

Network News

Network of Religious Communities

1272 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14209-2496 • Phone 882-4793 • Fax 882-3797 • www.ReligiousNet.org • ReligiousNet@aol.com

*Facilitating interreligious, ecumenical, and interracial cooperation among
judicatories, congregations, and religious organizations in Western New York and the Niagara Peninsula*

May/June 2002

Catholics and Muslims Discuss Aggressive Use of Force, Violence, Injustice, and Suffering

—The Reverend Francis X. Mazur, Co-Executive Director, Network of Religious Communities

The Mid-Atlantic Dialogue of Catholics and Muslims held its fifth annual meeting on April 9-11, 2002, in New York. Cosponsors of this dialogue are the Islamic Circle of North America and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. There were 22 participants in this year's meeting, coming from New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Washington, D.C.

One month in advance of this year's meeting, the planners for the dialogue recommended certain changes for the agenda in

response to several unanticipated developments since last year's meeting. They strongly urged the dialogue to meet as scheduled so that the regular participants could gather for friendly, sustained, and focused conversation. Over the past meetings, the dialogue group had been preparing portions of a resource on marriage and family life with appendices to support dialogue groups on these topics as well as church and mosque staff involved in marriage preparation for Catholic-Muslim couples.

We shared with one another how our lives and work in service to Catholic and Islamic institutions have been affected since September 11th and then held formal sessions on how the Bible and the Qur'an guide Christian and Muslims in their thinking about aggressive use of force, violence, injustice, and innocent suffering. We all agreed that the promotion of justice and care for the poor and innocent are central themes in our Scriptures. For most members, the last several months have involved

Continued on Page 4—Catholics & Muslims

93 Community Saints Honored at 22nd Annual Appreciation Dinner

A total of 93 persons from congregations throughout the Western New York area were honored with Religious Service Awards at the 22nd Annual Appreciation Dinner held April 18, 2002, at the Hearthstone Manor, Depew, New York. The recipients of the awards were nominated by their own congregations for outstanding service to their congregation and their community. Reflective of the broad membership of the Network of Religious Communities, persons receiving awards are members of Christian (Roman Catholic and Protestant), Muslim, Buddhist, and Unitarian/Universalist Congregations.

The over 730 persons attending the dinner heard Dr. Wilson Greatbatch, the inventor of the implantable heart pacemaker and holder of 240 patents in bioengineering, speak of the power of religious faith in his life and work. Dr. Greatbatch shared how his religious faith motivated him to offer academic scholarship to the children of all the employees of his company and how this has proved to be a benefit to both his employees and his company. He also spoke of the "The Prayer of Jabez" (I Chronicles 4: 9-10) and how the prayer of Jabez motivated him to undertake the challenge of developing a new design for the implantable cardiac pacemaker that will allow patients to undergo MRIs and cancer treatments.

For a complete list of honorees, please see page 3.



**Persons are left to right:
Imam Fajri Ansari, Dr. Wilson Greatbatch,
Ms. Marlene Glickman**

**Fajri gave the Call to Prayer, Wilson was
the speaker, and Marlene, Network VP, was
the MC**

American Muslims: Community at a Crossroads

—The Reverend Francis X. Mazur, Co-Executive Director, Network of Religious Communities

On April 23, 2002, Muslim scholars from different backgrounds addressed a crowd of 200 people on key issues related to Islam and Muslims in America. This conference for Muslims was the culmination of Project MAPS (Muslims in the American Public Square) which is supported by The Pew Charitable Trust and is based at the Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding at Georgetown University. About 20 non-Muslims were invited to this conference. Because of a long-standing relationship with the Catholic Bishops Committee on Interreligious Affairs, the project director, Zahid Bukhard, invited me to participate in this conference. Each scholar touched on a theme that illustrated the American Muslim community in a great period of transition, as it comes out of its initial phase of hesitation, isolation, identity crisis and anxiety. The American Muslim community is now entering a phase of participation in the life of the larger community, interaction with the media and other institutions of opinion making and, more importantly, institution building. The keynote luncheon speaker, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, University Professor of Islamic Studies at

Georgetown University, presented some challenges to the conference attendees. He said that American Muslims need more Muslim scholars to teach Islam and the intellectual background and tradition of Islam. A second challenge presented was that American Muslims need to know the intellectual language of the West to present themselves effectively in the media. Furthermore, Professor Nasr illustrated in his research that American Muslims want their children to have a nice profession but few encourage their children to become clerics and scholars in Islam. He said that when fundamentalist Christians say evil things about Islam, learn from the Christians, "turn the other cheek" and do not retaliate.

