

Pint-Sized Whirlwind Leads March of Dimes Campaign



SUNDAY SAILORS. Marty Mim Mack and his father, Bill, relax aboard "My Six Sons." Quiet moments are rare for Marty, who keeps the grownups hopping to keep pace with him. The energetic youngster will be stirring up activity all over the country during the January March of Dimes campaign.

By ANN FORER

Meet Martin Mim Mack, 1970 National March of Dimes Poster Boy! Marty is a cheerful, healthy eight-year-old with all the zest of a typical American boy for sports, games, hamburgers, camping trips, and not taking baths. He is a bright lad and does well in school, thanks to parents who make sure he studies hard, and a well-developed ability to concentrate.

Marty sounds like a normal kid and in most ways he is. Once you've spent a few hours with him, you get used to the things that make him different. But you never really forget them, for every time you look at Marty the differences are obvious. Once you get past the big brown eyes and the Huck Finn grin, you are looking at a little boy who has no arms.

He has artificial arms that he wears all day at school. With them, Marty can feed himself, paint pictures, type on a regular electric typewriter, and even play the recorder. Three days a week of physical and occupational therapy have done that for Marty.

Or you could say Marty has done it for himself. He is dead set on being self-sufficient.

Struggle To Walk

Being born without arms isn't Marty's only problem. He was also born with a hip defect that makes his left leg three inches shorter than his right. As a baby, he couldn't crawl around the house breaking things and driving his mother nuts. He couldn't, because his legs were in casts first and later in braces. Other uncomfortable gadgetry was also tried to help him walk some day—maybe.

Over the years, that "maybe" has become a yes. Today Marty walks. In fact he runs. With some coaching from his five healthy older brothers, he has become a pretty good soccer player. In 1967 he had a bone graft operation on his left foot, which straightened and strengthened it. And he no longer wears his leg braces

during the day. He will always have to wear a built-up shoe, however, just as he'll always have to use prosthetic arms.

Still, Marty Mim Mack is doing all right, compared with many other kids in this country. A quarter of a million babies are born with significant birth defects each year in the United States. Many of them are in worse shape than Marty. Some die within the first few years of life because their defects are so overwhelming that doctors can't save them.

Others are mentally retarded and don't have Marty's brain power to help them fight for a productive, happy life. Some are blind or deaf, or both. Some are paralyzed. An American baby with one or more defects is born every two minutes.

Knowing the facts about birth defects, Marty and his family believe that things could be much worse. So, they support the fight to prevent birth defects from striking other families. Today they work with The National Foundation-March of Dimes, the voluntary health organization which, following its smashing victory over polio, has been in the forefront of the birth defects struggle.

This year, Marty has been named the 1970 National Poster Child for the March of Dimes. He and his mother will tour the country during January on behalf of the voluntary health organization.

The March of Dimes supports year-round programs for patient and community services, education, research, and 111 March of Dimes Birth Defects Centers which provide diagnosis and treatment, for children like Marty.

Goal Is Prevention

Then there are the scientists whose work is supported by National Foundation grants. These investigators are studying hereditary and environmental factors and their effects on the developing embryo. They are finding out how to diagnose birth defects earlier and how to treat them more effectively, and ultimately how to prevent them from happening in the first place.

All this isn't going to grow Marty a pair of arms. But Marty isn't complaining. He just thinks it would be a real good idea to prevent birth defects. And so does the March of Dimes.

There were 2.7 million motor vehicles registered in North Carolina in 1967.

North Carolina, with 52,712 square miles of land area, ranks 28th in size in the United States. The state spans 503 miles.

North Carolina, widely known as "The Good Roads State," has the largest state-administered highway system in the United States. There are almost 74,000 miles of state roads here, almost enough road mileage to circle the earth three times.

Posing behind the familiar 4-H emblem and under the Official Seal of the National Press Club are principals of the special 4-H Week observance in Washington October 9, including five members of the 4-H Report to the Nation Team. Left to right are: Miss Janice I. Glover of Westbury, N. Y.; George Wallace, Hopedale, Ohio; Miss Karen Seppa of Petaluma, Calif.; Jack Linkletter, famed TV star and West Coast businessman; J. C. Penney, founder of the department store chain bearing his name; John D. Heffernan, Washington Bureau Chief for Reuters News Service and Press Club President; Miss Margaret Bartosok, Rockledge, Fla.; and Chris Peterson, Millin, Pa. (Seth Muse Photo)

WASHINGTON, D. C. — It was "...an historic night" in the 61 years of the National Press Club October 9 when National 4-H Week was observed with a large representation of national 4-H leadership from business and government.

Jack Linkletter, famed young TV star and son of Art Linkletter—they are National 4-H Foundation Co-Chairmen for the West Coast—received rapt attention and a standing ovation, a rare occurrence with Press Club audiences, as President John D. Heffernan observed at the conclusion.

"It is Not the Generation Gap—It's the Communication Gap" was Linkletter's topic, previously selected by his father, who was unable to attend because of a death in the family. Young Mr. Linkletter generally praised today's younger generation, and declared that much of their demonstrated resentment reflected their feelings toward hypocrisies in an adult society that dictated strict codes of behavior for youngsters, not necessarily practiced by their elders.

Linkletter cited the need for 4-H principles among today's youth, and said that he and his father were committed to the current \$8 million capital fund campaign to expand the Na-

tional 4-H Center, located in suburban Washington.

The expansion of 4-H membership, and emphasis into urban and suburban areas by the traditionally rural organization, was outlined by Chris Peterson and his colleagues on the 4-H Report to the Nation Team, representing the Nation's 3 1/2 million 4-H members. The poise with which these youngsters communicated 4-H goals and the great strides in reaching city youngsters earned repeated applause from the audience.

A special tribute was paid J. C. Penney in the audience, the 94-year-old founder of a department store empire who, with Mrs. Richard M. Nixon, is Honorary Co-Chairman of the Advisory Council. His 80-odd years of philanthropy and work with young people, notably with 4-H, was cited, and he received a respectfully affectionate response from the large attendance.

The Club President introduced several special guests, including Henry M. Hansen, National 4-H Foundation Board Chairman and Associate Director of Extension at the University of Connecticut; Edwin L. Kirby, Deputy Administrator, Federal Extension Service, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture;

Norman C. Mindrum of Chicago, Director, National 4-H Service Committee, and these Advisory Council leaders from American business and industry:

James M. McKee, Jr., President, CPC International, Inc., who was also representing Howard C. Harder, CPC and Advisory Council Chairman; Herbert M. Cleaves, Senior Vice President, General Foods Corporation; Charles W. Parker, Jr., Vice President, Allis-Chalmers Manufacturing Co. and Milwaukee Area Chairman for the capital fund campaign; and

Merritt D. Hill, Chairman, Hill Associates, and Detroit Area Chairman for the capital campaign; William T. Brady of Los Angeles, Calif., Honorary Chairman, Executive Committee, CPC International, and Russell B. Robins of Detroit, Executive Vice President, The Jam Handy Organization, and Chairman of the Foundation's Public Relations Advisory Committee.

Young Chris Peterson presented a beautiful plaque of appreciation to the Press Club on behalf of the nation's 4-H members; President Heffernan said it would hang in a place of honor so long as there was a National Press Club.

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