



The DEAF LUTHERAN



Official Publication of the International Lutheran Deaf Association & the Board for Missions of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

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KONKEL MOVES UP TO PRESIDENCY, NORTON NEW PRESIDENT-ELECT

Despite only having a scant two years to plan and orchestrate a national convention, the just ended 14th biennial ILDA convention drew a record breaking attendance approaching 450 people from every part of the United States and Canada. Some concerns that meeting over the national holiday (July 4th) might not be such a good idea, the large attendance proved that most attendees were not too worried about

possible crowds and traffic congestion, which by the way, were enormous right in the heart of downtown St. Louis and the famed Gateway Arch.

For the first time in the over a quarter century that the ILDA has been in existence, a deaf seminarian will head the International

Lutheran Deaf Association as its president. Moving up to his new office is Dennis R. Konk-el, Gaithersburg, Md., who for the past two years was President-elect and chairman of the Law Committee. A new first-year student at Concordia Seminary, Konk-el will be a busy man with both his studies and administrative duties for the Association. He and his wife, Susan, will reside in St. Louis. He succeeds Larry M. Gorton of Spokane, Wash., who closed out a very successful two year term and was not eligible to succeed himself.

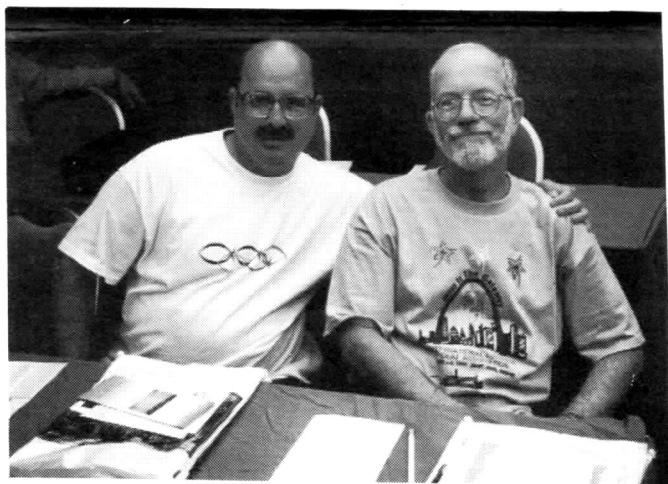
A somewhat reluctant Richard Norton of Dripping Springs, Texas, who initially declined to run for office, was persuaded to reconsider and was elected President-elect. With his new office, he will be required to relinquish the presidency of the Dixie region, under the present rules. Norton is also a member of the steering committee planning the 1997 Convocation on deaf ministry to be held later this year in Kansas City, Kan. He will assume the presidency at the close of the Cleveland convention in 1999.

After three consecutive two year terms as treasurer, Russel Healey was finally allowed to retire from the office. The last two years were unplanned due to the inability to find a qualified person to succeed him. Suspending the constitution at the Chicago convention permitted him to serve the extra term. The new treasurer is Karen Beiter of Lima, N.Y., a member of Alpha Lutheran Church in Rochester.

Both Secretary Alice Hagemeyer and Pastoral Adviser Rev. Donald Leber were returned to office for new two-year terms.

MISSION PROJECTS GOAL TOPPED

Probably the most electrifying news of the convention was the announcement by Pam Kane,



NEW STAFF OF THE DEAF LUTHERAN--Pictured are Larry D. Ginter (left) the new Business Manager of the paper and his brother-in-law David G. Brown, the new Editor. Both are from Parma, Ohio.

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KONKEL MOVES UP TO PRESIDENCY

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Mission Projects Chairperson, of Cleveland, Ohio that the goal set at the previous convention in Chicago two years ago had been exceeded with a total of \$31,297.66 raised. In addition to this amount, a group from Emmanuel Lutheran Church, West Allis, Wis. (Milwaukee) brought a check for \$1,360.00. In summation, the two year effort was at least \$657.66 in excess of the goal!

