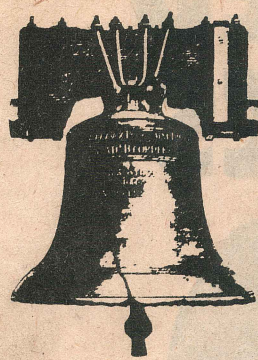
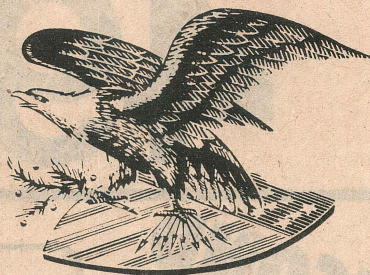


MADRID

AREA



BICENTENNIAL



1776-1976

"Remembrances of Days Gone By"

Camp Fire Organization Began in 1916

Camp Fire girls is a nation-wide organization for girls between 7 years and high school age. It offers a program of education and recreation that combines fun and friendship with constructive activities.

It organized in Madrid back in the fall of 1916, and with the exception of a 3 year stretch between 1937 and 1940, Camp Fire has remained active in the Madrid area.

Madrid District of Camp Fire girls is a member of the Heart of the Hawkeye in Des Moines, and has been since 1946.

There are 122 girls and 30 adults registered in the council. Madrid District Committee meets four times a year and helps plan and oversee the year's projects. Lois Pies and Nancy Samuelson are co-leader chairmen while Beverly Morning is the district chairman. Current leaders include Janis Anderson, Helen Sherwood, Cheryl Kelley, Lenora Pendroy, Brenda Callahan, Janice Muehlenthaler, Sandy Boresi, Nancy Samuelson, Lois Pies, Leora Sowder, Louise Wade, Carolyn Magnani and Beverly Morning.

Camp Fire is subdivided into four groups. Blue Birds form the junior group of Camp Fire with the youngsters ranging in age from first to third grades. Their program centers on creative play activities, simple community service projects and development of elementary skills.

Girls in grades 4-6 are eligible to belong to the Adventure Club. Each division of Camp Fire builds upon the previous one to help develop girls to their greatest potential. The girls progress through the ranks of Trail Seekers, Wood Gatherer, and Fire Maker.

Discovery Club girls are generally in junior high and during this time they work individually or as a group toward the rank of Torch Bearer. The girls work on projects covering a wide interest area and must secure the help of an outside individual in order to successfully complete the project. A presentation or written report is turned in at the completion, telling what they accomplished or learned during this time.

The Horizon Club forms the senior program for high school girls. It stresses personality development, career exploration, social activity and community service. The girls work on specific projects and can earn the Wohelo medallion, one of the highest awards given. A recognition dinner is held each year for the senior girls, honoring them for their years of active service.

Yearly projects of the Madrid clubs include the November candy sale and the vesper service, which has been held well over 15 years. This traditional event is held at either Thanksgiving or Christmas and was originally held in the church. But increasing attendance forced its movement to the Iowa Lutheran Home where it has been presented for many years.

This year's service was held at Thanksgiving time with the girls making gifts for the residents. Refreshments are served after the service and during this time the girls can get acquainted with the residents.

The picnic and council fire was held May 11 and it is here that the girls receive their awards and honors.

Madrid Camp Fire is funded through the Community Chest.

Camp Fire was started back in 1909 with the opening of a camp at Lake Sebago in Maine by Dr. and Mrs. Luther Halsey Gulick. However, 1910 is the official beginning date of the organization and it became incorporated in 1912.

Gulick was concerned with the development of youth and he felt character developed during leisure time. So he originated the camp to reward the girls and boys in their free time. American Indian lore was the center of interest for Gulick's camp and he deemed this appropriate because the Indians love and wisely use nature; express fairness and honesty and use symbolism.

The Camp Fire Girls' insignia consists of crossed logs and a flame, symbolic of the hearthfire of home and the outdoor campfire. The Camp Fire watchword is "Wohelo", made up of the first two letters of work, health and love. "Give Service," the third point of the Law of Camp Fire Girls, is the slogan.

