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File photo

Bill White, shown here in 1996, was a patient at Strong Memorial Hospital for 30 years. He died in his room Aug. 13.

Bill White dies at 50

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — Bill White, whose request to end life-sustaining medical treatment raised numerous questions about right-to-die issues, died Aug. 13 at Strong Memorial Hospital. He was 50.

Hospital spokesperson Teri D'Agostino said that Mr. White died at 7:03 p.m. in his room. He had resided at Strong since 1969, two years after a gymnastics accident that left him a quadriplegic.

D'Agostino declined to detail the procedure used to allow White's death, or who was with Mr. White when he died.

Mr. White's death occurred one day after Monroe County District Attorney Howard Relin announced he had found no

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legal reason barring the hospital from unhooking Mr. White's respirator — the means by which Mr. White had sought to die.

Mr. White died just hours after U.S. District Court Judge Charles Siragusa denied a Rochester disabled-rights group's request — for the second time last week — for a temporary injunction delaying the action.

"Bill had made his wishes very clear to us. Even though people here are saddened, they were relieved to be able to do what Bill had asked of us," D'Agostino said.

No family members were available for comment. However, Father Stan Kacprzak, pastor at Our Lady of Mercy Church in Greece, said he spoke with Mr. White's father.

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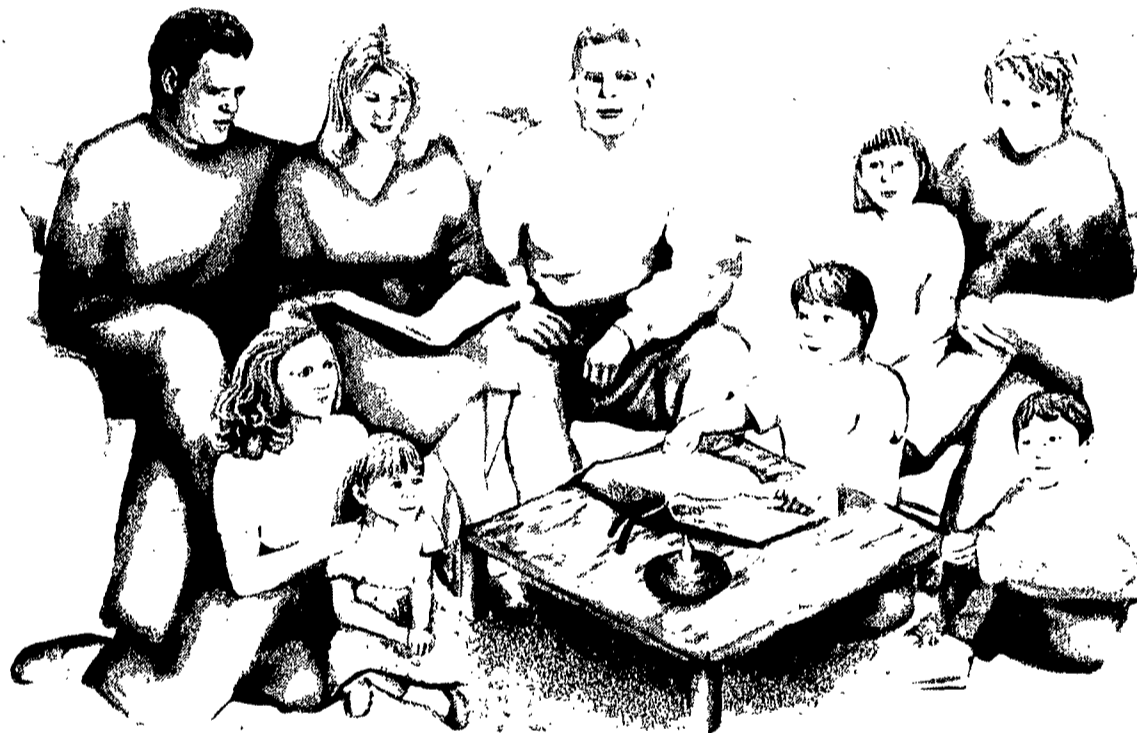
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Family Faith Formation

Fruit salad may seem to have little to do with family faith formation.

But a number of folks at the Corning-Painted Post Roman Catholic Community know the connection.

Last year, participants were asked to bring some fruit to a family education session, explained Religious Education Coordinator Mary Ann Hinkley. During the program, the fruit was combined to make fruit salad, which was then shared.

"Our theme for that session was unity," Hinkley said, adding the salad "showed that all of us with our little parts, when we put them together, it's great."

According to advocates of family faith formation, putting family members together for catechesis likewise produces great results.

"The program has grown in popularity through word of mouth," noted Ursula Arnold, faith formation coordinator at Penfield's St. Joseph's Church. "Parents have come and said, 'I now know what my child is learning about the church.'"

"I feel like we're empowering people, helping them to realize that their family life is holy and sacred," she added.

"What we're doing in enabling (parents) to do the job they already are doing, but maybe they don't feel they have the knowledge, the education," explained Gail Brooks, Christian formation coordinator at St. Catherine of Siena Parish, Mendon. But

thanks to study packets they receive through the program, she said, parents "feel equipped to answer the questions their kids might have."

Hinkley pointed out that one of the best parts of her cluster's family faith formation program is that the children see their parents learning.

"One of the kids happened to say to his mother, 'Gee, Mom, you learn, too,' and that was important to him, that he wasn't the only one learning about his faith. His mom was, too," she reported. "I hear that a lot."

"If you don't have the parents actively involved in the child's religious education — and I mean actively involved and not just dropping them off for class — it's not going to work," Hinkley added. "They have to see it at home."

"If you talk to the parents, it's working," Brooks said. Tim and Julie Shadeck certainly endorse the approach at the Corning community.

Parents of two boys (Mike, 8, and Daniel, 7) they are part of the community's family faith formation planning committee.

"To me, the best part is the involvement because you get to see that there is more to your church than Mass," Tim said. "The kids see this as a family thing, but you still make it fun."

"Then you bring it home and talk about it," Julie said. "It's

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