

... Around Town

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Charity and Children, a Baptist publication. It would seem from the article that much needed work is being accomplished at the camp. The article follows:

Mike traipses down the trail that snakes between towering pine trees. Sticks and dried leaves crackle under the heavy tread of his hiking boots.

Motioning toward the nine boys farther back on the trail, the 13-year-old explains why he and the others live in these Cameron NC woods.

"We're helping each other solve our problems," he says. "We're working together as partners, and we're friends while we're doing it."

Mike is one of 30 boys involved in friendship therapy at Cameron Home, The Baptist Children's Homes' therapeutic camping program. In these woods the boys live year-round, sleep, cook and eat in tents they design and build themselves, and concentrate on the problems that have disrupted their schooling and home lives.

Their problems are as different as the boys themselves. One came to Cameron Home after he'd been expelled from school. Another is learning to control his violent temper. Still another is overcoming emotional problems caused by being shipped from one child care institution to another almost all his life.

"At camp you don't just solve your problems," says Tony, a 14-year-old who's been in care a year, "you learn how to solve them."

The boys live and work in groups of 10, supervised by two live-in counselors called chiefs. The campers don't attend public school—Cameron Home is an alternative education program recognized by the State Board of Public Instruction and the Moore County Board of Education.

They learn math and English by figuring dimensions for tents, planning menus and budgets, and writing articles for the camp newsletter. They overcome their problems through PSP, which stands for problem, solution and prevention.

If an argument erupts between campers, the group uses positive peer pressure to solve the disagreement, what needs to be done, and what can prevent it from happening again.

Working through a problem can take from 10 minutes to 10 hours, but once it's solved, it's never brought up again.

"When I'm helping a friend, I won't criticize him and tell him how rotten he is," says Glenn,

who's been at camp one year. "And I wouldn't remind him of his problem over and over and over. I'd just try to help him."

"If a friend of mine has a problem, I'll do my best to talk to him seriously about whatever's bothering him," says 14-year-old Willie, "I won't joke about it, and I'll see what I can do best to help him out."

The backbone of friendship therapy is showing care and concern for every boy in camp, according to Lois McKenzie, who helped her husband, Buford, organize Cameron Home. "No matter how hostile or unpleasant a boy may be in his attitude, we show care and concern for him," she says. "The key to camp is loving the turmoil, the bitterness, the hostility out of these boys by showing them you do care."

Every evening the boys gather in their campsites for pow-wow, where they discuss the day's event. "We discuss the day and talk about things that helped us grow during that day," says Tony.

After six weeks of friendship therapy, campers return home for four days to practice what they've learned. "At home, the boys apply the personal relationship skills they talk about and learn here at camp—learning to open up, to be more sharing with siblings," says Mrs. McKenzie. "Then they measure the progress they've made from one home visit to the next."

Most boys return home for good after 13 to 16 months of friendship therapy. But the transition from woods to school and home is not always an easy one. "When you go back to school you might lose some friends because you stand up for what's right," says 14-year-old Darren. "But your real friends are like the ones at camp, who want you to do what's right."

Friendship therapy at Cameron Home has changed the lives of 76 boys since it opened in 1980. "We couldn't get along if it weren't for being friends and helping each other out," says Willie. "Without friendship, where would the world be today?"

Absentee votes ended Wednesday

Wednesday, October 31, is the last day to apply for an absentee ballot for next week's election, according to Hoke County Board of Elections Director Rose Sturgeon.

The only exception that can be made to the Wednesday deadline is if sickness occurs preventing voting on election day.

On election day, the polls will open at 6:30 a.m. and close at 7:30 p.m., Sturgeon said.



Photo by Pam Frederick

Lady, you look terrible...

For a person, but you look great for a witch. Could it be that she is counting money with which to buy her strange brew? Hopefully, she was looking for the judging of the costumes at the TMH Halloween Carnival last Saturday. Shawn Christian, in a monster costume won first place in that contest. Pam Smith, as a cavewoman, took second and Jason Monroe, who came as a strawberry tied with Anna Kokoruda who came

punk. Poster winners were (K-4) Melody Cole, first, Santez Beatty, second, and Katina Dial, third. Winners in the fifth and sixth grades were Delphine Richardson, Crystal McNeill and Katina Dial. Seventh and eighth grade winners were Anna Kokoruda, Maurice Donald and Camron Shopea.

... Crisis energy cases being investigated

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 issuance) is the best way," she said.

According to Fields, systems by which two party checks to the receiver of the funds and also to the fuel supplier were opted out because of higher administrative costs.

