

Suburban Life

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Kadima

Bridges that lead the mentally ill onto independent living

IN 1981 KADIMA opened the first group home in Oakland County for six mentally ill adults.

"The house is a bridge, the first step back into the community from the hospital," said Miriam Iwrey, executive director of the organization, which is based in Southfield. "Kadima was initiated to break the cycle from institution to home to hospital and around again."

The average stay in the group home is 18 months when the resi-

dents, mostly those suffering from manic depression or schizophrenia, take the next bridge into semi-independent living in their own apartment.

"They are still under the auspices of Kadima at this point," said Kadima board member Gloria Perlmutter. "Our clients are responsible for maintaining their own apartment, but they are supported with a psychiatrist, nurses, social workers, care management, program coordinators, instructors, everything they

need to keep them moving to becoming productive citizens in the community."

"These are highly functional people who can get off Social Security — that's what we want — that's the goal — when we can break that home-to-institution-and-back-again cycle."

"It is their own sickness and symptoms that trip them up. A common problem is feeling so good they don't take their medication and then in two weeks they are back in the hospital."

"With interim living in the group home and in Kadima apartments, our clients are integrating back into the community," she said.

THE WORD kadima means "moving forward."

The most recent step in moving forward is an outreach program that runs 1-3 p.m. every other Sunday in Jewish Community Center, 15110 Ten Mile, Oak Park.

"This is one more step in getting these people back into society," Iwrey said of the Sunday series that offers get-togethers with experts such as an exercise therapist, a folk dance teacher, a nutritionist or artists whose purpose is to discover hidden talents.

"Sometimes the bent is to hide from the world. The outreach pro-

grams are for any one with a mental illness — not only our clients. We've contacted other agencies as well as those on our waiting list and invited them. These programs are for people to meet people at a social function. This is not a support group. This is to get people out of their homes and do something," she said.

Iwrey emphasizes that Kadima, with its explanatory subtitle "Association for Jewish Residential Care and Support Services" is a non-profit as well as non-sectarian organization.

"Our programs are open to all of the mentally ill, but they must live in Oakland County," Perlmutter said. "The criteria for residence is your ability to get well, not whether you can afford to be here."

"We have no custodial cases. We want our clients constantly working toward reintegration into the community."

Money to keep Kadima moving come from the Department of Mental Health and private donations.

DONATIONS are ever important to the association.

"Every cut for mental health in the federal or state budget, or even talk about a cut, makes us all nervous," Iwrey said.

She called Kadima's fund-raiser last year "phenomenal" and hopes to



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raise as much money this fall.

"We showed a video of our first clients who were living by themselves. The film moved us all to tears," Iwrey said. "With the video we were able to show our contributors how their money was spent and the progress our clients were making."

"We raised enough money that night to start leasing and furnishing more apartments."

The two women describe the Kadima residence as a "spacious lovely

home on a quiet street in Oakland County."

Kadima's apartment units are scattered all over the county. An integral part of the independent living is not having any two clients in the same apartment building, they said.

Donations are accepted by writing to Kadima, 2910 Southfield Road, Suite 205, Southfield 48076. Inquiries on Kadima residence, the apartment program or the outreach program are taken by Iwrey, 559-8235.

TRAMPS

Teens head for the mountains

By Noreen Flack special writer

ST. FABIAN CATHOLIC Church's TRAMPS are heading for the mountains again this year to repair homes for needy people.

The TRAMP (Tri-Appalachia Mountain Project) group will leave for Appalachia Mountain in Buckhannon, W. Va., June 25 and return July 1.

The St. Fabian group decided to continue the program after last year's Ohio River Workcamp had been such a rewarding experience, according to Judy Thibodeau, TRAMPS leader.

The program is sponsored by Group Magazine, a youth ministry publication in Colorado.

Workcamps were developed in 1977 after a flood in the Rocky Mountains wiped out a community, said Carol Sipes of Group Magazine.

"These programs are designed for the use of youth groups," Sipes said. "They allow them to grow by helping people in need."