John Esposito from Georgetown University gave some challenges as a non-Muslim. He said that there is still a divide between immigrant Muslims and African American Muslims. American Muslims need to begin to be self critical and denounce extremism and begin to look at their sacred texts critically.

Fifth Annual Jewish-Christian Dialogue June 17, 2002

Daring to Trust: *The Jewish Response to the Catholic Church's Offer of Reconciliation* is the theme of the fifth annual Interreligious Dialogue Program to be held on June 17, 7:00-9:30 p.m., at Temple Sinai, 50 Alberta Drive, Amherst. The program is sponsored by the American Jewish Committee, the Buffalo Roman Catholic Diocese, the Network of Religious Communities, the Buffalo Board of Rabbis, and Christ the King Seminary.

The guest speaker, David Novak, Ph.D., is a founder, vice-president, and coordinator of the Panel of Inquiry on Jewish Law of the Union of Traditional Judaism and a founder of the Institute of Traditional Judaism in Teaneck, New Jersey. He serves as Secretary-Treasurer of the Institute on Religion and Public Life in New York and is on the editorial board of its monthly journal *First Things*. He is a Fellow of the American Academy for Jewish Research and the Academy for Jewish Philosophy. He has lectured throughout North America as well as in Israel, Europe, and South Africa.

Dr. Novak is the author of eleven books, the latest being *Covenantal Rights*, which won the American Academy of Religion Award for best book in constructive religious thought in 2000. He has held the J. Richard and Dorothy Shiff Chair of Jewish Studies at the University of Toronto since 1997 as Professor of the Study of Religion, as well as Professor of Philosophy. He is also a member of University College and the Joint Centre for Bioethics.

The program will include a presentation by Dr. Novak, response by Dr. Dennis Castillo, question and answer period, and refreshments and opportunity for continuing discussion.

Jewish-Christian Dialogue Registration Form

Name _____
 Address _____
 _____ Zip _____
 Day Phone _____
 Evening Phone _____

\$10.00 Registration Fee/Person

Total Enclosed: _____

Make checks payable to:
 American Jewish Committee

For further information:
 Christ the King Seminary—716-652-8900
 American Jewish Committee—716-877-6234
 e-mail—buffalo@ajc.org

Mail to:
 Academic Office, Christ the King Seminary
 PO Box 607, East Aurora, NY 14052

22nd Annual Appreciation Dinner Honorees (see page 1)



