

Petersburg Builds a Health Program

New Enterprises in Education

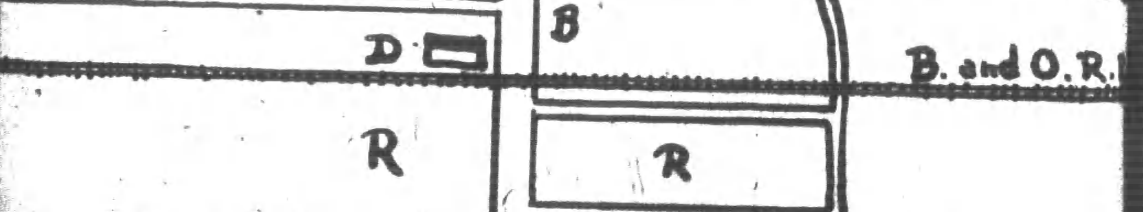
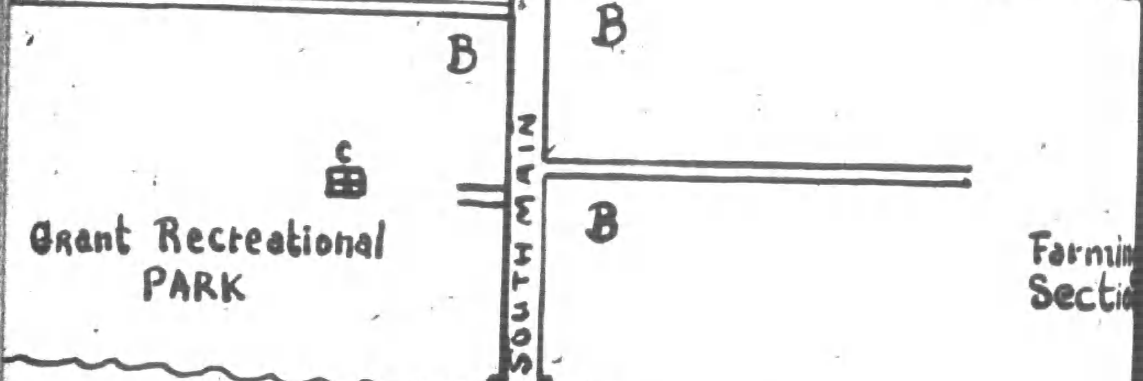
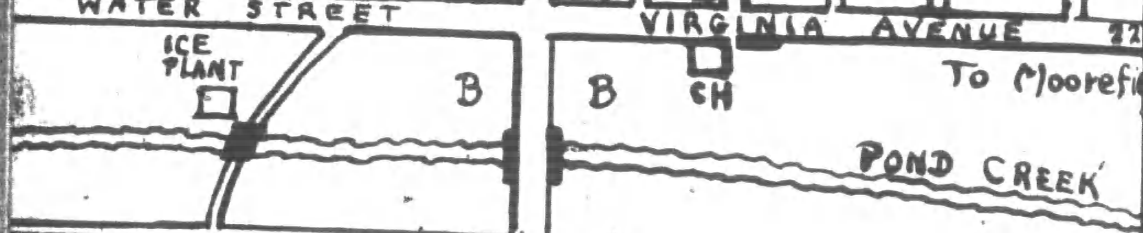
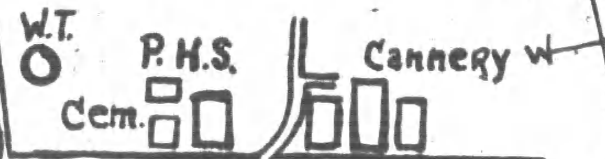


FEDERAL SECURITY AGENCY • Office of Education

Bulletin 1949, No. 9

PETERSBURG W.VA. N

- R-Residential
- B-Business
- PGS-Grade School
- P.H.S.-High School
- CEM-Cemetery
- WT.-Water Tank
- P.O.-Post Office
- CH-Court House
- †-Churches
- GCB-Grant Co. Bank
- PVB-Totomac Bank
- Hatchery
- C-Clinics



Petersburg Builds a *Health Program*

By Effie G. Bathurst, *Division of Elementary Education*



New Enterprises in Education Series

Bulletin 1949, No. 9

FEDERAL SECURITY AGENCY . . . Oscar R. Ewing, *Administrator*
Office of Education Earl James McGrath, *Commissioner*

THE ENTHUSIASM with which boys and girls explore the practical problems of community life is always heartening. Here is such a story of how grade-school children worked with their parents and other interested citizens to make their home town a healthier and better place to live in. This example of democracy in the making is the first in a special series of Office of Education bulletins on school projects designed to help educate children for good citizenship while they are growing up in their communities.

Oscar P. Ewing

Federal Security Administrator

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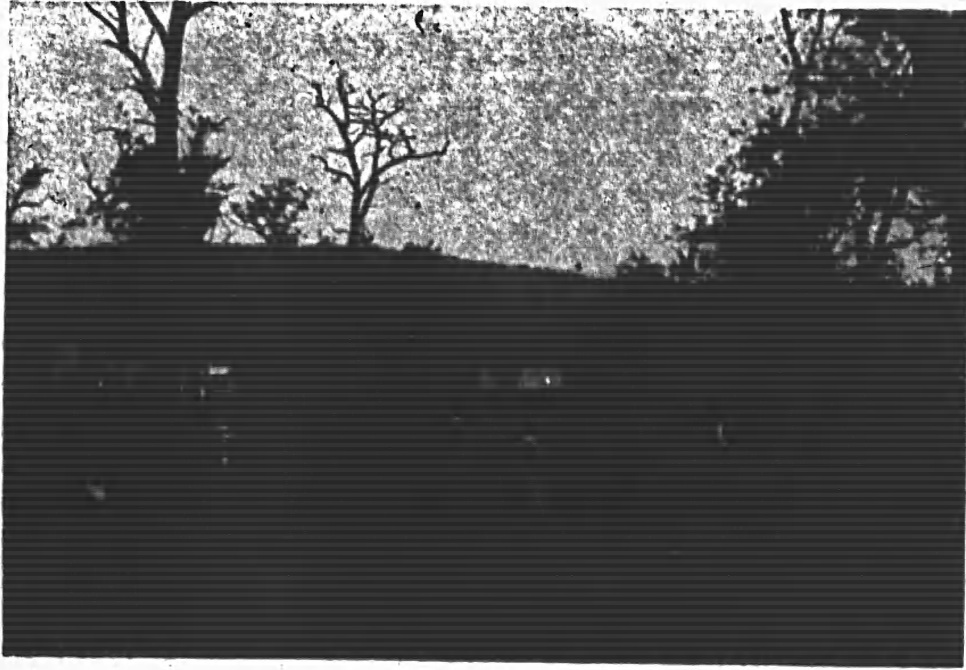


A FACT-FINDING COMMITTEE STARTS TO TOWN

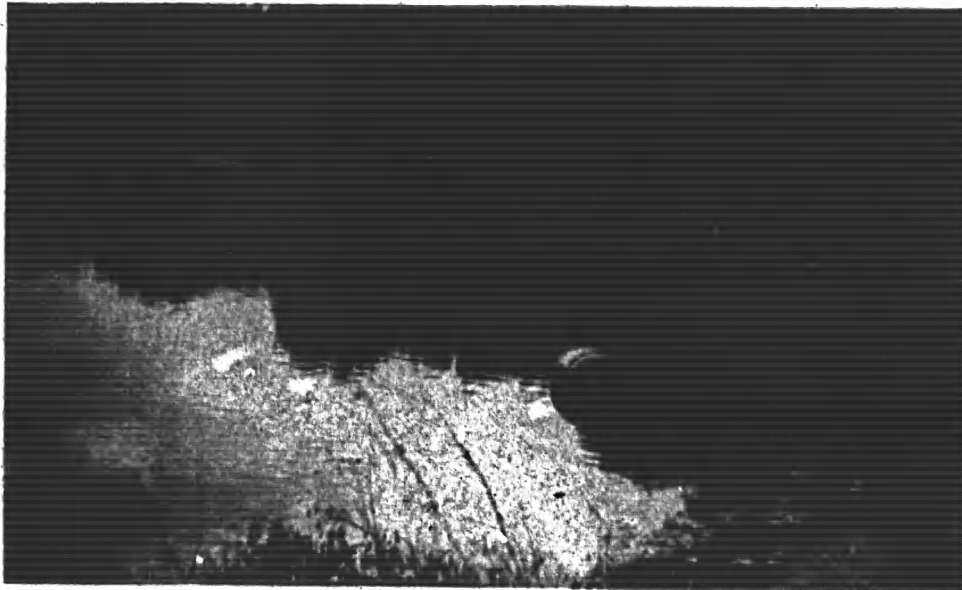
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PAGE 2 OF COVER: a fourth-grader puts her town on the map. The lines showing Petersburg's streets, business places, and rivers are as real to her as the walks, curbs, buildings, and rivers which she knows so well.



WE EXPLORE THE PLACE FOR OUR PARK.



WE FOUND THAT THE SOURCE OF OUR WATER WAS POLLUTED.

IV

Foreword

THIS bulletin is about an invasion that was welcomed. It tells how boys and girls of Petersburg, W. Va., invaded their town to learn and to serve. Hotels, school lunchroom, alleys, creeks and swamps, unused park areas, and other resources were utilized. The young invaders were welcomed by the adult citizens of the town because the principal of the school had sent those who might be interested a letter asking them to receive the boys and girls and help them. The children were working on a school health project, the letter said, and, "Would the community hear the children's story and help them learn firsthand?"

"How healthful is Petersburg?"—that's what the children wanted to know; and "How can we help to make it more healthful?" This bulletin tells how the boys and girls organized their campaign to get information. It explains why information was not enough, and how the campaign to get information was followed by cooperative plans for improvements when these were needed.

In the pictures you will see the children as they interview people to get facts. You will see them posting, on the town bulletin board by the bank, a summary of their discoveries. You will see them in a health parade along the streets of Petersburg. You will see sketches of the maps and charts which the children made as the townspeople helped them with the project.

In the lines of the story, and between the lines, you will see a community that's back of its school, encouraging its boys and girls, helping them learn, applauding their first steps in citizenship. If you live not too far away from Petersburg, you'll want to visit the town and get acquainted with its citizens.

The work described here was done by children, school staff, and patrons cooperatively. Committee reports are abridged and partly edited, but otherwise included as the children and teachers submitted them. The maps and charts were made by children from data gathered by them, with the guidance of the staff.

The Petersburg community was enabled to develop this health program partly through a grant from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation of Michigan to the West Virginia State Department of Education. The object of the grant was to establish 3-year demonstration centers in certain schools of

the State for experimenting with ways of improving school and community health. The Petersburg Elementary School became a center.

