

Hornell Hospitals File Merger Application

By Martin Toombs

Hornell — It's been 10 years since the discussions began, but a signed request to merge was filed by the two Hornell hospitals on the last day of 1981.

St. James Mercy and Bethesda hospitals began talking about a merger in 1971. The process went through several phases since then, the latest being about six months of discussions over the document which now has been forwarded to the state.

While the St. James board has repeatedly approved the concept of the merger, the move has caused considerable controversy on the Bethesda board.

Merger supporters have consistently pointed to the need for Hornell to have a single hospital, and the improved services which could be provided by that hospital.

The merger discussions have resulted in both hospitals delaying major renovation plans during the past decade. The need for such renovations, and the increased services included in the merger application are major factors in the \$26,327,224 cost of the project.

Included in that price is the cost of upgrading the facilities and renovating them to the new service pattern, construction of new specialized areas, the addition of a 60-bed skilled nursing facility at the Bethesda site, and the architectural and other fees involved in such a project.

The merger would become effective upon receipt of the necessary state approvals. The new corporation, to be called Bethesda Mercy Health Care Center, would be directed by a board drawn from the existing boards.

The permanent role of the Sisters of Mercy in the merged

corporation is protected by the agreement. Eight members of the board of the merged corporation have been appointed from each board; five of the St. James appointments are Sisters of Mercy. The board also will include two representatives of the medical staff.

Provisions of the agreement prevent the Sisters of Mercy's proportional representation on the board from being diluted without the approval of the five Sisters on the board.

Scheduled to serve on the merged board are, from Bethesda: Carl Wellington, Bethesda board president; Adam Davidson, Robert Elsenheimer, Fred Gertz, Henry Guenther, Robert Hollands, Mary Huntington, and David Shults.

The St. James appointees are: Spencer Crow, St. James board president; Sarah Curtis, Robert Granger, Sister Jean Marie Kearse, Sisters of Mercy superior; Sister Jacqueline DeMars, Sister Gaye Lynn Moorhead, Sister Mary Augustine Malley and Sister Mary Rene McNiff, the administrator.

The agreement also provides that Sister Rene will serve as administrator of the new corporation, and the first board president will be drawn from the Bethesda appointees.

The physician members would be Dr. John Coyle and Dr. Leon C. Haymes.

A three-phase plan taking three to five years has been designed for accomplishment of the renovation plan.

In the first phase, the obstetrics and pediatrics at Bethesda, or the "Northern Division," would be moved to St. James, or the "Southern Division." The skilled nursing facility and additions for obstetrics and other services would be constructed at

Bethesda, and most of the remainder of the hospital would be renovated.

A new operating room, intensive care-coronary care unit, laboratory and laundry would be constructed at St. James. During the phase, many administrative functions will be moved to the former Lincoln School.

In phase two, obstetrics and pediatrics would move to their permanent locations at Bethesda, and the services would move into the new space added at St. James. Emergency and radiology departments would be constructed at St. James, and renovations would be done to several other areas of both facilities.

