

# Cooperative Effort Provides Dental Care

By Martin Toombs  
Southern Tier Editor

Corning — The note from the student began "Dear Sir," but became more personal as she expressed her thanks for the aid she had received in getting dental work done to her four front teeth.

And to the bottom the girl's teacher had added her appreciation as well, noting how good it was to see the girl smiling, something she hadn't done before the dental work was done.

The girl's family had been unable to afford the work she needed, so it was paid for by Corning Area Emergency Referral Program which operates through the

## 'Death of Wow' At McQuaid

Father William O'Malley, SJ, will deliver a commentary on changes in thinking among young adults entitled, "The Death of Wow," Thursday, Feb. 28.

The lecture, sponsored by the McQuaid Aides' Morain Circle, will be held at 8 p.m. in Spina Bifida Group to Meet

Dr. Frank Bennett, assistant professor of pediatric psychology and psychiatry at Strong Memorial Hospital, will address the Greater Rochester Spina Bifida Association at 8 p.m. Feb. 28, at the Al Sigl Center. Members are asked to bring the premium stamps and labels they have been collecting.

cooperation of local dentists, school nurse-teachers and St. Patrick's Human Development Committee.

Ann Maloney, head of the committee, said of the note: "That's what makes it all worthwhile."

The cooperative effort makes dental care available to students in the Corning school district whose families are unable to pay for it. The program's service area includes the public schools of the Corning City School District and the Catholic schools in the district, Catholic School North and Catholic School South.

Mrs. Maloney related that the program began in April

the McQuaid High School cafeteria.

Father O'Malley, widely known as an author and as a film actor, is a teacher at McQuaid.

Proceeds from his lecture will be used for the renovation of the school's Audio-Visual Department. Tickets and further information on the program are available from McQuaid Aide members: Mrs. Joseph Bayer, 288-8995; Mrs. John Glavin, 473-9074; Mrs. William McDonnell, 381-8094; Mrs. Robert Peartree, 244-0468; Mrs. Adrian Prince, 381-5803; and Mrs. John Ryan, 385-2050.

Mrs. James Lane is in charge of publicity for the event.

1977, and received a \$1,000 grant from the Campaign for Human Development in July 1978. The program also has been funded through a collection at St. Patrick's and donations from groups such as the Knights of Columbus and from St. Vincent's Human Development Committee.

Heading up the effort in the schools is school nurse-teacher Marion Hoff, of whom Mrs. Maloney said "Marion is the main cog that makes this program go."

It was a comment of Mrs. Hoff's that started discussion on founding such a program. Seeing the effort the local Elks expended to help children at Christmas, she wondered aloud at what could be done for the dental health of some of the children if she had such resources. The right persons heard her, and at the time St. Patrick's Human Development Committee was looking for a project.

That proved to be the beginning of the program, which since has aided about 30 children.

Mrs. Hoff noted that many families pressed to make ends meet just can't afford the dental care their children need. When it comes to deciding whether or not a family should be aided, she noted, they usually only make sure that no other program will pay for the care. Mrs. Hoff and Mrs. Maloney explained that the system is not bureaucratic, benefiting from the fact that the nurse-teachers know the children and their families.

Cases aided have included cavities as well as a student who had his front teeth knocked out in an accident.

When a student who needs work done is identified, the nurse contacts the parents; they take the child to the dentist. The program works with a dental practice in Corning whose members have agreed to take the referrals. One member of the practice, Dr. John Gunselman, has worked closely with the program.

In February 1979, the program got involved in coordinating a dental

screening in the Corning schools, a practice which had been dropped by the district several years ago, Mrs. Hoff said.

With the cooperation of 10 local dentists, 1,300 children in grades three, four and five were screened. Of those examined, 426 or 31 percent had decay; 381 or 28 percent had problems with their bite; 255 or 19 percent had plaque; 209 or 15 percent had multiple problems, and 55 or 5 percent had swollen gums.

And earlier this month, during National Dental Health Week, the process was repeated with grades six, seven and eight. While she

didn't have the statistics yet, Mrs. Hoff reported one instance of a child who had a speech difficulty that was determined to be caused by problems with his teeth.

For the future, Mrs. Maloney said that they are studying ways to do more preventative work in the schools.

Now incorporated as the Corning Area Emergency Referral Program, they are currently waiting for designation by the Internal Revenue Service as a tax exempt agency, which will make it possible for donations to be tax deductible.

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