System through which applicants are issued coupons or certificates for fuel were also scrapped by DNR for the same reasons, she said.

When systems such as those are entered into, contracts must be drawn up with suppliers and the

costs are too high, she said.

Problems also arise when there is more than one supplier in an area.

All the area suppliers must have contracts so no one is left out, she said.

Fields said that she thinks most

of the people who get energy assistance checks use them for the correct purposes.

"All recipients are screened carefully," she said.

No checks have been issued this year yet for regular energy assistance, said Witherspoon.

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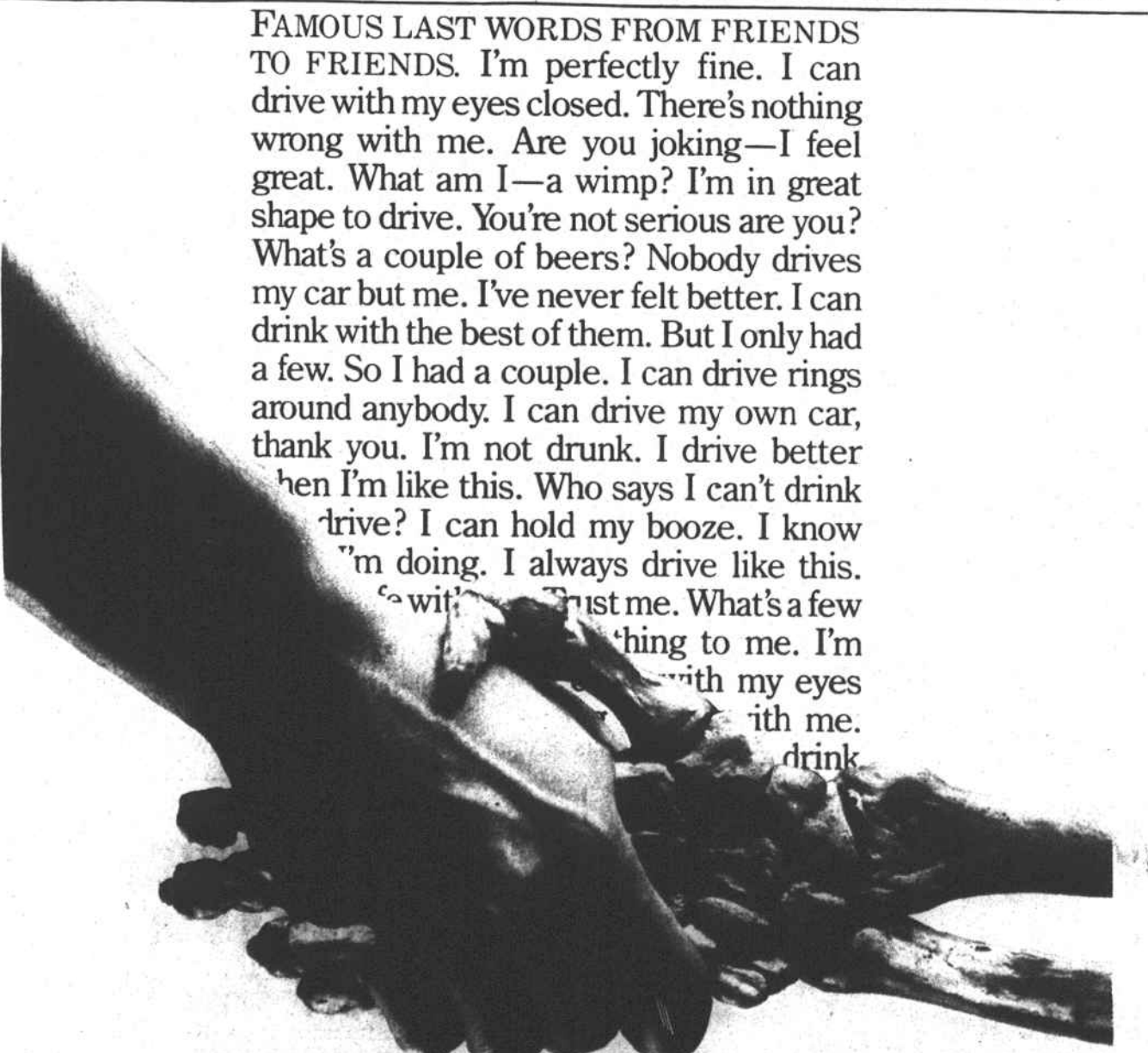
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