Among the goals of the demonstration-center program were the following: (1) to discover means of making health education as functional as possible; and (2) to learn ways of using the community as a laboratory and a field of civic service in health improvement. It is the purpose of this bulletin to show how the Petersburg Elementary School and community achieved these goals and thus took several steps toward a way of life not only for today and today's citizens, but for tomorrow and the day after, and the day after that.

The professional staff responsible for the development of the project included: (1) the teachers—Evelyn Hutson, Bessie Wolford, Pauline Sites, Mildred Inskip, Kathleen Mouse, Marguerite Feaster, Wilma Sites, Tracy Evans, Fleta Shobe, Betty Day Smith, Evelyn Henderson, Lois Ours, Frances Everly, Mabel Hott, Keller Reid, and Mary McDonald; (2) the county school supervisor, A. Neil Frye; (3) the county superintendent of schools, C. P. Hott; (4) consultant from the State Education Department, Katherine Steinbicker; and (5) the principal of the Petersburg Elementary School, C. D. Sions.

Ben Goodenough

Director, Division of Elementary Education



WE ASK MR. BOWMAN ABOUT THE RECREATION CENTER.

How the People of Petersburg Live and Work

PETERSBURG, W. Va., has interesting resources for school and community development. The town grew up in early days between two picturesque branches of the Potomac River in the eastern part of the State and eventually became the county seat of Grant County.

Petersburg was incorporated in 1910, but some 150 years before that the earliest settlers built their simple cabins. In front of the courthouse, whose architecture belongs to the early 1900's, stands a plaque which reminds us that the first settlers came in 1745 and that the Petersburg people many years later took part in the War Between the States. A small crude settlement stood on the present site of Petersburg in 1746 when Washington and his group of surveyors were laying out the tract of land which Lord Fairfax inherited earlier from his mother. It was the westernmost settlement of that time. Here the party stopped for provisions and established the line of the Fairfax land.¹ The town was named in honor of one Martin Peterson who was a man of affairs around the middle of the 18th century. He lived about 5 miles south of the present site of Petersburg, but owned land in and around the settlement.

Today about 2,000 people live in Petersburg. Streets of neat business houses and homes reach out with a welcome for traveler, casual visitor, or homecoming citizen. Two hotels provide rooms for transient visitors, or make pleasant temporary homes for guests who return periodically to hunt and fish in the mountains of Grant County and in Monongahela National Forest, a section of which lies in Grant County. Attractive tourist homes welcome visitors to town or country. The two banks handle much of the business of the people of the county: Grocery stores, restaurants, a general store, a dime store, and filling stations help meet the needs of citizens and visitors in Petersburg.

Around Petersburg, scattered patches of rich soil support a mixed agriculture and many beef and dairy cattle. Poultry raising is popular in town and country. At the edge of town stands a small cannery. A saw mill receives lumber from the private forests of the county. A fish hatchery helps supply the region with speckled and rainbow trout.

As for recreation, if one judges front places of commercial amusement,

¹ Lewis, Thomas. *The Fairfax Line*, p. 27.

adults, rather than children, have the lion's share. The theater is clean, carpeted, and air-conditioned. Movies of interest to adults are shown Monday through Saturday, with a matinee on Saturdays and Sundays. A nightclub open to all adults provides dancing, music, and refreshments. A bowling alley accommodates 25 adults and teen-agers. People over 15 years of age can play pool in a certain restaurant. People who are at least 21 years old may, for a membership fee, dance at a private nightclub. But for small children and for the teen-agers, for the most part, there are chiefly seasonal activities, such as ice skating, roller skating, hiking, bicycling, and church programs; and bowling, movies (which usually are not suitable), and school activities.

Like most country towns today, Petersburg has certain county- and State-supplied facilities to protect the health of the town and the country around it. For other types of health protection, the town relies on the public-spirited cooperation of citizens and improvement of local resources. There are four practicing physicians; four nurses, including the public health nurse; and one dentist. The County Health Department serves part of a district of five counties. The Department has a public health officer, two sanitarians, a nurse, and a clerk. The public health officer and sanitarians serve the five counties, while the nurse and clerk work only in Grant County. The nurse is a busy person. She cannot meet all the needs of the town. Two and a half days each week are spent in the schools. She has to inspect the pupils once each year; assist in immunizing them for smallpox and diphtheria to meet requirements of the State law; and fill out a health record for each child. Grant County has its public health clinics: One is an X-ray clinic twice a year; the other a venereal disease clinic once a week.

Every morning the children of Petersburg saunter up a steep hillside to their school, which they love. In spring, flowers and vegetable gardens border the streets. The yards are velvety with thick grass and white clover. In front of the school, the lawn has a neatly clipped hedge. The playground at the back is big enough only for the younger children. For their games, older boys and girls sometimes borrow the larger grounds of the high school three blocks away.

The elementary school has six grades; the high school has six. Until last year the seventh and eighth grades were part of the elementary school. There, as the oldest members of the school group, they had special knowledge and ability which made them leaders in many ways and gave them further opportunities to improve their leadership qualities. This responsibility of leadership was good experience for the seventh- and eighth-grade boys and girls and fine aid to school morale. Now, however, these grades are taught as part of the high school. The sixth-grade pupils must step into the gap as school leaders in those projects for which they have enough knowledge and understanding. They can-

not, as sixth-graders, give as much service, or get as much experience in leadership as they might have as eighth-graders.

Though not new, the elementary school is an attractive building. The classrooms are arranged around central halls that all pupils have close and home-like associations with those in other grades. The building is kept clean, and the teachers and children make their classrooms attractive. About half the children who attend the school live in Petersburg. The other half are transported to school in busses.

Each grade is divided alphabetically into two rooms. There are 12 classrooms and 1 music room. The usual enrollment runs slightly more than 400 pupils, with an average teacher load of about 30 pupils. After 3 years on the program, 10 out of the original 13 teachers are there.

Some of the teachers live in town. Others live in the country and drive to school in their own cars. One of the teachers lives 25 miles out of town on a 560-acre farm, which he manages.

The principal of the school lives in the country, too—8 miles from town. His farm is small, but it provides vegetables, fruit, and meat for his family throughout the year. In town, he drops into homes now and then to talk with families about the most profitable vegetables to grow in small gardens, the longest-blooming flowers, the latest insect spray, the future of the small-town hardware business, the effect of the European recovery program on American business and agriculture, and other interests that hold the community together practically and intellectually. He drives into farmyards, ready to advise with rural parents about their children's progress in school; or about the number of seasons during which the valley soil will produce good corn without a change of crop, the kind of crops that pay best, the latest hybrids in corn, chickens, or



A COMMITTEE TAKES A FIELD TRIP.

hogs, or what they as farmers are doing to speed the program of world economic recovery.

As the principal arrived at school one morning in the fall of 1946—and this is where our story really begins—a group of seventh- and eighth-grade boys and girls from town clustered about the steps of the schoolhouse, greeted him courteously as usual. He recalled that, just the evening before, he and his teachers had discussed the children's needs as they planned for the year ahead.

"The children have learned some of their courtesy through our citizenship club," he thought. "In this club they also learn how to get along together, how to carry on business meetings, how to select chairmen and leaders, and how to take part in schoolroom activities. They also have their school subjects. But these things are not enough. Boys and girls need to have a part in the life that is going on around them. They need to study their ways of living and learn how to improve them."

Then he thought of the boys who came to school from farms. "They've got plenty to do—chores and odd jobs at home. They're seldom idle the way the town youngsters are. But they work too much alone. They need fun with other children."

In his office he found on his desk the monthly attendance reports. "Pretty good for now," he thought. "But this winter many children will be absent with colds if we don't do something about it. We ought to start right now to help them build resistance. Many trifling ailments could be prevented with proper foods and good health habits."

He pondered over the needs of individuals, of the children just beginning elementary school, as well as of those who would leave for high school at the end of the year. "The first thing is to get these boys and girls to see the importance of taking care of themselves. That's not too hard. Then we've got to help them see the importance of their own health to that of others in the community. That's harder."

On the principal's desk also were inquiries from teachers, a memo about a Kiwanis Club luncheon, and the mail. Usually one day followed another without great variation of routine, but this day was different.

As the principal weighed the possibilities that might meet the children's various needs, a visitor came from the State Department of Education offering suggestions and aid in starting a community health program. The State Department had received a grant from the Kellogg Foundation to help promote such programs. The visitor asked whether the children and the teachers of Petersburg would be interested.

"Maybe *this* is what the children need," thought the principal. "A school and community health program. One that's really down to earth and practical. One that has its roots in the lives of our children. I guess maybe we'd better play around with this suggestion from the State Department and see if we can't start such a program."

The Eighth Grade Initiated the Health Program

SEVERAL TIMES during that busy day on which the representative from the State Education Department called, the principal thought about the extra work which a school-community project would mean for the teachers. He wondered about their reaction to a type of instruction in which the pupils would go on field trips, use the community as a laboratory for health activities, do their part in improving the health facilities of the community.

"Would the teachers welcome this new way of helping the children have more meaningful health experiences?" he asked himself. Health, as a subject, had long had a place in the curriculum and the staff had been doing a good job in the traditional way—checking height and weight regularly; cooperating with the Public Health Nurse when she inspected the children; sending notices to parents when further checking seemed desirable; stressing the development of desirable health habits; carrying on health instruction in the classrooms; using the school lunch program to help teach children about nutrition. Could he ask them to take part in a wider health program?

Later in the afternoon a vision of the group of idle pupils he had greeted in the entrance that morning came back to him. He knew they were now in the classroom right next door to his office. He could almost hear the scratch of their pencils as they struggled with the too-abstract topic of percentage. He could hear their teacher's patient explanation to help them understand the figures—for which they needed more immediate use than had been provided. Then an idea struck him.

"I'll ask the eighth grade," he said. "This is the kind of activity they need. If they are interested, I'll help them start the project and the other grades can take part. But first I'll see what the teachers think about it at staff meeting this evening. The burden of the work will fall on them, even if I do start the job and take the initiative to keep it going."

And so it came about that one day later when the last class was over, in the few minutes left before the busses would take the country children to their homes, the principal walked into the eighth-grade room.

"The visitor who was here from the State Education Department wanted us to have a health project," he said. "And the County Superintendent thinks maybe we can do some things about community health."

"Community?" asked one boy. "You mean Petersburg?"

"You mean really *do* something?" asked another.

"Aw, he means brush our teeth." You could feel the children's interest drop.

"Well, I guess you all do that anyhow," said the principal. "I mean really do something to improve the health of the school, maybe the whole community, if you think it a good idea and the community wants to help."