Eligible homes are determined through a reliable network of community aid directors and agencies. Some homes are in such bad condition, they have been condemned and are not eligible for aid.

A WORKCAMP handout describes the Buckhannon residents as friendly people who range in age from elderly retired citizens to children and teens.

The economy in the Buckhannon area is suffering. The coal mining companies no longer employ many people as they did years ago. Other industries have not located there. Farmers may raise cattle but very few crops are grown. Jobs simply do not exist for some of the people.

The students will stay at Buckhannon-Uphire High School. They will be on the sites at 7:30 a.m. every day and return at 4:30 p.m. for evenings with a Christian rock group, amateur show and interaction projects.

If a group finishes a home early, they will help another group complete a job.

Repairs to homes will include painting, caulking, roof patching and porch repair. Each group brings its own equipment and supplies such as paint and tools.

including travel, food and shelter. Each pays \$50. The parish contributes the remainder, Thibodeau said. Most of the money is earned during fund-raisers throughout the year.

Last year, 18 students participated. This year, nine of those 18 will be going again.

"I didn't want to go," Andrea Thibodeau said. "My mom made me go. But I'm glad I went. It was sad to leave everyone. We really felt like we got something done."

Thibodeau had to limit the group this year to 30 students even though there was a list of others wanting to go. For every six students, one adult is needed for supervision and responsibility.

"These are just normal teenagers," Thibodeau said. "I know they are much more interested in good times than praying. I'm just glad they're coming and being involved in a church group."

THE APPALACHIA Mountain Workcamp is expecting 400 students from all over the United States. Five students and one adult are assigned to each home. Students are not allowed to stay with their home group. They are assigned to a different work group in order to meet other youths of various religions and races.

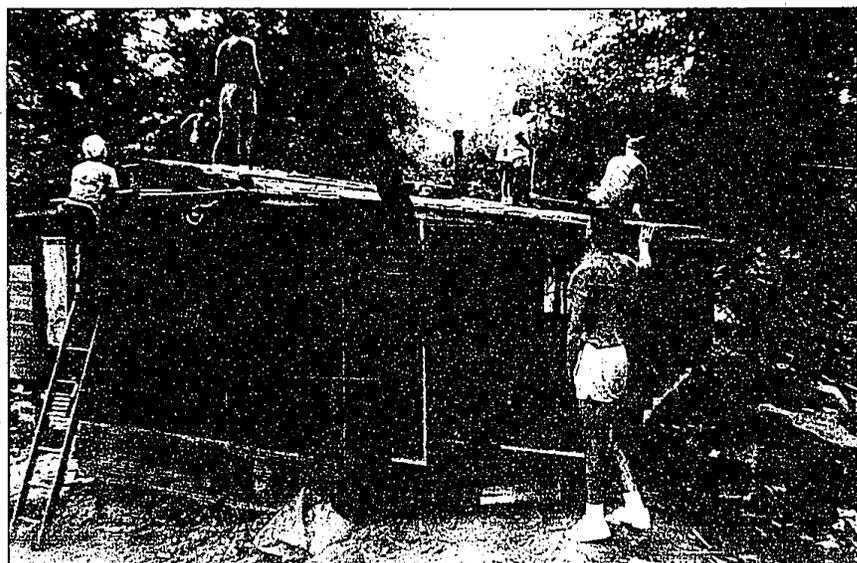
Last year, participants were from 16 different states and 12 different religions. The trip opened the eyes for teens as they met new people and saw poverty that exists, Thibodeau said.

"There is a large number of kids who want to go," Thibodeau said.

"There are a large number of parents interested in having their kids go. But they are reluctant in putting out the money for this kind of experience. If it were soccer or baseball, they would have no problem paying."



The pictures above and at right were taken last summer. St. Fabian parish teens were among about 400 teens from around the country who spent some of their school vacation time in Appalachia painting and repairing homes in the mountain area. The youths work in teams of eight or 10 doing whatever needs to be done to make the home habitable for the winter.



THE TRIP costs \$300 per person.