

Alternative To Training School

Task Force Seeking Funds For Juvenile Care

The juvenile task force committee plans to submit their findings to county commissioners sometime next month along with recommendations on how to deal with certain juvenile offenders in place of sending them of the state training schools.

The six member committee, organized last year to study alternatives to training schools through community facilities, has completed a preliminary report on needs, but is still wrestling with the problem of how to finance a home, and what type of home.

Under a law passed by the General Assembly last year, courts may not send "status offenders" to state training schools after July 1, 1977. (A status offender is a juvenile who could not be sent to prison if he were an adult for the offense). It usually means runaways or undisciplined children.

Watson McNeill, Juvenile Court counselor for Hoke County, has a current caseload of 27 status

offenders. Seven are presently in a state training school.

Although the total number of status offenders dealt with in Juvenile Court decreased last year over 1974, the number of commitments to training schools doubled in 1975, according to McNeill's records.

McNeill, who is also a member of the committee, said the cost of establishing some type of home is the biggest problem facing the committee right now.

"A group home, which would house up to nine kids, has completely different requirements from a foster home, and those requirements are quite strict. LEAA (Law Enforcement Assistance Administration) money can't be used for new construction, only leasing of existing dwellings, so a group home may be just too expensive for the county", McNeill said.

Hobert Freeman, social work supervisor with the Department of Social Services, has worked up an alternative to the group home, which is a specialized foster home which would house up to five children.

Freeman, who is not a member of the committee, helped set up a group home for a four - county region while in Yadkinville, and agrees there is a need for such a home, both as an alternative to training school for undisciplined youths, as well as a center for juveniles returning from training

school who are not ready to return to their own home environment.

"Our biggest problem is getting the 'startup' money. More and more counties are developing these and it is just a matter of financing. It's going to cost, we're talking about someone with a college background", he said.

"We don't want a babysitting service. There will have to be someone there all of the time to take care of the kids, but there also has to be some counseling from a trained staff", he said. Two "houseparents" usually are in charge of a specialized foster home. As yet, the committee has not

drawn up any cost estimates, but county planner Lester Simpson has been checking all available sources of funding.

Simpson explained that if the county is successful in getting LEAA funds, the local match for the first year is only five per cent, but the second year it increases to 25 per cent. at the end of the third year, the county assumes all costs.

Simpson said aid is also available through the Title XX benefits under Social Security, but the county has to match 25 per cent of this aid with the federal government contributing 75 per cent.

"The county will have to pay some funds. All of these (programs) are matching funds. The possibility of outright grants for the building or a new facility, well we've already got applications into HUD for this year, so that would have to wait until next year", Simpson said.

Although the new law does not require counties to open group homes to receive undisciplined youths, McNeill and Freeman see it as a necessity to deal with the problem.

"If the county does not act, the alternative is to have a whole bunch of these youngsters out on the streets", McNeill said.



GRADUATION — Corpsmember Stephen Le Grand of Rt. 4, Box 42-B, Raeford, took part in the 205th graduation exercise of The Singer Breckinridge Job Corps Center July 28. Le Grand successfully completed studies in culinary arts and plans a career in the field of baking.

Swim Classes Still Open



LESSONS—Mrs. Milo Postel (on left) organizes swim camp students in groups to prepare for a Red Cross swimming lesson. The annual two week swim camp was sponsored by the Hoke County Recreation Department.

Hoke County Parks and Recreation Commission will be sponsoring swimming lessons in three separate sessions of 10 days each. Lessons will be given by a certified Red Cross personnel and registrations will be on a "first come, first served" basis. Individuals may attend only one session.

Sessions two and three will be held at 323 Magnolia St. from 8 a.m. til 1 p.m. with individuals scheduled in classes. The fee per session per individual will be \$2.00 and will be used for necessary supplies. Swimmers will come to the swimming classes by their own transportation for their scheduled time only. Ages for these two sessions are from 10 years old and up with one adult class per session.

Applications are available at Howell's Rexall Drug Co. and Hoke Drug Co. Session 2 is July 26-30 and Aug. 2-6 (10 days) and Session 3 is Aug. 9-13 and 16-20. Forms and fees should be mailed to: Mrs. Milo Postel, 1004 N. Fulton St., Raeford, N.C. 28376.

Class assignments will be made by phone whenever possible and lists for Sessions two and three will be posted at the two drug stores.

College News

Joanne Miller, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Howard Miller of Raeford, was named to the dean's list at Sandhills Community College. She is an early child care major.

Two Raeford area students are among 231 at Livingstone College in Salisbury to be named to the first semester dean's list. Barbara Lide, a freshman, and Reginald Treadwell, a sophomore, each achieved a 3.70 average.



OFF TO CAMP—About 80 youngsters participated in the two week swim camp at Ft. Bragg sponsored by the county recreation department. Transportation was provided through the loan of two school activity buses.



TOUR—Swimming students who attended the camp at Ft. Bragg got a tour of Pope Air Force Base. This group walked through a C-130 aircraft.

CF Telethon Raises \$30,000

The "Something Special" Telethon of the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation raised over \$30,000.00 for the research effort to cure and control all forms of children's chronic lung-damaging diseases. In the Raeford area, more than \$200.00 was raised for this event.

Miss Mary Margaret Sawyer helped with the fund raising in this area. She also went to Charlotte and helped with the telephone calls during the Telethon.

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