

Businesses give \$50,000 to Corpus day care

By Rob Cullivan
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — Three area businesses — Sentry Group, Caldwell Manufacturing, and David McKelvey — jointly have made a grant of \$50,000 to the Corpus Christi Child Care Center, 880 East Main St.

The grant was announced at a morning press conference on June 30 in the parking lot of Corpus Christi Parish.

According to a press release distributed at the conference, the funds will be used to help the center become a nationally accredited child-care center; to renovate its second floor; and to double the number of children it currently serves.

The press release noted that with the grant's funds, the center will renovate its second floor, adding 3,480 square feet to the center's current total of 4,872 square feet. Monies will also go toward the purchase of floor coverings, furniture, office equipment, a security system and tricycles for the children.

Linda Hagarty, director of the center, expressed gratitude for the grant and added that it would enable the center's staff to become certified in early childhood education. According to the press release, only 14 child-care centers out of 170 in Rochester are nationally accredited.

Accreditation enables a day care center to go beyond "baby-sitting" and actually prepare children for elementary school, Hagarty and other officials said at the press conference.

Hagarty also pointed out that the grant comes in a year when the center celebrates the theme, "Dreams are the seeds of change." That theme was illustrated by the center's 32 children who "planted" construc-



S. John Wilkin/Staff photographer
Michael Terrence (top) and Cory Sanders climb on the lap of Victor Cypher, president of Caldwell Manufacturing, during a June 30 press conference at Corpus Christi Child Care Center. The event announced a \$50,000 grant to the center by Caldwell, Sentry Group and David McKelvey.

tion paper hands and hearts emblazoned with such words as "Love" and "Nurture" in a wagon "garden."

The grant was distributed under the auspices of Rochester's Child, a group of community businesses, retired business people, government officials and the following agencies — Rochester Area Foundation, the United Way of Greater Rochester, the Rochester Chamber of Commerce, the Industrial Management Council, and Rochester Grantmakers Forum.

In addition to the grant, Douglas Wolk, a representative of Sentry Group, has volunteered to serve on the center's advisory board. He explained that he will concentrate on developing other funding sources for the center and devote his time to financial issues.

He added that the grant highlights the business community's stake in an educated work force. Today, when working mothers, fathers and single parents must often place their children in day-care centers, businesses need to pay attention to where the children they someday will employ are being raised, he noted.

"We're trying to put something back into the community," Wolk said of the three businesses. "We're really investing in our future."

Wolk said he hopes other businesses will "adopt" day-care programs in the same manner as the three underwriters did with Corpus Christi, a notion that pleased the pastor of Corpus Christi Parish, Father James B. Callan.

"The whole community is taking responsibility for raising the next generation," he said. "That makes me very happy."

According to Hagarty, the child-care center is open from 7:15 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and is run by a staff consisting of paid employees and numerous volunteers.

Southern Tier food bank being built in commercial zone



S. John Wilkin/Staff photographer
John Farrer, director of the Southern Tier Community Food Bank, stands at the site of the bank's new facility building on Chemung County Road 64.

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

"BIG FLATS" — Exiting onto Chemung County Road 64 from Route 17, one can't help noticing the flood of commercialism engulfing the area. Arnot Mall can be found on the left, and a new Wal-Mart and Sam's Club are being erected on the right.

So it would seem that the new Southern Tier Community Food Bank, currently under construction smack in the middle of this consumer's paradise, is rather out of place.

Quite the contrary, said John Farrer, who serves as the food bank's director.

Rather, Farrer observes that the Southern Tier Community Food Bank's placement near this hustle and bustle will contribute to an increased aware-

ness of the agency's services.

"This is going to be big-time visible now," Farrer remarked. "A lot of people don't know about the food bank."

Farrer added that the new facility's proximity to Route 17 will also provide "easier truck access for food pantries and soup kitchens" than is offered by the current site at 175 Grand Central Ave. in Elmira Heights.

In addition, increased freezer and cooler space at the 15,000-square-foot Big Flats facility will enable the food bank to store more items at a time than was possible in the Elmira Heights building — which once served as a fire-truck factory.

"The space will be much more efficient. We have more square footage now, but a lot of it is unusable," said Prudy Georgia, who serves as STCFB's community director.

"We can't take a lot of frozen food right now," Farrer acknowledged.

Ground for the new food bank was broken last month. Farrer said that a target time of late November, 1993, has been set for STCFB to move its operations from Elmira Heights to Big Flats.

The new property is owned by the Southern Tier Office of Social Ministry, which STCFB is a member organization of. Farrer said the project's estimated cost of \$600,000 will be largely offset by state funding, expanded operating budgets and fundraising.

STCFB began operating in 1981. It serves as a distributor of food and household supplies for 130 member agencies in Chemung and surrounding New York counties as well as parts of Pennsylvania. The food bank receives donations on the local, regional and national level — "anywhere and everywhere we can," according to Georgia.

Farrer noted that in today's challenging economical climate, a new and improved food bank will come in handy for needy Southern Tier residents — employed as well as unemployed.

"There are people working full-time who get food stamps. If you're making minimum wage, you're likely to show up at a food pantry or soup kitchen," he remarked.

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