Southwest La. Rehabilitation Center

Drive To Help Crippled Children

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Lafayette Kiwanians will spearhead the drive to help raise $70,000 for the building of a Southwest Louisiana Rehabilitation Center, to be used for crippled children and adults, Kiwanis Club President W. R. Oliver announced.

A giant “Rehabathon”—nine hours of auction, music, stunts and novelties over KLFY-TV is the plan. $18,000 has already been raised and we hope to raise an average of $3,000 per hour or $27,000 with the “Rehabathon,” Oliver said. The remaining $25,000 will be collected through a fund-raising drive running concurrently with the Easter Seal Campaign.

Hill-Burton Funds from the U.S. Government have been approved in the amount of $107,000 and the “Evangeline Country” must come up $70,000 in order to secure the funds. June 30, 1957 is the deadline or portion of the Federal funds will be revoked.

Architect H. J. Lagroue’s plans and specifications meet the requirements of Hill-Burton officials and the total cost of the center including furnishing is estimated at $177,000.

There are no facilities at present to deal with most of the crippled children in Lafayette and adjoining parishes who need rehabilitation, Tom Pears told the meeting. Those facilities which do exist, he continued, are over crowded and unequipped to handle many of the cases that desperately need attention.

Pears emphasized that the current Easter Seal drive for crippled children will not contribute to the center’s construction, as capital expenditures cannot be financed from Easter Seal funds.

The TV fund raising show will be held Friday and Saturday evening, May 11 and 12. Oliver said that this was not a Kiwanis project, but a community undertaking, and urged all area residents to support the fund drive.

Bank President R. J. Castille, “Rehabathon” general chairman, told the group that the show would feature name entertainers, area bands, stunts, and the auction proce-

edings. Auction Committee Chairman Joseph J. Piccone explained that to raise $50 a minute—$3,000 an hour—large lots of merchandise contributed by area merchants would be presented to the TV audience at one time. Bids will be taken over the telephone, but the price will be preset at a fair trade level. The first phone calls would get the merchandise, he said.

Piccone also noted that many goods must be sold before the “Rehabathon” gets on the air. Assistant General Chairman John Prejean illustrated this point by noting that a carload of yams may be donated by the St. Landry parish growers, and must be sold to an area food merchant before the program. The sale would be announced during the program show.

On this point, Piccone urged area merchants to donate their best merchandise to the drive.

Stunts Chairman E. J. Chatelain called for ideas from all interested persons in the area—Kiwani-ans or not—for money-raising stunts, which will form another major part of the show. He suggested a dollar a vote for local queens or a dollar a brick for school rooms as possible money makers.

On the entertainment side, suggestions were made to have request numbers at five dollars each. Wilbert Woody is the head of the entertainment group.

Radio news commentator and columnist Paul Harvey has been engaged by the “Rehabathon” to help things along. He will speak on both Friday and Saturday nights.

The Rehabilitation Center for Southwest Louisiana must be a reality and it will take the combined efforts of all the people of the Evangeline Country, W. R. Oliver, President of the Kiwanis Club of Lafayette stated. All persons with ideas and who want to help are urged to communicate with General Chairman R. J. Castille, Guaranty Bank and Trust Company, Lafayette, La.