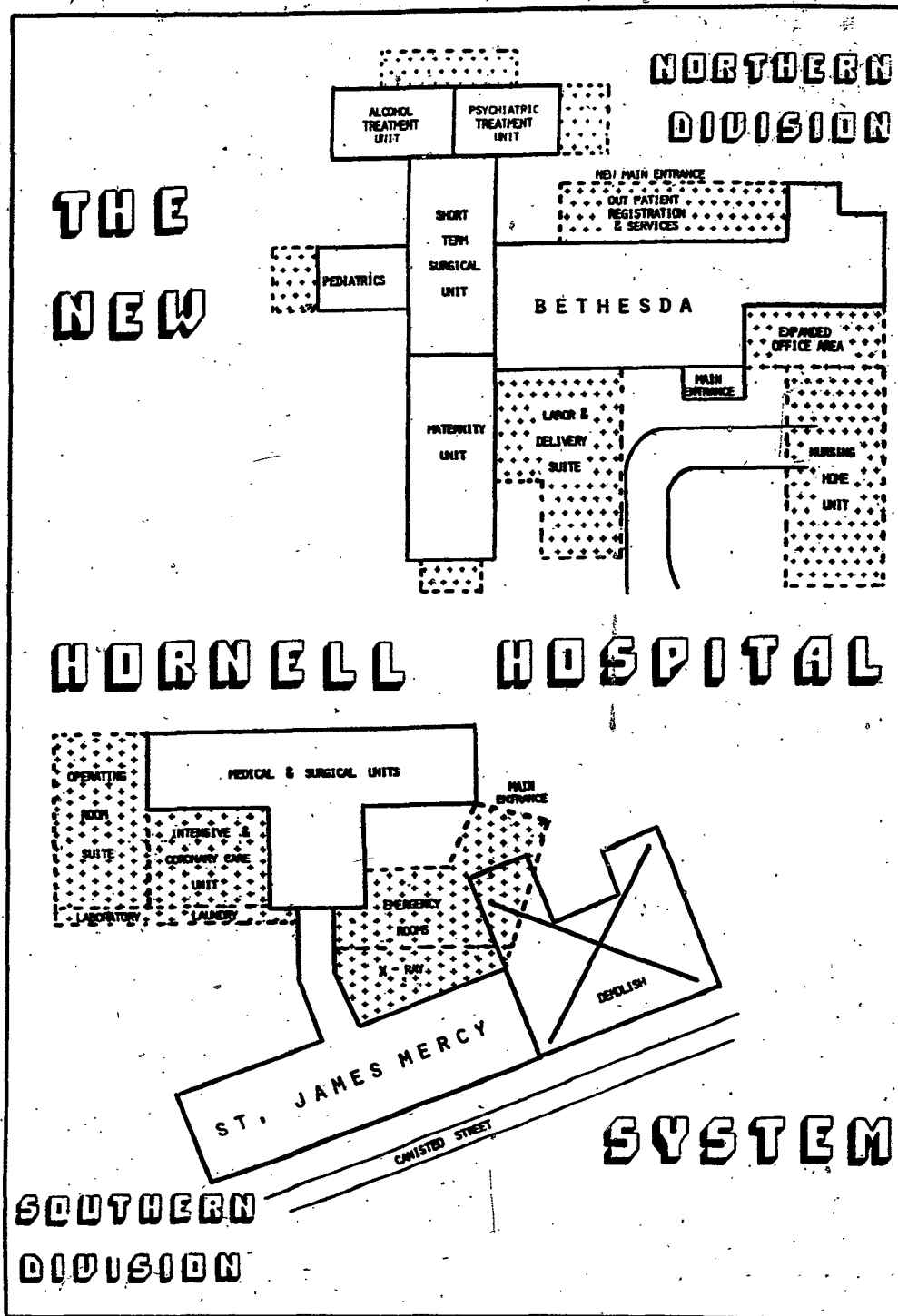
The existing north wing at St. James, no longer used for patient care, would be demolished during that phase.

The net result of the work will be an end to the current duplication of services in the two hospitals, the establishment of the most technical units in new quarters constructed according to modern standards, and some adjustments in bed complements.

The 60-bed skilled nursing facility and a separate application requesting certification for acute hemodialysis also will be new services for Hornell.

The two hospitals currently have 159 medical-surgical beds; the renovated hospitals will have 16 fewer, or 143. Establishment of a single intensive care unit will allow a reduction in four beds, to eight, while the four coronary care beds now in two units will increase to six.

Pediatric beds will be reduced from 20 to 16, and maternity beds reduced from 23 to 13. The 16-bed psychiatric unit will maintain its size.



Plans also call for a 20-bed alcoholism unit to be added.

The plan must be reviewed by the Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency, which will forward a recommendation to the state. The merger and construction proposals also will be considered by the State

Hospital Review and Planning Council, which will make a recommendation to the state health commissioner, who must approve such applications.

Those planning agencies have consistently expressed support for the merger of the

Hornell hospitals, while reserving comment on the construction plans.

