

tive to take care of the books while school is not in session. The library should by no means be confined to the school children, but should include all the people of the community. I once visited a library in Kinsman, Ohio, which had arranged with citizens of the community to subscribe for thirty magazines which were circulated each month among the people. The *Farmers' Bulletins* and other publications of the United States government and of the state department of agriculture should form one section of this community library. The children at school are the natural media of communication between the home and the community library. In time the county library idea will reach a much larger development. The schools will then be sub-stations at which the county library wagon will leave supplies of books on regular visits.

6. The community fair is a potent force in bringing the people together in their best efforts. A community will surprise itself with its possibilities when an exhibit of its products is brought together at the school house. The exhibits of the several community fairs of the county will form an excellent basis for a county fair. A big basket dinner or barbecue and instructive addresses are the natural concomitants of the community fair.

The forms of recreation which have been mentioned by no means exhaust the list. The rural womans' club is in successful operation in many sections of the United States. The Grange, the School Improvement Association, the Parent-Teachers' Association are all merely names for forms of community cooperation which have recreational features. When properly organized there is no reason why boys and girls brought up in the country should not have every advantage in recreation which is possessed by the city cousin—all in the wholesome, natural environment which the Creator designed as the proper abode of man.

ORGANIZING THE NEIGHBORHOOD FOR RECREATION

Lee F. Hanmer, Director, Department of Recreation, Russell Sage Foundation, New York, N. Y.

The ideal recreation center, conditions permitting, is the home. Is there any better sight in all the social doings of human beings than a home in which the young people find abundant resources for their free time, where friends come in

for parties, socials, and an evening of songs; where there are the return parties at other homes, picnics or outings, and occasionally a clubbing together to bring to the neighborhood a reader or lecturer or musical troupe?

Playing together, as well as working together, establishes bonds that become strong, develops common interests, and forges chains of friendship which not only make possible the joys of human fellowship, but also hold the individual in emergencies when restraint is sorely needed and when self-control must be reinforced. Under such conditions most of the evils against which social workers strive vanish into thin air.

These most desirable neighborhood relations do not happen of their own accord, even under favorable conditions. Back of it all there is a father or mother, or teacher, or pastor, or someone, stimulating action and guiding the course of events. Grown-ups need play leadership nearly as much as do children. One of our wise social thinkers has well said, "Civilization does not grow wild; it is not a natural product; it is the product of the finest of the arts."

Would that all homes were such as to lend themselves to this kind of use, and that neighborhoods were all made up of neighbors. But they are not and, especially in the larger cities, they are in many cases very far from it. Two or three small rooms and a fire escape do not lend themselves readily to home parties or home comforts of any kind. The theatre, the roof garden, the motion picture show, the dance hall, the pool room, the bowling alleys, and the saloon, existing because they meet a real human need that has not otherwise been met, offer their attractions and get the patronage. Young and old thus seek their recreation—separately and outside of the home. Family, group, and neighborhood ties are weakened, the restraining and holding power of close friendship is lacking, and the multitude of social evils that are causing much public concern, thrive and increase in number. More free time and more money to spend, incident to the shortening of hours of labor and the establishment of minimum wage requirements—both most desirable in themselves—further complicate the recreation problem.

Attempts are being made to meet the situation by improving housing conditions, providing children's playgrounds, organizing and promoting athletics, offering public lectures and evening study classes, and conducting evening recreation centers in school houses and recreation buildings. All these efforts are yielding splendid returns but the most hopeful undertaking along this line, one that promises to make possible many of the advantages of the family and neighborhood groups, is

what is known as the *community center*. This new institution has been described as a "place where neighbors or people with common interests meet, in order to be better neighbors and to make their common interests more effective. A community center is not primarily a building or a set of activities, but rather an organizing center for the life of a neighborhood."

The Service of the Neighborhood Center

Let us look at such a center and see what it does and how it does it. The modern school building serves well as the physical equipment for such a center, both on account of its favorable location and because it belongs to the folks who so use it. Taking as an illustration one of these centers in actual operation, we find the following group activities occurring there during a given week:

One evening concert by the neighborhood orchestra.

One afternoon motion picture exhibition.

Two civic meetings.

Six game and reading-room sessions.

Three dances.

Fifty-two club meetings.

One lecture.

One social.

Six athletic occasions.

One meeting of the Community Center Association.

In addition, there were numerous committee meetings. The attendance for the week at these different functions totaled 6,084. Certainly, good evidence of a neighborhood getting together.

Now how did they do it? A community center association was organized there about two years ago by a man employed for the purpose by a voluntary association, working with the approval and cooperation of the school board. He became a resident of the neighborhood and gave his entire time to forming the organization, of which he was elected president, and in promoting its activities. Subsequently committees were appointed to take responsibility for the following interests: Finance, membership, rules, use of building, concerts, dances, lectures, clubs, forum, moving pictures, magazine, neighborhood relief, and a bureau of advice and assistance. The board of education furnishes heat, light, and janitor service, and employs two people for work every evening and eight other people for part-time evening services for the period from October to May. The various committees work in conjunction with the employees of the board of education. The cost per week to

the board in addition to heat, light, and janitor service, is \$105, or one and four-fifth cents per person attending.

