

Smile! Volunteers

Thanks go to thousands

The Oakland County Volunteer Bureau, a program of the Volunteer Action Center of United Community Services, has weekly listings of volunteer opportunities. Further information about these and other volunteer needs at more than 200 agencies may be obtained by calling the bureau at 642-7272. Any nonprofit organization needing volunteer assistance may also call the bureau.

In observance of National Volunteer Week, the Economic team of the Oakland County Volunteer Bureau in saying thank you to the thousands of volunteers who make our community a better place in which to live.

CLERICAL VOLUNTEERS — Maintain or sharpen clerical skills and make potential paid employment contacts while helping support important community services. There are many agencies and institutions that need clerical

volunteers to perform such jobs as reception, typing, photocopying and filing. There is probably a position close to your home and short-term openings are available.

TEEN VOLUNTEERS — Young people between the ages of 14 and 18 can receive hospital experience as summer Teen Volunteers at Children's Hospital in Detroit. The time commitment is four to six hours per week for three months. Possible jobs include working in playroom, recreation therapy, children library or clerical opportunities.

PARENT EDUCATION volunteer — Avondale Youth Assistance in Auburn Heights works to prevent juvenile delinquency. Volunteers are being recruited to work with their Parent Education program scheduling speakers and publicizing workshops as well as some clerical work. A school year commitment is asked.

Children belong on prized vacations

Let's pretend you were a contestant on a game show. You brilliantly defeated your opponents and won the grand prize — a trip. But there is a catch. You must take your spouse and children with you. The trip is three weeks long and 3,000 miles from home. Would you accept the prize?

Anytime parents contemplate vacationing with the family, questions need to be asked and decisions made. Are the children too young to benefit from the trip? What about their routines? Will this upset their feeding and sleeping? Can they miss school? What about behavior, are they able to handle the confines of a long plane ride, hotel accommodations, restaurants, bus tours?

Children are amazingly flexible. Routines can be re-established, school work made up and behavior appropriate to a myriad of situations produced almost at will.

"Children can also add another dimension to a trip. In tiny toy stores instead of dimly lit cafes, you will see things you would never have noticed without young eyes.

On a recent trip to the Middle East, one child purchased an Israeli toy. Unfortunately, the proprietor did not know the rules of the game. The child set about looking for someone who knew how to play.



from children who spoke only Hebrew!

An even more revealing discovery was that though the two cultures are quite different and separated by many hundreds of miles, the game bears a striking resemblance to one commonly played at home.

The game is called Chamashim Avanim or Five Stones. Its name comes from the street version where it is played with five small smooth stones. Sold in Israeli toy stores, the stones are 1/4-inch metal cubes. If you wished to make it at home, hardware store nuts would be a good substitute.

The game is similar to jacks, but is deceptively simple. It begins by putting all five stones into the hand and scattering them on the ground. One stone is then thrown into the air. While it is airborne, a second is picked up from the ground and the first caught before it hits the ground. Keep at it until all the stones on the ground have been picked up one by one.

REPEAT THE process, but this time pick up the stones from the ground two at a time. In the third round, pick up first three stones, and then the one remaining. Finally, all four stones are scooped up from the ground while the fifth is in the air, again

catching the airborne stone before it hits the ground.

Part two of this game begins by again scattering the stones on the ground. Now place your hand on the ground near the stones so that it resembles a bridge. The job is to send the stones through the bridge one at a time by flicking them with the fingers of the opposite hand.

The task is made more difficult by two rules. First, no stone may touch another as it travels under the hand bridge. Second, the opponent may select which stone shall be the last to go under the bridge.

You're not through yet. Put all the stones into the palm of one hand. Throw them into the air and catch them on the back of the same hand. At this point they can be juggled around for good position, then thrown into the air once again. You must catch them four together and then one.

There's still more. One stone is eliminated from play and the whole thing begins again using only four stones. When the whole sequence has been repeated, drop off another stone and repeat using three stones, and so on until there is only one stone left.

Patricia Bordman, a free-lance writer and photographer, has a master's degree in early childhood education. She has taught elementary school and conducted workshops and lectures.

Mrs. Bordman welcomes suggestions and comments. Please write her c/o the Observer & Eccentric Newspaper, 36251 Schoolcraft Road, Livonia 48150.

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