

Mostly about People

By Wally Traling



Home Is People

Home is people all right and, if you put it this way, there's a lot of kids around who don't have a home.

Mainly because a lot of parents aren't really people. Some are selfish lumps. Others are slave to drink. Others put up a try, but divorce or desertion by husbands has sent them to work.

Lord knows, it's hard enough to run a family with two parents.

So you have hundreds of kids who don't have decent homes or kids whose only effective parent must work a full day to keep beans in the pot.

And, in order to keep these youngsters from growing up into wild things, lousing up society more than it is already loused up, we have what is called the foster home. It's a wholesome second home set up when the original home structure breaks down.

And what a Godsend these are.

There are 113 foster homes in Santa Cruz county; 52 are for day-time care, taking in 203 kids whose mothers must work.

One hundred and sixty kids are housed full time in foster homes, removed permanently or temporarily from their parents. Imagine! One hundred and sixty tykes in this county. Not a very good

testimonial for the sociological climate of the area, is it?

And one Social Welfare spokesman said there is a desperate need for more homes to take care of the waiting list!

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I talked to one foster mother whose huge house rings with the youthful rambunctiousness of nine youngsters. Her own children are grown and away. These people have money of their own and do not (as do any foster home by law) take on these unfortunate kids to make a buck.

Eight years ago a welfare friend came to her big house and asked if she could take in seven kids from one family. How's that for a cold question? These kids were sleeping in an automobile at the time. She and her husband said okay.

Today she still has four of those kids. Two have married, one is in college, and the other is an apprentice carpenter. Other youngsters have come and gone and she has housed some 55 over eight years.

"These youngsters come to me needing affection badly and, even with our giving it, many have not known how to receive it—some are afraid to love, for fear of being hurt again.

"Our rules are not strict, or it wouldn't be a home. But I don't let them pick on each other.

"On the other hand kids need to feel discipline. It's part of feeling secure.

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"The only reason these kids are here is because we want them," she said.

"One time one of the boys didn't come home on the hour he was supposed to. The whole family stayed up waiting for him and when the disciplining was over one of the boys later told me this youngster said: 'Boy, she gave me hell; isn't that wonderful. She really cared about my being out late; and everybody was up; isn't that wonderful!'

"One time I told one of the girls that if I found her room dirty again in the morning I would call her out of school to clean it. I did, too. It embarrassed her, but she knows where I stand and keeps her room clean now," she said.

"So many parents are afraid of their kids. They don't want to make an issue. Some of these poor youngsters are so confused after their divorced parents get through fighting over them, they come to me a real wreck."

She admitted she had failed with a few children over the years. These were sent to other foster homes.

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This home I visited had a good feeling, a solid feeling, a secure feeling.

There are probably many people in the county who have room in their homes and in their hearts who could take in a foster child or foster children.

The welfare department would like to talk with these good people and maybe give them a human challenge or two to further ripen their lives. Give the foster home department of the welfare office a call (426-5121) and talk it over.

The Peace Corps is great, but it would be nice to start taking care of our own people.

From A Place Called Sheridan

Sheridan, Wyo. (P). — A student named Sheridan has received a diploma from Sheridan college which is named after the city of Sheridan which is named after frontier Gen. Phil Sheridan who was an ancestor of the student named Sheridan.

Patrick M. Sheridan of Fond du Lac, Wis., was one of 59 graduates of the two-year school. He is related to Gen. Sheridan through his great-great-grandfather.

A favorite in Chevy Chase, Md., was Allison Blaine McQuin, the whistling mail carrier. During World War II, McQuin signalled to housewives with the mating call of the cardinal when he had a letter from a husband away in the service.

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