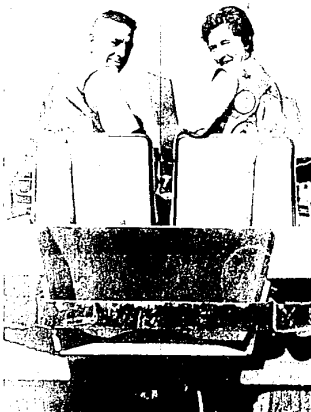


World's Largest Camp Out

Suburbia In The Boondocks



DON AND NANCY EDGAR of Livonia prepare a story direct from the world's largest camp-in. It may end up in the camp's daily newspaper, in a public newspaper, in the NCHA official magazine, or in any one of the many camping interest magazines on your newsstand. Yes, that's an electric typewriter, plugged into the side of their camper.



GEORGE AND BARBARA LEITER of Farmington set off for an inspection tour as part of their efforts to help make the affair a success. During much of the afternoons he piloted a truck over miles of makeshift roads, spreading the music of a four-piece electronically amplified combo.

Story And Pictures
By Dennis L. Pajot



AT HOME -- Don and Shirley Hayden and their young son, of Clarenceville area, weren't far from neighbors despite their travels. They pitched camp in the "Metro Detroit" compound.

Don Edgar, one of Observerland's most devoted nomads, calls travel trailer camping "a real, every day, true to life adventure."

He proudly explains that his children have traveled across the nation and to adjoining countries. The family has shared campgrounds with people from all walks of life. They've danced with American Indians.

The Edgars have traveled more than 100,000 miles in the past 10 years and are currently wearing out their third trailer. This summer he has a trip into the western canyonlands planned, which will require use of a four-wheel drive pulling vehicle.

"Or we could use horses and pack in, but I'm not too crazy about riding a horse," he said.

FOR THE PAST WEEK, however, the Edgars' adventure has been one of almost true life suburban-type living among 35,000 campers hunched down in rolling open Michigan country fields.

Imagine half the people of Redford Township, or one-third of Livonia, camping 60 miles away for a week. That's what it was like when more than 8,500 camping families converged in the Irish Hills for "Campvention Seventy."

From all over the United States and Canada they swarmed to the 11th annual National Campers and Hikers Association (NCHA) business meeting. One couple from England attended.

WHEN MICHIGAN CHAPTERS decided to host the nesting of world travelers, they didn't realize twice as many would respond as ever before. Yet it was up to them as hosts and hostesses to justify the compliment and expectations of the world's largest camp-out.

Under Chairmen Don and Juanita Woolworth of Clio and seven sub-chairmen teams, they did -- by virtually providing city services.

Don and Nancy Edgar of Livonia were one of the sub-chairmen teams, handling the press, exhibitors and the printed program. Tasks completed by them and about 100 other Observerland family helpers helped achieve the three-fold goals.

Two of the families who helped them were Stan and Nora Tkacz of Redford Township and George and Barbara Leiter of Farmington.

THE EDGARS' supervised publication of a 60-page advance program, brought a radio station to the grounds for the week and guided preparation of a daily campground newspaper that was not only written but set in type under a tent. They directed photographers. They submitted to press questions. And much more -- including chasing unauthorized vehicles from the press (near parking spaces).

Stan Tkacz, in charge of the exhibitors, whipped together a crew that erected nearly 1,500 electrical poles by sledging first a small pilot stake and then the larger in hard clay earth. Ditches found between camping compounds required them to build sophisticated footbridges.

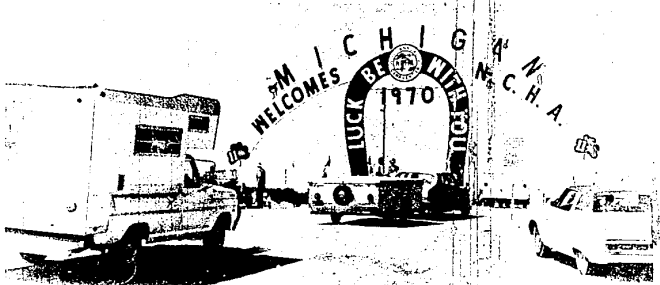
George Leiter loaded a truck bearing a four-piece electronically amplified combo along bustling improvised roads.

MEANWHILE, THESE and the other unpaid "city fathers" made advance arrangements and on-the-spot improvisations that provided on the grounds:

- A major chain grocery store outlet; a flea market of pots and pans, blankets, sunsuits and other miscellaneous items; and about 90 camping interest exhibits in all.
- Police, fire, drinking and septic water supply, and ambulance service (a maternity run was necessary the first day).
- Church services, daily recreation programs, entertainment, tour arrangements, community campfire programs, door prizes and "swimming holes."

For all this, plus the tribulations of rain one day and 100-degree shade temperatures the next, each camping household paid \$12 "taxes," which went solely to the property owners.

These were some of the facets of this true-to-life adventure of suburbia in the boondocks.



HOSPITALITY TOUTED -- Camping vehicles of every description streamed through this main gate of Campvention Seventy at Juniper Hills Campground in the Irish Hills.

It was the 11th annual National Campers and Hikers Association (NCHA) business meeting -- the first in Michigan and more than double the size of any



HONEYMOONERS -- Mr. and Mrs. Larry Goldstein (Sharon Schulkins) of Farmington.



WHAT IT'S ABOUT -- A couple from England brought their collection of pennants testifying to travels around the British Isles and Europe. No, they didn't come all the way by camper truck. They rented it here, with local hosts making the arrangements.



STAN AND NORA TKACZ of Redford Township clown it up at one of the exhibits they worked long and hard weeks ahead of the event to make possible. Campers could buy pots and pans, a custom trailer hitch, a rustic nameplate, a travel trailer, or learn about the nation's campgrounds from among the more than 85 exhibitors.

KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE MALL

WATCH FOR OUR
SOUTH of the BORDER
DOORWAY SALE!
JULY 23-24-25

LIVE - IN PERSON
WJR's JACK HARRIS
• JIMMY CLARK and his ORCHESTRA
• JEAN OLIVER • PLUS SURPRISE GUESTS
THURSDAY - 8 p.m.

PANCHITO and his
strolling **MARIACHIS**
FRIDAY - 4-7 p.m.

EDISON CALLOPE
SATURDAY - 12-2 p.m.

Special cartoon and children's programs at Cinema 3 from 10 a.m. until noon on Thursdays. Open to all children 12 and under.

25¢

OPEN EVERY EVENING
'til 9 p.m.
Meet You
At The Mall

LIVONIA MALL
7 MILE at MIDDLEBURY
There's always something going on at ...
LIVONIA MALL
7 MILE at MIDDLEBURY