

# ...Church From page 1

ian communal living is the answer to mankind's problems," Father Albert said. "We also believe the Second Coming (of Christ) is just around the corner. We want to try to get together as one Christian family, like the disciples when Christ was on earth."

Their liturgy unites the traditions of Orthodoxy, Catholicism and Protestantism in an effort "to bring Christians together — it's a prerequisite for Him to have a Christian

community without prejudice." They have occupied the property since April 1984 under a special use permit granted by the Hyde Park Zoning Board of Appeals in July of 1983 over community opposition. The permit allows the organization to operate both a church and school on the grounds.

The school was designed for the seven children in the group, who were to be taught at home rather than at

tend public school. The older children entered Roosevelt High School a few weeks ago, church members said, because the organization could no longer afford to pay their teacher.

The group does not hold public services because the sanctuary is still being renovated, they say.

Gates to the 65-acre property are locked to outsiders. According to church member Leon Kalayjian, this is because there has been some problem with harassment and concern over liability if anyone is injured while on the property.

**No complaints**  
Hyde Park officials say that by all reports the church has been a quiet neighbor and has cooperated with authorities in allowing visits to the grounds and 72-room building when required.

Opposition to the group when its

proposal originally came before the Hyde Park Zoning Board of Appeals was on "religious grounds," said ZBA Chairman Bradley Lynch.

Lynch said there were fears that the group was a cult.

The board overrode that opposition, he said, because "the state can't regulate religious use of grounds."

"If the Millennium Kingdom Family Church was recognized as a religious corporation by the State of New York, that's what they were," Lynch said.

"One could apply (the charge of being a cult) to almost any religion — what were the 12 apostles? One person's opinion is as good as another's."

**Court battle**  
This is not the first time the Millennium Kingdom Family Church has faced public opposition.

In 1973, after the families who

made up the congregation moved in to a home belonging to one of the members in Rye, the city took them to court. It won its case, forcing them to move back to separate residences.

"Our position was that there were a number of families living in a house zoned for single-family residences," said Anthony Antinozzi, then corporation counsel for the City of Rye who is now in private practice. "We felt they weren't using it as a church. At that

time, they were still attending a church in the Bronx."

It took the church 10 years to find a place where members could live together. Rawiszer and Antinozzi both said the Town of Harrison denied a request similar to that made in Hyde Park.

The Hyde Park property is owned by the religious corporation, not an individual. Members do not attend church outside the grounds.

## Millennial members: we're not fanatics

by BARBARA HORNER and RAY FASHONA

The gates of the Millennium Kingdom Family Church in Hyde Park were open when former member Randy Rawiszer took his wife and children out to dinner.

And they would have been open if he and his family had simply said they wanted to move out, according to members of the church.

In fact, his father Bernard said he was helping his son pack in contemplation of the move. Bernard is an archbishop in the church.

"What was very traumatic was the way they went," said Randy's mother Zorina. "I find it hard to believe he kidnapped her."

"Here I am helping Randy pack, and a co-worker of his was watching us (from outside the gate) with binoculars, like we're a bunch of killers or something," the elder Rawiszer said.

Church members say they do not understand why Rawiszer felt he had to "trick" his wife into leaving.

They admit that Becky Rawiszer was torn about going. All they knew, they said, is that Randy and his family went out to dinner — and never came back.

They say they're not sure why Randy is "trying to destroy the church." Spiritual leader

The gate that turns Mansion Drive into a dead end was shut behind two recent visitors, allowed onto the property for an interview.

Church members, who say they can come and go as they please, are concerned about security in the wake of several incidents of harassment, said Leon Kalayjian. They are concerned, too, about the problem of liability if anyone is injured while using the grounds.

That's why the gates are kept locked.

Members' accounts of life in the 72-room mansion occupied by the Millennium Kingdom Family Church — the rules, the communal setup, the separation of men and women — parallel almost completely with Rawiszer's.

But their interpretation of that life couldn't be more different than Rawiszer's charge that they are brainwashed.