The following information was submitted by Mrs. Elsie Anderson who recalled her days as a Camp Fire Girl.

When Claribel Woodroffe came to Madrid in the fall of 1916, she brought with her two new words — golf and Camp Fire. She had played golf while attending college at Ames and she had been inspired by a speaker who had told of the new organization called Camp Fire Girls, which had grown out of the camp he and his wife he operated in Maine for a number of

years. This man was Dr. Luther Gulick.

He and his wife had felt girls needed to find joy in the home and its surroundings. Camp Fire is completely American with a background of Indian tradition. Girls learn to share and to work together. The slogan, "Give Service" emphasizes growth in spirit and mind. Wohelo is the watchword; a word made from the first two letters of three words: work, health and love.

The Camp Fire Law consists of the following: Worship God; Seek Beauty; Give Service; Pursue Knowledge; Be trustworthy; Hold on to health; Glorify work and Be happy.

The charter for this first Camp Fire group in Madrid records that AKA, an Indian word meaning "I Can" was organized on April 11, 1917.

The girls in that group were Edith Baxter, Helen Betts, Laura Bolle, Hazel Booth, Bernice Brown, Victoria Brown, Georgiana Kenison, Helen McCoy, Ethel Morning, Helen Raye, Elsie Shaffer and Marian Zook.

Miss Woodroffe decided not to return for the next year so Mrs. Scott, the principal's wife agreed to take over the meetings, but not the camping. So, the girls talked their mothers into taking turns coming to camp, not to cook but to be their guests.

F. M. Bolle allowed them to pitch two tents on a high woody spot, back from the road and not far from what is now part of the Big Creek Lake land development. The girls built a dam, and though the water didn't get very deep, it was fine for the kind of mud crawling they enjoyed.

In the fall of 1917, Mrs. Helen George came from Grinnell to teach history and Latin, and she agreed to be the leader beginning on September 5, 1917.

Mrs. George was a war bride with her husband stationed at Ft. Deming. Her influence made the girls war conscious also so they made a quilt out of knit squares for the Belgians and helped pack kits for the Red Cross.

In the summer of 1918, they collected papers and magazines in an effort to raise funds for the club.

Difficulties among the school staff brought about the resignation of Mrs. George as guardian, but she was replaced by Mrs. M. J. Kenison.

To make money for camp, the girls sold house numbers for the city and practiced a play called "The Call of Wohelo."

Again they camped, recalled Mrs. Anderson. This time at the Clint Morning woods, north and west of town. They adopted Mr. and Mrs. Morning as their camp father and mother. They were there for ten days from July 9-19. The big event of the trip was when they hiked to Luther, caught the train to Boone, ate picnic dinners at Herman Park and spent the day on slides and swings until time to catch the train back to Luther where Mr. Morning met them with his truck and took them back to camp.

"Wonderful days were about to end," she continued. "Most of us had received our Woodgather and Firemaker rank and were working on Torch Bearer. The fall of 1919 found most of us 12th graders and very busy. No available guardian appeared and so the story ends . . . of AKA Camp Fire . . . but the times live on in our memories."

In 1942 Wilma Bennington came to town as the kindergarten teacher and she sought Mrs. Anderson's help in organizing what proved to be the first Blue Bird group in Madrid. This was started in December and they chose the name "The Four-o'Clocks" for their club.

Those belonging to this first Blue Bird club were Audrey Todd, Dorothea McElheney, Donna Steinick, Betty Kocur, Rosalie Kernes, Beverly Vavra, Beverly Adams, Joann Comstock, Joanne Jones, Louise Madison, Beverly Thoren, Carolyn Mataya, Evelyn Barclay, Teresa O'Deay, Carla Freking, Barbara Anderson, Mary Sue Anderson, Joyce Lehman and Helen Welder. These girls were from ages 8-10 and were in grades 2, 3, and 4. In February Wilma decided to leave Madrid for Chicago to become an army nurse. Her successor was Frances Christenson.