Realizing that our Lord opens doors to us to be of even greater service to Him and that we should consider a challenge to do even greater things with His help, the new two year goal was set at an unprecedented \$50,000 with some carryover from this year to be met by convention time in Cleveland, Ohio in 1999. Some members of the board of directors were understanding nervous in voting for such a large project, but the Biblical truth that "all things are possible with God" was very reassuring and the measure was carried without dissent.

CHOIR COMPETITION

Some very keen competition was seen in at least three choir groups which has become traditional during all ILDA conventions in recent years. Taking first place at this convention was Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Toledo, Ohio where Rev. Shirrel Petzoldt is pastor. They were followed for second place by Ephphatha Lutheran Church of Chicago where Rev. Prentiss Marsh is pastor. Taking third was Christ Lutheran Deaf of Cleveland.

BANNER COMPETITION

An array of various banners graced the front stage and faced the audience throughout the four-day event with all of them emphasizing the convention theme, "Jesus is the Gateway" more often than not with the Jefferson Memorial Arch as the background for their designs. A huge "stained glass window" meticulously crafted and designed with individually numbered places to be matched to corresponding numbers on the "window" was the 'eye catcher' among all the banners but was not entered into competition. Made by members of Holy Cross Lutheran Church and its pastor, Rev. Richard Moody, the words found in the window echoed the beloved verse we find written in John 3:16, "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son. . . ."

First place went to Holy Three-In-One Lutheran of Houston, Texas, where Rev. Donald Zuhn is pastor. Second and third places were won by Holy Cross, Cary, Ill., and Emmanuel Lutheran Church, West Allis, Wis., respectively.

Junior ILDA banner honors went to Holy Cross, St. Louis and St. Matthew Lutheran Church, New York City. Skit competition honors went to Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Columbus, Ohio which is served by Rev. Ed Bergstresser.

RIGHT HAND AWARD

Ever since the 1977 convention at Spokane, Wash., The Board of Directors has selected one person from several nominations submitted to confer its prized "Right Hand Award" upon some individual who has done meritorious service to their home church, regional conference and national association and which emphasizes Christian service. The context for the award is taken from the verse we find written in Matthew 6:3, ". . . let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." Since 1977, ten persons have been so honored of which three are now deceased. This year's honoree is Arthur C. Green of Los Angeles, who is a resident of the Pilgrim Tower. He was present to accept the honor which was presented to him by Richard Norton, acting on behalf of Carol Seeger, Award Chairperson of Austin, Texas, who was unable to be present. Green graciously accepted the honor.

NEW DEAF LUTHERAN STAFF

With a combined total of nearly 42 years of service to the ILDA, its regions, national office and its 88-year old publication, **THE DEAF LUTHERAN**, Editor Lester Ahls and Business Manager Elmer D. Francisco made the difficult decision that it was time to pass the task on to younger people, and to step down from the positions they have held for many years. Their resignations were submitted in April, 1996, to be effective at the close of the 1997 convention, thus allowing the board a year to search for their successors.

Four persons applied for the jobs, two for each position. Chosen as the new Editor was David G. Brown and as Business Manager, Larry Ginter, both of Parma, Ohio, who are related as brother-in-laws. Both gentlemen are members of Christ Lutheran Church of Cleveland, which is served by Rev. Gary Lawson. The pre-

Continued **KONDEL MOVES UP** Page 3

RHODA J. RYNEARSON DIES

The victory is won! And thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. After a long struggle with carcinoma, Mrs. Rhoda J. Rynearson, 62, of St. Louis was called home by our Lord on Monday evening, July 21, at St. Anthony's Medical Center in South St. Louis County. The immediate cause of death was attributed to pneumonia, freeing her at last from a long battle that was relentless in pain and suffering.

Rhoda Rynearson (nee Ryan) was always a strong advocate for causes of the deaf, especially so in areas of religious education. She often accompanied her husband, Dr. Rodney R. Rynearson, Counselor of Ministry to the Deaf and Blind of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, on the many trips where his travels took him and was a familiar figure at many events where deaf Lutherans were meeting to further deaf ministry in the LCMS.