"Lots of the kids have colds," said one girl. "But that's no project."

"Building up our health so we won't have colds might be a project," said the principal.

"I know something," said Bobby Joe. "My mom says, this community ought to get rid of flies. They carry disease. Would that be a project—a good one?"

"To my way of thinking we've named two good projects—getting rid of flies and building up our health," said the principal. "June, suppose you write them on the blackboard."

"Rats carry disease and filth," said one of the pupils.

"You've named three things we can do something about," said the principal. "Maybe we ought to look around the community and see if there aren't other dangers to health that we can do something about."

"I can ride around town on my bicycle and see if there are junk heaps that ought to be cleaned up," suggested one pupil.

"We can all look around and ask questions," said the principal. "Tomorrow we can have another meeting."

"We'll be health scouts," said Jimmy. "Watch our smoke!"

"Fine," said the principal. "Let's meet here again at 3:30 tomorrow."

When the eighth grade met the next day there were dozens of ideas. The boys and girls all wanted to talk at once and the principal had to call a halt and ask that a chairman and secretary be appointed.

The chairman took charge. The secretary got ready to write the main ideas on the blackboard. Once started, the children knew how to conduct a meeting in this way, because the school had for several years had a school council, a committee of the citizenship club, to call meetings and help make plans for many of the school activities. The council was made up of representatives from different grades.

"Do we have to consider just things that the school children can do, like cleaning up junk heaps?" one pupil wanted to know. "Or can we study about things the whole town ought to do?"

"Let's write 'em all down anyway," said Jimmy. "Maybe the school can do something about all of them."

"Harry and I rode around town on our bicycles last night," said Junior. "We saw where the sewer empties into the river. There are two places."

"Sewers up above us in Franklin empty into the river, too," said Isaac. "My dad says the river water is not fit to bathe in."

"Don't all sewers empty into rivers?" asked one of the children.

"My dad says they ought to empty into a septic tank or something," said George.

"That's something to look up," the principal suggested. "Should towns be allowed to turn their sewers into rivers?"

"Roy and John and I walked around the town and looked at some of the back streets and the alleys, and, boy, you oughta see how crummy they are," said Billy.

"Old tin cans and broken boxes and pans and weeds," said John. "Looks like people ought to be good enough citizens to clean up their own back alleys."

"I've only got one word on the blackboard," complained the secretary. "It seems like we don't name things; we just talk."

"Better write down *Street Cleanliness*," said the principal.

Once started the pupils could hardly stop naming things to make the town healthier and more attractive. Somebody said that people should not be allowed to keep chickens and goats in town. Another mentioned mosquitoes and said mosquitoes breed in the low places near the city dump, and that the city could spray them with DDT if somebody would just get busy. A boy asked if the city water was safe to drink. The principal explained that no one could be sure about whether the water was good to drink unless it was tested, and he suggested that the school might be able to find out if tests were being made and how often.

The secretary did not complain again about not having anything to write. The list on the blackboard looked somewhat like this:

Garbage Disposal	Animal Pests	Poultry and Livestock Within Town Limits
Sewage Disposal	School Health	Control of Contagious Diseases
Street Cleanliness	Food Handling	Recreation
Water Supply	Insect Pests	Public Parks and Rest Rooms
City Dump		

The principal said that it would take a long time really to find out whether the dangers to health were serious or not. "For example," said the principal, "Roy here mentions the rats around the city dump. Well, does anybody know if rats are dangerous to health?"

The children were not sure about the answer. Several of the boys said they had seen rats in other places besides the city dump.

The principal suggested that the children might want to read about rats and other animal pests and find out whether they should be destroyed. He said they would all need to study the entire list of health hazards.

"That would take too long," said someone. "We want to do something right away."

"The sixth grade could help us," said another. "Maybe all the grades could."

PETERSBURG BUILDS A HEALTH PROGRAM

As a result of the discussion, the eighth grade decided to invite the entire school to help them gather information.

The principal approved the idea of inviting the other grades and teachers to help with the study. He said that he would talk with the teachers that evening and get their ideas and suggestions for planning the project. He would ask them to get ideas from their pupils. He asked the eighth grade to plan a time for another meeting in which to set up a working plan based on suggestions from the teachers and the other grades.

As a result of the next meeting's discussion the secretary wrote their first steps on the blackboard:

1. We will ask all the pupils of the school to take part in our health project.
2. Every grade that wants to take part will be a working committee to study one phase of the health program, like garbage disposal or animal pests. Each teacher will be the sponsor for her grade.
3. Two pupils from the eighth grade will be helpers for each committee. One eighth-grade pupil will be chairman of each committee. (This leadership was later taken by the sixth grade.)
4. The principal and the teachers will help us find some books and bulletins that give us some useful information.
5. Each working committee will choose a project and plan ways of working.
6. Each committee will report its accomplishments to the school and community.

This would be the school's first attempt to carry an active health program into the community and to extend the children's study activities much beyond fixed periods in school. However, the community had previously helped to meet health needs of the children. The local Kiwanis Club had financed the correction of defects of eyes, teeth, and tonsils. A community health committee sponsored by the County Teachers' Association had outlined a school health program, including courses in first aid and safety, especially for the sixth grade.

The fuller program now anticipated would help achieve aims suggested by the State Departments of Health and of Education somewhat as follows:

1. To promote cooperative study, planning, and action by community groups.
2. To make the school health program broader and extend it into the community.
3. Eventually to develop a situation in which a school health council could be organized.
4. To organize a community health council.
5. To base as much of the school program as seems desirable on surveys and analysis of school and community needs.
6. To improve health education in the school by providing greater variety of health experiences and activities, and by using local, State, and national resources.

Everybody Wanted To Help

GETTING STARTED was fun. An important aim of the principal and teachers was to have the entire school take part.

A Whole-School Project Took Root

The principal and committee helpers from the eighth grade, together with the teachers, held a planning meeting to consider ways of getting the project under way as a whole-school enterprise. At this meeting they decided tentatively what phases of the project probably could best be undertaken by the different grade committees. The teachers helped by explaining what things their pupils thought they could do best and which jobs they most needed to take part in from the standpoint of their own development. After discussing the 13 small projects which the eighth grade had mentioned for the proposed whole-school project, the group decided that the work would require 3 years. After that new projects would be undertaken as needed. They made the following over-all plans:

OUR PLAN FOR BETTER COMMUNITY HEALTH

1. The first year (1946-47), each grade will carry on an investigation and record all facts we can learn concerning the phase of community health assigned us.
2. The second year (1947-48), we will check the facts and make recommendations for improvement.
3. All the time, we will inform the community about our findings and recommendations.
4. At any time, but especially the third year (1948-49), we will take part in any school or community activities necessary to bring about improvement.

The meeting closed with the understanding that the various grades would work on their projects as follows:

WHAT EACH GRADE WILL WORK ON

1. Garbage Disposal, eighth grade. Taken over by sixth grade the second year because eighth grade was moved to high school.
2. Sewage Disposal, eighth grade.
3. Food Handling, seventh grade. Taken over by fifth grade second year.
4. School Health, sixth grade.
5. Insect Pests, fifth grade.
6. Poultry and Livestock Within Town Limits, first grade.

7. Recreation, third grade.
8. Public Parks and Rest Rooms, fifth and seventh grades.
9. City Dump, fourth grade.
10. Street Cleanliness, third grade.
11. Water Supply, second grade.
12. Control of Contagious Diseases, second grade.
13. Animal Pests, first grade.

Although each grade had its own job to do, there was cutting across grades, too. The eighth grade, and after that, the sixth, gave help to the younger pupils on their committees. All children gave information which they discovered to the proper committee.



OLDER PUPILS HELP YOUNGER PUPILS STUDY THE WATER SUPPLY.

The Community Gave Assistance

The children knew that their parents and the other citizens were proud of the school and willing to help in enterprises which the school undertook. So the boys and girls who were doing the over-all planning discussed ways of informing the community about the project and asking people for help.

In making their contacts with the community the boys and girls had the help of their sponsoring teachers. Sometimes a teacher called on the mayor or the representative of some community agency before the children planned their interview. Sometimes the principal made the preliminary contact.

After preliminary contacts were made, there was still work for the leader of the subcommittee that made the interview. He had to introduce the members of his group to the person to be interviewed. He kept the committee's plan of questioning in mind to make sure that all the desired information was secured. He tried to see that each member of his committee had opportunity to take part in the questioning.

The principal also offered to send a letter to parents and other adults in the community whom the children expected to interview. Teachers and the children who were serving on the whole-school committee made suggestions for this letter. The principal used their suggestions. Among the items to be included were the following:

1. How Petersburg Elementary School happened to undertake the study.
2. What people outside Petersburg are helping.
3. How the community can cooperate in the program.
4. What results can be expected.

Here is the final form of the letter. It was signed by the principal, mimeographed and distributed in the community, and published in the local paper, the *Grant County Press*.

PETERSBURG GRADE SCHOOL SELECTS STUDY

The Petersburg Grade School has selected for a study for the next three years, "Community Health."

Many of the boys and girls will be asking questions and seeking information from the Town Council, Mayor and leading citizens of our town. This is written for the purpose of informing you of their work so that you will answer their questions and give them encouragement. These boys and girls need a knowledge and understanding of community problems. Your help may lead to their becoming interested in the civic improvements of our town instead of seeking jobs and homes elsewhere and they will remain as citizens to contribute more to the town they have helped plan. Let's go along with them in any projects they may suggest that will lead to better community health.

The following is a plan of our organization:

Thirteen committees have been organized, each with a definite phase of community health to study and each committee with four steps to take, as follows:

1. Carry on an investigation and record all facts they can find concerning the phase of community health assigned them.
2. Make recommendations for improvement.
3. Inform the public of their findings and recommendations.
4. Take part in any action necessary to bring about improvements for better community health.

The organized committees are as follows: Garbage Disposal, Sewage Disposal, Water Supply, City Dump, Animal Pests, Insect Pests, Street Cleanliness, Poultry and Livestock Within Town Limits, Control of Contagious Diseases, Recreation, Public Parks and Rest Rooms, School Health, and Food Handling (names of pupils and sponsoring teachers were given also).

Sincerely yours,

Principal.

People were glad to receive the principal's letter. They were eager to help. They could see advantages to the school by including the community in the plan. They were pleased that the children would have the opportunities which the project gave for learning to meet and talk with people and for getting an idea of what good citizenship, as well as good health, can mean to a community.

