

Remembering Pearl Harbor



Steven Woznick Sr. recalls the attack: "I was 100 yards away on the U.S.S. Solace (a medical ship) and watched as the U.S.S. Arizona was blown to smithereens."



Ralph Bleier, a member of the Catholic War Veterans, salutes while the national anthem is played during a Dec. 7 Mass marking the 50th anniversary of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

Brian Crites/Photo intern

Quadrant board withdraws plan for closings

By Rob Cullivan
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — The Northeast Quadrant Governance Board voted Wednesday, Dec. 4, to withdraw its prior recommendation to close three quadrant schools.

The original recommendation, adopted by the governance board on Nov. 18, was to have gone before the diocesan Christian Formation and Education Council this week.

The vote to overturn the proposal followed a Dec. 4 meeting of the quadrant board at St. Margaret Mary's Parish, 401 Rogers Parkway. Most of the parents in attendance expressed opposition to the plan.

Thomas O'Neil, president of the governance board, said strong parental opposition to the plan had influenced the board's decision to withdraw its earlier recommendation. But he said he could not provide a tally on how many board members voted to reject the plan Dec. 4.

The board's decision leaves the formation council with no plan to consider in its review of the financially troubled Northeast Quadrant. The council was slated to meet Wednesday, Dec. 11.

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In addition, the quadrant board's vote presents Bishop Matthew H. Clark with a challenge to his statement that he would not accept the "status quo" in the Northeast Quadrant for 1992-93.

The bishop stated that position in an early-November letter to O'Neil following the board's initial rejection of a reorganization plan devised by its strategic planning committee.

According to diocesan spokesman Father George Norton, Bishop Clark was reviewing the situation as of the *Catholic Courier's* deadline Monday, Dec. 9.

Meanwhile, the Catholic School Committee, an organization of Northeast Quadrant parents attempting to stave off school closings, has announced it will begin selling raffle tickets this week. Organizers hope the ticket sales will raise \$200,000 to cover the quadrant's budget deficit.

Declining enrollment throughout the quadrant and a projected 1991-92 budget deficit of \$104,000 contributed to the board's original recommendation to close quadrant schools at St. Thomas the Apostle, St. Stanislaus and St. Cecilia.

The board announced its recommendations Nov. 19. But school parents in the quadrant quickly formed the Catholic School Committee to draft an alternative plan.

Barry Sullivan, chairman of that committee and president of St. Thomas the Apostle's school board, presented the alternative plan at the Dec. 4 quadrant meeting.

The school committee was willing to pledge \$100,000 toward financing the 1991-92 deficit, Sullivan said. He later explained that the monies pledged would be drawn from the Monsignor Richard K. Burns Education Foundation, a fund named for the late pastor of St. Thomas the Apostle Parish.

Furthermore, the committee said it had compiled a list of about 300 volunteers willing to serve on committees devoted to such tasks as publicizing quadrant's schools, raising funds for them, and increasing their enrollment, he said.

Noting that about 2,000 people had signed petitions against the proposed school closings, Sullivan pleaded with the board to withdraw its recommendations.

"There is no delicate way to state

the premise upon which this proposal is made," Sullivan told the governance board. "Simply, we are convinced that if you close all the schools, you will save a great deal of money, but will lose the faith of generations to come."

Sullivan said the proposed closings — if implemented — would spur an even greater enrollment decrease in the remaining quadrant schools than that which occurred in prior reorganization moves.

According to a survey conducted by his committee, for example, only 14 percent of those who send children to St. Thomas the Apostle would enroll their offspring in another quadrant school if St. Thomas is closed, Sullivan said.

Additionally, the survey showed that only 38 percent of St. Cecilia school parents and 40 percent of St. Stanislaus parents would re-enroll their children in another quadrant school, he said.

A total of 457 questionnaires had been analyzed for the enrollment portion of the survey. Committee members noted that they were still receiving responses to the questionnaire, which was distributed Nov. 22.

Black Catholics to elect delegates for National Congress this summer

ROCHESTER — African-American Catholics will elect delegates Saturday, Dec. 14, to represent the Diocese of Rochester at the Seventh National Black Catholic Congress.

The congress is slated to convene July 9-12, 1992, in New Orleans, La.

Voting will take place during the diocesan-sponsored Day of Reflection for African-Americans in St. Monica's Rectory, 34 Monica St.

In addition to selecting delegates for the congress, participants in the seven-hour conference will examine a number of issues concerning black Catholics. The event will begin with registration at 10 a.m.

In small-group discussions, participants will tackle such topics as "the internal structure of the African-American family; the African-American male; and the effects of racism on the African-American family," according to Jacquelyn Dobson, director of the diocesan Office of Black Ministries.

Dobson noted that a videotape outlining concerns surrounding each issue would be presented before each group discussion.

Cost is \$6 per person, and walk-in registrations are welcome. For information or to pre-register, call Dobson at 716/328-3210.

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