Amherst Community Church

Alvin Havin

Bethel A.M.E. Church, Buffalo

Carrie Alexander

Collie Arrington

Marguerite Bell

Julia Bethel

J. Carl Bland

Gladys Brown

Willah Dubard

Cynthia Flood

Florence Gary

Vera Gladden

Ada Belle Harris

John Hart

Jean Hill

Rudolph Laster

Martha McMillan

Lula Peoples

Marie Pitts

Cecelia Sharpe

Connie Smith

Celes Tisdale

Dorothy Trueheart

Raymond Walton

Georgia Washington

Vanetta Williams

James Willis

Annie Wilson

Bettye Wyatt

Bible Society of Western New York

The Reverend Frank E. Wright

Amherst Lutheran Church

Jon Mott

Cleveland Hill Lutheran Church, Cheektowaga

Gladys Beverly

Marion Boenheim

Dunkirk Conference Center

Eileen Keipper

Howard Keipper

Endless Light Ku Temple

The Reverend James Koshu

Faith United Presbyterian Church, Kenmore

Isabel Keuther

Karen Sargent

First Congregational United Church of Christ, Angola

Robert Fuerst

William McSkimming

Kurt Weinheimer

Henry Wojciechowski

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Buffalo

Donald & Judith Ronald

The Lutheran Church of Our Savior, Buffalo

Paula Evans

Erdene Robinson

J.W. Loguen Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church, Buffalo

Cynthia L. Barber

Masjid Nu'Man, Buffalo

Bro. Wahab Arzeyz

Sis. Lynell McMillan

Sis. Elise McMillan

Bro. Rasheed Sultan

New Hope Baptist Church, Buffalo

Mrs. Agnes Graham

Mrs. Geraldine S. Hemphill

Deacon Raymond D. Hemphill

Deacon Brandon Jackson

Dr. Traci A. Jackson

Mrs. Gwendolyn Ross

North Park Presbyterian Church, Buffalo

Terry Drennan Smith

Orchard Park Community Church

Joe DiPirro

Shelly Sellepack

Parkside Lutheran Church

Larry & Carol DeAeth

Pilgrim St. Luke's United Church of Christ, Buffalo

Vernon Baker

Jean McNamara

Birney F. Moore

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Depew

David A. Freund

St. Barnabas R. C. Church, Depew

Sister Mary Clement Schubert, OSF

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, W. Seneca

Rosemond Johnson

Jeanne Stover

St. Luke A.M.E. Zion Church, Buffalo

Marion Bryant, Jr.

Sister Gladys Clark

Sister Flossie Mack

Ondrea Mack

Sister Mary Mahone

Brother Willie Maple

Sister Lucille Perrin

St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Blossom

Karen Hauser

Fred Streit

Tracy Will

Ray Will

St. Philip's Episcopal Church, Buffalo

Alexander Clark

Norwood Samuel

Teresa White

Bernice Woodard

St. Stephens-Bethlehem United Church of Christ, Cheektowaga

Paula Zientek

Ted Zientek

Salem United Church of Christ, Tonawanda

Robert & Donna Mileham

Kathy Najuch

James Walters

Unitarian Universalist Church of Amherst

Jayne Murray

University Presbyterian Church, Buffalo

Connie Michael

Zion United Church of Christ, Tonawanda

Doug & Jean King

Television	Channel	Day	Time
Story Time Puppets Puppet Therapist Janet McDonald, Co-Host Dan Mackowiak, and Jr. Puppeteers tell stories with a positive message to children, parents, and teachers	20 Adelphia	Every Friday	7:35 p.m.
Challenge for the 21st Century Making the connection between faith and life commitments; Moderator Rev. Dr. G. Stanford Bratton, Co-Executive Director, Network of Religious Communities	7 WKBW	1st Saturday	7:00 a.m.
Kaleidoscope Multi-faith program featuring segments on religious activities and matters of concern in the community	2 WGRZ 20 Adelphia	1st Sunday Every Friday	6:30 a.m. 6:35 p.m.
In Process Discussion of today's issues as they relate to the religious community; Moderator Rev. Dr. G. Stanford Bratton, Co-Executive Director, Network of Religious Communities	4 WIVB 20 Adelphia	2nd Sunday Every Wednesday	5:30 a.m. 5:35 p.m.
Radio	Channel	Day	Time
Crossroads Life experience interviews; rotation of regular monthly hosts	96.1 WJYE-FM	Every Sunday	6:00 a.m.

~Tune In~

Network of Religious Communities' Radio and Television Ministry Offers a Variety of Quality Programs

NETWORK OF RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES 2003 RIEFLER APPLICATIONS

The 2003 Riefler Enablement Fund Application Forms will be available June 1, 2002, from the Network of Religious Communities Office, 1272 Delaware Avenue in Buffalo, NY, and as a pdf. download on the Network of Religious Communities WebSite www.ReligiousNet.Org.

The Riefler Enablement Fund was established in 1988 through the generous bequest of Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Riefler. In each successive year the Network has been able to provide grants to Buffalo area congregations and ecumenical/interreligious organizations totaling between \$25,000 and \$41,000 per year. The total amount distributed each year is determined by the income from the invested principle.

In preparing the 2003 Riefler Fund Application, please keep the following in mind:

1. The deadline for receiving applications at the office of the Network of Religious Communities will be a yet to be determined Friday in August 2002. (The deadline date will be provided with the 2003 application form.) Applications received after

deadline will not be considered for grants in 2003. No exceptions will be made.

2. Applications from local congregations, groups of congregations, ecumenical and or interreligious organizations or projects sponsored by the above are encouraged. Applications from individuals and those from community groups without an official tie to a congregation or an ecumenical/interreligious organization will not be considered.

