

# 'Operation Followup' Makes A Surprising Turn

By Alan Pugh  
Sentinel Staff Writer

A program sponsored jointly by Cabrillo college and the Santa Cruz county Human Rights Action committee to assist underprivileged children in the Watsonville area has backfired. It is operating entirely contrary to the concept under which it was started.

It is called "Operation Followup," and it was designed to take over in helping school children where the federal government's "Operation Headstart" left off. Headstart gave pre-kindergarten children a running start into their educational ventures. Followup was to take the first four grades and "assist children that could benefit from broader experience in the community."

But the who's-assisting-whom philosophy has blown up entirely in the face of the corps of Cabrillo college students who are acting as teachers for the 15 to 20 children attending the program every morning, five days a week.

"We came here with the idea of teaching the children," Wayne Pimentell, who has a group of youngsters in a class at Assumption Catholic church, declared. "But I am learning from them . . . I am learning more about the philosophy of living, about the feeling of other people, about the expressions of human emotions, than any course at any college could teach."

Pimentell, along with Donna Gearhart and Stephanie Holman, fellow instructors in Operation Followup, were at Cabrillo college Thursday to requisition teaching materials from Brad Smith, a history instructor who is serving in the project as advisor and "material getter."

Miss Gearhart was assigned two first graders for whom she would act as a tutor. "But I find now I have a class of five or more — my regular children bring their brothers and sisters." She sought art supplies and paraphernalia for cut-outs.

Miss Holman's list included yard goods, sewing machine thread "and pinkie scissors, if I may have them."

All of the material for Operation Followup is donated by merchants in the Watsonville and mid-county area. The sewing machine was a gift "on loan" from one of the teachers.

As the three put in their requests they began exchanging notes.

"I never knew children could express so much love," Miss Gearhart confided to Miss Holman. "One of my little girls gave me a ring she had found in a cracker jack box. I know it was her treasure, but she gave it to me and I cried."

Miss Holman has her treasure, too. One of her pupils had a small cloth sash and wrote on it: "I like you."

Operation Followup could well be called "Operation Foulup," the student-teachers agreed. "Because it has fouled up our lives . . . The children have implanted themselves firmly in our hearts . . . It is going to be a job to separate from them when

the program closes in three more weeks . . ."

The little tots come from underprivileged homes. Some are from families of eight or nine and even larger.

"At home, the child has no chance to find himself . . . to become noted, to obtain attention, affection," the three said. "Of course, there is the family love, but from the way the children act they need an open expression, and outward flow of affection . . . they need to identify, and they turn their childish affection on us."

"I have learned a great lesson in giving and receiving," Miss Holman said. "It seems that I have given so little of myself and have received so much from the children in return that I want to give more and more." She looked up and smiled. "They have helped me mature . . . they have helped me grow up."

The teacher-students have wholeheartedly agreed they have learned a great lesson in humility and humbleness.

"Just let one of the little tots take your hand, lead you off and proudly show what he or she has done, and you'll know what I mean," one of them said.

Administering the program as a part of Cabrillo college community service is Dean George Clark. Smith and Sam Bloom, instructor in history and philosophy, are the "material getters."

Each morning the children are given a snack of cookies, crackers and fruit juice. It is all donated. Educational supplies

come from the college under the community service program. When something extra is needed, such as a kickball or some other playground equipment, it usually is purchased by the teachers themselves.

An ice cream and cake party a week ago was financed through a "dig down" into the pockets of the staff.

"There isn't enough we can do for those kids," Pimentell said.

How did the student-teachers get into the program?

It was all on a volunteer basis with no pay. Nor is there any college credit given. It's all pure altruism.

