

'Helping Hands' Fund To Aid Seneca Falls' Unemployed

By Teresa A. Parsons

Recent layoffs at Phillips Electronic Components Group in Seneca Falls have been only the latest in a series of tough economic breaks for Seneca County. Sylvania's Colonial Division moved to Boston, Mass., after Phillips purchased the company in 1981. Then there was the closing of Eisenhower College, layoffs at Gould's Pumps and the closing of Sarah Coventry. Meanwhile at Phillips, the third shift has already gone, and the community has been advised that further layoffs are ahead, according to Mary Monnet, manager of manpower development at Phillips.

For a county with a population of just over 33,000 according to the 1980 U.S. census, that means hard times, not just for those directly affected, but also for the town's overall economic health. On a one-to-one basis, Seneca Falls resident Kitty Peterson suggested that "you could probably walk down the street and anyone you talk to would know someone hit by this."

She cited two instances of families she knows who face frightening prospects if Phillips closes. One is a young couple, recently married, that just had their first child and are building a new home. Another, Peterson mentioned, is a man in his 50s, an age when he's not ready to retire but at a point in life when making a new start is extremely difficult.

Parishioners at St. Patrick's Church in Seneca Falls have not been affected in a major way yet. But looking ahead to when unemployment checks stop coming and winter brings high utility bills, Loretta Baldassari and Mary Suffredini, members of the church's Human Development Committee, began to wonder what could be done, and the "Helping Hands" fund was born.

Still in its infancy, the fund is designed to provide grants for unemployed people with such financial emergencies as utility bills and rent according to Peterson, who is also a committee member. The real need is not expected to show up until January, she said, so the committee is starting now to raise funds.

One of their first ideas came from Father William Moorby, who was until his recent transfer the associate pastor at St. Patrick's and a member of the town's Council of Churches. He suggested that since unemployment was a community problem, their efforts should reach out to the community as a whole through the council. He and Suffredini took a proposal to the council's next meeting where it was not only approved, but was greeted with enthusiasm and a start-up donation.

"It was seen as something we ought to be involved in ... that we ought to be doing," commented Reverend Charles Bollinger, the rector of Trinity Episcopal Church in Seneca Falls and the treasurer of the council. "There was great enthusiasm for the idea," he said.

Peterson pointed out that one crucial step in setting up the fund has been to find an impartial means of disbursing the grants, which do not require repayment. That task will be undertaken by the House of Concern, a community-based assistance program, and the local branch of the Red Cross, so that screening and decisions on aid can be kept apart from the church. As Father Moorby pointed out, it will also help the fund to coordinate with the other programs' efforts and avoid duplicating services.

St. Patrick's got the fund-raising effort off the ground this past weekend with a bake sale after all Masses. Future possibilities include a walk-a-thon modeled after the success of the



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Kitty Peterson of Seneca Falls and her children, Marie, 2, and Becky, 4, are about to start baking for a sale this past weekend at St. Patrick's Church. Proceeds will benefit the area's unemployed people through the Helping Hands Fund.

CROP Walks in the area, and possibly a rummage sale, Peterson said.

The fund may be brand new, but it already has a motto which testifies to the pride of

Seneca Falls residents in their independence and concern for one another — "A helping hand is better than a handout."

Community Calendar

Thursday, July 4

EVENING OF REFLECTION: "Focus on the Eucharist;" Our Lady Queen of Peace Church, 601 Edgewood Avenue; 7:30 p.m.; evening prayer and rosary preceding Mass; meditation and Benediction afterward; all welcome.

Friday, July 5

CHARISMATIC MASS: First Friday Charismatic Mass on the beach just west of Ontario Beach Park; 288 Beach Avenue; celebrant, Father Jim Connolly, S.J.; 7 p.m.; bring lawn chairs; limited parking at a distance from beach — car pools recommended; in case of rain, Mass at Holy Cross Church, 4492 Lake Ave.; call Charismatic Renewal Center, (716)436-6252.

Saturday, July 6

CONCERT: Nik and the Nice Guys concert to benefit the Kidney Foundation of Upstate New York; Downtown Festival site; 7 p.m.; tickets — \$4 in advance at Altier's stores or foundation office; \$5 at the door.