The 2003 Riefler Fund Grants will be available beginning in January 2003. Recipients of the 2003 awards will be notified in late December 2003. They will receive further instructions at that time.

Applications to the Riefler Fund will be read by persons who are actively involved in the life and work of local congregations in the Buffalo area. Each proposal will be scored using a form developed by the Network. The committee's recommendations will be forwarded to the Board of Governors of the Network of Religious Communities for approval and then sent to the Trustees of the Riefler Estate for a legal review.

Continued From Page 1—Christians & Muslims

numerous talks, dialogues, and meetings about these themes and how they have been manifest in Christian-Muslim relations. An interesting discussion developed on how our different understandings of Divine Revelation and Scripture and their different perspectives on contemporary situations and developments often interfere with attempts by Christians and Muslims to understand one another. Even framing a mutually agreed upon question about violence and God's Revelation requires considerable attention to these differences.

The Muslim delegates expressed appreciation for the good work of the Catholic Church.

Next year's discussion will continue on God's Revelation and to identify clearly those teachings which Christians and Muslims share.



Child Mentors Needed!!

Compeer West's program, Compeer for Kids, serves children & youth who are diagnosed as seriously emotionally disturbed, mentally ill, or at risk children, many of whom have been abused and neglected or are homeless. Children are referred to Compeer from over 75 different mental health agencies, school systems, and practitioners. Since 1987, Compeer volunteer mentors have served hundreds of children, ranging in age from infancy to late childhood.

Compeer West, Inc. has added a new program to the already successful Compeer for Kids Program. This new program, Intensive Paid Mentorship, is highly innovating, not only in WNY, but for New York State as well. With the addition of this new program, Compeer West becomes a vanguard in the field of mentoring for emotionally disturbed children and youth. The Intensive Mentorship Program expands upon our current volunteer model to provide a spectrum of mentoring services reaching children and youth with varying degrees of diagnosed mental health problems.

In addition to developing a lasting relationship with a special youth, the mentors for this program have an educational experience that will positively influence future professional endeavors. Mentors participate with their mentee's families in developing goals and activities designed to develop daily living skills. Mentors are trained in resiliency theory, strength based treatment planning, and psychopathology. Extended trainings for mentors cover key symptoms of all the major disorders diagnosed in childhood and ado-

lescence, as well as expected behaviors, treatments, and how to develop a positive relationship with a child diagnosed with each disorder.

Mentors for this very special program must have one or more of the following qualifications: 1) experience working with Seriously Emotionally Disturbed children, 2) have a professional mental health degree, 3) are enrolled in a related college program (preferably Juniors, Seniors, or Master Level Students but will consider Freshmen or Sophomores with experience with SED children and youth, or 4) have been or currently are Compeer for Kids volunteers. Mentors need to live in Western New York and remain in contact with their mentee over school and summer vacations. Mentors will receive a financial stipend of \$1,000 annually as well as a Certificate of Mentorship from Compeer West, Inc. Mentors in this program make a commitment of one year to Compeer as well as a commitment of 2-4 hours a week spending quality time with their mentee.

Compeer offers enrichment activities throughout the year including holiday parties, bowling parties, and summer picnics that all mentors and mentees are invited to attend. Compeer has also built strong relationships with various organizations in the community that provide mentors with free tickets to special events including Buffalo Bisons games, movies, and theater passes. For more information please call the Compeer Office a 716-883-3331 or www.compeerwest.org.

Make a Difference in the Life of a Child

The Erie County Respite Task Force is looking for people who would like to make a difference in the life of a child with a mental illness and provide relief for the family of that child. Respite is a paid position and Respite Workers are trained to provide the services.

Respite care is the provision of planned, short-term, temporary care, with the primary purpose of offering relief to families of children and youth with emotional or behavioral difficulties. It is a service provided by workers trained to meet the very unique and challenging needs of these children thereby reducing the level of stress in the lives of the children and their families.

Respite services are designed to be safe for the child and the family, and provide the least restrictive alternative to parental childcare. It is a way to give the child and family some "breathing room." Respite is not babysitting, nor is it therapy for the child or family. It is not designed to meet all of the family's childcare needs, but it does assist parents by providing a much needed break from the demands of care taking for very challenging children.

Some benefits of respite are that it reduces the level of stress in families, allows siblings time for themselves and time alone with parents, and allows the child to experience outings within the community.

