

No Fences Enclose Leonard

Tedpoles swim around in the gullion jar on the table beside a neatly-made bed. A collection of racing cars occupied a small shelf. A picture cut from a magazine was pinned on a bulletin board on the wall.

Two other hospital-type beds, both neatly-made with grey spreads tucked tightly around the mattresses, military fashion, shared the room. Its occupants, who had added touches of their personality to the institutional sameness of their quarters, are students at Samuel Leonard School, a boys training school at McCain.

The student population there now totals 260 boys, although the facility was designed to house 150 students. Crowding adds to the problems of rehabilitation, the director, William R. Windley, admits, adding the tensions that accompany cramped living space.

The boys are housed in seven "cottages", wings of an old hospital building that was converted in 1959 into the training school. The accommodations vary, while others have barely enough

room for the beds. In some rooms, old porch areas are used for bedrooms.

A new classroom building was completed in February, freeing space formerly used as classes in the main building to become bedrooms. These rooms need renovating, and the school has requested \$45,000 for the project.

The students are allowed to decorate their rooms with whatever materials they can find and the efforts vary widely, some showing great ingenuity. In one room, an old beater from an institution electric mixer, once consigned to the trash heap, had been rescued and fixed on a small pedestal, resembling a modern sculpture.

Large remnants of curtain fabric donated by a mill have been used by many of the students to cover wooden chairs and pillows to give the appearance of sofas. Curtains throughout the building were made from the scraps.

Leonard is an open school, Windley pointed out. The windows are not barred, the doors to the buildings are not locked

from the inside at night, he said, and there is no fence around the campus.

According to figures published by the North Carolina Board of Juvenile Correction, there were 26 runaways in 1969 and 12 in 1970.

Windley cited other freedoms allowed the students at the school. They go and come from classes without supervision he said. The mail is not censored and they are allowed possession of their own clothes and belongings at all times, he said.

Students are also allowed to carry money, up to \$5, with them and to spend it at the canteen for soft drinks and snacks, he said.

"We operate on trust here," Windley said. "If a child believes you trust him, and care for him, he'll respond positively to you. This is our philosophy and this has been our experience."

No corporal punishment is allowed at the school, he said.

The mainstay of correction there is counseling, he said. In addition to counseling from the school staff, a group session is scheduled every night in the cottage from 8 to 9:30 p.m. in which the students take over.

"If the staff can't get through to a boy, his peers usually can," Windley said.

The Leonard student government also plays a role in daily life at the school, he said. Each cottage has two representatives on the government. Projects are discussed on the government and then voted on each in each cottage. The project goes back to the student government for ratification and then to the administration for final approval.

Michael Collins, president of the student government and valedictorian of the graduating class this year, commented on the student government.

"I think the student government works pretty well here," he said. "I like the school better since the students have a say in the way things are run."

The instructional day at Leonard is eight hours. Part of the students go to academic classes in the morning and work at tasks on the 228-acre campus in the afternoon. The rest attend classes in the afternoon.

Vocational training is included in the jobs assigned to the students, Windley said. In addition to courses in auto mechanics, industrial arts, brick and masonry, basic electronics, vocational agriculture, home mechanics and arts and crafts, training is given in food service, short order cooking, baking, janitorial skills and other jobs around the school



FARM PRODUCE - Leonard students bring in bushels of mustard and turnip greens from the school farm. Vegetables grown by the students are used in the school cafeteria.

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that could afford training for later employment.

Remedial education is given in reading and other academic areas and, a new feature this year is social education. This teaches personal grooming, social graces, proper telephone manners, manners for job interviews, and other skills designed to help the students make their way in society when they leave school.

Samuel Leonard is the only training school in the nation to be academically accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. Classes are usually 15 students or less, he said.

The boys become the responsibility of the cottage personnel at the end of the day. The early part of the evening is devoted to supper, personal grooming and homework and the counseling session lasts until 9:30, Windley said. Television sets are located in the cottages and the boys are free to visit between rooms or in different cottages. Some of the boys have phonographs or radios.

Bedtime is "after 10 p.m.," Windley said. This means, he explained that the students may go to bed before ten if they want, but they may not be put to bed by the cottage personnel until ten.

Many opportunities for recreation are available at the school, he said. All the students are members of Boy Scouts and each cottage sponsors a troop. Leonard is one of two correctional schools that has a J-Teen club, sponsored by the Jay-ees. A 4-H club was organized last month.

Sports are a big part of the recreation program, Windley said, and in the summer many of the students are able to attend camp. Last Monday, 68 boys left for a week at Camp Mitchell. Another 68 will attend the camp next week. In June, 22 boys will go to White Lake Camp.

Four students have received campships to Methodist camps, Windley said, where they will be with regular campers.

Frequent field trips for cultural enrichment are made available, Windley said, through ESEA funds. Last year the eighth grade students were taken to Washington, D.C. and this year the staff hopes to take some of the students to Six Flags Over Georgia in Atlanta.

Medical, dental and psychiatric services are available to the students either on campus or at surrounding facilities, Windley said.

"We attempt to treat the total child," he said. "We have social workers and contracted psychology facilities for psychological needs. We have medical and dental services through the school physician, Dr. Clifton Davenport, and two registered nurses. We have a dental clinic on campus twice a year and an eye clinic once per quarter. Local dentists and opticians care for the students in between."

"Our social needs are met by the counseling by the staff and by parties, activities, a full time recreation program and movies. Representatives from industry come to the campus with shows, such as exhibits from the department of natural history and the Bell Telephone Company, and CP&L.

"Academic needs are met in the school room.

"Local ministers provide for our spiritual needs with church services here," he concluded.

Next week: Needs at Leonard.



HOME - This room at Samuel Leonard School shows the effects of a few materials and a lot of imagination. Curtain fabric scraps and pillows make the easy chair and floor cushions. The coffee table was built in the school woodworking shop. This room also included a phonograph, a pole-lamp, a carpet and other touches of affluence. It is one of the largest and best furnished rooms viewed at the school.



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