Sunday, July 7

CAMP: summer basketball camp at St. John Fisher College; girls 5th-12th grade are eligible; directed by Larry Weise; through Friday, July 12; call Jon Green, (716)385-8103 for more information.

Monday, July 8

CAMP: basketball day camp for boys in grades 6-9; through Friday, July 12; Nazareth College; 9 a.m.-5 p.m. daily; \$89; call Bill Nelson, (716)586-2525, ext. 428.

CLASSES: "Exploring Art '85" at Nazareth Arts Center; students grades 10-12; photographic process, papermaking, collage and sculpture offered; through Friday, July 12; 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. daily; \$75; call (716)586-2525, ext. 400.

WORKSHOP: in creative dramatics for 7-9 year olds; theatre games, puppetry, pantomime and improvisation; Nazareth Arts Center; Mon., Tues., Thurs. and Fri., 9-10:15 a.m.; through Friday, July 19; \$30; advanced classes for 10-13 year olds; 10:30-noon; \$35; call (716)586-2420.

Tuesday, July 9

WORKSHOP: "Anger, Resentment and Self-forgiveness" offered by Women in Transition; Salem United Church of Christ, 60 Bittner St.; 6 p.m. — brown bag supper; 7-9 p.m. — program; no charge.

Friday, July 12

CHARISMATIC MASS: sponsored by Charismatic Renewal Group of Elmira; St. John the Baptist Church, 325 Lake St., Elmira; 7:30 p.m.; all are welcome.

FESTIVAL: St. Mary's Church in Canandaigua; Friday and Saturday, July 13; 5:30-11 p.m.; garage sale, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. on convent lawn both days; food, videogames for children and more.

Saturday, July 13

"Drums Along the Genesee" drum corps competition; sponsored by Bishop Kearney High School Marching Kings Band; for more information, call Arthur Rietman, (716)342-4000.

Monday, July 15

FAMILY EDUCATION: "Seeking God's Will, Biblical Prayer, Types and Models of Prayer" adult prayer class taught by Denise Mack; Vacation Bible School for children; St. Rita's Church in Webster; 9:30-11 a.m. through Friday, July 19; babysitting available; \$3 for adult book; \$5 for child's materials; \$8 for two or more children per family; call Coleen DeKing, (716)671-2371 for more information.

CAMP: Greater Rochester Quarterback/Receiver Camp; St. John Fisher College; through Friday, July 19; \$50 per camper; boys, grades 8-12 are eligible; call Dave Whitcomb, (716)254-2020, or John Heck, (716)624-3300.

Friday, July 19

FESTIVAL: Most Precious Blood Church, 219 Stenson St.; international foods; country store craft booth; music and rides; Friday/Saturday — 6 p.m.-midnight; Sunday — 1 p.m.-1 a.m.; spaghetti dinner on Sunday, 1-4 p.m.

FESTIVAL: St. Bridget's 131st Anniversary Celebration; 175 St. Bridget's Drive; through Tuesday, July 23; Friday — Hispanic celebration, 7:30 p.m.; Saturday — Gospel Music Workshop, 9:30 a.m.-4:40 p.m.; Sunday — all heritage celebration, 5 p.m.; Monday — Irish, German, Italian celebration; Tuesday — all heritages; call (716)454-4236.

FESTIVAL: Church of the Holy Ghost, 220 Coldwater Road in Gates; food, refreshments and fun for all ages; Friday and Saturday, 6:30 p.m.

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New Calendar Format

Starting with the edition of July 17, the Courier-Journal will change the presentation of its Community Calendar. We are moving to a semimonthly calendar that will be packaged attractively with a feature photograph. We hope readers will want to save the calendar page as a reference for upcoming events.

The calendar will be published the first and third weeks of each month. To submit entries, follow these guidelines:

Submit information on events occurring during the first three weeks of the month by the 25th of the previous month.

Submit information on events in the last one or two weeks of the month by the 5th of that month.

For the July 17 calendar only, we will try to accept notices until July 12.