

Suburban Life

Lorraine McClish editor/477-5450



Thursday, July 4, 1985 O&E

(F)18

YMCA offers summer fun for campers

By Julie Brown
staff writer

There may not have been many American Indians at Kensington Metropark last Thursday. The youngsters at the Farmington Area YMCA's Summer Fun Day Camp, however, were glad to fill that role.

Last week's theme for the Summer Fun camp was "Indian Week." The youngsters played games and participated in crafts activities, designed to help them learn about American Indians. Thursday, July 27, the group traveled to Kensington Metropark.

"Indian Week" is just one of the themes scheduled for the summer, said Beth Schoenberg, assistant community program director for the Farmington Area YMCA.

Day camp activities and field trips are designed to correspond with the week's theme. During "Hawaiian Week," for example, the children will travel to the "Island" of Belle Isle.

A COUNSELOR from Spain will work with the Summer Fun youngsters during part of the summer.

"We feel that's good for the kids," Schoenberg said. The foreign counselor will teach the language, games and crafts of her country, and will work with youngsters at several other area YMCAs during the summer.

"Mystery Week" is also a popular theme for the Summer Fun youngsters at the Farmington Area YMCA. During that week, they will learn the art of "secret handwriting" and will search for hidden prizes in a treasure hunt.

The field trip taken during "Mystery Week" will remain a mystery to the youngsters until their arrival at the destination point.

"We don't tell the kids what field trip we're going on," Schoenberg said.

Other themes include "Holiday Week," in which a different holiday is celebrated each day, and "Olympics Week," planned with Olympic-type sports activities in mind.

The YMCA's day camp programs are divided according to the age of the youngsters.

The younger children — generally those ages 3 to 5 — attend the PAL (Play and Learn) Camp. Separate morning and afternoon sessions are scheduled for the PAL Camp.

THE OLDER children — who have finished the first through the fifth grade, and are generally between the ages of 6 and 10 — attend the Summer Fun Day Camp.

Both camp programs started on June 24 this summer. A total of eight one-week sessions are scheduled, with the final session ending on Aug. 16.

Swimming lessons, games and crafts activities are regular events for the Summer Fun Day Camp, said Schoenberg, who supervises the Summer Fun camp activities during the summer months.

The Summer Fun youngsters usually travel to Camp Obiyasa in Holly, Mich., one day each week. Using the resident camp's facilities allows the children to participate in such activities as boating, archery, pony rides and hay rides.

The youngsters also work on "skill cards" in various areas, such as outdoor cooking or wildlife. During the week, they fulfill the requirements for the different areas.

"At the end of the week, they'll receive a badge," Schoenberg said.

"The other thing we do is values. We take a half-hour each day for that, usually. The youngsters discuss family life, friendship, respect and other topics related to daily living.

The day camp programs are designed to combine learning and fun.

"I hope they get to try new experiences that they've never had," Schoenberg said. "I look at it as an enrichment-type thing."

SHE TRIES to create "a family-

'I think the first thing we hope they get is fun. I'd say fun, friendship, some new skills, and a look at their values. That's one of the things that's really important to us.'

—Sue Brooks
YMCA staffer

type atmosphere" for the youngsters.

"Whatever they have to learn, that's the best atmosphere for them to learn in."

The youngsters develop friendships during the summer, Schoenberg said, not only with other children but also with the counselors.

"They become very close to the counselors during the summer."

Sue Brooks, the Farmington Area YMCA's community program director, agreed that fun and friendship are essential parts of the camp programs.

Please turn to Page 2



Yoko Teraseka plays an Indian game at Kensington Metropark.



RICK SMITH/staff photographer

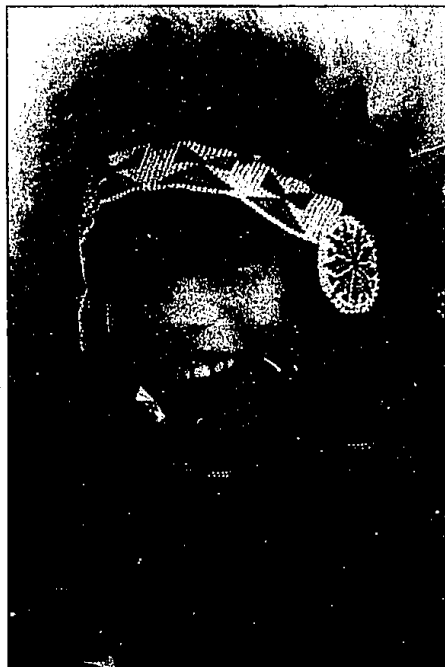
YMCA counselor Tricia Pierce and Vicki Vonn enjoy their time together at Kensington Metropark.



The youngsters at the YMCA's Summer Fun Day Camp gather around for a story.



Amy Inch teaches swimming skills to two youngsters. Swimming lessons are also a part of the day's activities for the YMCA day camps.



Mike Hueck enjoys his Indian attire. "Indian Week" was the theme last week at the Farmington Area YMCA's Summer Fun Day Camp.