

Redwood Glen --- A Nature Class For Children

'Gosh, It's Pretty'

It's quite amazing how environment can change a child's scale of values . . . how things so important and so vital to happiness in one place can become second rate or even discarded in a new locale.

And it's wonderfully amazing how quickly a child's mind adapts to new surroundings and how his constant inquisitiveness keeps him busy seeking knowledge of the "new."

With such a philosophy, teachers at the tri-county camp Redwood Glen science conservation school above Scotts Valley greet each class of upwards to 200 youngsters from Santa Cruz, Santa Clara and Monterey counties that appears each week.

"Basic purpose of the school is to provide sixth grade youngsters with an opportunity to study nature in the out-of-doors, under the guidance of a trained science teacher." . . . so reads the cabin teacher's manual.

"The curriculum goes far beyond study of individual

items and takes in the role of each animal, plant or object in the total natural community," the manual says.

But the manual fails to take in the child's role. With 145 children at the camp — such as there were when Laurel, Capitola, Soquel and Cupertino sixth graders attended two weeks ago — each item takes on 145 different concepts and it is up to the field teacher (there are six of them) to handle those concepts as well as the "curriculum" items.

Jean Poulson is one such teacher.

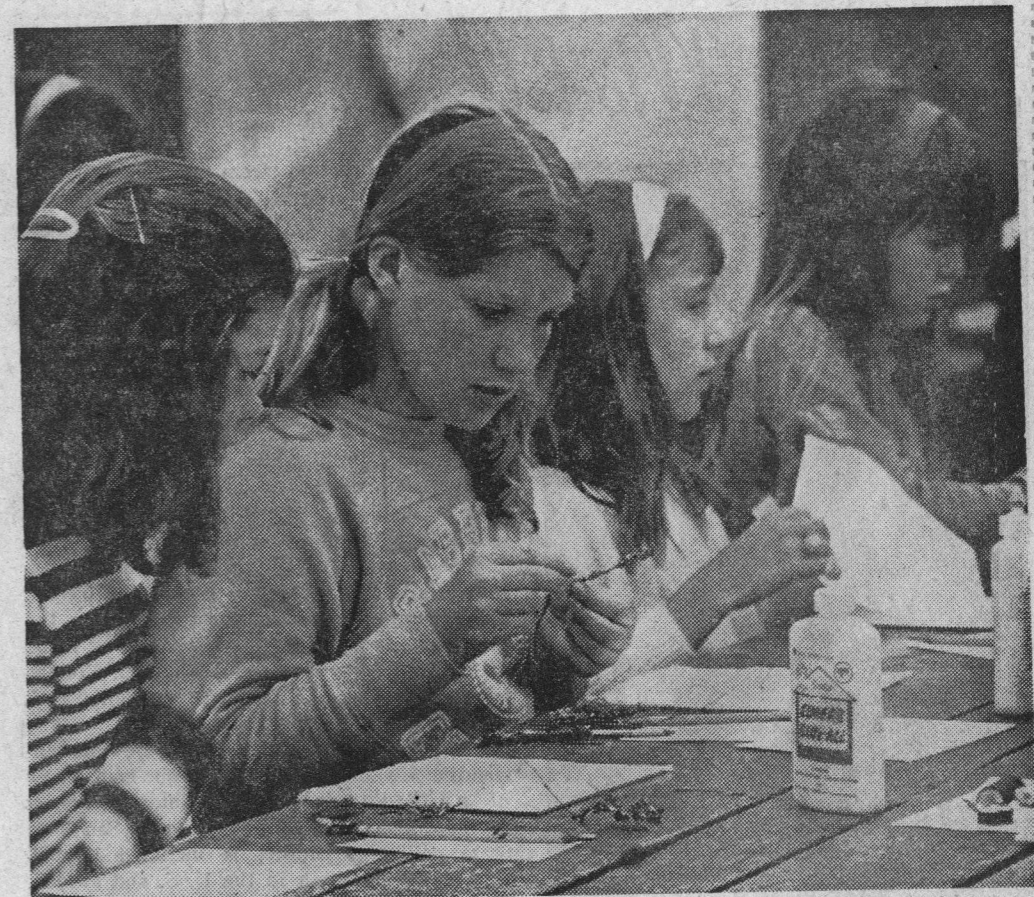
A graduate of San Jose State and with a regular teaching credential, each week she takes on a new group of students in her out-of-doors classrooms.