Although gravely ill, Mrs. Rynearson attended the just concluded 14th biennial ILDA convention, assisted by her husband who wheeled her around to greet friends and well wishers.

She authored some religious booklets and Bible Lessons with teachers' guides for instructing deaf children.

Services were conducted at 7:00 p.m. Thursday evening at Resurrection Lutheran Church in Sappington, Mo. with Rev. John L. Schmidt officiating. Interment was on Saturday, July 26 at Glen Eden Cemetery in Livonia, Mich.

Survivors, besides her husband include sons, Rev. Timothy J., of Wolsey, S.D., Rev. Stephen P., of Hewitt, Texas and Peter of Sterling Heights, Mich., a sister, Mary and seven grandchildren. In lieu of flowers and memorials, the family wishes that such gifts be directed to the Deaf Institute of Theology, care of Concordia Seminary, 801 DeMur Ave., St. Louis, Mo. 63105 in her name.

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." Psalms 116:15

KONKEL MOVES UP

Continued from Page 2

sent editor will do his last issue with this number and the new staff will start with the September/October, 1997 issue and thereafter. Brown's address and phone number is 3434 Klusner Ave., Parma, Ohio 44134-5030 (216) 886 2906. Subscription and business matters should be sent to Ginter at 4134 Sarasota Ave., Parma, Ohio 44134. Ph. (216) 885 5479 (TTY)

LOOKING AHEAD

With a theme from the Book of Revelation 21:6 which reads in part, "Jesus Christ . . . the Beginning and the End" . . . the 1999 convention dates have already been chosen and a site for the convention headquarters been made. It may not be too early at all to look forward to meeting in Cleveland June 24, 25, 26 and 27 at the Holiday Inn. There is a very active local committee already hard at work planning for this event.

And what about the first convention in 2001 which will be the first in the new century? We already know it will be held in Charlotte, N.C. with Chapel for the Deaf Church hosting the event. And 2003? No bids were submitted at the just ended 1997 convention. All of our churches are encouraged to consider a bid, as planning for our conventions takes much preparation.

In retrospect, the 1997 convention was just great!

God Be With You

'Til We Meet Again

God be with you 'til we meet again,
By His counsels guide, uphold you,
With His sheep securely fold you:
God be with you 'til we meet again.

God be with you 'til we meet again,
'Neath His wings protecting hide you,
Daily manna still provide you:
God be with you 'til we meet again.

God be with you 'til we meet again,
If life's trials should confound you,
God will put His arms around you:
God be with you 'til we meet again.

God be with you 'til we meet again,
Keep love's banner floating o'er you,
Smite death's threat'ning wave before you:
God be with you 'til we meet again.

The teaching about Christ's death on the cross seems foolish to those people who are lost. But to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

THE 1997 CONVENTION: A



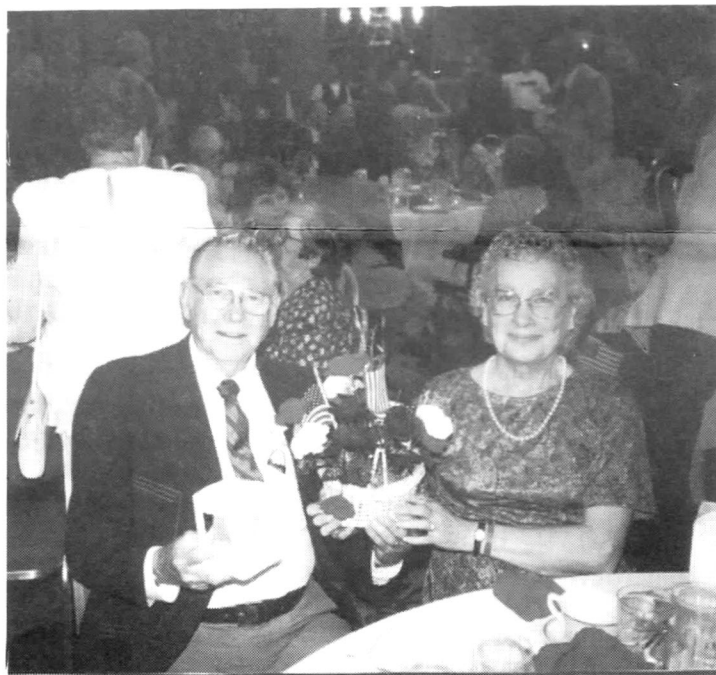
JEFFERSON MEMORIAL ARCH--This spectacular View of St. Louis east from the 18th floor terrace of the Adams Mark Hotel provided viewers a vantage point to watch the air show during the festivities on July 4. Parachutists landed directly below the memorial.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING--Partial view of board meeting at Best Western Inn in Kirkwood, left to right: Ron Madding (N.W.); Alice Hagemeyer, Secretary; Pam Kane (Great Lakes); Donna Wright (Eastern); Richard Norton (Dixie); Charles Kotal (Pacific) and Bob Dunnington (Midwest).

