

# GRCC marks 75 years of fostering ecumenism

By Lee Strong  
Senior staff writer

ROCHESTER — Countering centuries of distrust and competition will take more than 75 years.

During that span, however, the Greater Rochester Community of Churches has gone a long way toward fostering communication and cooperation.

GRCC is marking its 75th year of promoting understanding between religions

and races with a Nov. 13 banquet, scheduled for 5:30 p.m. at the Mapledale Party House, 1020 Maple St.

In keeping with the organization's spirit, co-chairs for the event are Father Joseph Brennan, director of the Interfaith Chapel at the University of Rochester; Jean Bartlett, recent president of Church Women United; and Rev. Leardrew Johnson, pastor emeritus of Mt. Olivet Baptist Church.

Since its inception, GRCC has gone by various names — the Federation of

Churches of Rochester and Monroe County (1919-40); the Federation of Churches of Rochester and Vicinity (1940-61); the Rochester Area Council of Church (1961-71); and Genesee Ecumenical Ministries (1971-91).

Over the years, this ecumenical organization has found itself involved in such efforts as promoting religious education; battling racism in the wake of Rochester's riots in the 1960s; taking on local businesses' minorities hiring practices; working for the rights of the in-

carcerated; aiding migrant workers; helping to promote better housing; and fostering better relations among religions.

Thus GRCC's children and step-children in its various forms include Flower City Habitat for Humanity; the Interfaith Forum; Rochester Jobs, Inc.; the Wellspring Ecumenical Resource Center; Church Women United; and the Judicial Process Commission.

The organization also formed other short-lived groups and committees as

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## Tier program emphasizes immunization

By Mike Latona  
Staff writer

ELMIRA — In Chemung County, the 75-percent ratio of children fully vaccinated by their second birthday is significantly above national and state statistics.

Still, that figure is not high enough in the eyes of the St. Joseph's Hospital Foundation.

"A goal stated by (President Bill) Clinton is for 90 percent of the nation's children to be fully immunized by the year 2000," explained David Sullivan, the hospital foundation's president.

In an attempt to achieve that ideal, St. Joseph's has joined forces with the Chemung County Health Department to offer free vaccinations for Elmira-area children.

Known as the Children's Health Improvement Project (CHIP), this effort was launched in early 1994. It included a series of free immunization sessions last spring for 236 children at 10 area schools and public-housing sites.

This service will be open to all Chemung County children for the first time when immunizations are conducted in Horseheads at the Arnot Mall's Community Room on Saturday, Oct. 29, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Children ages 2 months and older are eligible; parents or guardians must bring immunization records. Shots will be provided to guard against measles, mumps, German measles, polio, diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, meningitis and liver infection.

While children wait for their shots this Saturday, they will be treated to clowns, balloons, sweat shirts and other giveaways.

"We want to make this as pleasant an experience as it can be," chuckled Sullivan, acknowledging that receiving multiple shots is a necessary process for children but not an enjoyable one.

Earlier this month, the St. Joseph's Foundation released results of a survey for 1,271 Chemung County children between 1991 and 1994. The study revealed that 75 percent had received all proper immunizations by age 2, compared to national and state averages of 65 and 50 percent, respectively.

Yet only 18.1 percent were on schedule at 16 months of age. Sullivan said that these lapses can usually be attributed to three factors: parents not believing that falling behind on vaccinations makes any difference; children not being covered by health insurance; and lack of access to immunization sites.



The eighth-grade class of 1944 at the former Our Lady of Perpetual Help School in Rochester will celebrate its 50th reunion Nov. 27. A 10 a.m. jubilee celebration will take place at held at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, followed by a brunch at the Spring House, 3001 Monroe Ave., Pittsford. For information, call Father Elmer Schmidt at 607/324-0410.

## Bishop Clark awards area Respect Life Fund grants

Bishop Matthew H. Clark Oct. 17 announced the recipients of Respect Life Fund grants. Sixteen pro-life organizations in the 12-county Roman Catholic Diocese of Rochester have received a share of this year's \$17,900 fund, which is directly supported by the annual Thanks Giving Appeal.

