

EIGHT WEEKS IN CAMP

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Kansas City

The camp of the Jewish Educational Institute was conducted for a period of eight weeks, during which time about 200 boys and girls whose ages range from 9 to 16 years were accommodated. The children were divided into four groups, each group having the privilege of staying two weeks. Each camper was charged a fee of \$1 a week and in cases where this could not be afforded, the child was taken gratis.

The Camp was located on the grounds of the Progress Country Club, about fourteen miles south of Kansas City. The tents were pitched on the sides of a wooded slope overlooking a large lake of spring fed water.

The equipment was designed and arranged with an eye for health and comfort. It consisted of two large sleeping tents 20 x 40 feet, a dining-room tent 20 x 40 feet, a permanent kitchen and two small tents. All the tents were floored; the large tents were also provided with screen walls and doors and rolling storm curtains. To reduce the number of flies around the sleeping tents to a minimum, the kitchen and dining-rooms were placed about 100 yards from them.

Sleeping accommodations were excellent, as cots were used in the sleeping tents and each cot provided with a blanket, quilt, sheet and pillow.

Two baseball diamonds, a basket and volley ball court, quoit alleys and other equipment formed an attractive playground, while all sorts of athletic paraphernalia, indoor games, books and swimming suits were always on hand to meet the demands of every occasion.

The kitchen was conducted on a Kosher plan and a great quantity of milk, butter, eggs, vegetables, cereals, bread and fruit were utilized to make the meals both wholesome and nutritious. In addition to their regular meals, the children were treated occasionally to ice cream, candy and watermelon, provided by many of our generous hearted friends. That the food served was both beneficial and healthful, is evidenced by

an average increase in weight of three pounds per child.

The Camp was in charge of a director and two assistants, and the kitchen was ably conducted by a cook and her assistant, under the director's supervision. All the duties of the Camp, such as cleaning of the tents and grounds, making beds, dishwashing, serving in the dining-room and carrying water, was done by the boys and girls. Each tent had its captains and lieutenants, elected by the occupants of the tent. They controlled the assignment of various duties of the campers in the group. After all the duties had been performed, the captains and director graded each group. These grades were recorded and the group having the highest average for the week was given a prize. A great amount of effort was exerted to win the prize and the competition was strong. The effect of this competition was to impress the child with an esthetic taste, as well as to cultivate a desire of cleanliness and orderliness and generally beautifying his surroundings. Work in this was made pleasant and attractive.

The program was prepared in advance each day and was varied to hold the interest of the child. Bathing was the most favorite sport among the boys, and advantage was taken of this opportunity by giving lessons in swimming and diving. Most of the boys were able to swim and dive at the close of their stay. Amongst recreational games, the most popular were baseball, basket-ball, highball, volley-ball, dare-base, run-sheep-run, checkers and dominoes. Other forms of amusements were fishing, Indian wrestling, blind-fold boxing, cross-country hikes, field meets, marshmallow and corn roasts, and camp fires were utilized to add a touch of variety. In addition to these forms of amusement, our evening programs included vaudeville, shadowgraphs, plays, parties and selections on a Victrola. Lessons in weaving, sewing, crocheting, basketry, woodcraft, forestry, etc., were given by popular demand.

The Camp, taken as a whole, was in every way successful. The benefit derived by the boy and girl campers cannot be overestimated. It gave to the boys and girls their first conception of what is meant when a person refers to God's open country. It stamped the blush of health on faces that had not known it before. It taught the children to play agreeably,

honestly and energetically, and above all, it converted thoughtless children, ignorant of nature and many of the niceties of life to lovers of nature and well mannered boys and girls.

Miss Fanny Benjamin and Mrs. Henry Cohen, were instrumental in making the Camp a possibility.

NON-SECTARIAN SUMMMER VACATION SCHOOL

Oscar Leonard
St. Louis

For the past eight years the St. Louis Board of Education conducted trade manual schools for six weeks in various parts of the city. This work was really taken over by the Board of Education from private hands, such schools having been conducted by social workers and other interested persons before the Board of Education undertook to do this work. It was generally conceded that the work was necessary and beneficial. The industrial work was particularly enjoyed by the children, who were thereby kept off the streets five half days a week for six weeks.

Early in June of this year, it was announced that the Board of Education on account of lack of funds was retrenching and would discontinue the grade manual schools. Interested persons, in common with social workers and social agencies, sent their protests to the Board of Education. They urged that the grade manuals be continued.

The Jewish Educational Alliance officially sent a letter recommending that the work be continued. The Board of Education announced that it was impossible to do this work because of the financial condition in which it finds itself.

It was then that I felt it would be wrong on our part to allow the children of our district to roam the streets instead of having an opportunity to play and work under proper direction. Our President, Mr. Emil Mayer, called a meeting of the Executive Committee of our association. I placed the plans before the committee for starting such a school in our own building or if we might obtain the use of the nearest public school, Patrick Henry, we might do

the work in that school. The Executive Committee agreed that the work ought to be done. It then became a question of funds. The Jewish Charitable and Educational Union, which supplies the funds to this association, has incurred a deficit of about \$10,000 during the first six months of this year. The Union therefore argued that while the work was necessary, there were obligations which have already been incurred and therefore no appropriation for this work could be made. Permission, however, was given to the writer to collect funds from a limited number of friends who might be inclined to help in this work.

The funds came readily. The Board of Education gave us the use of the Patrick Henry School, about two blocks away from the Alliance, a teacher corps was organized and on July 6th we opened our summer school. We engaged teachers who had done that work in former years for the Board of Education. These teachers were selected by Mr. Philo Stevenson, who has been in charge of the grade manual schools for the Board of Education since their inception. He volunteered his services. The day we opened the school there was a registry of 150 children. They were brought to the school by the announcement in the press. The school was open to children of all denominations and nationalities, the ages ranging between 5 and 16. In the five weeks during which the school was kept open, the total registry rose to 651, 400 girls, 251 boys. During the twenty-four days of school, there was a total attendance of 10,956, an average daily attendance of 457. Children from seventeen public schools and one parochial