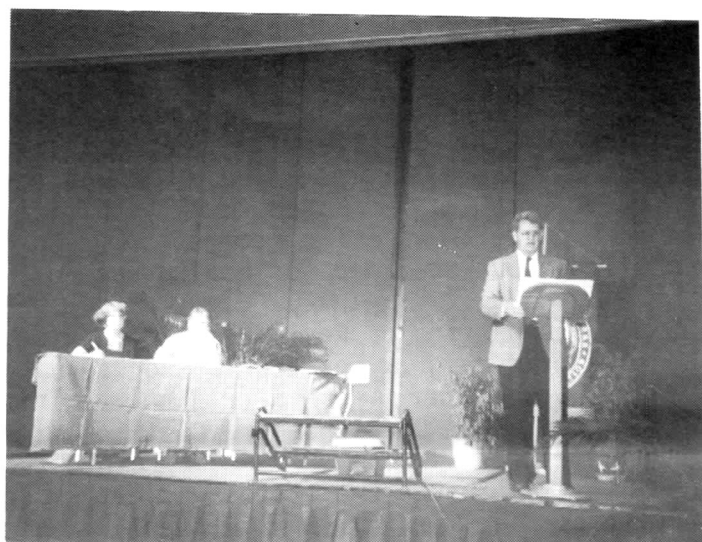


CONDUCTING WORKSHOP--Presenters leading a workshop are Pastors Daryl Gehlbach, Minneapolis and Ror Friedrich of Dallas, Texas.



ENJOYING BANQUET FESTIVITIES--Retired Pastor George Ring and his wife Doris Des Moines, Iowa hold souvenirs during the banquet Saturday evening.

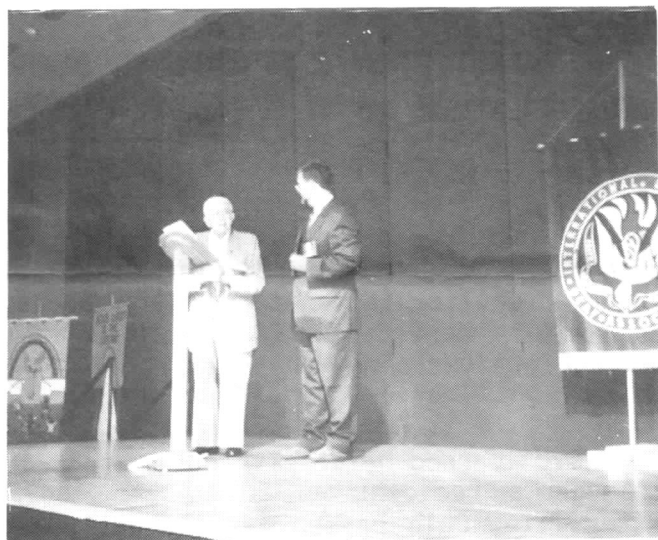
NEW ATTENDANCE RECORD



PRESIDING OVER BUSINESS MEETINGS--ILDA President Larry Gorton is pictured during a portion of the business session on Friday. At the table are Secretary Alice Hagemeyer (left) and Lee Ann Kotal.