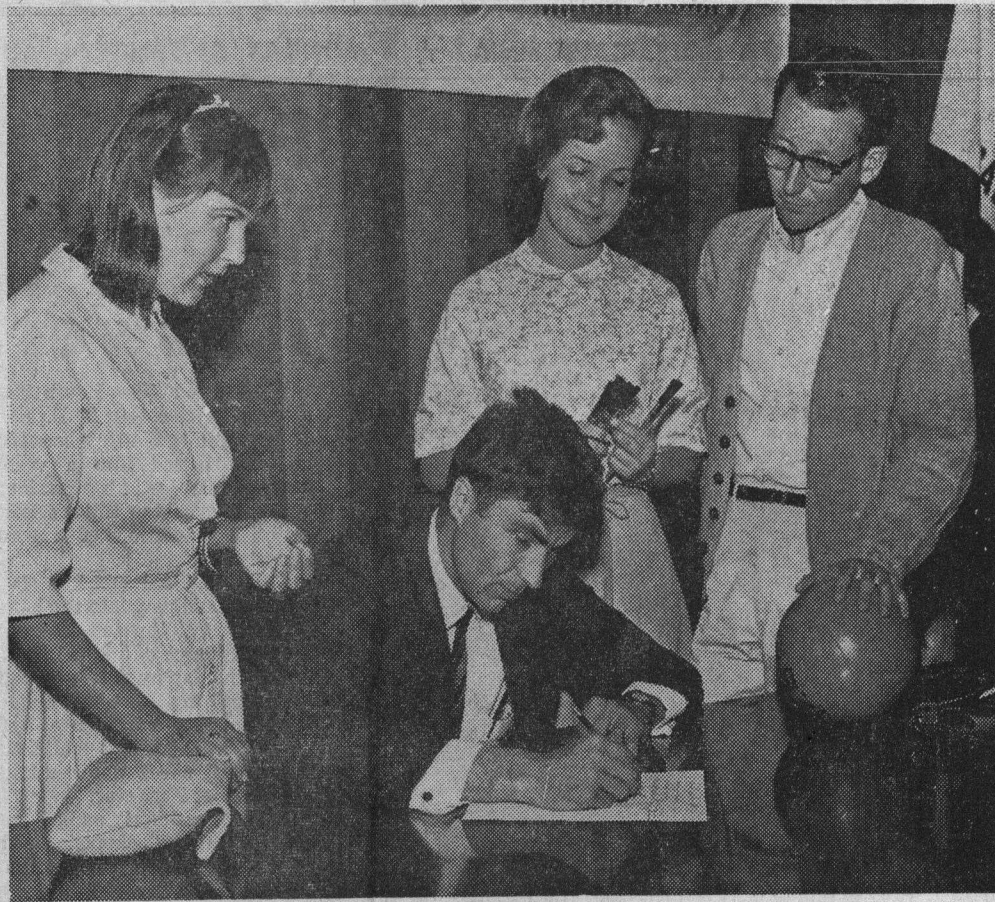
How will they get out of it?

That's a different matter. "I don't know," Pimentell said. "Maybe we can extend it over the year and meet with the kids on Saturday," he said. Miss Holman is going away to college and declared she "just can't bear to leave the children."

Operation Followup was designed to help underprivileged children in the Watsonville area. But if there were any way to evaluate benefits of the program, that evaluation would show the teacher-students benefited far more in realization of the needs of others and in the freely giving of one's self than the little Watsonville tots benefited in their educational assistance.

Or did they?

"One thing is sure," Smith said. "A lasting impression has been made on both pupil and teacher — an impression that will be with both always."



Let's see now . . . I will need sewing machine thread, said Stephanie Holman, left, as she recounted her list of educational material needs to Brad Smith, seated, when she and Donna Gearhart and Wayne Pimentell reported at Cabrillo college Thursday. Smith is the "materials getter" for Operation Followup, jointly sponsored by the college. Miss Gearhart is holding a sheaf of paintbrushes she will use in her classwork and Pimentell will use the kickball during playtime.

## Win At Bridge Silence Becomes Golden

By Jacoby & Son  
1965 Vanderbilt Cup Winners  
Newspaper Enterprise Assn.

An Ohio reader the column might amply of unusual the sort of mishap does not always experts.

We go back 30 the days before the ways to ask for a is the late Sherman New York, winning national titles in one of the greatest all time. The game bridge. He said have no spades," "Two spades," came mouth.

He tried to collect hearts, six hearts trump, but even himself at seven his partner played spades.

North had to

NORTH

♠ A 7 5

♥ 7 2

♦ K 9 3

♣ 8 7 4

WEST

♠ K 10 9 4 2

♥ 9 3

♦ Q 10 6

that point and Sherman proceeded to play the hand. As you can see the contract was

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