

Foster grandparents at training seminars

Approximately 30 participants in the Foster Grandparents Program left the Staten Island Developmental Center yesterday morning for a three day regional conference at Grossinger's Hotel in the Catskill Mountains.

The program enables low-income senior citizens to volunteer several hours of their time each week with emotionally, physically and mentally handicapped children at three Island agencies.

The volunteers, 60 years of age and older, donate four hours each day, five days each week, at the Staten Island Developmental Center, PS 69 in New Springville and the Staten Island Center for Developmental Disabilities. They provide care and companionship to the handicapped youngsters.

At the conference, which is the seventh of its kind to be held, each

foster grandparent will receive training through a series of 23 workshops aimed at improving various skills for use in their work with the children. The volunteers will also receive praise and recognition at a special awards banquet.

Speakers at the conference include officials and representatives from various federal and state agencies who will discuss the interaction between children, volunteers and professional staff of the participating schools and institutions.

There are more than 1,700 foster grandparents who serve about 4,000 handicapped children throughout the state. Nationwide, there are 50,000 volunteers.

According to Nettie Evans, Island coordinator, our borough is in need of 10 volunteers. Persons interested in serving can contact Ms. Evans at the Staten Is-

land Developmental Center.

Panel plans special Olympics

The Staten Island Special Olympics Committee, in its monthly meeting last night in the Staten Island Developmental Center, Willowbrook, made plans for area games May 2 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in the center.

Events will include games for the profoundly retarded and wheelchair games, as well as other activities. There will also be entertainment and an opening parade.

The group made plans for a disco fund-raising event May 13 at 9 p.m. in the Park Villa II, Stapleton. Tickets are \$5. Plans were also made for a "bowlathon" to take place at various Island bowling alleys. The group will meet again Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. in the center.

Union blasts state merit pay program

The 110,000-member Civil Service Employees Association blasted a state merit pay program yesterday as a "dismal failure," and said it would end its participation in the plan when contracts expire next March.

The program, known as the performance evaluation system, is erratic, union president William McGowan said, adding that 2,300 employees due for raises recently "received nothing because the state has run out of money" in its budget.

—Mark Liff.