As a result of the letter, too, the people felt free to ask the principal or teachers for explanations of phases of the project which they did not understand or approve. For example, having poultry and livestock within the town limits was a two-sided question. For one thing, during the present inflation, a family can appreciably cut the cost of living by raising poultry. But in town chickens can be a nuisance to next-door neighbors. As Petersburg increases in population, it is possible that the practice of raising poultry within city limits may have to be discontinued. It was helpful, in a case or two, for people to whom raising chickens meant much, to talk with the principal when they met him on the street, and be assured that whatever laws might be made in the future, there was



LOOKING FOR PLACES THAT HARBOR RATS AND OTHER PESTS.

no intention at present that people who already had chickens which were not a nuisance to neighbors would be asked to dispose of them.

In another case, the children were puzzled by differences of opinion among people. For example, when was a wild animal a pest, and when a rare "something" protected by law? The pupils had to look up conservation laws and facts in order to determine whether or not certain animals like skunks should be treated as desirable or undesirable. If you want to know the truth about a subject, they learned, you have to get information from people who are authorities.

How the Children Learned To Do Their Part—A Committee at Work

In most real-life group projects, children need to learn skills and techniques of working with others. These skills and techniques include organizing committees, cooperative planning, and working together in the solution of problems.

The children of Petersburg Elementary School had had a fair amount of skill in organizing committees and other working groups before they began the project. They had learned how to elect a chairman and how to conduct and take part in business meetings.³ They learned something of what it means to be a member of a group and to share work and experience in achieving common goals. These things had come about largely through participation in the school council mentioned on page 6.

The children also had learned how to express opinions and give information to a group of people. They had pleasing manners. They had become sensitive to the needs of their school organization and quick to take responsibility for advancing the welfare of an entire group. Consequently, when the health project was undertaken, it was not necessary for the principal or the teachers to help the children take the first steps in learning how to conduct business meetings and make interviews and achieve other group skills.

The children did, however, need to improve their ability in solving problems cooperatively. They needed to learn how to set up large problems which required gathering information and planning work to be done and evaluating results. These skills were to be developed further in connection with the new project. For example, in every one of the 13 small group projects children had to think through situations, state problems, gather facts which would be useful in finding solutions of the problems, recheck the facts, and plan activities to be carried out in improving situations. They needed continually to evaluate what they had done, to criticize, to plan for improvements. To help the children learn these skills was an important aim of teachers and principal.

Take a brief overview of the experiences of the fifth- and seventh-graders, who were assigned to public parks and rest rooms the first year of the project. When they began talking about the rest rooms without study of the situation, the pupils found their knowledge very meager. A preliminary survey showed 10 public rest rooms available in town. No one knew whether these rest rooms served the people adequately or

³ In *Country School Diary* by Julia Weber, published by Harper and Bros., New York, one finds an excellent description of the way in which a group of school children who were inexperienced in conducting business meetings learned to elect their officers and to conduct a large part of the business of running the school. See pp. 12-16, 200-203, 210-211, and index.

not. They did not know how sanitary the rest rooms were. With the teacher-sponsor's help they decided that the first problem for them to attack was this:

Are there enough sanitary rest rooms in Petersburg for the people who come to town to trade; if not, what can be done to improve the situation?

The children's first job in solving the problem was to decide what kind of information they needed. The next was to plan how and where to get the facts. The third step was to plan cooperatively ways of improving the situation.

Together the pupils and teachers made their plans. They decided to send a questionnaire to the managers and sponsors of the 10 public rest rooms that they knew about. In a meeting of the seventh-grade committee as a whole, the children planned the questions. They did this by asking one of the children to serve as secretary and to write questions on the blackboard as they were suggested. The list was later copied, typed, and run off on the mimeograph machine. This is the questionnaire as the teacher and the children planned it:

QUESTIONNAIRE

The committee on Public Parks and Rest Rooms, a part of the community health study being made by Petersburg Grade School, is investigating all of the public rest rooms in Petersburg.

Will you please fill out this questionnaire in regard to your rest room?

Name

1. About how many people does your rest room accommodate at one time?
2. About how many people use your rest room in one day, other than Saturday?
3. About how many people use your rest room on Saturday?
4. Do these people interfere with your business?
5. Do you have paper towels in your rest room?
6. How many people use your rest room other than guests?
7. Do you have sanitary paper seat covers?
8. Are your towels and seat covers free or do users have to deposit a penny?
9. Do you have toilet paper?
10. Do you have liquid soap?
11. Do you have hot and cold running water?
12. Do you have a mirror?
13. Is your rest room cleaned thoroughly every day?
14. Do you have a basket or place to dispose of waste paper?
15. Do you find that people generally keep your rest room clean or do they leave it messy?
16. Do you have a lounging room in connection with your rest room?
17. What type of furniture do you have in your lounging room?
18. Do you have reading material?
19. Is your rest room well lighted?

20. Is your rest room heated in winter months?
21. Is your rest room well ventilated?
22. Is your rest room kept free from offensive odors?
23. Is your rest room kept open at all times, or do you keep it locked and present a key only to the people asking for it?
24. Do you keep your rest room free from flies and other insects?
25. Do you have foot scrapers available for use during muddy weather?

The children knew that in order to answer the question of adequacy of the rest rooms they would have to learn how many people used the rest rooms.

"Looks like we will have to count the people who come to town," said one.

It was decided that six of the children would do the counting. Two pupils would take each of the three roads running into Petersburg—North Fork Road, Franklin Pike, and Moorefield Road.

The committee decided to count on Wednesday and on Saturday. The total count on Wednesday was 1,220 cars and 2,150 people. The total count on Saturday was 1,310 cars and 3,030 people. The rest rooms could easily accommodate 647 people. The greatest number which could possibly be accommodated was 1,900.

Two children were appointed to visit the rest rooms and see how well they were taken care of. Following is part of the information reported:

Seven rest rooms have paper towels, and one has sanitary paper seat covers. Nine furnish these accommodations without charge. All have toilet paper, mirrors, waste baskets. They are well lighted, ventilated, kept free from offensive odors, are thoroughly cleaned every day, and kept free from flies and other insects.

Only two rest rooms furnish liquid soap. Six have both hot and cold water, and only four have only cold running water.

We found that seven out of ten are left in fair condition. Two of these rest rooms have lounging rooms which are furnished with table and chairs. None of the rest rooms furnish reading material.

Seven of the rest rooms are heated during the winter months and seven are kept open at all times. Two rest rooms supply foot scrapers for use during muddy weather.

This information was compared with the children's summary of the facts gathered through the questionnaire. With all facts before them the children decided to visit the managers of the rest rooms and give them a report of the information which the committee had gathered through all its activities. The report mainly pointed to three conclusions:

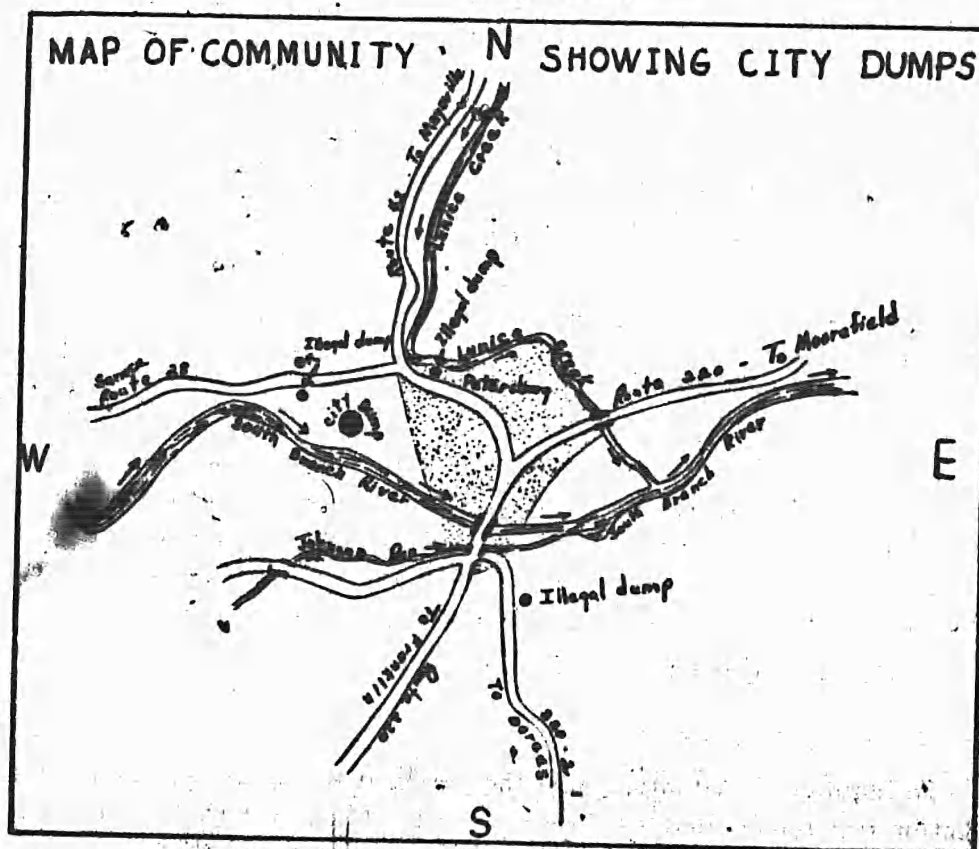
1. For the most part the present rest rooms are in good condition.
2. Some need soap.
3. More rest rooms are needed.

To improve the situation, said the pupils, it was more rest rooms, not better rest rooms, that the town needed. A recount the second year showed similar data. The children planned tentatively that their work

the third year would be to visit managers of business places that provided no public rest rooms, give them facts about the probable effect of good rest rooms on business, and make recommendations such as:

1. Petersburg is the center of a farming district. Therefore many country people are coming to town. We need a large public rest room for their convenience.
2. A large rest room should be built from public funds. It should have a lounging room and toilets. The best location for a rest room would be the parking lot beside the fire house.
3. The many people coming into Petersburg need a place that they may go to rest and spend some time talking and visiting with their friends. During their visits to town is the only time that many of these people have the opportunity to visit with their friends.
4. A public rest room is needed in the town to protect the health of the town people, because the alleys are being used for toilets. This condition could be improved by building a rest room with a large and comfortable lounging room.
5. The rest rooms now available are not able to accommodate more than half the people that come to town on any one day. Due to this the town has become insanitary, and diseases are being spread by insects and animal pests.

CHILDREN OF THE EIGHTH GRADE MADE THIS MAP SHOWING THE REGULAR CITY DUMP AND THREE ILLEGAL DUMPS.



Different Committees Used Different Ways of Digging Up the Facts

The sponsoring committee talked about ways of getting facts and bringing about improvements. They decided that the pupils of the different grades could think of ways to get information about the parts of the project assigned to them, and that each grade should be responsible for making recommendations for improvements. They agreed that getting facts was the first thing to be done.

