membership. She noted that if only Ithaca churches were members, the group "would lose" the perspective of the rural churches. She also feels that ACT members should get to know persons from throughout the county, and get to know the various congregations. Meeting rotation is part of that effort, she noted, pointing out that the annual meeting, which was May 1, was in Groton, after having been in Newfield last year.

### Women's Club to Hear Father William Smith

Elmira — Father William B. Smith, professor of Moral Theology and dean of St. Joseph's Seminary, Dunwoodie, will be the speaker at the annual Communion Breakfast of the St. Patrick's Women's Club, Sunday May 6. The breakfast at Pierce's Restaurant, Elmira Heights, will follow the 9:30 a.m. Mass at St. Patrick's Church.

Father Smith, vice chairman of the state Right to Life Committee, has lectured extensively on such subjects as abortion, euthanasia, genetic engineering, and situation ethics. He has appeared as a pro-life spokesman on the "Phil Donahue Show" and other network television shows and debates.

His topic for the breakfast will be "Family-Strength and Stresses Today."

Further information and reservations can be obtained by contacting Gail Cristofaro, 733-7426; Betty DeBlasio, 733-6292; Tonette Stapleton, 732-7610; or Jane Callahan, 734-8051.

### 'Sportswoman of the Year'

Auburn — Mary McGee was honored as "Sportswoman of the Year" at the Holy Family Sports night recently. Magee, who spent 35 years coaching and teaching including her last assignment as athletic director at Mount Carmel High School where she retired was given a trophy and the key to the city during

the ceremonies.

Also honored at the banquet was Sandy Harding, an eighth grader who received the first annual Richard Woods Memorial Trophy for her athletic and academic accomplishments. Mildred Kinarty, Joan McCormick, and Rosie Casper received

plaques for their contributions to the Holy Family Sports program.

Special guests at the dinner included Auburn Mayor Paul Lattimore, Al Ianiri, Robert Race of Pepsi Cola, Auburn High School basketball coach Robert Bradley and Holy Family's Ray Wall.

### St. Ann's Alumni Elect Officers

Hornell — St. Ann's School Alumni Association recently elected officers and directors for the coming year. They are: Bishop, president; William Sirianni, vice president; Barbara Bishop, secretary; Mary Falzoi, treasurer; Roseann O'Connor, membership secretary.

The directors will be Salvatore Falzoi, Ann Watt, Mary Agnes Crosby, Mary Agnes Cavalletti, Mary Jane Price, James O'Connor and Joseph Aini.

The association's annual banquet is planned for October.

### Women's Health Seminar Tonight

Elmira — The third "To Your Health" seminar Aminax will be Wednesday, May 2, at 7:30 p.m. in the Doctors Meeting Room of St. Joseph's Hospital. The program is dedicated to women.

Diseases of the female organs, "Alcohol and drug dependency" and "What to expect during the menopausal years" will be three topics broached by Dr. Alan E.

Rothberg and Dr. John A. Rurak, gynecologists, and Dr. G. Greg Miklashek, psychiatrist.

The seminars, sponsored by the Community Relations Committee of the hospital's Development Council, are free of charge. To assure a seat, those wishing to attend should call the Development Office at St. Joseph's, 733-9137, for reservations.

### Rosary Rally

A bus excursion to the National Rosary Rally July 15 at Auriesville is being

organized now. Reservations may be made with Mary Kelly, sponsor, at 586-1664.

### Death

#### Mrs. Mary C. Murphy

Elmira — The Mass Christian Burial was celebrated March 20 for Mrs. Mary C. Murphy at St. Mary's Church here. Father William Burns was principal celebrant of the Mass. Father Burns was joined at the altar by Msgr. William Roche and Fathers James Hewes, James Sauers, William Spilly and Raymond Wuest.

Mrs. Murphy, a daily communicant at St. Mary's, was active in the Rosary Altar Society, Ladies of Charity and the Legion of Mary. She was also active in volunteer work while living at St. Ann's Home.

She is survived by her son John J. Murphy, of Rochester, a daughter Sister Ann Concepta Murphy, SS of Canandaigua, a brother Dr. Daniel O'Neill, a sister Mrs. Margaret Keefe (both of Elmira) and two grandchildren.

### Lack of Self-Respect Cited as a Problem By Women Alcoholics

By Martin Toombs  
 Southern Tier Editor

Elmira — Failing to become the "perfect wife and mother" that they feel they are expected to become can cause a loss of self-respect that is common in alcoholics, four panelists stated at an Alcoholism Seminar at St. Joseph's Hospital April 19.

The four women, who all described themselves as alcoholics, noted their frustration at not being able to attain the "overwhelmingly demanding" standard portrayed on television and in the other media.

That loss of self-respect and the fact that they have regained it since they stopped drinking, was a theme as the women discussed their experiences with alcohol. One woman, Helen, noted that "I didn't like myself at all" when she was drinking, but that she has "gained my self-respect" since she stopped.

The women also noted the difficulty mothers have in seeking treatment for their alcoholism. They reported that nine of ten alcoholic wives are left by their husbands; therefore, many of them are single parents. Not only is it difficult to make child care arrangements during treatment, but they also fear the loss of custody of

their children if they are treated for alcoholism.

The women described their previous drinking patterns, which varied widely. They pointed out that a person doesn't have to get intoxicated constantly to be an alcoholic; Nancy noted that she feels that if a person has emotional problems and is drinking at the same time, there is a drinking problem. She further stated that, at least for her, dealing with only the emotional problem is insufficient; the drinking must be addressed.

The four women supported the work of Alcoholics Anonymous, and defended the existence of a women-only group in Elmira. They noted that, especially for an alcoholic who had stopped drinking a short time, members often attend more than one meeting each week. Therefore the women attend both the women's meeting and mixed meetings. They pointed out that they feel that

women who are hesitant to go to a meeting probably would be more apt to go to a women's meeting.

Nancy noted that the "type of support" that can be offered a mother by other mothers is "very, very important" to an alcoholic trying to start a life without alcohol. The women's group helps them to deal with the "special guilt" that is connected with being "an alcoholic mother."

Discussion at the seminar also raised the additional problem for women alcoholics caused by society's attitudes toward them. Women who drink are helped to cover their problem, they noted; for example, women are much less apt to be arrested for drinking-related offenses. Those "protections" of the female alcoholic make it easier for them to continue drinking, it was noted.

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