

line client can receive advice on anything from drug overdoses to legal aid. Morrissey added that not all calls are critical ones: "There's calls asking 'Where can we get dog food at 3 a.m.?'"

In addition, Mainline supports an on-the-street task force, and can refer clients to a local bail fund. Their crash-in service remains popular, but more local residents are needed who can put up unexpected one-night guests.

Neil Brown, a junior at Ithaca High, often stops by Sheldon Court to talk to Mainline staffers or regulars. He agreed that many high school students are getting in trouble in Collegetown: "It's easy to drink up here-- they look just like Cornell kids." Brown can tell Mainline is concerned about these problems, but admits that some young people are wary of staffer's help.

"Sometimes kids think they're going to call their parents, or the police," he said.

Nonetheless, Brown believes these kids are growing accustomed to Mainline's services. "They're coming by more often," he added. "Maybe to warm up, or use the bathroom, or just talk to people."

### Struggling for Funds

Mainline's new Outreach program aims at removing such barriers between the agency and the Ithacan community-at-large. Bob Beers, Mainline's coordinator, describes Outreach as "coming out from behind the desk and going to where the people are." This summer, for example, a Mainline softball team was organized with the help of area kids. Their record was hardly a flawless one; after beating Alpha House, they lost to the Ithaca Police Department's team.

Another Outreach endeavor, aided by Our Place, resulted in the Aug. 24 jam session in the Dryden Road parking lot. Over 500 people attended the evening-long concert and local kids were involved in its planning, security and clean-up. "We were working alongside them, 50-50 with them," Beers recalled. "We had kids get involved who'd been in trouble, who'd been told all their lives that they were failures, and they'd never before experienced success."

Such projects require financing, however, and both Mainline and Our Place are perpetually struggling for funds. In recent years, Mainline raised money by sponsoring a Walk-a-thon and selling apples. Today they are

supported by their own assets and fund-raising, city revenue sharing, Cornell financing, and a large fund-matching grant from the New York State Division of Youth.

According to Beers, however, Mainline is still running short of funds. "We need another (paid) staffer," he said, "and we're still operating at full potential." Recent budget cuts at Cornell have also hurt Mainline finances.

Our Place is equally hard up for money. Until next January, rent is being covered by city funds channeled through the Youth Bureau. Despite this windfall, Our Place lacks the capital for more recreation equipment and a full-time attendant. "We just passed up a pool table," Whitman said. "We just couldn't afford it."

Financing is not Our Place's only problem. Their WVBR landlords have complained about litter, building vandalism, and occasional thefts from staff members' cars. Gary Fassak, WVBR's general manager, explained that "I totally support the concept, but sometimes I wish it weren't located in our building." Fassak, however, sees "no present reason" for terminating Our Place's lease. "I've talked things over with Jason," he said, "and I do have a desire to make it work."

This desire is shared by many Collegetown merchants. In July the East Hill Merchants Association drafted a letter to Mayor Conley which applauded the efforts of Give Us a Chance. Robert Johnson, owner of Triangle Book Shop, has given the corporation both financing and moral support.

"Thank God for Jason Wittman," Johnson said. "He's one of the most unselfish individuals I've ever known." The combined efforts of Our Place and Mainline, Johnson feels, may reduce the number of youth related robberies and vandalism now prevalent in the C-Town area.

Meanwhile, the Bank Wall continues to thrive. On last count, 15 beer cans were found piled behind the wall and under nearby shrubbery. At Our Place, however, Cozzarin thinks that pinball machines may yet win out over the wall-sitting syndrome. "When they get bored up here, they go down there," he said. "If they have a good time, they stay." Boredom is therefore the chief villain, and both Our Place and Mainline are fighting it hard.

## TOKYO STRING QUARTET

STATLER AUDITORIUM

Friday, October 3 8:15 p.m.