The fund was established in 1983 to support organizations offering services, pastoral counseling and alternative choices to abortion for women facing a problem pregnancy. It was formally named the Respect Life Fund in 1985.

This year's recipients and grant amounts in the counties of Monroe and Livingston are:

**Melita House (\$2,900)** — This residential facility operates in the City of Rochester's north side, providing prenatal care, childbirth classes and counseling. In addition, an after-care program provides educational and social skill support to former residents. The grant will support such resources as transportation, personal-care items, nutrition education items, food and educational materials.

**Nazareth Academy (\$2,100)** — The grant will be used to cover general operating expenses of the Teen Pregnancy Support Program. Pregnant and parenting students are assisted in completing their education, provided with counseling and referral services, and taught parenting skills.

**Corpus Christi Center (\$1,900)** — This non-profit, community-based clinic operates in northeast Rochester. The grant will support free pregnancy testing, counseling and prenatal classes.

**Life's Refuge (\$1,800)** — This Livingston County project is dedicated to helping identify options available to young, pregnant and/or parenting women. The grant will support the agency's informational, referral, counseling

and support services.

**Birthright of Rochester (\$500)** — The grant will be applied to costs for counseling and educational services to pregnant women.

In the Finger Lakes area, this year's recipients are:

**Birthright of Auburn (\$500)** — This volunteer organization provides services to any woman whose pregnancy presents a crisis. The grant will support referral service to community agencies that can support the pregnant woman's needs, such as WIC, public assistance, adoption services, legal assistance, etc.

**Birthright of Ontario (\$500)** — This volunteer service organization provides alternatives to abortion for crisis pregnancy. The grant will be used to offset the expenses for counseling and referrals, free pregnancy testing, maternity and baby clothing, transportation and short-term emergency housing.

**Birthright of Victor (\$300)** — The grant will help this volunteer service chapter provide alternatives to abortion for women with crisis pregnancies in the Victor area.

**Faith Haven (\$650)** — This interdenominational maternity home offers support and counseling for young, pregnant women. General operating expenses will be supported by the grant.

**Maternity Services Program of Finger Lakes Social Ministry (\$2,150)** — The grant will support staffing costs for this program, which serves people in Wayne, Ontario, Yates, Seneca and Cayuga counties. Access to health care, counseling, housing, food, clothing and other life-support services to pregnant-parenting women are provided.

**Crisis Pregnancy Center (Geneva) (\$250)** — The grant will help defray start-up costs for this community-based organization, which will provide pregnancy care, counseling, education and assistance in the Geneva area.

This year's recipients in the Southern Tier area are:

**Birthright of Corning (\$1000)** — This organization offers a positive alternative to abortion through counseling, referrals, free pregnancy testing, clothing and other material needs associated with pregnancy and childbirth. Rent, pregnancy test kits and material aid to clients will be covered by the grant.

**Birthright of Ithaca (\$1000)** — This volunteer organization provides alternatives to abortion for girls and women. Services include pregnancy testing, financial aid, labor coaches and referrals to other agencies. Birthright is open to any girl or woman who is or who suspects that she is pregnant. Services are also provided for the pregnant woman's children, husbands, boyfriends, parents, etc. The grant will be applied to the cost of utilities and direct material aid to clients.

**Birthright of Owego (\$1000)** — This free and confidential pro-life pregnancy service organization helps any woman facing an unplanned pregnancy and provides all the practical aid she may need: pregnancy testing, a shelter home, adoption referral, legal, medical and Social Service referral; transportation to doctors; counseling; and education on caring for herself and her unborn or newborn child. The grant will defray expenses for rent, utilities and insurance.

**0-3 Family & Maternity Project of Catholic Charities of the Southern Tier (\$1000)** — The grant will be applied to providing material assistance, parenting education and support, information and referral for low income families with children from 0 to 3 years of ages.

**Tioga Teen Pregnancy Project (\$350)** — This outreach program coordinates health, education and counseling services to pregnant/parenting teens and their families in Tioga County. Staff and program costs for adolescent support groups will be covered by the grant.