The members of the various clubs pay dues; admission is charged for the motion picture exhibition and the concerts, and the dances are also a source of income. The receipts totaled about \$3,000 for the year, all of which was devoted to the support of the various activities. These funds are handled by the finance committee and reported upon in detail to the board of education. The word has gone out that this community center work is self-supporting. Of course, as you see, it is not. In addition to the \$105 per week for salaries paid by the school board for a period of 30 weeks, and the cost of heat, light, and janitor service for the entire year, there is the full-time salary of the organizer that was paid by the outside organization. Of course the expenses were higher during this initial organizing stage, and probably could be regularly handled for what the school authorities are now putting into it, and possibly somewhat less. Another center has been run with only one evening worker employed by the board of education and the part-time services of an organizer and leader furnished by an outside organization.

The specially significant things about this plan of "organizing the neighborhood for recreation," is that it can be made largely self-governing and partly self-supporting; that it develops neighborhood spirit, fosters cooperative endeavor, and furnishes the opportunity for families and groups of neighbors to function socially in spite of the unfavorable living conditions that are all too common in both large and small cities. Where the living quarters will not permit family parties in the home, a group of friends may secure from the community center association the use of a room in the school building and meet there in much the same way that they would in a private home. Then, too, it brings neighbors together through service on committees and in the various community functions in a way that makes for a larger acquaintance, a better mutual understanding, and a union of effort for neighborhood improvement.

Some of the actual instances of civic and social achievement that have come out of work of this kind are: an objectionable dance hall put under strict inspection and finally closed up, a street little used for traffic closed for children's play after school hours, a school playground kept open for play from 3 to 5 o'clock each day and supervised by the school authorities, a gang that was a menace to the youth of the neighborhood brought into the community center and transformed into a boys'

club, a neighborhood orchestra of over one hundred pieces organized, an employment bureau maintained for helping those in the vicinity of the center, and a community pageant given in which over a thousand persons took part as performers and which gave a program extending through an entire week.

The volunteer service in supervising club work, training musical groups, handling social occasions, and serving on committees averages at one of the centers studied forty-one evening units of service per week in addition to much unrecorded work that was done through the day; a total of 2,132 periods of service per year, which, if paid for at the usual evening recreation center rates, would cost the city \$5,585 for one neighborhood alone.

The minutes of a typical community center association business meeting are illuminating. They tell the story of financial problems, conflicting ideas, spirited discussions, resignations, and readjustments; but through it all, an earnest pulling together of neighbors to do a neighborhood service. The following is copied from the secretary's minute book for a meeting held less than a month ago:

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 9 p. m. Minutes of the preceding meeting were read and approved. The Treasurer reported that after the immediate payment of outstanding bills amounting to \$58.89 there would be a balance of \$12 in the treasury.

Reporting for the Executive Committee, Mr. D. stated that a vacancy had been created by the resignation of Mrs. Ml. The Chair appointed Mrs. Mo. to succeed Mrs. Mi. The Committee submitted in writing several important amendments to the Constitution, one raising the eligible age for male members of the Association to 21 years, the age for female members to remain at 18 years, and the other amendments stating the duties of the Financial Secretary and the control of financial matters. These suggested amendments were tentatively approved, and the Chair announced that the next regular meeting would be devoted to the consideration of these changes in the Constitution.

For the Dance Committee, Mr. B. reported the dances to be running fairly well, but he was dissatisfied with a resolution passed by his committee authorizing the hiring for the entire season of the band now furnishing the music. Considerable discussion following this report. It was moved and carried that it be referred back to the committee for further action and for a written report.

Mrs. K. reported for the Moving Picture Committee that the last two shows had been quite successful, just paying expenses. It might be well to have one or two more, before resuming the supervised out-door play. The Chair instructed the Committee to stop the shows when it deemed best.

For the Magazine Benefit Committee, Mrs. D. reported that there were about 350 outstanding tickets, of which about 175 had thus far been reported sold. Mrs. D. returned to the Treasurer the \$6 advanced for expenses of the Committee.

Reporting for the Club Committee, Mr. D. reported applications for special affairs granted to the Allegro Social Club, The Loyal Friends, Amateur Actor's Association, the Relief Society, the Blossoms of Israel and the Maidens of Zion. Several clubs were granted summer use of a room at 25 cents a meeting. Recommended that in future all affairs of clubs should be run under the supervision of the center, a member of the Association to be present in the ticket office. Resolution was passed to give power of granting charters to clubs which might apply for them later on, to a sub-committee consisting of Mr. D. Miss H., and Mr. K. A sub-committee was appointed and authorized to have 200 charters printed. Committee recommended that in conjunction with the final inter-club dramatic contest on May 14th a "Charter Night" be celebrated, and that then the charters be distributed to all the clubs whose applications have thus far been approved, and representatives of the clubs be present to receive them. The Committee reported two clubs' applications for charter as accepted at its last meeting. Report of Club Committee was accepted, and the Chair asked that it follow up the matter of a "Charter Night," and have the charters in readiness for that occasion.