The principal said he would help the committee secure materials to read because it was such a big job. He would order bulletins and books for the committees to use in gathering facts and in making recommendations for improvements. He would reserve certain space in the library, where committee members and other children who were interested in reading could find the materials and arrange tables to work in small groups or by themselves. Teachers read the materials and guided the children who had trouble in finding the information they needed.

Another way to get facts, the committee agreed, was to take field trips. When the children looked over their list of things for each grade to work on, they decided that one or more *field trips* would be needed for every part of the project, just to get information. Other excursions into the community would be needed when the action part of the project was reached. For example, take the committee on garbage disposal. As the boys and girls planned the things they would need to investigate about garbage disposal, they discovered that they were by no means agreed as to what the situation really was. Some children said that there was a garbage truck to collect the garbage. Others said they had never seen this truck. Some said the garbage was collected once a week. Others said it was collected once a day. Only a few children knew where the garbage was dumped. No one knew how much it cost to have the garbage collected. In other words, some of the children would have to take a field trip to see actually how garbage was being taken care of at the dumps. Others would have to observe the situation in their own neighborhoods.

When facts gained from field trips were combined with information gained in other ways, the eighth grade prepared the following statements about the garbage situation:

1. The main city dump is approximately 1 mile west of town and covers an area of about 200 square yards.
2. The city dump is directly above town and drains into the south branch river which furnishes our water supply.
3. There are at least three other illegal dumps.
4. Refuse from homes, groceries, drygoods stores, garages, the slaughterhouse, and the hatchery is dumped here.

5. This is a perfect breeding place for flies, insect pests, rats, and disease germs.
6. A very small amount of the refuse is burned or destroyed.
7. The main dump as well as the illegal dumps drain into the south branch river directly or indirectly.
8. The town only spends approximately \$950 to \$1,000 a year for collection and disposal of garbage and junk. A large amount of this is spent on repairs for a worn-out truck, therefore there is very little actually spent on collection and disposal.

The children also decided that they would need to *interview people* who knew the facts, and ask them questions. As one boy said, it would be a long, long job to find out just by observation how many people had their garbage collected by truck. So the children said they would call on people and ask questions.

The Committee on Recreation the second year of the project, provides an example of the preparation needed for an interview. The children had learned that the town was taking action to secure the park with the swimming place which the boys and girls so much desired. But the pupils did not know what kinds of recreation would be provided and had asked a small committee to investigate. Although in this case the entire third grade was the project committee, they selected this small sub-committee of four children to visit the park manager. Meeting in a committee of the whole, the boys and girls of the third grade discussed the possibilities of the proposed swimming pool and the park, and with the teacher's help made up questions for the interviewing committee to ask the park manager. Some of the questions follow:



THE CHILDREN DISAPPROVED THIS DUMP. THEY HAD LEARNED THAT GARBAGE SHOULD BE BURNED.

1. Will there be a place to sell refreshments?
2. Will there be a lifeguard? will he get paid? and will he give swimming lessons?
3. Will there be bathhouses?
4. Who will be caretaker?
5. Will there be a ball diamond?
6. How big will the park be?
7. Will you have to pay to get in?
8. What hours will it be open?

On page vi is a picture of the committee talking to the park manager. In this case the interview proved a satisfactory way of getting facts. But it was not always so satisfactory.

"We'll have to find another way to get facts," said one of the girls, after a less successful interview. "We will never have time to find answers to all of them by asking every person one at a time."

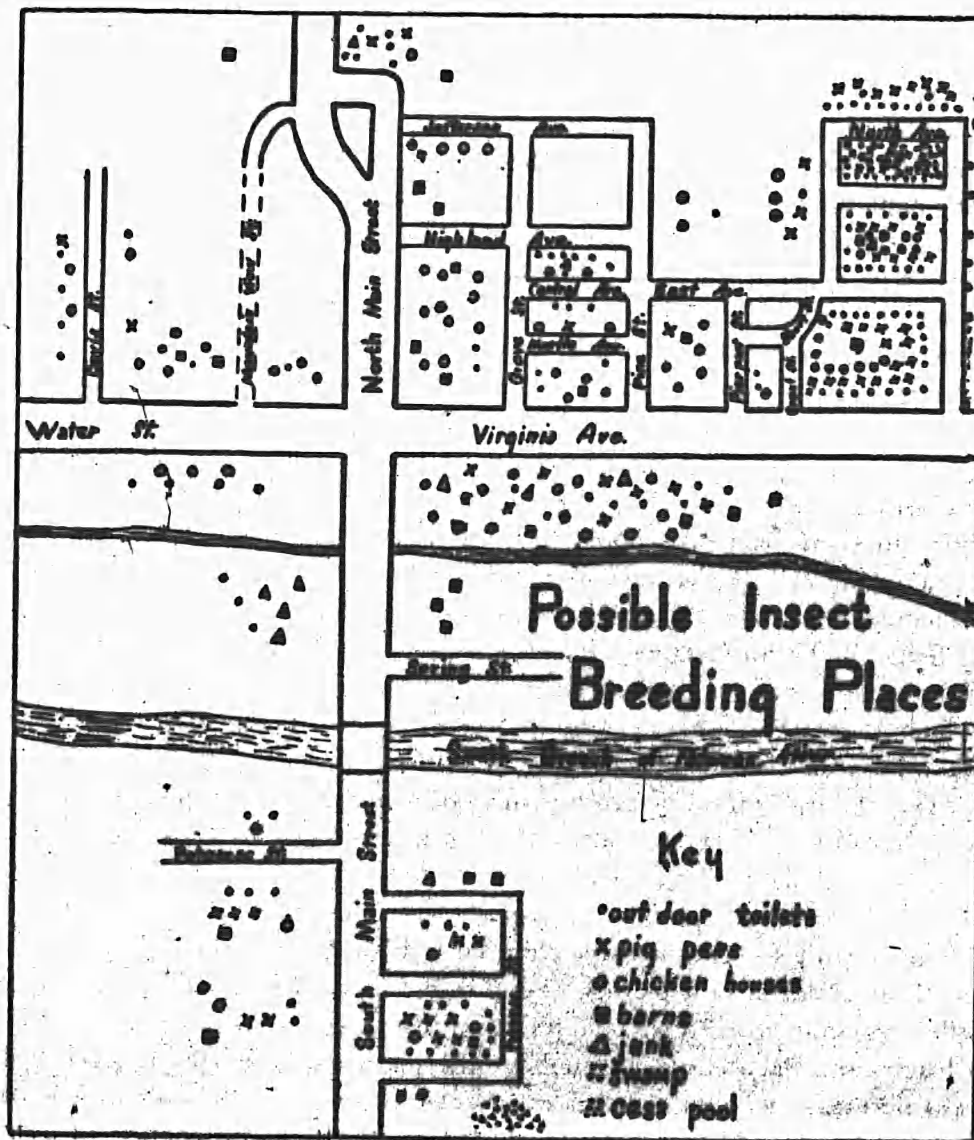
One of the teachers suggested that, for some of the projects, they might need to rely mostly upon the questionnaire. They could send a *questionnaire* to many people, she said, whereas the interview reaches only a few. She explained that the children might write down all the questions that they wanted answered. These could be mimeographed so that there would be a list to be sent to every family in town. Space for answers would be left after each question. The father or mother, or one of the older children could be asked to write the answers to the questions. The Committee on Public Parks and Rest Rooms used the questionnaire for a small group (p. 1). The eighth-grade, responsible for the study on garbage disposal, used the questionnaire for a larger group. One of the eighth-grade boys offered to receive the questionnaires when the children brought them back to school. A committee was appointed to help him organize and study the questionnaires, and write a summary of the combined answers for each question. There is a summary on page 23.

Some of the committees used *photography* as a means of gathering facts. The Committee on Garbage Disposal did that. The picture on page 18 which shows how the city dump looked before it was improved is an example of the use of photography in fact-getting.

The children found difficulties in grouping themselves for good photographs. By looking critically at the first photographs they had taken, the children decided that each picture should have a center of interest. For example, if an exhibit of materials was to be photographed, it would be interesting for two or three children to be arranging the exhibit. One to three children in a picture, doing something, was thought to be more effective than many children standing just posed. An even proportion of light and dark effects throughout the picture was desirable. When it was necessary to photograph a number of people, especial care had to be taken to have effective balance of objects, the right proportion of light

and dark, and enough distance from the camera. They learned to help the photographer by grouping themselves the way they wished to be shown in the picture, and to avoid looking at the camera while pictures were being taken.

A few committees *made maps* of certain streets and of the town. On these they sketched objects connected with their study. For example, the Committee on Sewage Disposal made a map showing the location of trash piles, and sewage lines, and places where the sewers empty into the river. The map on page 16 shows city dumps. The map of Petersburg which lines the front cover was made by a fourth-grade girl to show the general plan of the town. The map lining the back cover is the children's idea of a park.



THIS MAP WAS MADE BY A FIFTH-GRADE GROUP.

The seventh-grade boys and girls who were studying food handling took a 3 weeks' course in food handling given by the sanitarians of the State Department of Health. As part of the course, a true-false test on food handling was given. The course prepared the pupils to plan more intelligently their visits to the town restaurants and the school cafeteria.

In summing up the ways in which they had been gathering facts the boys and girls one day made the following list:

1. Reading and study.
2. Interviews and conferences.
3. Field trips.
4. Questionnaires.
5. Maps.
6. Photography.
7. Study course.

Not all the committees used the same plan. Most committees revised their plans from day to day. For example, suppose the children decided to gather information about animal pests through interviews. Usually these interviews were well planned in advance and children made their interviews in small groups. Three or four children would interview the people who lived in one part of town; a similar group would visit those in another part; and so on. Sometimes when the committees reported to the classroom to tell the other pupils what they had learned they said that the questions planned had not been the kind to gather the information they needed. Some committees said they had to change their questions during the interview. Comments of this kind sometimes led the children to revise a set of questions. Questions originally included might be dropped because they did not fit into the interview. Or they might be expressed more clearly or naturally. Now and then questions were added. The children learned to use their heads and be themselves.

Committees Exchanged Experiences

Often different committees would call meetings to compare experiences informally. The pupils tried to select items of special interest or humor for these little chats. On their trips they looked for incidents that could be told as stories.

For example, the Committee on Garbage Disposal had studied its part of the project so carefully that some of the members remarked that they would feel at home riding on the garbage truck. Others said that when they passed homes where refuse was put out in open cans or untidy parcels, they wished they might go to the people and explain in what way such practice was harmful to the community.