LIGHTING CANDLES--The audience in the auditorium lit candles during part of the program Saturday night and the lights were doused, giving off a beautiful view.



RIGHT HAND AWARD--Arthur Green of Los Angeles graciously accepts the ILDA Right Hand Award during ceremony Saturday evening. Making the presentation is Richard Norton of Texas.



HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH CHOIR--The group, led by Pastor Richard Moody is pictured in action Saturday evening during the banquet.

WITH OUR FRIENDS HERE 'N THERE

Once in a while we have an embarrassing oversight that was not supposed to happen. No one remembered to order a plaque to present to outgoing president **Larry Gorton** in St. Louis, who by the way, had a very successful two years as the man at the helm of the ILDA. He was honored at his home church in Spokane, Wash., on Sunday, Aug. 3 with the award presented by former president Ron Madding. Congratulations, Larry!

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You're not going to believe this, but has it ever taken you three hours to find your parked car in a garage? This is precisely what happened in St. Louis Sunday, July 6 as **Lester Ahls and his wife, Betty** were preparing to leave. Efforts by hotel security, Pastor Jerold Munz and Mike MacDonald and others could not find the car. We had traversed all seven floors of the facility, even on "go-carts" to find the elusive vehicle. After three hours and about ready to call the police to report a "stolen" auto, Ahls and Pastor Mike decided to give it one last try on foot. The editor spotted his car, at last, in the area that they apparently had not searched before and parked in the same place he had left four days earlier. All is well, that ends well, the saying goes.

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One of the interesting things at the just ended convention in St. Louis is the hotel requirement that all guests wishing to exit the hotel on Friday evening, July 4 wear 'hospital type' bracelets identifying them as such. Failure to be wearing one would be grounds for denying them entrance back inside. We heard that someone tried to get inside via a window that was broken out. Evidently, someone (doubtful it was any ILDA member) tried to get in who was 'locked out.'

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No doubt, some of our people are members of the **National Fraternal Society of the Deaf**, an Insurance Company run solely for the deaf people and in existence since 1901. It moved its offices recently to Springfield, Ill., to much better quarters after being in the Chicago area for years. Their new address is; 1118 S. 6th St., Springfield, Ill. 62703. Ph. (217) 789-7438 TTY.

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This is a reminder from the **second oldest** deaf church in the LCMS (the first oldest is in Chicago) that it will be celebrating its centennial in August, 1998. If you are

wondering which church this is, its Emmanuel in West Allis, Wis., where Rev. Bud Palmer serves as pastor.

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Mr. Richard French, for many years a Lay Minister in the Seattle area, retired last winter. It was a surprise that Dick was extended a call to serve the deaf in Africa. We believe he was really tempted with such a challenge but declined for health reasons.

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Since the passing of **Rev. Theo. Frederking**, there has not been a resident pastor serving the deaf in either Arizona or Nevada. This past spring, Rev. Donald Leber, District Ministry Developer, has spent a month exploring possibilities in the two states and gathering statistics on the numbers of deaf people there. In analyzing the results of his visits and from letters received since, the pastor believes there should be a full time resident pastor in Arizona and southern Nevada.

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Over 100 people with 50+ children spent a week-end camping at **Timberlake Camp** near Marquette, Neb. June 13 to 15 and a great time is reported! With swimming, a water slide, horseback riding, cook-outs and fishing . . . all in a Christian setting was just superlative! There are already plans afoot to repeat this next year.

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CONGRATULATIONS to **Victor and Evelyn Lyon** of Seattle on the occasion of their 55th anniversary on May 6.

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The newest resident in Iowa is **Mary Lee Krueger** who returned to her home state after living in California for many years. She sold her home in Manteca and now resides in Atlantic, Iowa. Welcome Mary!

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We have learned belatedly that **John W. Riddlebaugh** a resident at Columbus Colony in Westerville, Ohio passed away recently. John was the 1995 winner of the ILDA's "Right Hand Award."