"They come to me as 'new' students," she said, "I know nothing about their past records or school background or achievement standings . . . I don't want to know . . . they all start equal."

As the children are led
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Who would think that a tiny velvet ant could attract — no — demand such attention from sixth graders.

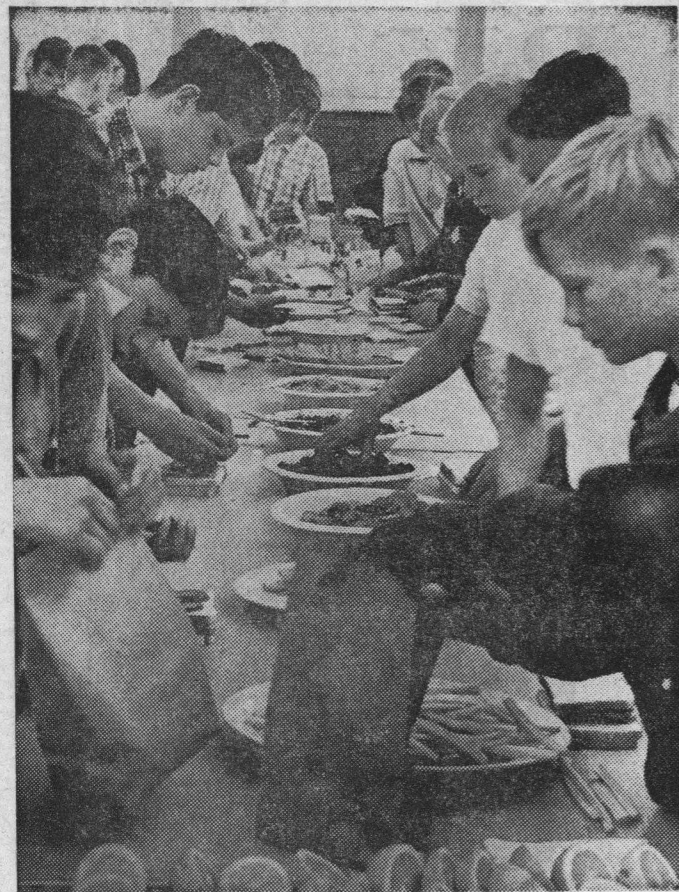


Intense concentration is shown as these two girls start mounting a botany exhibit they will take home.