"During the years that Camp Fire has been associated with the Heart of the Hawkeye Council, the program has grown and adapted to the changing kind of world in which we live," she says. "I'm not sure that anything is more fun than building a dam across a creek, but a swimming pool is a better place to learn to swim. More parents interest and participation has made for real progress."

"I felt most happy when in 1951, at the Council Fire at Camp Hantesa, we had our first Torchbearers from Madrid. Judy Cleven, Barbara Anderson and Mary

Sue Anderson were received by our beloved Miss Gen."

"I think back to council fires with much meaning," she concludes. "The play days at Edgewood Park; the 82 dolls we made and dressed in 1951; the mitten tree project in January 1952, resulting in 75 pairs of mittens, 6 balls of yarn with a cash donation of 5 dollars; the boxes of candy we sold and the candy queen and the earned weeks at camp; girls singing; camp talk; and the serious sweetness of faces reflected by the light."

Miss Gen

Miss M. Genevieve Clayton or Miss Gen as she was known by many, was named as Camp Director and Executive Director of the Des Moines Area Council of Camp Fire Girls in 1934.

She was named assistant director at Camp Hantesa from 1931 to 1933 and was named Camp Director on May 15, 1934. She held this post for many years and was succeeded by Susan Welch who holds the post today.

Miss Gen organized a group of fathers who wanted to do things for their girls into what is now called "Do-Dads". All but three of the buildings in camp have been erected under Miss Gen's administration. Much of the labor was furnished without charge by the Do-Dads.

Madrid fathers have actively participated in this program in past years and this year's heads of the group include Ray Magnani, Bob Krukow, Bill Young, Jim Anderson, Darwin Knox, Merrill Muehlenthaler, James Tolyan, Marv Samuelson, Marvin Sowder, Jack Wade and Eugene Morning.

Camp Hantesa's first camp season was held in the

Boy Scout Camp in the Ledges State Park. Thirty-five campers attended.

The following information can be found in the records of the Ledges State Park. "The shadow of the tall steel flag pole in front of headquarters reached the stone in the sun dial at its base, which marked high noon; the clear notes of a bugle sounded attention in the Des Moines Boy Scout Camp, at the Ledges on the Des Moines River. A small attachment of Scouts formed near the flag pole. While everyone in the camp stood at attention, the flag was slowly lowered and taps sounded. The scouts reverently folded the flag, and marching to headquarters, presented it to a detachment of Camp Fire Girls who were waiting to receive it. They, in turn, marched to the flag pole and to the stirring strains of "To the Colors" the flag was raised rapidly. With this simple ceremony Camp Hantesa, the Camp Fire Girls camp opened its second season August 22-31, 1920."

The camp consists of 132 acres of land and is the oldest girls camp in Iowa. It is located next to the Ledges State Park.

Back in 1919, the Camp Fire girls and their leaders camped below Table Rock in the Ledges following the Boy Scout camping season. They continued to do this until 1922. They camped on the present site in 1923, which was then a farm.

Later that year, they purchased the original site of Camp Hantesa. Forty acres of the land was a gift from Mr. and Mrs. Albert Rocho and this area is known today as Rocho's Hilltop Unit. In 1966 40 acres of the Hermann property was bought and this area is known as Hermann's Heaven Unit.

There are 40 buildings, 20 of which are heated and can be used the year round.



Vesper Price, president of the Heart of the Hawkeye Council back in 1965 presented Mrs. Jack White with the National Luther Halsey Gulick Award at the Council Fire held at Vet's Auditorium in April of that same year.

This award is the highest honor given to adults in the council for outstanding service to the council, regional and national organization.

Mrs. White has been actively involved in Camp Fire for nearly 25 years.

She is the co-chairperson for the Iowa Camp Fire Girls Fair and Council Fire that will be held Saturday, May 22 at McElroy Auditorium in Waterloo. This event is partially funded by the Iowa Bicentennial Commission.

Lillian and her husband, Jack, are both members of the Heart of the Hawkeye Executive Committee.

THE MADRID REGISTER-NEWS
Thursday, May 13, 1976