One boy, a member of the sewage disposal committee, said that while

he was searching the region along the stream where the sewer empties he found rat nests and saw several large rats. He also saw a rat enter a storage room and go into a sack of potatoes. He believed people ought to "gang together" against the rats and showed the other children a Red Cross pamphlet to help.

Johnny reported that his father had just completed the building of a large apartment house. After the painting was done, a number of empty tin cans and buckets which had held the paint were left to accumulate. When, under the sponsorship of the Street Cleanliness Committee, the town had a clean-up week, John reported that he had put these cans in a pile for the trash collector, saying to himself, "Tin cans! Tin cans! I didn't think there were so many in town. And just to think they all came from our own yard!" He added that he could see how important the job of the Street Cleanliness Committee was.

A spirit of freedom characterized the work of all groups. For example, when the fourth grade and their teacher were well along with their study of the city dump, they were elated to learn that they had the whole-hearted help of the mayor, who, incidentally, is the local undertaker. One day at a group meeting, the boys and girls planned an interview with the mayor to learn about recent improvements in the city dump and to put before him if necessary the need for still more improvements. After several questions had been suggested with a view to learning more about improvements under way, the class took up the case for the future, some of them feeling the need of "selling" the mayor on their ideas.

"We might ask him if he wants all the people in town to die of disease?" suggested one boy earnestly.

Immediately another youngster laughingly objected with, "What if he'd say 'Yes' to that!"

Findings Were Pooled and Reported

When one committee took a field trip, other pupils were interested. The boys and girls who "stayed at home" expected those who had taken the trip to return with interesting reports. Parents began asking about what the children learned. They were looking forward to the outcomes of the study.

Experience reports which were more or less formal came to be the immediate means of keeping the parents and stay-at-homes up to date. To make their reports more effective the pupils learned to use maps and draw sketches to illustrate facts.

When committees began pooling the information gathered there were suggestions for improving the situations found in the community. The sponsoring committees studied the reports, made suggestions, and asked

questions. They decided that suggestions for improvement should be made by each committee and included in its report.

For example, let us look for a moment at the report on garbage disposal. The interviewing committee reported that the garbage truck runs 8 hours a day between 7 a. m. and 4 p. m., 2 days a week, Monday and Tuesday. Usually 8 trips are made on Monday. Garbage left over is hauled on Tuesday. Only things put in containers are taken away by the truck and dumped outside the city. Such things as brush cannot be hauled by the trucks.

As a result of the questionnaires which the parents filled out for the committee and returned to school, it was found that 170 families had their trash and garbage collected by the truck and 16 did not. Those not using the truck fed their food scraps to the chickens, burned things that could be burned, and buried other parts or just threw them away. The average number of tin cans for the 170 families was 4 per week. Most of the garbage cans had lids so that they could be tightly closed. Each can held about 10 gallons. Most people washed their cans each week, but some never washed them. Usually only water was used for washing the cans, but occasionally the committee found families that were using lysol, chlorox, soap, or soda and other disinfectants. Some people were bothered with rats around the garbage cans until they put out rat poison. Others were troubled with flies and got rid of them by spraying.

Few people considered the present system entirely satisfactory. Many gave suggestions for improvement. The committee added ideas of their own. Suggestions for improvement in the report on Garbage Disposal include:

1. Use a covered truck for garbage.
2. Use more care in loading so that garbage is not spread on the street.
3. At the dump, burn what trash and garbage can be burned, and bury the rest, such as refuse from the slaughter shops.
4. Get another truck and collect the garbage oftener than once a week.
5. Clean the approach to the dump from Route 28 and fine individuals who place trash in the road instead of in the dump.

Children were alert to observe and report the results of their recommendations also. For example, the garbage committee has reported that garbage is collected more regularly and that the town council has new plans under way for burying the garbage. The town council and State Road Commission are cooperating to minimize illegal dumping at places other than the designated "City Dump." Local slaughter shops have ceased dumping certain wastes, even at the city dump, but are destroying them instead.

This committee did not limit its study to the disposal of garbage. They looked for other means of improving the health of the community and added the following suggestions to their report for improvement:

PETERSBURG BUILDS A HEALTH PROGRAM

1. Enforce quarantine of diseases.
2. Get rid of chicken houses.
3. Clean the streets.
4. Check the water supply and the disposal of waste more often.
5. Have a community incinerator for the garbage.
6. Extend the sewer line to take care of the streets that do not have inside toilets.
7. Get rid of insects and places which breed them.

The committee on communicable diseases reported its findings on a chart and added a list of recommendations as follows:

In the year 1946-1947 we made a survey of all the communicable and infectious diseases which our boys and girls in Petersburg Grade School have contracted at some time. Of the 435 pupils enrolled, the following number of cases of diseases have been reported to us.

Enrollment of the school	435
Whooping Cough	394
Ear Aches	389
Eye Aches	197
Flu	188
Chicken pox	137
Red eye	83
Influenza	89
Measles	66
Itch	28
Impetigo	23
Tuberculosis	9
Tonsillitis	7
Trench Mouth	2

The number of immunizations for smallpox, diphtheria, and typhoid fever are:

Smallpox	435
Diphtheria	435
Typhoid	228

No cases of smallpox, diphtheria, or typhoid fever were reported.

Recommendations of the Committee

1. THAT WHOOPING COUGH AND TYPHOID IMMUNIZATIONS BE MADE COMPULSORY, EVEN FOR PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN. ALSO ANY OTHER VACCINES THAT BECOME AVAILABLE IN THE NEAR FUTURE.
2. THAT FREE CLINICS BE PROVIDED SO AS TO REACH EVERYONE.
3. THAT A FUND BE PROVIDED BY SOME CIVIC ORGANIZATION OR BY TAXES TO TAKE CARE OF CASES THAT CANNOT PROVIDE MEDICAL CARE IN STAMPING OUT A DISEASE BEFORE IT GETS TOO BIG A HOLD ON A COMMUNITY.
4. THAT MOSQUITOES, RATS, AND OTHER ANIMALS BE DESTROYED WHICH MAY HELP TO SPREAD DISEASES.
5. THAT PURE DRINKING WATER BE MADE COMPULSORY.
6. THAT PURE OR PASTURIZED MILK BE MADE COMPULSORY.
7. THAT OUR SCHOOLS GIVE A MORE THOROUGH HEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAM SO THAT THE CHILD AND PARENT AS WELL, WILL KNOW THAT IT IS THEIR DUTY TO SEE THAT GERMS ARE NOT PASSED FROM AN INFECTED PERSON TO OTHER PEOPLE.
8. THAT WE KEEP A PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE AND DOCTOR IN OUR COUNTY.
9. THAT THE FOLLOWING PRECAUTIONS IN THE HOME OF AN INFECTED PERSON BE MADE COMPULSORY
 - (1) STERILIZING EVERYTHING TOUCHED BY THE INFECTED PERSON.
 - (2) DISINFECTING BY PROPER ANTISEPTICS OR BURNING ALL EXCRETIONS FROM THE BODY OF THE INFECTED PERSON.
 - (3) SEGREGATING THE REST OF THE FAMILY FROM THE INFECTED PERSON.

The bulletin board in the hall carried clippings from local papers, children's reports about their activities on the project, snapshots, and maps made by different groups or individuals. At the end of each week materials were usually exchanged for new ones.

Groups of children who had taken field trips, or had discovered news or information of general interest, went from room to room to make reports or answer questions, usually accompanied by a member of the sponsoring committee. On these visits information and suggestions for activities also were collected for consideration in future planning.

The children who made maps to record the facts which they had learned,

or to illustrate their recommendations, were sometimes asked to show and explain these to their classmates. Examples of maps used in this way are on the inside covers.

Teachers and principal were especially concerned about keeping the community informed. They appreciated the willingness of parents and others to help. They were grateful for the community's whole-hearted support of the work, for the responses to the principal's letters, and for the efforts of those in official positions to make Petersburg a healthful town. They were looking forward to a time when perhaps members of the community would assist the school in planning the health program as well as in carrying it out as they had done.

Consequently the children were asked to think of ways to inform their fathers and mothers and grown-up friends about the project. When all suggestions were pooled the list contained the following items:

- | | |
|---|---|
| Bulletin board by the bank | Posters in store windows |
| Articles for the <i>Grant County Press</i> | Contributions by school to programs of community service groups |
| Room programs for mothers and parents | Whole-school entertainments |
| Programs for meetings of PTA | The parade for Grant County School Day |
| School news sheet | |
| Mimeographed home announcements of activities | |

Some of these should be discussed at length. For example, sometimes the local newspaper, *The Grant County Press*, was willing to publish appropriate news items of interest which children and teachers prepared about things that were going on in different classes and committees. For this purpose, the health project was a source of news of immediate interest to the community. A sample of news written during the second year of the project follows:

A WORTHY PROJECT

The boys and girls of Petersburg . . . at the request of Mayor Earl Bush, are carrying on a campaign against insects in Petersburg and community.

They will appreciate the cooperation of the general public in this worthy movement.¹

Teachers were encouraged to prepare material for the *Grant County Press* from their point of view as citizens. Here are some excerpts from an article prepared by one of the teachers:

RECREATION IS NOT EXPENSIVE, SAYS WRITER

The Petersburg Grade School is conducting a Health Survey. . . . The School was divided into committees, one of which is a Recreation Committee.

This committee found in its initial investigation that recreation facilities in Petersburg are embarrassingly inadequate. Are the few meager facilities which are available meeting the recreational needs of these age groups: the children? the teen-age? the adult group?

¹*Grant County Press*, April 29, 1948, p. 1.

The writer then described a recreational park in Mannington, W. Va., a neighboring town, and told about its success and how little its development had cost the town. She suggested that Petersburg needed and might develop a recreational park with a similar kind of program with a 20-year investment of about \$1,300 annually which would mean something over 50 cents a year, or about $\frac{1}{2}$ of a cent a day, per person. She added further:

We realize that the dollar spent in Petersburg in 1948 and 20 years hence, will not go as far as the dollar spent in Mannington in 1926 and 20 years thereafter. But we feel if the whole population were supporting this program, and giving endlessly of their time and free labor, we could cope with inflationary costs and keep the total expenses low enough to have a park equally as good as Mannington's.⁴

The Petersburg elementary school also writes and distributes a mimeographed news sheet to patrons. This is called *Highland Ripple*. From time to time children engaged in the health project submitted to this school paper articles which were too detailed to send to the *Grant County Press*. The following are titles of some of the articles: Grade 3-M Enriches Health Program; Interest in Health Promoted in Grade One-O; Physical Education Program Changed; Health Committee Encourages Teeth Corrections.