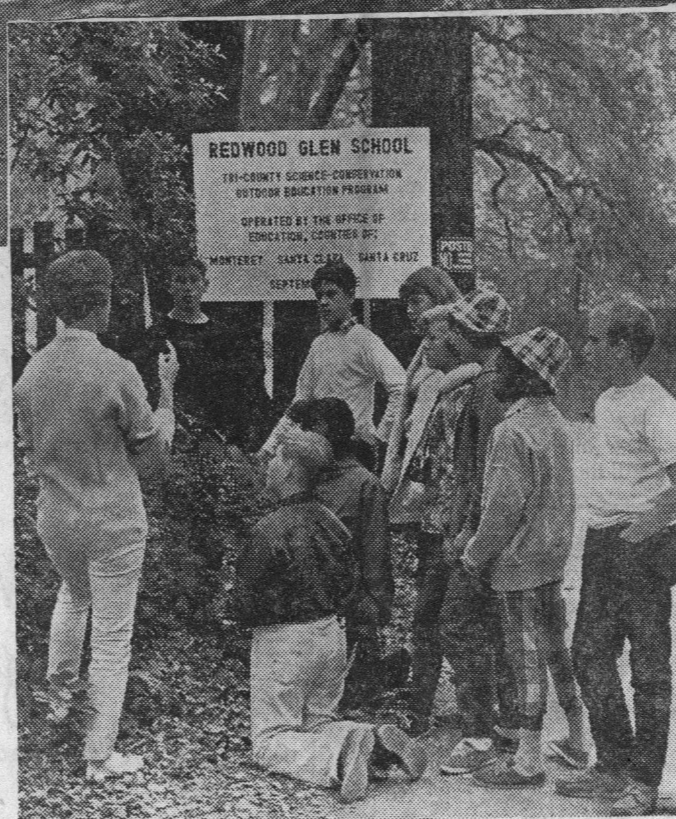
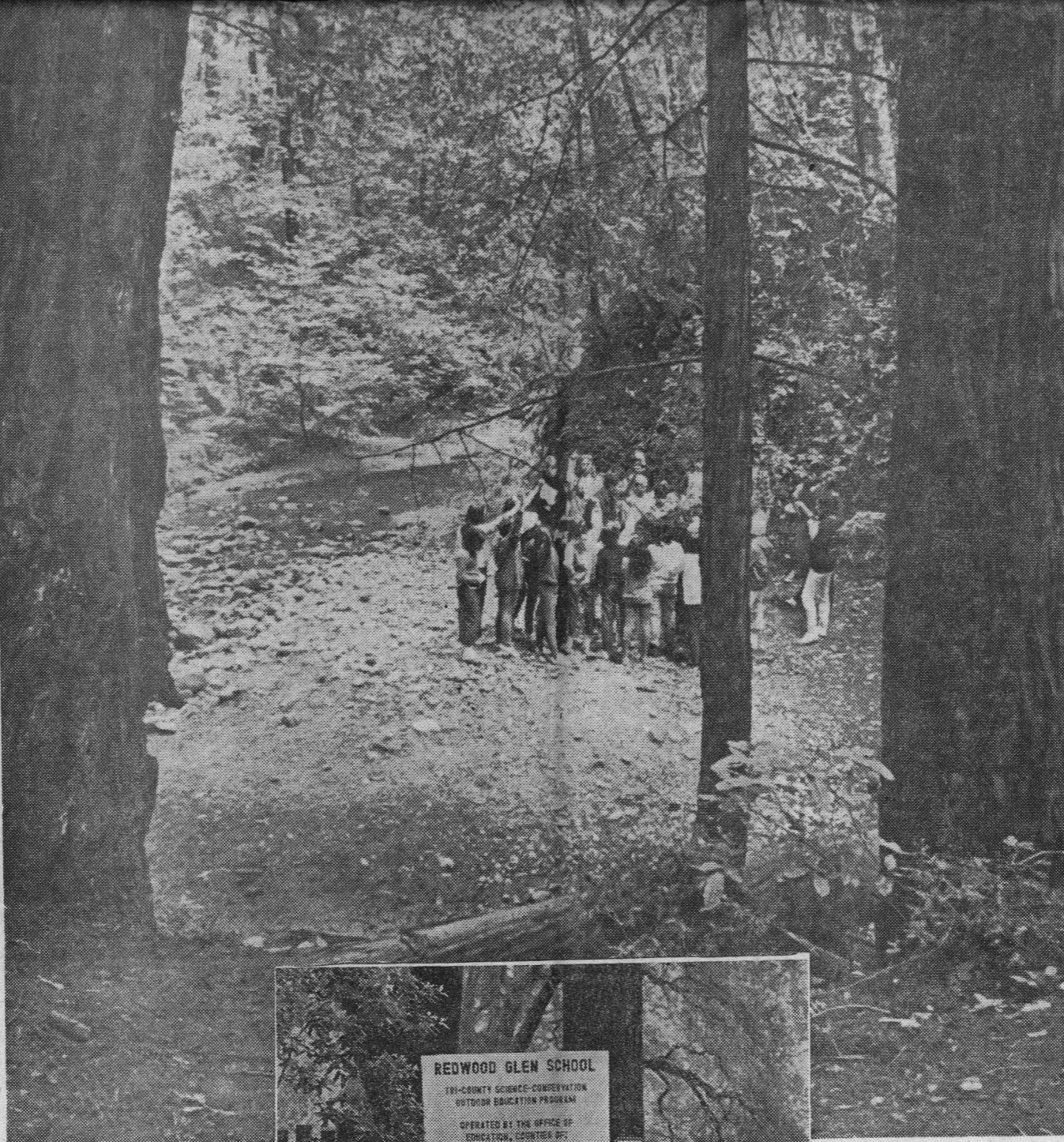


