

Migrants Look to SAMM for Recreation, Advice



INDEPENDENCE—While their parents are busy preparing the evening meal these youngsters of migrant bean pickers at the S. B. Walker ranch near here settle down for a session of scissor-and-paste work on a batch of Christmas cards. Directing the program, which is a regular and welcome occurrence for these kids,

is Barbara Williams (at left), a Migrant Ministry student working out of Independence. Bean camp's "front yard" is shown in background. Materials are supplied by Salem Council of Churches. (Statesman photo.) (Photo also on page one.)

By CONRAD PRANGE
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INDEPENDENCE—Highlight of the day at bean-picking camps in this area is when the SAMM truck rolls around.

Because SAMM means games and songs for the kids, sewing classes for the girls, advice and counseling for the adults. Movies, health lectures, dances and other recreation also are on the schedule.

SAMM stands for "Salem Area Migrant Ministry."

It is a voluntary semi-religious program which seeks to provide recreation activities and both spiritual and physical assistance to the several thousand migrant workers who each summer come into this area for the bean and other harvests.

SAMM virtually has the field to itself. Because apparently few other agencies, public or private, appear to be interested in that side of the migrant worker.

In the Independence area six young persons, mostly college students, work full-time in the Migrant Ministry program. They have established "extensive" programs in two bean yards and also direct activities in seven other camps in this area.

"We visit camps daily," says Carolyn Miller of Whittier, Calif., a small, earnest girl who is co-director with Joan Nicholson of Mt. Sterling, Ohio, of the Migrant Ministry program in this area.

Seeks Acceptance

"The greatest desire of the migrant worker," she said on the way out to a camp this week, "is to be accepted by the community in which he is working. We do what we can to foster a feeling of mutual understanding."

"We set up vocational classes for the kids. Some of the Spanish speaking youngsters can't speak English. Other children need special school tutoring. The girls go for sewing classes."

"The program is carried on under general direction of the Oregon Council of Churches. Local funds for the Independence-Stayton areas come from the Salem Council of Churches, which also sends over used clothing for "thrift sales," at the camps.

It was just after the 5 p. m. quitting time at the S. B. Walker bean yard southeast of Independence when cars containing Miss Miller and four other young Migrant Ministry workers—Richard Schneider of Chelsea, Mich., Barbara Williams of Nelscott, Evelyn Neal of Oakridge and Margie Miller of Whittier, Calif.—rolled into camp.

Many Youngsters

The long rows of cabins and tents seemed to swarm with youngsters. They came running over to the cars.



INDEPENDENCE—"Henry" was the only name this boy would give the photographer at the S. B. Walker bean yard. In addition to being a sturdy bubble-gum blower he also is said to be the best bean picker, for his size and weight, in camp. (Statesman photo.)

making skirts and aprons with all material furnished by the ministry program at Salem.

Because facilities are meager at the camps the classes are held right in the middle of the noise and bustle. The Migrant Ministry even rustle up tables and other props for their activities.

Miss Williams' group finished its story time and now engaged in cutting pictures from old Christmas cards and pasting them up.

Free 'Health Kits'

Dick Schneider conducted a brief discussion on health habits for older youngsters and then passed out free "health kits." Each kit contained soap, tooth paste and brush and comb. It is estimated about 1,000 of these kits will have been given away this summer in migrant camps in Oregon.

After two hours at the Walker ranch the SAMM group packed up and moved on to the Sunset bean ranch for a softball game and night movies. Here the group was joined by two girls from First Methodist Church in Salem, to assist on a part-time basis. They were Marcia Humphrey, 180 S. 19th St., and

Bev Fulton, 1249 S. Commercial St. They accompanied the other girls on a round of "visiting." They chatted with Alfred Emmons, a picker from Nespelem, Wash., who told the girls he could find God in the outdoors better than in a church. Nobody argued with him.

Films Draw Crowds

Meanwhile Dick Schneider had dispatched several boys to round up a table. He set up a movie screen in an open clearing in front of a row of cabin apartments. The movie fare for that night included a cartoon, a short health film and a film on the life of Jesus. It drew a big crowd.

"We hit each camp on a separate day of the week," said Schneider. "One night we sponsored a teen-age dance and invited young people from the camps and from Independence. Another time we took 50 camp youngsters to Monmouth to swim in the OCE pool there."

"Many of these kids exhibit a feeling of insecurity. We try to make them feel they 'belong' both in a social and a spiritual sense. We hope we succeed."



INDEPENDENCE—Busy and cluttered headquarters for SAMM work in the Independence area is basement room of the Calvary Presbyterian Church. Migrant Ministry workers Margie Miller and Dick Schneider pack books and movie equipment for a trip to one of the nine bean yards they visit daily. Funds and most of the material for the Migrant Ministry program is supplied by the Salem Council of Churches. (Statesman photo.)



INDEPENDENCE—Dick Schneider (in above photograph), student from Michigan who is spending the summer in Oregon in the Migrant Ministry program, examines a scratched finger of young Deborah Simmons at the Walker bean yard while her mother, Mrs. Ralph Simmons of Grand Ronde stands in bean camp cabin doorway and looks on. Part of Migrant Ministry duties is aiding in health problems of migrant workers. (Statesman photo.)



INDEPENDENCE—Margie Miller (left) and Barbara Williams, Migrant Ministry workers, help a group of children relax after a day in the bean fields at the S. B. Walker ranch near Independence. With bean rows for a backdrop the youngsters, all children of migrant pickers, swing in a circle dance. (Statesman photo.)



INDEPENDENCE—One way to entertain youngsters is to let them sing. Above scene at the Walker bean yard shows SAMM workers Carolyn Miller (at left) and Dick Schneider in background, leading a group of bean pickers' youngsters in song. Song fests also help camp children to become acquainted with one another. (Statesman photo.)



INDEPENDENCE—Young bean pickers at the Sunset bean ranch north of Independence offer helpful advice in an effort to get the weekly evening movie underway. Working with the projector are SAMM students (from left) Evelyn Neal, Dick Schneider and Margie Miller. SAMM brings the only movies to bean camps in this area. (Statesman photo.)