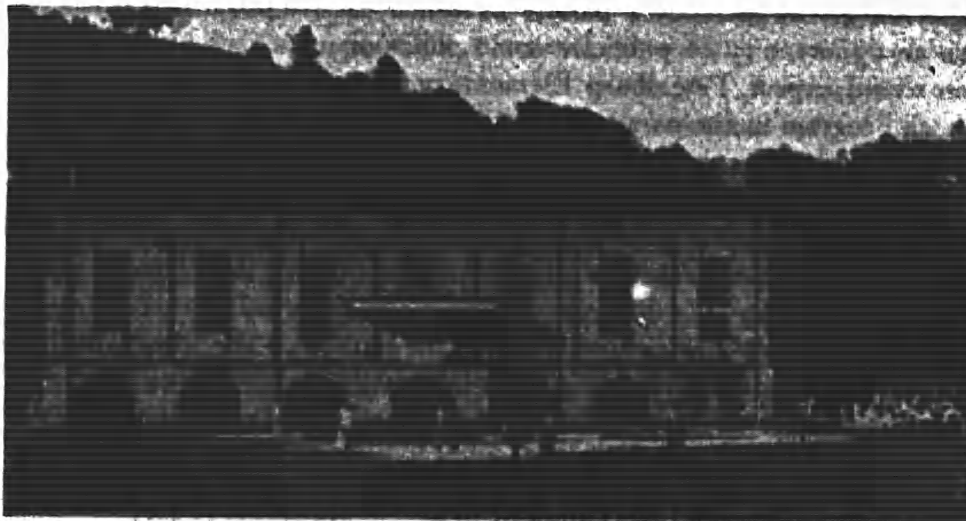
Here is a notice which was placed on the *Bulletin Board* near the Grant County Bank after the project had been under way for a year:

PETERSBURG GRADE SCHOOL HEALTH PROGRAM

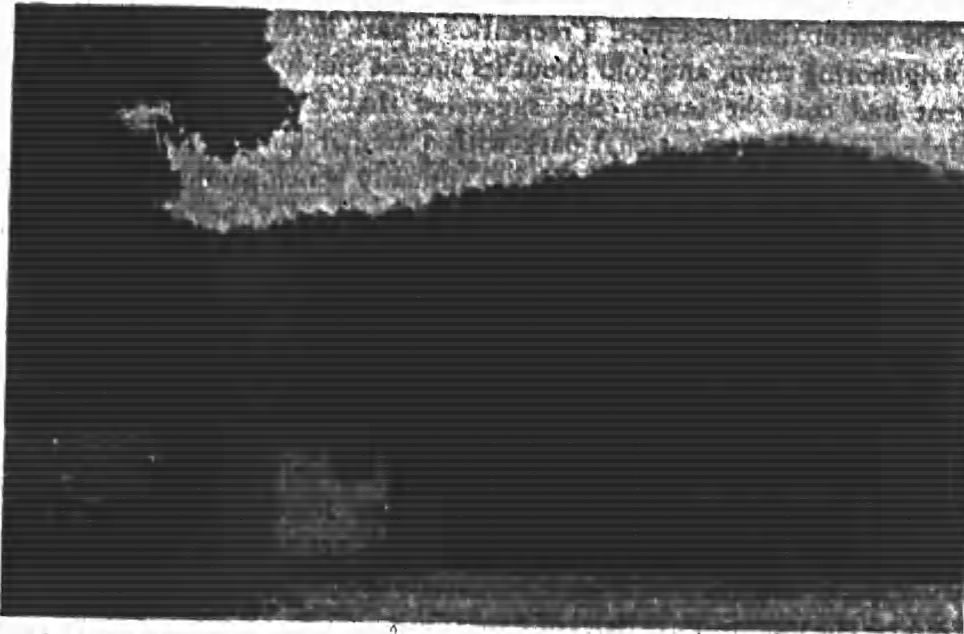
Watch this bulletin board for exhibits of our findings on Community Health.

This study is now entering its second year. Last year we found many things in our investigation that we think may be of interest to ALL the people in our community

⁴ From an article by Frances Evert, in *Grant County Press*, April 1, 1948.



HERE IS A PICTURE OF A BATHHOUSE WE LIKE IN MANNINGTON, W. VA.



WE WISH OUR TOWN HAD A SWIMMING POOL LIKE THIS ONE IN MANNINGTON, W. VA.

To bring this information to you is the purpose of the exhibits.

The following is a schedule that will be followed during the year bringing this information to you:

The announcement was completed with a list of the committees which would prepare material for the bulletin board, together with the names of the teachers and the grades which were represented by the committees; the particular phase of the health program to which the committees contributed, such as, city dump, animal pests, and insect pests; and the date on which the report would appear.

"Grant County School Day" is a school activity held every spring in Petersburg. It includes a parade in which each school in the county has an opportunity to publicize some phase of its school program. As one would expect, Petersburg Elementary School decided to feature its health program in the parade.

Each of the 13 committees planned floats and posters to bring to the people of Petersburg and to the pupils and parents of visiting schools some idea of what had been accomplished the past 2 years.

The children and teachers planned maps, charts, and graphs large enough to be seen at a distance. They made these on cloth banners as wide as the street and carried them in the parade. The illustration on page 48 gives an idea of the plan. An interesting feature of the children's plan was to have the pupils march behind their banners grouped as committees rather than grades, thus showing how the children had been able to cut across the barriers of grades to work on projects in which they had particular interest or need. Seven-year-olds marched along with ten-year-olds.

How the Project Fitted Into the Regular School Program

At first much of the planning and work on the project was done before and after school. Trips were taken and interviews made on Saturday. The regular and formal school program between 9 a. m. and 4 p. m. permitted little or no time for field trips and similar adjustments to pupil needs or community resources. For children who had few worth-while interests for their time over the week end, the project activities were helpful. But for country pupils and others who had out-of-school interests, it became evident that some of the project work should be done in school time.

When the project was well under way, the principal and the teacher-sponsors of the study discussed the growing worth and ramifications of the work. It seemed advisable to find a way for all children to take some part in the project in school.

Every day there were interesting jobs for individuals and groups. The problem was to adapt the daily schedule to the project. Every pupil needed opportunity and time in the daily schedule to read information on the questions which arose in connection with his job on the project. For some of the children the project was motivation for the letter writing in which they needed varied experience according to individual ability and previous study. The pupils all needed the experience of planning some activities together, such as taking trips, writing summaries, making sketches and printing posters, evaluating what they'd learned or achieved. How could such activities be drawn into the regular daily program? The principal advised the teachers to follow the plan that seemed to meet their own pupils' needs best.

"I think in our room we will use some of our reading periods to gather information," said the fifth-grade teacher one day. "Reading will seem more important to the children when they can see how useful it is for the project."

"My pupils have planned to write for materials to those places which you mentioned," said the sixth-grade teacher at another time. "We're going to study letter writing this year, anyhow, so why can't we have the children use the language period to learn how to write letters for the project?"

"It seems more sensible to do that than to have them write make-believe letters," said the principal.

The first-grade boys and girls, who had undertaken the study of livestock and poultry within the town limits, were delighted when they found that they could count enough to summarize parts of the questionnaire. "We often found ourselves counting and adding pigs or chickens

in our arithmetic period," said their teacher. "It's the most exciting real use we've found for arithmetic recently."

A third grade learned to make a simple questionnaire and to plan questions for an interview. "We've had enthusiastic language lessons ever since the project started," said their teacher. "The children seem just as much interested in wording questions for an interview committee as they would if they all were to be the interviewers."

Several teachers said the project increased the children's interest in spelling, reading, arithmetic, and social studies. Some said that they had now and then combined all the subjects that had anything to do with the project. That is, instead of having a short time for reading on some topic for which the children had no immediate use, and another few minutes for learning to spell isolated lists of words, the teacher arranged for the children to work an hour or more on their "project" and to learn the letter writing, arithmetic, or spelling which they would need. Assignments were adapted to the individual abilities of the children. Learning to spell the words to write an article on health for the school paper was a pleasure, not a task. The children seemed to remember better the words they learned that way, too.

Daily schedules were not all changed immediately to include the project. But once in awhile, perhaps just one day a week at first, time was planned so that subjects were studied in connection with the project. Eventually when teachers and children and community entered into the action part of the project, time for the work was more frequently scheduled in the daily program of the school.

For example, before the project one might have found classroom schedules with classes arranged completely by subject and exact number of minutes for each regardless of individual or small-group needs or interests. At first probably no schedules were any more flexible than the one below. Some were even more fixed and static.

DAILY SCHEDULE

a. m.	p. m.
Opening exercises	Social studies
Language arts: Reading, writing spelling, language	Art
<i>Recess</i>	<i>Recess</i>
Arithmetic	Science

Now, in the third year of the project, ask a fifth-grade teacher where her "daily schedule" is, and she may say something like this: "I've got a schedule posted here on the end of the bookcase, with 40 minutes for each major subject. But we seldom follow it. A schedule that's blocked off by subjects is not much good, it seems to me. Right now, for example, the project's absorbed the subjects. They're all there,

but they are being used for something that is more real to the children. Sometimes the project's the first thing the children think of when we plan a day's work, sometimes we take it up later."

If you ask this teacher how the children use the subjects, she may say, "Well, for example, the children can see that they have to do a lot of figuring on the costs of school lunchroom improvements, or on how long it will take a certain restaurant to pay for a new dishwasher. So we decide to do that in place of book arithmetic. When the boys and girls wrote a health play, that took the place of language for some pupils, and of spelling for others. Of course if it turns out that the children need to study or practice some phase of arithmetic, or some other subject, which is not used for the project, I teach it in the usual way."

And if you ask her what the pupils' plans look like, the new way, she'll probably say:

"It seems rather mixed up when I try to explain it, but actually we just all decide during planning time each morning what jobs will be done that day, and who can do them best, or who needs to learn what, and then those people take the jobs.

"Here's today's schedule on the bulletin board. We made it this morning in planning period. Mary wrote this copy. Tomorrow's plan may be different.

"When we were making this plan, I helped each person make note of the jobs for him. We want the children to have satisfaction in their progress as individuals."

Following is the type of schedule that might be used in the situation described:

TODAY'S PLANS

a. m.

Class Devotions and planning

Writing *thank-you notes* to be sent people who answered questionnaires. Things to study with Miss ———: Spelling, punctuation, beginning and close. We will each write a thank you note for the rest of the class to approve.

Recess

Independent reading: Bulletins on *tree planting for our park project*, article in *Mannington paper*, bulletins on playground activities. Children will each look for ideas to report to the class. Boys and girls who are working on reading difficulties are to work with Miss ———.

p. m.

Individual work on our *art projects*. (Posters, announcements for the bulletin board, setting up the School News Sheet, wall hangings related to local history or children's special interests.)