A Respite Care provider must be at least 18 years of age, have some experience working with children, and some high school education. For more information on how you can provide respite care, please call one of the following agencies:

Karen Kasperak, Gateway-Longview: 716-882-8468

Patty Bova, Parents Anonymous: 716-822-0919

Belle Walls Montree, Child & Family Services: 716- 881-2591

Laurie Stanton, Mental Health Association: 716-886-1242

You'll be glad you took this important step to help these special children and their families.

New Coalition Forms to Oppose Buffalo Casino— “Citizens Against Casino Gambling in Erie County” Draws Diverse Elements

A wide range of citizens of Erie County have officially announced the formation of “Citizens Against Casino Gambling in Erie County” (CACGEC). The group, consisting of community, religious and government leaders is focusing its efforts on specifically preventing a casino from opening in Erie County for both economic and moral reasons.

Joel Rose, the group’s interim convener, said, “A casino in Buffalo makes no economic sense. It will not draw tourist dollars in any significant amount. Instead, it will suck up local dollars that might otherwise be spent at existing recreational facilities, and it will impoverish some of our citizens in the process.”

Stan Bratton, Coordinator of the WNY Coalition Against Casino Gambling agreed, adding, “Like a siphon used by thieves at midnight, a casino will suck all the energy and resources out of the Buffalo area.”

Dan Schifeling, the group’s interim secretary, echoed the sentiment, “On the surface, it looks like a lot of money will be coming in to Buffalo. Millions will apparently be invested in new buildings. But these new buildings will just be a marvelous drain to siphon money out of Buffalo. No one will come here from outside the region to gamble. This money is going to come out of Buffalo’s neighborhoods and end up in the pockets of developers and owners who live out of town. The share of the profits Buffalo will receive is a joke. But we’ll end up paying the costs for increased security, loss of tax revenues, small businesses and local restaurants who will suffer, and the costs of treating those who become addicted to gambling.”

Merle Showers, Community Minister of the Buffalo District of the United Methodist Church said, “I oppose a Casino in Buffalo for moral reasons. It is immoral to take the livelihood of low and middle income people in addition to their taxes to bail out a City which hasn’t done the economic planning it should have done.”

Nancy Kresge, one of the group’s founding members, added, “Rather than creating and investing in a gambling industry, I want our governmental leaders to invest in the things we already have: world class cultural institutions, architectural treasures, and our scenic waterfront.”

Jeffery L. Termini, another of the groups founding members said, “Citizens Against Casino Gambling in Erie County is opposed to opening a casino in Buffalo because gambling complexes have not provided any economic stimulus in depressed areas. Industry has not enjoyed any economic uplift whatsoever. We could see an increase in street crime as well as organized crime and addiction problems, lowering the quality of life in our city.”

State Assemblymember Sam Hoyt, an ally of the group and long-time casino opponent, said; “I agree that part of the allure of casinos-as-economic-development is the perception that nothing else is working. But establishing casinos in the name of ‘doing anything,’ instead of doing the right thing, could result in deleterious outcomes along the lines of UB’s and Ralph Wilson Stadium location, the waterfront highway, ending Metrorail at South Campus, etc.”

Joel Rose concluded, “Buffalo and Erie County badly need economic development, and so some of our leaders have developed an unfortunate tendency to sign on to any proposed project, no matter how ill-considered. We need to remember the old adage that there is no problem so bad that with a little effort it can’t be made worse.”

CACGEC meets the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM. Currently, meetings are held at 1272 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo. For additional information call 716-882-4793 ext. 201.

Food Donations Needed Year Round



The Network of Religious Communities Food Pantry is in need of donations of non-perishable food items. It is often difficult to keep up with the demand for emergency food during the spring and summer months.

Please consider organizing a food drive in your congregation. Donations may be delivered to the Network building any weekday between 9:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. or you may call the Network office at 716-882-4793 to make other arrangements.

Volunteers are also needed year round for a minimum of one morning each month, 9:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Anyone interested should call Miriam Kennedy, Volunteer Coordinator, at 716-773-2558.

Monetary donations are also accepted. Checks should be made payable to the Network of Religious Communities and designated for the Food Pantry.

Special thanks to those congregations who donate food and/or dollars regularly. The Pantry could not continue to serve people living in poverty in our community without their faithful generosity.