"How could people be brainwashed when they sometimes have to wait days, even weeks to talk to me because I am so busy?" said Avak Hakobian, the church's spiritual leader, called Father John by members.

He added: "We have absolutely nothing to hide."

In his long gray hair and beard, dressed in a soutane, he looks like an holy man. His piercing brown eyes regard one carefully as he speaks.

"I'm more like a father than a spiritual leader in this house," he says. His duties as spiritual leader include "teaching, guidance, supervision," he said, in addition to leading services on the property for church members.

**Combines traditions**  
The faith the Millennium Kingdom Family Church hopes one day to spread is based on a combination of Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant traditions. Like all three Christian traditions, said Father Albert Zabiniski, the church is based on worship of Jesus Christ. He denied Rawiszer's charge that the group worships Father John.

"We are looking for the family of Christians to come together," Father Albert said. "We believe it's necessary to establish a church to bring Christians together. It's a prerequisite for His coming to have a Christian community without prejudice."

The church, he said, traces its roots to the American Orthodox Catholic Church, a worldwide movement with some three million members. Its archbishops, who wear choir robes while at home and work outside the church to support it, were trained under Walter Propheta, the late patriarch of the American Orthodox Catholic Apostolic Church, and under Father John.

It formed as a splinter branch of the American Orthodox Catholic Church in 1973 because "we had a belief that Christian community living is the answer to mankind's problems," said Father Albert. "We believe the second coming is just around the corner. We want to try to get together as one Christian family like the disciples when Christ was alive."

It received its charter as a not-for-profit religious corporation from New York State and its tax-exempt status from the Internal Revenue Service that same year.

**Members establish rules**  
The church has established three levels for members as they become more involved in the religion. The first, the novitiate, lasts for three years as members learn what is demanded of them, Father Albert said.

The second is a semi-cloistered lifestyle in which married couples can live apart and "come together at different times whenever they choose," Father Albert said. Married members who consider themselves on the second level can also occupy the same bedroom, if they wish.

What the church calls the "highest" level involves vows of poverty and celibacy, Father Albert said.

Unmarried members must be celibate no matter what level they are on. They are chaperoned, as are married members when not with their spouses, and live on separate floors.

"It's protection for communication," said Father Albert, searching for words. "We have to make sure one doesn't communicate with another. Suppose they're weak — not all Christians are strong."

The third level was originated by church members and passed by a community vote.

It was the third level that created problems for Randy Rawiszer, church members said.

"She became very interested in the religion," Rawiszer's mother said of Becky. "Randy felt the Kingdom was destroying their marriage. He felt she was using her spirituality as an excuse for not wanting to be with him."

The couple lived on separate floors, although Randy's father Bernard said the church offered to build a separate apartment for them if they wished to live together. Annette and Leon Kalayjian, two members of the church (Kalayjian is an archbishop), have such an arrangement.

Zorina Rawiszer said Becky did not want to live with her husband.

"I wanted her to understand what she wants to do," said Father John, whose English is accented but fluent after some 40 years in the country.

"I tell her, 'You know our conditions, you know what we do. You have a choice. Look at what your husband offers you.' I am trying to help her make up her mind."

"She always used to say, 'You don't trust me, you don't think I'm going to make it — that I'm going to leave, I'm going to fail,'" he said Becky told him.

Becky wanted to go to the highest level, but "it was suggested not to do it because Randy wasn't ready," Father John said. "But I couldn't get her to cooperate. She said she would help him (reach that level)."

"If a married couple disagrees, if you have one this way, one that way, you have real problems. You have to give opportunity to try it (reaching the highest level). You can always go back. If you deny a person the opportunity, you create problems."

**Broken vows**  
One of Randy Rawiszer's charges against the church was that it doled out harsh punishments to children. As an example, he cited one young man who was isolated to weeks because he was caught kissing a girl.

The young man, now 19, was brought into the room when the subject was discussed.

"It was more of a secret relationship," he said of the incident. "We knew it was wrong, because that kind of relationship is not practiced in this religion. It's not God's will."

He was trying to enter the final level, he said, and had "broken his vows, more or less, constantly, repeatedly."