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Christ Lutheran Church, Silver Springs, Md., will have a 50th anniversary gala Saturday, Sept. 13 at the Holiday Inn, College Park, MD. Located at I-95 and U.S. 1. Guest speaker will be Dr. Harry Hoemann and another speaker will be Don Pettingill. Tickets are going for \$30 apiece.

FAREWELL

By now, most ILDA members are aware that there will be a change in the staff of THE DEAF LUTHERAN starting with the next issue which will be for September/October, 1997. Both Elmer Francisco, your Business Manager for nearly 20 years and Lester Ahls, your editor for 14 years, are leaving the paper. Believe us, it was a very hard decision to make. Devoted as we are to our readers and to the paper, it is not a lot different from giving up an old friend.

We have felt our ages, as we are both in our 70's and we believe the paper needs new blood and perhaps a new direction as well. Your next copy will almost certainly have a new format.

Succeeding us after a year long search for new people to serve on the staff will be David G. Brown as editor and Larry Ginter

as Business Manager, both of Parma, Ohio. Their addresses appears elsewhere in this issue.

THE DEAF LUTHERAN has a long history. It has served us well in war and peace and in just 12 more years, it will be 100 years old. It has pointed us deaf Lutherans to "The Bright and Morning Star" which is none other than Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord. It has brought us news from our brothers and sisters all over the USA and Canada. It has brought us news from Synod. It has covered our national conventions and regional conferences. From the earliest days of our deaf ministry in the LCMS, it has served a very useful purpose, when the deaf demanded their own publication rather than one shared with others. We urge you to continue your support for OUR PAPER! We both thank you for your past support and may God bless each one of you.

MISSION PROJECTS 1997-1999

Starfish Lutheran Church	\$ 6,000
Ethiopia	1,000
Brazil	1,000
India, 5,000, 1,000, 1,000	7,000
Ghana, 5,000, 1,000	6,000
Macau	1,000
Australia	3,000
Lebanon	1,000
Four Camps:	
California	3,000
Nebraska	3,000
Ohio	3,000
Pax Natura, Clyde, Alberta	2,000
Zacharias Fund (Scholarship)	11,000
Silent Word, River Forest, Ill.	1,000
Mission, P.R.	1,000
Grand total, if fully funded	\$50,000
"With God, nothing shall be impossible."	



A FOND FAREWELL--Elmer Francisco, Business Manager of The Deaf Lutheran and Lester Ahls, Editor (R) display awards presented them by the Association. In the background is the magnificent "Stained Glass Windows" crafted by members of Holy Cross, the host congregation.

LATE FOR THE SIGN-LANGUAGE CLASS at Fresno Pacific College in California, a friend ran into class with her arms full of books, and I signed to her that she was late. Verbally she replied, "I can't talk now. My hands are full."

--Contributed by Sherry A. Tharpe

THIEVES ACTIVE IN CLEVELAND

Over the years, we have been hearing tales of break-ins at various locations in the country where the deaf worship and have church property. We can recall incidents in Oakland (CA); Des Moines (IA); Pittsburgh (PA); Milwaukee (WI) and there must be others that we have forgotten with the passage of time. The latest report we have was sent in to the editor by Pam Kane of Euclid, Ohio who with her husband, Bob, are members of Christ Lutheran Church which is served by Rev. Gary Lawson.

On April 4 (1997) thieves broke into their church and made off with more than \$10,000 worth of music and video equipment. It

doesn't matter that it was a House of Worship. Were the culprits satisfied? Apparently not. They returned a second time and took more stuff: a big screen television; small television and video camera.

Elated with their success, the burglars had the audacity to return a third night and this time they stole more equipment, including two close-captioning devices. It is possible the thieves did not know what closed-captioning devices were for, but they took them anyway.

The church did not have any security or burglar alarms, which it is said, they could not afford. News of the thefts in the media resulted in an outpouring of donations of equipment and a security system and bars on the windows to deter future break-ins.

Kam Kane did not indicate what insurance the church might have had, if any. However, we are happy that a bad incident has turned out rather well.

THE FAMILY CIRCUS,

By Bil Keane



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"I AM bein' quiet!"



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July-August, 1997

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