Geology studies finds sixth graders busy on the shale beds above Redwood Glen. They are allowed four samples from which to find fossils.

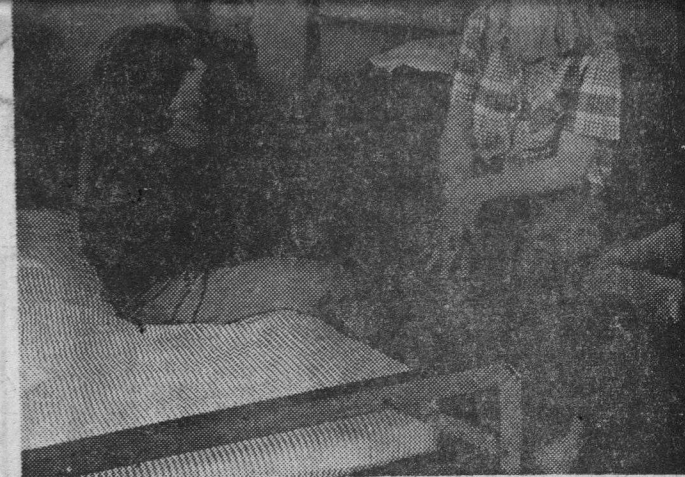


Chow Line! Boy sixth graders at Redwood Glen stoke up on peanut butter and jelly sandwiches at the Thursday paperbag picnic lunch. The crowd used 35 loaves of bread!

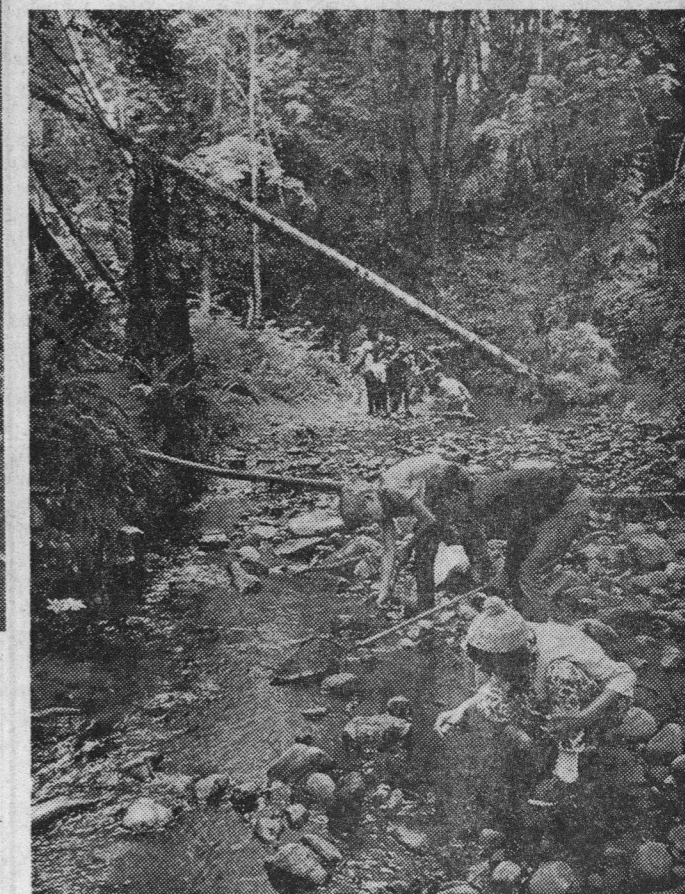
**Tree'n'Sea
Living**



Before the entrance gate, a class is enthralled by the small blossoms on a stand of wildflowers.