“Rediscovering Joy”— Conference at Camp Pioneer

A S.M.I.L.E. (Sharing Arts Ministries Is Life's Enrichment) Conference will be held at Camp Pioneer and Retreat Center on Lake Erie in the town of Angola, New York, August 9-13. The Conference, *Rediscovering Joy*, is designed for those interested in learning how to use the performing arts in education, hospitals, worship, wherever there is the need to bring a little JOY into people's lives: freelance performing artists, caring individuals looking for a way to serve others, retirees, teachers, home schoolers, religious educators, health care workers, therapeutic recreation specialists, rehabilitation therapists, and families.

More than 30 workshops are planned, including clowning, sacred dance, puppetry, mime, storytelling, folk dancing, juggling, magic, prison ministry, origami and sign language. Participants will learn to use these performing arts in existing recreation programs and develop new activities centered on therapeutic performing arts. Valuable networking opportunities will be available with artists for future staff, skills and program development.

One morning assembly each day will be presented on how to use the art forms in various environments. In addition, there will be a nightly beachfront campfire and an opportunity to practice and perform at “Monday Night’s Potpourri.”

Participants will have access to Camp Pioneer’s shuffleboard courts, tennis courts, basketball courts and volleyball court. There is a beach with a state certified lifeguard for swimming, paddle boats, canoes, and sailboats.

For additional information, contact S.M.I.L.E., Ruth Turk, 21 Timberline Drive, West Henrietta, New York 14585, 585-334-7937.

TAP Available Free of Charge

*Are you sitting at home wishing someone would call?
Would you like to talk with someone—a new friend—
on a daily/weekly basis? Or just have someone
“check in” on a regular basis?*

Coordinated Care’s Telephone Assurance program (TAP) provides free friendly and reassuring telephone calls to people 60+ living alone in Erie County. TAP’s main purpose is to eliminate some of the concerns facing people who live alone, thereby assisting them to remain independent. It is strictly a phone friendship. A pilot program is also being offered to homebound individuals with MS (no matter what your age or if you are currently living with someone).

In addition to benefiting people who receive calls, TAP provides a worthwhile volunteer opportunity for people wishing to make the calls. Volunteers (21 years and older) may make calls from the comfort of their own home or at a TAP site. If you would like further information, please call 858-2386.

YMCA Camp Weona Offers Wide Range of Programs

Camp Weona, a branch of the YMCA of Greater Buffalo, is nestled among 1,000 acres of woodlands near Warsaw, New York. The Camp is now in its 104th year of operation. In addition to summer camp, Weona’s facilities are utilized by more than 4,000 people from schools, religious organizations, corporations and families. Weona also operates several programs in the nearby community of Arcade, New York, including school age child care and youth sports. All programs seek to help members and participants reach their fullest potential in terms of spirit, mind and body, as well as working with core values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility.

The summer resident program offers children from grades 2 through 11 the opportunity to have a fun and safe summer experience away from home. Campers stay in cabins with campers in their grade level and staff members for one or two weeks. Activities include horseback riding, archery, canoeing, arts and crafts, swimming, rock climbing and other traditional camp favorites. Specialized programs are available for campers who want to learn leadership skills, become counselors or travel around the state and learn different adventure skills.

From the end of summer until June, Camp Weona welcomes groups who want to enjoy the facilities. It is the perfect site for youth retreats, family reunions and holiday gatherings. Activities include: skiing and snowshoeing in the winter; canoeing and swimming during the summer months; and team building and rock climbing all year. The camp provides the lodging, meals, staff, and facilities.

For information, call 716-565-6008.

Erie County Home Seeks Volunteers for New Program

Approximately 140 residents of the Erie County Home have not received a visit from a friend or family member or a personal card from an outside source in years. Individuals and groups are needed for a new and exciting program, “Adopt a Resident.”

Volunteers will make a commitment to visit a resident at least twice each month and send a card during the holiday seasons.

The Erie County Home is the oldest long-care facility in Western New York and has approximately 600 residents with health related issues.

For additional information and to volunteer, please call Lauren Kennuth, Director of Volunteers at 716-937-5692 or Elder Manuel L. Wiggins, Protestant Chaplain, Erie County Home.

Calendar of Events

May 13, 7:30-9:00 p.m.