Sister Rene commented that she hopes the application will be reviewed expeditiously. She also emphasized that the merger and renovation plans are closely connected, and expressed her hope that reviewers will not try to deal with them as separate items.

Pope: No Government Can Legitimize Abortion

Vatican City (RNS) — Pope John Paul II said here that abortion was an "abominable crime" that no government has the right to legalize.

"No human authority can declare as legitimate that which divine law condemns," the pope declared. "The life of every man, even of man just conceived and not yet born, is worthy of absolute and unconditional respect."

"If this fundamental right is not respected, how is it possible, then, to speak of the rights of man and of the dignity of the human person? Is there not a patent contradiction in this?"

The pope met at the Vatican with 600 delegates to two Church-sponsored Rome conferences on the family.

In an indirect appeal against the use of contraceptives, the pontiff also

said that love between married couples and the begetting of life are inseparable.

"The Church has always taught this inseparable connection: conjugal love is the spring of human life, and the gift of human life originates in conjugal love," he said.

"The still more destructive element of family well-being is

the plague of abortion, which the Second Vatican Council

justly called an abominable crime," the pope said.

NFP Workshop

A Natural Family Planning workshop will take place from 10:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 30, at the Bishop Kearney Building, St. Mary's Hospital. The workshop is open to anyone interested in NFP, especially instructed couples.

No charge will be levied for instructed couples but a \$5 charge per person will be charged to anyone not instructed by NFP.

Father James Hewes will be the guest speaker with the subject of The Spirituality of NFP. Participants may attend four of the six workshop sessions. Participants are

urged to bring a lunch for the noon break.

Schedules, handouts and coffee will be available at 10 a.m. Workshop sessions are: Conscious-Responsible Parenthood — What Does the Church Really Say?; Parents, Children, Fertility Awareness; A Winning Combination; Couple Communication; New Outreach Ideas; Breastfeeding Review; and Ask the Foleys (medical questions and concerns).

Registration is necessary and may be accomplished by calling (716) 464-8705.

Ministry and Bible Workshop Subject

Father Sebastian A. Falcone, director of St. Bernard's Institute, will lead the 12th annual workshop of the Association of Religious Educators Jan. 25-27 at Notre Dame Retreat House, Canandaigua.

Father Falcone will have as subject "Our Ministry and Biblical Enthusiasts." The workshop is intended for priests, administrators,

pastoral assistants, education directors and coordinators and those involved in catechetics.

The workshop is co-sponsored by the Association of Religious Educators and the diocesan Office of Religious Educators.

Father Falcone is a scriptural scholar and is considered an expert on Paul, Luke and Apocalyptic literature.

Memorial Service Scheduled

Elmira — A memorial service will be conducted at 7 p.m., today, Jan. 13, in the Dunn Chapel at St. Joseph's Hospital.

The Pastoral Care

Fisher Offers Special Skills

Beginning and intermediate sign language will be offered as non-credit courses at St. John Fisher College this spring.

The beginning class will cover basic spelling and sign language skills, using Signed English and the Rochester method of finger spelling. Intermediate Sign Language is a continuation of the beginning class.

Department of St. Joseph's, sharing in the grieving of those who have experienced a death in the family, plans the worship service every two months for all those who have died at St. Joseph's within that

The intermediate class will meet from 3:30 to 5 p.m. on Mondays and Wednesdays with classes beginning Monday, Jan. 18. The beginners class will meet from 7 to 8:30 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays, beginning Tuesday, Feb. 2.

There is a \$75 fee for each section and a limit of 25 students. The instructor is Mrs. Nancy Fine. For further information contact Paula Lane at 586-4140, ext. 234.

Students Accepted

Hornell — First year students who began studies in August at the St. James Mercy Hospital School of Radiography were accepted as juniors Dec. 18 in ceremonies in the hospital's board room.

The action marks successful completion of their first three months of study. The students are William Ellis of Hornell, Sharon Traylor of Woodhull, Mary Cronin of Wellsville and Wendy Williamson of Nunda.

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