

## Operation To Begin Soon

# Switchboard Operation Planned

In Rocky Mount there is a drug problem that needs to be recognized and not ignored. Within the last year in the Rocky Mount area, one youth has died from drug abuse; there have been numerous bad trips; numerous arrests have been made on local people; and the use of drugs is prevalent, ranging from marijuana, LSD, mescaline, amphetamines, to heroin. Some of these may be obtained through illegal drug channels whereas others are available at any local service station, drug store, or even in the medicine cabinet at home. Users range from the poor to the socially elite - from junior high students to junior executives. This includes those from the first-time novelty seeker to the addict.

We, as concerned citizens who recognize and are close to this problem offer SWITCHBOARD as a community service on the basis of need and with the knowledge that our organization can be as effective as other SWITCHBOARD is not a new concept, it is unique in that it is concerned with educating and informing the potential drug user, the actual user, and the concerned public; as well as with helping those who are involved with drugs. We, as representatives of SWITCHBOARD, are in the preliminary stages of organizing our community service in hopes that we as a Rocky Mount organization can be as effective here in dealing with the drug problem as other SWITCHBOARDS have been in dealing with similar problems large and small in other cities throughout the nation. SWITCHBOARD is a non-profit organization staffed solely by trained volunteer personnel. In establishing our organization we are seeking the support of local civic leaders, businessmen, school ad-

ministrators, law enforcement officials and medical and legal professionals. We have found not only sympathy and concern for our cause, but active support. Needless to say we have met with opposition, but we fully realize that any group of this type is going to raise public suspicion and dissent. It is our earnest belief that the ultimate worth of our efforts will prove these doubts to be premature and unfounded.

SWITCHBOARD will offer its service in the initial format of 12-hour service on weekdays and 24-hour service on weekends. This format is designed thru experience to cover the most likely hours for calls. Phone lines will be open regarding information on drugs as well as emergency assistance when the need arises. Switchboard personnel will be available to extend their services to any part of the Rocky Mount area where a caller might be located. These situations have already arisen in our community and have developed into serious crises, which with our help, we believe could have been lessened or alleviated. On our organization setup we require medical assistance on a full-time basis with local hospitals and knowledgeable physicians available. Counselling and referral service will be available to those whose needs extend beyond the immediate services of Switchboard. Our present support comes from the local Red Cross Chapter and Rocky Mount Health Center for referral of problems dealing with and relating to not only drug usage and mental health, but other medical problems such as social diseases.

Training has been given by local medical, legal, and law enforcement officials as well as experienced SWITCHBOARD

personnel who are presently conducting training classes for their home organization. Training has been administered through the facilities of the Red Cross and the Mental Health Society.

In conclusion I would like to say that our primary motive is to establish a service which will give to our community the help which we feel is sorely needed. The greatest part of the work of SWITCHBOARD will indeed be shouldered by young people, and in many cases those who are involved with or have been involved with drugs. We feel that by giving us an opportunity to fulfill our goals you are not only helping to curb the mounting drug problem, but you are helping us to become a productive force within the community.

By: Bryan Tuttle  
and Burt Gurganus  
Co-Chairmen of the Rocky  
Mount SWITCHBOARD



RMSH's celebrities Connie Maxwell, Andy Dorr, and Cathy Harrison have prepared an oscar performance.

## On To Chapel Hill

# 'Allegation' Wins At Drama Fest.

(Editor's Note: The RMSH Edsonians traveled to Campbell College last Saturday for the District Drama Festival. The following is a comment by Richard Newman, a member of the Drama Dept. and a Junior member of the GRYPHON Staff.)

The RMSH Dramatics Department won a first place Distinguished Award at the District Dramatics Festival at Campbell College February 27.

The Edsonians presented "The Alligation", a one-act play by Ferlingetti, to approximately 300 people attending the festival. The plays were judged by Mr. Paul Crouch from Atlantic Christian College, Mr. Bob Versteeg from Louisburg College and Mr. Anthony Dingman from N. C. Wesleyan College. The host of the event was Mr. Dan Linney, head of the Campbell Playmakers.

The festival is an annual event sponsored by the Carolina Dramatics Association. The first round of competition is held on the District level. Each district festival may have between six and fourteen plays. The winning entry, or entries, is eligible to compete in the State Dramatics Festival in Chapel Hill March 18, 19, 20.

The drama students worked for six weeks preparing for the competition. Each student worked in some capacity, whether it be costuming, set designing, or directing. To accomplish all of this work the students put in extra hours of hard work after school and on weekends. The play was directed by Mr. Bill Rawls, who, unfortunately, could not attend the festival because of illness. None the less, Mr. Rawls had prepared his students so thoroughly that they attended the festival and returned with the

coveted award.

"The Alligation" is a stirring comment on the slavery issue of the 1850's and 60's. Each character represents a specific aspect of the ideals of slavery. A young Southern girl, living in a large Northern city, keeps an alligator as a pet. She receives several telephone calls advising her to set the alligator free. A Blind Indian also warns her of the consequences she will face if she continues to harbor the animal. In the end, the girl realizes the error of her ways and admits her guilt. The young girl represents the South's position before and during the American Civil War . . . The alligator represents the enslaved people. The Blind Indian represents the hope of freedom.

Cathy Harrison gives an excellent portrayal of the young girl and speaks a Southern accent that could convince Junior Samples that she was home-grown. Andy Dorr plays the Blind Indian in a manner that would make Sitting Bull proud. Connie Maxwell plays the alligator, although you'll never see her under twenty-five pounds of gator costume.

The GRYPHON would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Edsonians on their award and to wish them much luck in Chapel Hill, for they are certainly one of the most talented and devoted theatrical group in North Carolina.

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