Islamic Center, 745 Heim Road, Getzville

An Islamic Perspective of September 11, 2001, sixth in a six-session series, *The World of Islam*; sponsored by the Network of Religious Communities and the American Muslim Council of Western New York; for information call 716-882-4793.

June 5, 8:45 a.m.-12:00 noon

Kenmore United Methodist Church, 32 Landers Rd., Kenmore

Basic Energy Cost Control for Religious Institutions II; sponsored by the Interfaith Coalition on Energy of WNY, a program of the Network of Religious Communities; for information, call 716-847-8756; see insert.

June 7, 9:30 a.m.

New Covenant United Church of Christ, 459 Clinton St., Buffalo

Church Women United Annual Meeting; \$3 donation includes continental breakfast; for reservations, call 716-882-4793 by May 31.

June 17, 7:00-9:30 p.m.

Temple Sinai, 50 Alberta Drive, Amherst

Daring to Trust: The Jewish Response to the Catholic Church's Offer of Reconciliation, fifth in a series of annual Interreligious Dialogue Programs; David Novak, Ph.D., Professor of the Study of Religion, University of Toronto, speaker; for information, call 716-652-8900; see page 2.

August 9-13

Camp Pioneer and Retreat Center, Lake Erie, Angola

Rediscovering Joy Conference; sponsored by S.M.I.L.E.; for information and to register, call 585-334-7937; see page 7.

September 26, 7:30 p.m.

Montante Cultural Center, Canisius College

Islam and the Modern World, Conversations in Christ and Culture lecture series; Dr. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, George Washington University, speaker; for information, call Dr. Timothy Wadkins at 716-888-2824 or e-mail wadkins@canisius.edu.

Visit Us on the Web at www.ReligiousNet.org

Keep up with the news. Click on the calendar to find out about upcoming events. Learn more about us—our mission, our purpose, and our programs. Find out about our officers and the organizations represented on the Board of Governors. Download the Network brochure, Bylaws, recent resolutions/statements/press releases, current and past editions of the *Network News* and workshop and Riefler application forms. Forget when the radio and television shows air?—Look for the schedule of programs. It's all there.



www.ReligiousNet.org



Family Church Nights!

The Buffalo Destroyers Football Team has planned special events for families and members of local congregations. One night each month during the season, a section of the stadium will be designated for congregations and families in the 100/200 level sidelines/endzones and 300 level sidelines. And...some of the players may be available to speak with families after the game.

Family/church nights will be held: Saturday, May 18, 7:00 p.m.; Saturday, June 8, 7:00 p.m.; and Friday, July 12, 7:30 p.m.

Tickets prices are: 100/200 level Sidelines—\$30; 100/200 Level Endzones—\$12; and 300 Level Sidelines—\$6.

For additional information, please contact Dana Edler at 716-881-5676 or the Reverend Gary Schindler at 716-592-2153.

Free Summer Meals for Children

This summer, all children **18 years of age and younger** will be able to receive free lunches through the Summer Food Service Program. Lunches will be served at various sites throughout the city, and most sites will run from **July 1, 2002, through August 23rd**. Many locations are **OPEN** sites, meaning that **any child, regardless of family income**, may attend.

The Summer Food Service Program promotes and continues the nutritional care and education of children during the summer months when the in-school programs, School Breakfast and School Lunch, are not available. Participation in school meals has been directly linked to improved test scores, fewer absences due to illness, and decreased instances of poor behavior and lack of attentiveness. For more information, please call **Food for All at 716-882-7705**

Become a Member of the Network

Membership in the Network of Religious Communities is open to denominations, congregations, and religious organizations in West-ern New York and the Niagara Peninsula of Ontario who subscribe to the mission statement and purposes of the Network and contribute toward its financial support. Each member is entitled to appoint one voting delegate to the annual meeting of the General Assembly.

The current member denominations are: Baha'i Community; Buffalo District United Methodist Church; Buffalo, Rochester Districe AME Zion Church; Churches in Covenant: Disciples/UCC; Church of Jesus Christ Latter Day Saints; Diocese of Buffalo, Roman Catholic Church; Episcopal Diocese of WNY; Episcopal District AME Church; Hindu Cultural Center & Temple; Islamic Society of WNY; Jewish Federation of Greater Buffalo; Mennonite Church; Presbytery of WNY; Religious Society of Friends; Sikh Society of Niagara Frontier; Unitarian Universalist Congre-gations; Upstate New York Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church. A complete list of member congregations and religious organizations is available upon request.

