



James Callahan, state commissioner of Mental Health, speaks to gathering of supporters of the Job Paths program during ceremonies at the former Job C. Tripp Elementary School in Fairhaven.

Servicing as master of ceremonies yesterday was Fairhaven Banker George Graves, who along with state Sen. William Q. MacLean Jr., D-Fairhaven, another speaker, was part of the driving force behind the center's creation. Offering the benediction was Ronald Simonsen, a former Fairhaven graduate with cerebral palsy, who now lives in Pelham, N.H. Also taking part in the ceremony was state Rep. Joseph A. DeNucci, D-Newton, House Chairman of the Human Services and Elderly Affairs Committee.

MacLean stressed that "not one cent of taxpayers' money" went into the renovation of the school and praised the community response for establishing the center. The center plans an open house for the public from 1-3 p.m. Sunday, and the Job Paths project itself expects to be under way on Feb. 19.

Graves, whose son David will participate in the project and who presided at yesterday's ribbon cutting, and MacLean led a local effort to get the center established. After the state supplied a \$125,000 grant for initial operating funds the town of Fairhaven made the former Tripp School available as a center, but there was no money available for repairs and renovations. Supporters of the center raised \$60,000 in contributions, which together with donated materials and in-kind services allowed \$400,000 worth of work to be performed, according to Graves.

Students at Old Colony Regional Vocational Technical High School handled most of the wiring work, while students from the Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School did the carpentry and painting

work. Trainees from the Plumbers and Steamfitters Union, Local 77, training school, did the plumbing and heating work.

Also singled out yesterday for special recognition were New Bedford wiring inspector Hugh Murray, who helped supervise wiring work; the Moore and Isherwood advertising agency, which developed a letter of solicitation for the center; the media, which help publicize the effort, bus company owner Leo Tremblay, who provided bus transportation for students working at the school; American Telephone and Telegraph Co., which contributed \$7,000 and Wilmington auto dealer Ben Ristuccia, summer resident of the area, who donated \$20,000 worth of kitchen equipment for the center.

Graves said after yesterday's ceremonies that Joseph Winterhalter, local McDonald's franchise operator, indicated he would donate proceeds from Valentine's Day sales at his McDonald's in Fairhaven to the center.