Miss H. for Committee on Use of Building reported that it had O. Ked all applications approved by the Club Committee. (Miss H. is the employed representative of the Board of Education.)

The Membership Committee, Mr. S. Chairman, announced the following as approved by it for membership. (Eight members with addresses.) These were all elected to membership in the Association.

Mr. L. having resigned as Financial Secretary at the last meeting, an election was held to fill the vacancy. Mr. L. was prevailed upon to run for re-election, and he was unanimously elected.

Mrs. D. made a motion that the Neighborhood Relief Society be granted all of the profits from its proposed entertainment, it needing money badly. Carried unanimously.

It was moved and carried that during the summer months, when the building would be closed on Tuesdays, the Association meetings be held the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month.

The Chair read the minutes of the last meeting of the Magazine staff, which meets every Saturday afternoon. All material for the first issue must be in hand for publication by May 15, the magazine to be issued May 26. Prize of \$1 has been offered for the best story, best poem, and cover design, but nothing satisfactory has yet been received. Various departments and subjects for articles have been assigned to different clubs, departments of work, and individuals. Total advertising received to date, \$30. Mr. La. was elected by the Association as Advertising Manager, to succeed Mr. Lo.

Mr. T. the janitor, inquired if the new schedule of rates for janitors would apply at P. S. center. The Chair replied that he should receive the promised extra compensation from the Board hereafter, as it had the funds for this purpose.

Mr. T. stated that at least two more electric lights were needed for lighting the courtyard. The present lamps are not equal in power to those of last year. The Secretary was instructed to write to Mr. S. of the Board, requesting that the extra lights required be installed.

With regard to the possibility of having outdoor motion pictures the Chair stated that on account of stringent fire regula-

tions this would be possible only by the purchase of a Pathe-scope, he thought. He will investigate further.

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 p. m.

Respectfully submitted,

....., Secretary.

The Rural Center

It is not in the city only that "organizing the neighborhood for recreation" has possibilities. There is a township high school situated in the open country midway between two small cities that is functioning in much the same way as the city centers described. A generous citizen gave to the township school board funds with which to erect a gymnasium and recreation building and to provide an athletic field and swimming pool as a part of the school plant. Provision has been made for the employment of a recreation and social center director, who also has charge of physical training in the school, but whose main job is to promote the neighborhood use of these facilities. He reports an attendance for February, 1915, of 12,318, or an average of 473 persons per day.

While a central citizens' association has not yet been organized for this work, an approach toward partial self-government and self-support has been made by forming a baseball league that handles its own affairs and pays to the center fifty per cent. of all proceeds, an inter-church basketball league that operates in much the same way, and a club made up of groups using the gymnasium which hires an instructor and which has secured excellent volunteer instruction for swimming and wrestling classes. A glee club, a dramatic club, and several social organizations pay for the use of certain rooms and give entertainments to which a small admission fee is charged. A neighborhood improvement association is now being organized, which it is hoped, may be made thoroughly representative and become the central administrative body for the center.

In a letter from the director of the center there is this significant paragraph:

An increasing amount of self-government has been allowed the grade and parochial school children with excellent results in the matter of conduct, discipline and sportsmanship. Of course, if this can be kept up, in a few years we shall have a group maturing that will be qualified and ready both to manage and finance the Center to a great degree. I find that both adults and children act quite differently when they are helping to pay for and are participating in the management of their own affairs.

Justification of Public Support

For the same reasons that schools are supported by taxation, playgrounds and play centers for children should also be so provided. Legislatures and courts are saying that it is right and proper also to use public funds in furnishing certain facilities for adult recreations. We are coming to agree that the way in which individuals use their free time is really a matter of public concern and that opportunities for wholesome recreation may well be provided at public expense. But experience here and there over the country seems to be demonstrating—and a great mass of such experience is rapidly becoming available—that public funds for recreation can be made to go much further than they have in the past and yield a far larger return by “organizing the neighborhood for recreation.” This experience is also substantiating the observation made by the recreation worker just quoted when he says, “I find that both adults and children act quite differently when they are helping to pay for and are participating in the management of their own affairs.” The *community center* makes this possible.

DISCUSSION: In the informal discussion of Recreation the following delegates spoke: Mrs. Martha P. Falconer, Philadelphia; Roger N. Baldwin, St. Louis; Mrs. Robert H. Keene, Golden Hill, Md.; Mrs. H. Guy Corbett, Afton, Va.; Charles P. Hall, Pawtucket, R. I.; Miss James, Baltimore; Mrs. George Crossland, Wayne, Nebr.



THE VALUE OF ANALYZING ONE'S JOB*

Helen Glenn, Head Worker, Social Service Department of the University of Pennsylvania Hospital, Philadelphia

The complex activities of social work present, to those of us who have come to look at them steadily, with a little understanding and perhaps more bewilderment, an intricate network of “jobs” that have grown up about certain social institutions—school, hospital or philanthropic association. These institutions were developed to serve certain definite group needs, to assure in various ways the freer development of the lives of group members. So the fundamental test to be applied in the analysis of any one of these jobs is a study of the effectiveness with which it subserves such a social purpose.

*Section meeting Wednesday, May 19, 11:00 A. M.