

DIOCESAN NEWS

Pilot to light way to reach fitness goals

By Kathleen Schwar
Staff writer

A number of students and patients from schools and hospitals across New York state are expected to be visiting Holy Family Junior High School in Elmira over the next year or two.

The draw: new outdoor fitness stations and a curriculum that teaches cardiovascular fitness and wellness.

Funded by St. Joseph's Hospital Foundation, the new program will serve as Project Fit's pilot for the state.

A dedication ceremony is tentatively scheduled for Sept. 9. An Olympic wrestling champion, Andy Rein, will help dedicate the program and train teachers and students.

"All kids need fitness equipment," said Elizabeth Berliner, school principal. The project is ideal for her 135 seventh- and eighth-graders, she added, noting that they are too old to play on playground equipment, too young to go to fitness centers on their own, have nothing comparable to use at recess, and don't necessarily see fitness addressed in organized sports.

"They're very concerned about body image and fitness," she explained. "I think it's a very good age group to target."

The hospital foundation is spending \$11,000 for the equipment and materials, and hopes to sponsor the same program at Holy Family Primary and Intermediate schools in Elmira and St. Mary Our Mother School in Horseheads by 2005, according to Dave Sullivan, foundation president. St. Casimir Parish's festival committee is covering such associated costs landscaping and lighting repairs at Holy Family Junior High.

"The foundation and St. Joseph's in general always look for community pro-

St. Jerome youths join ER festivities



Kerry Huller

St. Jerome's Parish, East Rochester, joined East Rochester's centennial parade Aug. 16 with its own festive float. At left, Samantha Gonzalez, and Ashley and Jenna Moulton (left to right) Aug. 7 build a church "wall" of paper bricks signed by parish families. Above, enjoying the ride are Kendra Jump (far back) and (left to right) Jamie Green, Corey Jump, Lindsey Green, Katie Moran, Tom Moran and Michael Flanigan.

jects to be involved in, especially when it comes to children," Sullivan said. "This really kind of fit the bill."

"I think health care today has a major emphasis on prevention," he added. "As soon as we can get, whether it be adults or children, into good exercise habits, the better."

The national Catholic Health Association in 1993 issued a study saying every \$1 spent on prevention meant \$10 saved in later health care expenses, he also said.

Established in 1990, Project Fit, a San Francisco-based nonprofit organization, has established similar projects for K-12 grades in nearly 120 cities in 37 other states, according to its president, Stacey Cook.

A number of Catholic schools are participating, she noted.

"I am excited about the Catholic schools because there is a real stigma that private schools don't need assistance, and that just is not true," Cook said. "There is a general perception by the public that Catholic schools are affluent."

Frank Kamas of St. Casimir's has been overseeing installation of the project's seven fitness stations around the grove of trees adjacent to the school. The equipment includes a climbing pole, parallel bars, horizontal ladder and stations for sit-ups, pull-ups and step-ups. Each can be adjusted for varying levels of ability.

Berliner said the stations will be open to the community, as well.

Although the accompanying curriculum will become part of the physical education classes, Berliner said, "We hope

to integrate it in other subject areas."

Language arts classes may write about fitness, science may explore fitness benefits, homeroom teachers may help motivate students, and religion and health teachers may address "the fitness of the body as fulfilling one of the talents God gave us, taking care of our body, a gift we treasure," she explained.

The program tests students for the first two years after equipment is installed. Studies cite an average increase of 75 percent in upper body strength, 16 percent in abdominal strength, 18 percent in cardiovascular endurance and 25 percent in flexibility.

A U.S. Surgeon General report released in July stated that 300,000 Americans die prematurely each year from sedentary lifestyles.

Obituaries

Sister Helen Holenstein, SSJ; former principal; taught 60 years in the diocese

Sister Helen Holenstein, SSJ, a diocesan schoolteacher for 60 years, died July 6, 1997, at St. Joseph Convent Infirmary in Rochester. She was 86.

Sister Helen was a native of Rochester and entered the Sisters of St. Joseph from St. Monica's Parish in 1929. She attended Nazareth Academy, and obtained her teaching degree from Nazareth College.

Sister Helen taught at St. Francis

Xavier, Corpus Christi, St. Pius the Tenth schools and Nazareth Hall, Rochester; Mother of Sorrows School, Greece; St. Patrick's School, Corning; Holy Trinity School, Webster; Immaculate Conception School, Ithaca; St. Francis de Sales School, Geneva; and St. Alphonsus School, Auburn.

Sister Helen also served as principal of St. Patrick's School in Corning and Im-

maculate Conception School in Rochester.

"Sister Helen was an excellent teacher, gifted in teaching math, and fondly remembered by both her students and their parents," a statement from the congregation noted. Sister Helen is survived by nieces and nephews, grandnieces and grandnephews as well as her fellow Sisters of St. Joseph. Contributions in her memory may be made to the St. Joseph Con-

vent Infirmary.

Sister Helen's funeral Mass was celebrated in the motherhouse chapel on July 8, by her nephew, Msgr. Robert Cunningham of Buffalo. Also present were Bishop Henry Mansell, Bishop Edward J. Head and priests from Buffalo; and Msgrs. William Shannon, Emmett Murphy and Joseph Sullivan and Fathers Donald Curtiss and Bartholomew O'Brien.

Sister Mary Damian Sullivan, RSM; served as teacher and principal in diocesan schools

Sister Mary Damian Sullivan, RSM, a member of the Sisters of Mercy of Rochester for six decades, died July 10, 1997. She was 80.

Sister M. Damian, a native of Gillett, Pa., entered the Sisters of Mercy in 1936 and professed her perpetual vows in 1941. She graduated from Elmira Catholic High School and also received degrees from Nazareth College of Rochester and St.

Michael's College in Vermont.

She taught English at Our Lady of Mercy High School (1958-78) and also taught at Holy Family School, Auburn; St. Patrick's School, Owego; St. Charles Borromeo School, Greece; and St. Joseph's School, Penfield. She was the founding principal at St. Joseph's in Penfield in 1956. Following teaching, she assisted at the Mercy motherhouse and in the com-

munity's administration offices as clerical assistant. She was serving in prayer ministry at the time of her death.

Sister M. Damian celebrated her 60th jubilee as a Sister of Mercy in September 1996. At that time she gave the following reflection: "Sixty years seems nothing as I look back. God has showered his graces in abundance, and it has been my privilege through the years to serve him in teaching

and prayer ministries."

She is survived by nieces and her sisters in the Congregation of Mercy.

The funeral Mass for Sister M. Damian was celebrated July 14 at the Mercy motherhouse chapel in Brighton. Interment was at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery in Rochester.

Donations in memory of Sister M. Damian may be sent to the Sisters of Mercy, 1437 Blossom Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14610.

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