



Gerry works at sealing envelopes at the ARC center.



Gerry checks the growth in his garden.

# Home Helps New Lives

By John Dash

Penn Yan — Nearly every day Gerald Bishop dons his black beret decked out with medals, settles his silvered sunglasses on the bridge of his nose, picks up his lunch pail and leaves home for work.

But what may seem an ordinary daily event in the lives of millions is really an extraordinary accomplishment.

Gerry, as he is called by his workmates and his housemates, lives in the former Hollowell House on Main Street here. Since May, the Hollowell House has been home to a number of folks, ranging in age from 22 to 60, several of them from Newark Developmental Center, Gerry and the rest from the local community. All of the residents are learning to take an active part in the regular daily commerce of the community.

Gerry explains his work duties include office maintenance, envelope stuffing and sealing and some artwork, all of which he does under the



egis of the county Association for Retarded Children (an unfortunate misnomer, for the center in which Gerry works serves no children). Action is now being taken to change the name, Dave Milliman, director, said.

At home, Gerry and his fellow residents are under the care of personnel from Catholic Charities which has contracted with the State of New York to provide those services that Gerry and others like him need.

The chief of the Charities program is Dr. Jill Szawara, an experimental psychologist, who explained on the morning after completing her operating budget for next year that while Church staffers run the house, no Church monies are involved. All money comes, in

a complex formula, through the state.

The project tries to enable persons who have been institutionalized or sheltered because of their disabilities to take an active role in their neighborhoods.

According to Karin Hilton, residence manager, the routine of the house is meant to involve all of the residents, to instill in them the sense that "this is their home."

"Most of the household chores," she said, "are done by the residents, from taking out the garbage to helping shopping."

"And residents are welcome to stay as long as they fit into the range of activities of the house," Dr. Szawara said. She explained that it happens that a resident may develop such skills as to leave the residence and live an independent life. Others, she said, may return to institutionalized living.

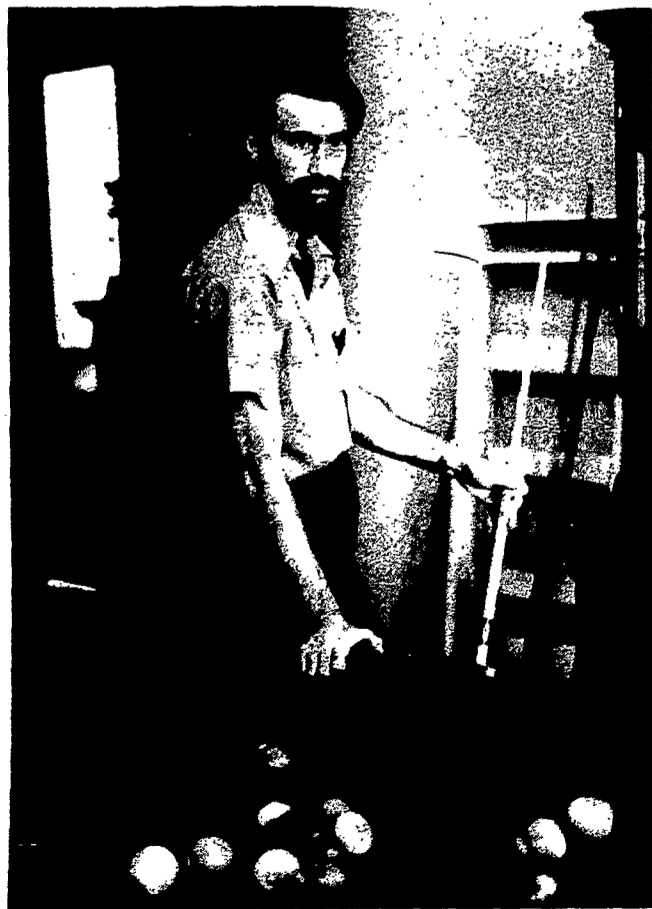
Gerry is one of the founding members of the house, having arrived shortly after its opening in May, around the time that the local paper acknowledged the presence of the house in Penn Yan with a banner headline "Welcome!"

That touch from the press pleased Dr. Szawara no end. She acknowledged that establishing such houses in other communities has on occasion been done in an atmosphere of hostility and fear.

But in Penn Yan, "we've had a very positive response from the community," she said.

The Penn Yan home is second of two operated by diocesan Charities; the other opened last year in Lyons.

The Hollowell House is a magnificent structure built nearly 100 years ago in the Victorian Queen Anne style. It has been remodeled to suit the needs of the group it houses, but many of the features which distinguish it have remained. Throughout the house oak and cherry woodwork dominates the walls and an enormous stained glass window floods the main stairway with rose and gold light.



A game of billiards ends off the day.

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