Individuals are invited to join the Network as auxiliary members. An auxiliary member subscribes to the mission statement and purposes of the Network, supports the work of the Network, and contributes toward its financial support. Auxiliary members may attend the General Assembly as observers.

Mission Statement: Motivated by the sacred texts and traditions of our unique faith communities, the Network of Religious Communi-ties, Inc., in recognizing a multiplicity of religious beliefs, respects the right to be and celebrate who we are within our particular religious traditions. Because our humanity is deeper than our division, we promote dialogue; facilitate the sharing of spiritual activities and resources; and work for justice and peace. The Network is not a religious community unto itself, rather a forum providing oppor-tunities for cooperative ventures, the strengthening of our religious communities, and the betterment of the community as a whole.

The purposes of the Network are to: facilitate communication and increased understanding among the members and between the members and the wider community; foster cooperation within and between the faith communities to which the members belong; facili-tate collaboration in areas of common concern and in response to needs in the wider community; and promote justice, peace and the common good (as expressed in the faith traditions of the members) in Western New York and the Niagara Peninsula of Ontario. Initia-tive shall be enabled at all levels of the Network. The core beliefs and integrity of all religious communities shall be re-spected in all policy statements issued and actions taken in the name of the Network.

**Membership Form for
Congregations and Religious Organizations**

Our congregation would like to join the Network and we agree with the Mission and Purposes. Enclosed is our 1-year membership contribution of:

\$100 for congregations with 100 or more members.
\$50 for congregations with less than 100 members.

Our religious organization would like to join the Network and we agree with the Mission and purposes.
Enclosed is our 1-year membership contribution of \$50.

We have also enclosed a special gift of \$_____ to support the work of the Network.

We would like more information. Please contact us.

Date _____
Congregation/Religious Organization _____

Address _____

Zip _____
Phone _____ Fax _____
E-Mail _____
Contact person _____

Please send completed form to:
Network of Religious Communities
1272 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo, New York 14209-2496

If you, your congregation, or your religious organization would like to join the Network, please complete the appropriate form and send to the Network office.

**Membership Form for
Individuals**

I would like to join the Network and I agree with the mission and purposes.

Enclosed is my 1-year membership contribution of \$25.

I have also enclosed a special gift of \$_____ to support the work of the Network.

I would like more information. Please contact me.

Date _____
Name _____
Address _____

Zip _____
Phone _____ Fax _____
E-Mail _____

Please send completed form to:
Network of Religious Communities
1272 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo, New York 14209-2496

- Lay Leader
- Clergy
- Secretary
- Newsletter Editor

Editor: Maureen Gensler
Guest editorials welcome
Please pass Network News on to others:

Network News

President:
The Very Reverend Allen Farabee
Co-Executive Directors:
The Reverend Dr. G. Stanford Bratton
The Reverend Francis X. Mazur

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“World of Islam” Final Session Planned An Islamic Perspective of September 11, 2001

Final session of 6-session series on World of Islam

7:30 p.m. Monday, May 13, 2002
Islamic Center, 745 Heim Road, Getzville, NY
 For information call 716-882-4793 ext 201

The World of Islam is a joint presentation of the American Muslim Council and the Network of Religious Communities. The series has provided a forum for the community at large to learn about the religion, culture and practices of Islam and to interact with and question those who practice Islam. It has been offered in an effort to increase interreligious understanding and to present accurate information about the history, culture, beliefs and practices of the Religion of Islam.

Have You Changed Your Address?

Please help us update the *Network News* mailing list. If your name and/or address are incorrect on the mailing label, complete the form and return to the Network office. Also include a copy of the label attached to this newsletter so that we can make the correction in the database. Thanks for your help!

My name and address should appear as follows on the *Network News* mailing list:

Name _____

Organization _____

Address _____

Zip _____

Phone _____

Please add my name to the mailing list.

Please remove my name from the mailing list.

Send completed form and copy of label to:

Maureen Gensler, Network of Religious Communities
 1272 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14209-2496
 FAX: 716-882-3797