It's rest period and in one of the girls' cabins, that means "girl" talk. This group of Santa Cruz county students compares findings of the morning field trip.



There's a wealth of aquatic life to be found along the creekbed at Redwood Glen and with net and bucket these students are seeking it.

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...More About Redwood Glen



Sometimes one of the high school helpers gets lost and in this photo Jean Poulson, left is showing San Jose high schooler Carol Bailly how to get from "here to there" in the shortest time. Dave Press of Laurel school looks on.

(Continued from preceding page) through their studies of botany, biology, geology, zoology, and entomology (among others) their scale of personal values changes.

Who would think that Batman, for instance, would be cast into limbo through discovery of a velvet ant.

What regular classroom teacher would dare to believe that a strapping, sixth grade athletic-minded boy would entirely forget his beloved Giants because he was immersed in the beauty of a tiny fern along a creek bed.

Wild Shrieks

"We see such things happen," Miss Poulson said.

A deer bounced across an open field. It was followed by a chorus of wild shrieks.

A grey squirrel chattered from the limb of a stately redwood. It was answered by a chorale of murmurs—"aw, look at that."

"Some of these children have never seen a wild animal before, Miss Poulson said. "In fact, some have never seen a cow or a horse."

Carl Mieske, associated with the Santa Clara office of education is principal of the Redwood Glen school, and he declares the unique opportunities of the outdoor school contribute to the education and development of its students in four general areas.

The first is the basic scientific understanding and appreciation. Secondly, there is development of healthful living in an outdoor environment. Third, there is the aspect of democratic social living in which all children from all of the representative schools and environments are mixed together, and fourth, it teaches the child to share in communal activities—washing dishes, caring for beds and clothing and helping keep the grounds clean.

A Clean Plate

There is no candy allowed. And there is no between-meal or after dinner snacking. That's firm!

Mrs. Lena Dickson is the head cook and has prescribed one basic rule . . . "take a little of everything, eat all you take, come back if you want more—if you can eat it . . . but have a 'clean' plate."

She says feeding the raft of hungry children is quite a job. For instance on one Thursday paper bag picnic lunch, children went through 35 loaves of bread, two number 10 cans of peanut butter, four gallons of jelly, four gallon jars of pickles, a great quantity of ham loaf, an undetermined amount of celery and carrot sticks and dozens of oranges. Of course, there is milk three times a day.

Astronomy, Too

Each field teacher is qualified to teach all of the various subjects and each morning means a field trip either to the meadow, the river, the "geologic beds" or a long hike at which random nature observations are made. There is one day of classroom at which time students—if they may be called that—make mount-ups of the various specimens they have found.

It's a full day at Redwood Glen for the sixth graders. They arise at 7 a.m., and then with a flag raising ceremony and breakfast, they are all ready for the day's activities at 9. Lunch is a noon. There is a rest period, fol-

lowed by swimming. Comes next afternoon educational activities followed by showers, dinner and an evening program. That isn't necessarily a campfire program as one would expect in a regular summer camp. Instead, the children study astronomy.

"Lights out" is at 9.

So that each child can keep "one link with home," his or her sixth grade teacher accompanies him for the week. At the time a Sentinel reporter-photographer team visited, the teachers were Dave Press from Laurel, Mrs. Gertrude Garrett from Capitola and Mrs. Elizabeth Marie from Soquel. Each one of them made the same field trips as their children "so they would know what the kids were talking about when they returned to the "indoor" classrooms at the week's end.

Can't We Stay?

Besides Miss Poulson, field teachers at Redwood Glen are Barbara Thormann, Jan Cooper, who is also assistant principal; John Myszak, Les Decker and Norman Everton.

To assist, the top-flight high school students from the representative areas are brought in each week to serve as cabin monitors—or proctors.

It's a sad bunch of children that mounts school buses each Friday. "They are homeward bound and nine times out of ten, each as asked if he couldn't please stay for another week."