His punishment was decided "after discussion" with Father John.

"His choice of isolation ('penance') was fasting," Father John said. "He felt it would increase his spiritual willpower. The fast was not forced, it wasn't done in a punishing way. It was discussed as some kind of penance."

The fasting was also not 40 consecutive days, he noted.

## ...Kane From page 1

diac care unit when Kane's vehicle swerved into her lane, striking her car head on.

Blood tests taken at Northern Dutchess Hospital following the accident indicated that Kane had a blood-alcohol level of .17, according to O'Neill. He said that a reading of .10 is considered legal evidence of intoxication.

According to O'Neill, a presentencing report will be presented to Judge Vogt by the Dutchess County Probation Department. The report will make a recommendation to the court on whether or not Kane should be incarcerated based on his past record and personal history, O'Neill said.

O'Neill said that Oles was released on bail pending the Appellate Court's decision. He said that Oles' attorney has filed the appeal on the grounds that the sentence was "excessive."

Costs of principle and interest payments on building bonds is estimated to increase from \$312,570 to \$592,880.

Some of these monies, reimbursable through separate state aid, will generate income, Barrett pointed out.

Other large increases include insurance coverage, which has nearly tripled from \$11,500 this year to \$30,750 next year.

Computer assisted instruction costs more than doubled, from \$35,330 to \$90,250. About \$49,000 of that is part of a Computer Assisted Instruction system to be purchased for Mill Road next year as part of a planned three-year acquisition of districtwide computers, computer instruction and management programs, said LeDoux.

Estimated mandated costs to handicapped children jumped from \$708,748 to \$853,279.

A near 100 percent increase in the estimate of the district's debt for next year is the result of additional borrowing for the district's renovation project to begin next year, said LeDoux.

The costs include staffing increases for 1985-86 — two elementary teachers, one high school teacher, a gifted education teacher, and an administration secretary.

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## ...Wish list From page 1

crease over this year's budget of \$1,435,283.

Estimates include certain fixed, negotiated costs, including \$1,220,154 for teacher salaries in grades kindergarten through sixth, and \$1,523,135 for teachers in the junior high and high school. This represents an increase of about \$333,000.

Teacher and employee retirement are estimated at \$864,245 and \$194,111, up from this year's figures of \$698,000 and \$103,000.

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## Tax assistance available

Free income tax assistance is available from the Internal Revenue Service by trained aides.

In Red Hook, aides will be available every Friday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Red Hook Town Hall Annex.

In Rhinebeck, the service will be available every Thursday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Reformed Church, Route 9.

## Lung disease talk topic

Pneumologist Dr. Donald Ber-

man of Poughkeepsie will present a Community Education Program on Wednesday, Feb. 20 at Northern Dutchess Hospital in Rhinebeck at 7 p.m.

The program will address the problem of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease including chronic bronchitis, asthma and emphysema.

Topics to be covered will include an

update on the nature and causes of chronic lung disease, environmental and genetic factors contributing to the disease and the role of medical therapy in the treatment of lung diseases.

The program is free. Registration is requested by calling Kappy McCorney at the hospital, 876-3001.

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Our RECIPE OF THE WEEK  
**Java Honey Cake**

6 eggs, separated	3/4 c. flour
1 1/2 c. sugar	2 tsp. cinnamon
1/2 c. Mocha Java coffee	1 1/2 tsp. baking soda
1/4 c. honey	1 tsp. baking powder
1 c. oil	1/2 tsp. salt
1 tsp. vanilla	

Beat egg whites until stiff; set aside. Beat egg yolks; add sugar, honey, coffee, oil, and vanilla. Sift together flour, cinnamon, baking soda, baking powder, and salt; stir into egg mixture. Fold in whites. Pour into greased 10-in. tube pan. Bake at 325° 55 minutes. Cool upright before removing from pan.

*All ingredients available at Country Couzens', (formerly Osterhoudt's Country Store), Market Street, Staatsburg. Also deli meats, fresh baked goods and produce, home-made soup, and much more.*

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