

DIOCESAN NEWS

'Marge' Nurnberg dead at 71; devoted to unity

Margery S. Nurnberg, whose ecumenical and interfaith work spanned three decades and was recognized nationally, died Friday, Dec. 8, at age 71 in Atlanta, where she was hospitalized for a lung infection while visiting family.

Nurnberg was the first lay director of what became the Rochester Diocese's Department of Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs. She retired after 15 years in April 1994.

That year she became the first lay person and first woman to receive the James Fitzgerald Award for ecumenical work from the National Association of Diocesan Ecumenical Officers (NADEO).

The honor crowned years of dedication, also highlighted by her presenting, on behalf of the U.S. Catholic Church, a Steuben glass cross to the Russian patriarch in Moscow in 1988, according to Brian McNulty, permanent deacon and Nurnberg's successor. The presentation marked the 1,000th anniversary of the conversion of Russia.

In a statement to area religious leaders following her death, McNulty wrote, "Her sense of humor and faithfulness to herself and friends made working with her easy and a joy. Her reliance and faith in God allowed her to find ways to treat



Margery Nurnberg, who received the James Fitzgerald Award for ecumenical work from the National Association of Diocesan Ecumenical Officers, died Dec. 8 in Atlanta.

File photo

all she met as children of the one God who created us all. She will be missed. We may honor her memory by continuing the work of understanding and unity of all that she labored so lovingly on during her life."

Bishop Matthew H. Clark, in a statement, commented, "We all have lost a great friend and community builder in Marge Nurnberg. Her commitment to ecumenical and interreligious cooperation sprung from her belief in the goodness of all God's people, and our ability to love, to cooperate, to journey together."

"She inspired others to believe in the possibility of dialog, cooperation and community," Bishop Clark continued. "Certainly our Covenant with the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester is an example of her vision and her efforts. Her spirit and confidence that we can do anything

taught us much about life and love."

Hilda Stebbins of Horseheads, a former member of the diocesan Commission for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, also reacted with sadness.

"We had a very close and beautiful friendship. It was grace adorned," she said. "We studied together the first documents of Vatican II, with the Franciscans who had a seminary in Geneva."

The two joined other women for a yearly meeting for 30 years.

"We used to get together the Wednesday before Holy Thursday," Stebbins said. "We called it Holy Wednesday. We shared our faith, we shared our growth, we shared our understanding of that growth. They were very special days."

Salahuddin Malik, former president of Rochester's Islamic Center, recalled working with Nurnberg a few years ago to

start the Interfaith Chapel at the Greater Rochester International Airport.

"She was a marvelous lady who worked on interfaith matters without prejudice," he said. "We never felt we represented separate faiths. We always felt we had one goal: to provide the travelers and members of humankind a place to submit to one Creator who we know by different names."

Nurnberg represented the diocese at the greater Rochester Interfaith Forum, and was chairwoman of the diocesan Commission on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, and president of Genesee Ecumenical Ministries (predecessor of Greater Rochester Community of Churches). She was also chair for an NADEO study paper on justification by faith.

In an interview last year with the *Catholic Courier*, Nurnberg said she grew in her faith as she learned about others.

"There's always the acknowledgement among religions that there's something greater than all of us and that loves us very much ...," she said.

A Chicago native, Nurnberg is survived by her husband Donald and children Dennis, Wendy, Steven, Sara, and Paul.

Calling hours will be from 2 to 4 and 7 to 9 p.m. Friday, Dec. 15 at the Thomas M. McNerny Funeral Home, 113 Walnut St., Elmira. A funeral Mass is planned for 11 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 16, at her home parish, St. Patrick's Church, Elmira. Arrangements for a memorial service in the Rochester area in mid-January are pending.

Memorials may be sent to the Food Bank of the Southern Tier, 945 County Route 64, Elmira, N.Y. 14903; Catholic Charities of the Southern Tier, 1700 College Ave., Elmira, N.Y. 14901; or American Association of University Women - Elmira Branch, c/o Margaret Belden, 607 Euclid Ave., Elmira, N.Y. 14901.

-Kathleen Schwar

Priest to mark 50th, in Rome

If you know Msgr. John F. Duffy, he would like you to pray with him in spirit in church Dec. 24 when he celebrates 50 years of priesthood.

"We're going to be apart geographically, but I hope to be together in spirit," he said of those he knows.

The retired monsignor, a native Rochesterian who resides in Syracuse, will be in Rome from Dec. 18 to 26. There he will mark the date of his ordination - Dec. 22 - by celebrating Mass at the altar of St. Pius X in St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican City.

Msgr. Duffy hopes to be joined at the Mass by his brother, James, and sister-in-law, Mary. The couple will be touring Europe.

"I'm not going to do much more than go to the Vatican museum again and again," the monsignor said.

Before moving to his current residence at St. Pius X House in Syracuse, the priest resided at St. Mary's Church in Baldwinsville, a Syracuse suburb. On Jan. 7, the parish will honor the golden jubilarian at its 11:30 a.m. Mass, followed by a reception.

Msgr. Duffy held a number of posts at parishes in the Diocese of Rochester beginning in 1946, including pastorates at St. Mary in Dansville, St. Catherine in Addison, St. Francis in Phelps and St. Philip Neri in Rochester. His last position in the diocese before his 1990 retirement was at Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Brockport, where he served as parochial vicar.

-Rob Cullivan

Center welcomes first new business owners

By Kathleen Schwar
Staff writer

The Micro Enterprise Center in Geneva is providing a macro boon for new businesses.

Its grand opening Nov. 29 at 494 Exchange St. featured three businesses begun, respectively, by three women new to the business world. Their training and support comes from the Worker Ownership Resource Center, which is providing the center as a foothold for the future.

"This is the first of these kinds of centers we have," Kevin Hennessy, WORC executive director, said. A second is being planned with Project Agree, a community groups coalition, in Addison, Steuben County, for early next year.

WORC is a community economic development organization dedicated to empowering economically disadvantaged people. Organized five years ago, it received funding from the U.S. Bishops' Campaign for Human Development and matching diocesan money. The program has trained close to 300 individuals and

helped 90 businesses begin or expand, according to Hennessy. It also provides loans to these individuals and businesses.

Next year, Rochester will become the fifth locus of WORC programs, which operate in Seneca County, Addison, and Elmira, as well as Geneva. A federal grant recently approved will allow WORC, working with Catholic Family Center, to train refugees from Cuba, Asia, and Ukraine.

Funding for the Micro Enterprise Center comes from a \$30,000 federal block grant through the city of Geneva. WORC signs subleases for the businesses, with rent initially 25 percent of the going rate.

"We anticipate businesses being with us for one to two years," Hennessy said.

First to move into the Geneva center were a custom clothing design shop and a Southwestern-theme gift shop, at the vacated J.M. Pants building. The owner of a third business, BB Beauty Supplies aimed especially at African-Americans,

celebrated with them, although not yet open. The shop was scheduled to open by the end of December. The building can house six to eight businesses.

Donna Salisbury of Phelps, who trained in April, owns Gift World, the Southwestern shop. A wife and mother of three children, she works nights full-time as a certified nursing assistant at Clifton Springs Hospital and Clinic and tends her shop, open six days.

"I had no business background at all," she said. "They helped me quite a bit with how to market and all different aspects. I didn't think I could do it."

"I would eventually like to be self-employed and not work for anyone else," she added, "and give up the night hours."

EDITORS' NOTE: Micro Enterprise Center shop hours are generally 10 a.m.-3p.m. Monday through Saturday. For further information, call Jose Cruz, WORC's economic development specialist, at 315/781-1934.

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