

Youth Aquatic School Teaches Safety in Water

Water education was the purpose of the American Red Cross Youth Aquatic school recently at Southern Oregon college.

Because of the dangers of water, it is felt that communities will benefit by having young people trained in water safety by specialists. In that way, each graduate of the safety school may go home to help train others in water safety.

The school was open to boys and girls between 15 and 17 years old, whose applications were approved. Registration was limited to 40 students, half of whom were from Jackson county, and half from Klamath county.

Qualified for Status

On completing the course, the students were qualified to go forward to instructor's status after reaching 18 years of age. They also had beginning training to serve in camps, playgrounds, swimming pools, and other community recreational areas.

Among subjects taught were junior life saving, senior life saving, water safety aid (instructor's assistant), basic canoeing, basic boating, and first aid.

Several instructors were available for the classes. Mrs. Roy Wilkes, water safety chairman for the Jackson county chapter of the American Red Cross, was director of the school. Mrs. Wilkes has attended National Aquatic schools in 1959 and 1961. She is the women's program director for the Medford YMCA, and will direct the YMCA camp this year.

Other Instructors Are Noted

Other instructors include two Southern Oregon college physical education instructors, Dr. Ruth Bebbler and Robert Bennett.

Miss Bebbler is the director of the women's physical education department at SOC. She is a water instructor trainer, and held that position at the 1959 American Red Cross National Aquatic school at Tulequia.

Bennett is an assistant professor of physical education at SOC. He served as a water safety and first aid instructor. Lawrence Jones, who holds his canoeing and WSI instructorships, has conducted Klamath county's swim program at Crescent lake for the past two years. He has been a staff member at the Malin pool in Klamath county for three years, and is a student at the University of Puget Sound.

Serves As Water Front Director

Mrs. Lowell Jones is small craft chairman for Klamath county. She has served as water front director of the Girl Scout camp for Klamath county girls for the past seven years.

Also contributing his services to this 1962 school was Granville Thomas, San Francisco. Thomas is a retired member of the physical education department of the University of California. He founded the water safety aide program, and is director of small craft training in the San Francisco chapter of the American Red Cross. He has been a Red Cross volunteer for 35 years, and is now the area instructor.

In their week of instruction the water school students were required to work hard. They studied from books, took written tests, and also participated in field practice work at Emigrant lake and the Twin Plunges swimming pools. They were graded on their work as if for an academic class.

Lived In Dormitories

While attending the school the teenagers lived in dormitory facilities at Southern Oregon college. Their basic fee provided room, board, tuition, books, and transportation. All instructors donated their time to the project.

Through this program students are given the opportunity to further develop their skills in the water. The more people who take these courses, the safer Oregon waterways will be, and a good place to start is with the teenage population, the Red Cross believes.



First aid courses at the safety school included instruction on many different situations concerned with the water. One of these was a lift and carry method of an injured person. The victim of this practice session was Janet Miller, Ashland. Robert Bennett, instructor, watches the students who are lifting the victim, Penny Forbes, Merrill Haggard, and Mike Brawn.



First aid was one subject taught at the aquatic school. Classes were available for both standard and advanced students, according to their proficiency in first aid. The class was taught by Robert Bennett, assistant professor of physical education at Southern Oregon college. Shown demonstrating the standard method of artificial respiration are Janet Miller, Ashland, Bonnie Knapp, and Merrill Haggard. Merrill is serving as the victim, as Janet tries to revive him. Bennett supervises. This portion of the course took place at Twin Plunges in Ashland.



The American Red Cross Youth Aquatic school was not all fun. Included were written tests on subjects covered in the school. Students were required to pass these tests as well as their practical work to graduate from school. Shown taking the test on boating are Bill Dames, Medford, and Diana Wales, Klamath Falls. Granville Thomas, instructor, supervises the testing.



Practicing proper methods of rowboating on Emigrant lake are Marion Roberts, Klamath Falls, and Linda Wilkes. Two more girls from the school are in the background. Since this type of water conveyance is one of the most readily available, it is wise to know proper methods of rowing, and also of righting, the boat.



Both junior and senior lifesaving courses were offered during the school by qualified water safety instructors. Various methods of life saving were taught for different situations. Among these was the "head carry" method. It was demonstrated by Linda Kirkpatrick, Malin, and Don Braymall.



Classes in canoeing are imperative in a water safety course, because they teach young people the frailties of canoes and how to handle them. Not only are they taught the correct way to use a canoe when it is floating, but also how to right an overturned vessel. Merrill Haggard and Tom Reid, Ashland, demonstrate one method of getting a swamped canoe afloat again.



Merrill Haggard and Tom Reid demonstrate another method of righting an overturned canoe. Here they stand in shallow water while dumping the water from the canoe.



"Gunwaling" is demonstrated by Tom Reid. This is another of the lessons taught in the canoeing portion of the aquatic safety school, sponsored by the American Red Cross. Gunwaling is the art of taking a canoe to shore without the aid of paddles. This is an alternative method to sitting in the canoe and paddling with the hands. It takes considerable skill to practice gunwaling, and many of the students took wet spills while attempting to learn it.