Children learn how to use percentage in making comparisons in the *questionnaire study*. Study of history of things that happened between the times for which there are landmarks in Petersburg. Class report information. Decide *what to include in the Petersburg history* which we are writing. Each pupil is supposed to contribute suggestions for this.

RECESS

Studying our different science books to get the information we need for *balancing the aquarium*. Taking care of our animals and plants. Reporting at the close of the period.

The Second Year Brought a Recheck and Suitable Recommendations

When the project was planned, as on page 9, it was thought that the second year should be used for a recheck and for such recommendations as would not be likely to be made the first year. Actually it was not possible to separate the activities of the 2 years. Some recommendations immediately followed the discovery of facts in the first year's work. For example, when the children saw garbage scattered about carelessly when being loaded, it was natural that they recommend more care in handling garbage at the time they made their report on facts. Condition of the garbage suggested that a collection was needed oftener than once a week. When it was learned that more rest rooms were needed in the interests both of health and of business, the children did not wait until the close of the project to make the recommendations.

Recommendations were made in the reports of all 13 committees. Some committees found the need for action so great that they planned for something to be done at once. For example, when the recreation com-



A COMMITTEE SEE HOW A PETERSBURG RESTAURANT KEEPS FOOD IN CLEAN CONDITION.

mittee learned that the city had bought land for a park, and that a town planning committee was talking about a place for children to swim with a teacher to help them learn, they appointed a committee to interview the manager. This committee was instructed to learn details and report to the class.

Not all of the tabulating and reports on findings on which recommendations had to be based could be made the first year. So these were carried into the second year. When immediate action was needed, it was taken, but in the main, action was postponed to the third year.

How the Project Succeeded

This is not the time to pass final judgment on the success of the project. That can most effectively be done when activities are on the way to some accomplishments which improve ways of living in school and community. From the first, it was expected that most of the action part of the program would be started after substantial facts were gathered.

But some activities, such as the campaign to get rid of insect pests, were begun as soon as children and parents became well aware of the need for doing something. Were these successful? Here are statements about improvements:

1. Already a little progress has been made toward controlling poultry and livestock within the city limits. A town ordinance has been passed which requires building permits. This means that barns and chicken houses to be built in the future can be constructed according to specification, and then only with a special permit from town council. (Principal)
2. The program, if continued, will mean a cleaner and healthier community. (A teacher)
3. In the schoolhouse, two new fountains have been placed in classrooms. Hall fountains have been repaired. Children are more inclined to eat the basic seven foods. (A teacher)
4. Breeding places of insects have been eliminated. (A teacher)
5. The health study that is in progress at our local school is of benefit to the community as a whole. Through the bulletin board by the bank it acquaints the public with health conditions in general and with the many ways in which they can be improved. (The Mayor)
6. A new sewer has recently been put in to carry away the waste from the cannery on the hill, which previously had caused much trouble to homes on Pine Street, by sewers backing up in the basements. (A student)
7. This study . . . shows the parents and visiting tourists what we are trying to do and they may take the idea back and try it themselves in their community. (A student)
8. My opinion of our health study is that I think it is a great idea. In our town there are things we have needed to do and this has opened the eyes of some, if not most everyone, to these things. We realize that we need a recreation

PETERSBURG BUILDS A HEALTH PROGRAM

center and many things need to be improved, such as the garbage disposal and dump, and the town water supply. If we can get some of our recommendations carried out in our town, we will have gained a great deal by it. (A student)

9. This is the beginning of a better and more healthful Petersburg. (A parent)
10. The health study not only makes an excellent study for the pupils, but also helps to improve the health of the community. (A parent)
11. The children learned something about tolerance and respect for the rights and opinions of others when they found out the different attitudes toward raising poultry for commercial purposes within the city limits. (Committee of pupils and teacher)

From time to time committees made group evaluations of the school and community's achievements. Following are examples of statements made by the second grade with their teacher and sixth-grade sponsors:

1. More boys and girls are being immunized.
2. Our boys and girls are . . . thinking of others as well as themselves when they have a disease.
3. We have obtained pasteurized milk for our hot lunch.
4. We are trying to get rid of animal and insect pests.

The real test of an educational project is better ways of living. Did the project change Mary's and John's lives? Make them healthier? happier? more active citizens? The answers to such questions may be in the statements quoted above and in others like them.

“—And, as a Result”

WHEN WE MEET with inconveniences or lacks in public service, most of us shrug off our responsibility with, “Somebody ought to do something about it!” But in Petersburg, now, you frequently hear, “Let us do something about it!” School and community are united, and boys and girls are well on the way toward becoming the kind of adult citizens who are aware of the importance of a healthful community and capable of keeping it that way.

Children Are Learning To Eat the Right Foods

Through school and community activity, Petersburg children are learning what kind of food to eat and how to plan nutritious meals. They also are eating the kinds of foods which children need most to give them good health and adequate growth, and help to keep them from getting sick.

They have discovered useful knowledge about foods. The information has meaning because they got it in connection with everyday living. For example, one group made statements such as the following:

1. Our bodies use up, or burn, certain kinds of food. These are carbohydrates, proteins, and fats. These foods make us strong. They give us energy.
2. Our bodies need proteins to help us grow. Proteins help our bodies recover from sickness or injury. The proteins that we get from meat and dairy products are more effective than those we get from vegetables.
3. Many foods have other substances that we need called vitamins. The vitamins are known by separate letters; as, A, B, C, D, and E. Foods with vitamins are essential for health and growth. We get vitamins from green and yellow vegetables, fruits, meat and liver, eggs, and dairy products such as milk and cheese.
4. Our bodies need minerals. Calcium and phosphorus help build teeth. The blood requires iron. Iodine helps control the work of the thyroid gland. We get minerals from vegetables, fruits, dairy products, and meat.

The children have accepted responsibilities for improving their own health and promoting the health of their group. For example:

1. As a means to quick selection and planning of foods, the children have learned to recognize the basic seven food groups recommended by the U. S. Department of Agriculture.
2. They have been instrumental in helping other children learn the value of the basic seven food groups.

3. They have learned how to keep records and compute percentages in order to study the food habits of the children of the school.
4. They have made themselves familiar with publications on foods.
5. They are becoming interested in improving community health through spreading information about nutrition.
6. They are developing appreciation of why and how the different kinds of food are good for us and through the program are helping others to develop appreciation of good food.
7. They are learning how to observe and evaluate the results of proper diet in themselves and their playmates in bright eyes, shining hair, physical energy, enthusiasm, and cheerful dispositions.

Sound practices, too, resulted from the study. For example, in the beginning of the study a check was made on eating habits, to see how many children were eating the basic seven food groups. During the year, the committee sponsored a campaign to teach the school what the basic seven food groups are and why they should be eaten. A recheck was made at the end of the year. A large increase was shown in the number of children who were eating these foods.

Boys and Girls Have Become More Active and Interested Citizens

The children's eyes are being opened to what makes a town attractive and healthful. Going shopping for her mother, for example, a little girl is likely not to buy rolls that are not properly protected from flies or other insects. Children are careful not to run across peoples' lawns. Wanton pulling of other peoples' flowers does not occur. Boys and girls are pleased when a Saturday brings an unusually large crowd of country shoppers into town, and are happy to reflect that Petersburg is the right kind of host to them. Teachers report comments that are evidences of this new alertness on the part of the children, such as:

"Miss -----, were you down town Saturday? Boy, there were lots of people here! Isn't that fine?"

"I told a little girl and her mother about -----'s new rest room."

The children are becoming better citizens of their school. They are quicker to report the need for improvements, more cooperative in taking care of school and classroom property and equipment, more concerned about community problems.

For example, consider the concern shown by the fifth grade and their teacher as a result of their study about insect pests and their control.

The children posted on the bulletin board by the bank the following statement:

The committee on insect pests has made a complete survey of the town of Petersburg, West Virginia, and has learned many startling facts.

To control some of these pests it is necessary to destroy their breeding places. From our survey we found that there are twenty-six barns within this town, one hundred twenty-four chicken houses, eighty-five pig pens, one hundred forty-eight outdoor toilets, thirteen junk piles, one swamp, and one open cesspool. The majority of these places are not cared for in such a way as to make the breeding of insects impossible.



CHILDREN OBSERVE MODERN COOKING EQUIPMENT IN A PETERSBURG RESTAURANT.

The boys and girls have become more sensitive to town improvements and appreciate them. For example, when the children learn that land was purchased for a park, they seemed to develop a feeling of possession about the park.

"We'll have a place to play ball."

"And a swimming pool."

"Maybe we'll have fireplaces for picnics."

Such were the comments that indicated their interest and hopes regarding the proposed park. It was the same way about a proposal for a new well to increase the town water supply, new and covered garbage trucks, improvement of the sewage system, about modern equipment and sanitation in eating places and hotels. Parents report that the children often talk at home about town improvements.

Children Have Improved Their Ability To Work in Groups

From first grade through the sixth, and, in the first year of the project, through the seventh and eighth grades, pupils improved their ability to conduct meetings in businesslike ways. Even the youngest got some practice in conducting meetings by taking part in them. Older ones gained some ability to think through a problem with others. They learned how to make helpful suggestions at appropriate stages of a discussion. They gained some feeling for the right time to speak and the time to be silent. They became alert to opportunities for helping others to clarify their thoughts. They gained some ability to feel the progress that was being made in cooperative planning and problem solving.

Appointing or electing committee members gave the children practice in selecting leaders who have the knowledge or abilities to handle specific problems. They learned to some extent how to evaluate the service of the leaders they selected.

Boys and girls had opportunities to speak before a group. They made a beginning of learning to organize their talks and to make their points when they spoke.

The children learned to consider the source and accuracy of their opinions about things and to confine their comments and questions to facts. When the boys and girls on the poultry and livestock committee were making plans to survey the town, it was decided that the surveyors would limit their study to home neighborhoods, for as one boy said, "When you know what animals people have to start with, you can ask smarter questions."

Adults, As Well As Boys and Girls, Are Better Acquainted With Factors in Community Health

"I never knew before that getting rid of rats might have something to do with health."

"The water *tastes* good to me. How could it be impure?"

The committee on Communicable Diseases had difficulty improving the attitude about vaccinations. Some of the children thought that the health nurse vaccinated them "just to be mean." Some even believed the rumor that vaccination might kill a person.

Such were the reactions of some of the people before the program was undertaken. After the project started through the children, nearly every home was learning to look more for facts instead of jumping to conclu-

sions. Clippings on health, brought to school, articles about the project in the local paper, and books on nutrition purchased for the town library now and then bore evidence that adults as well as children were becoming more health conscious. Children ceased to fear vaccinations unduly.

In people's homes, at church gatherings, at parties, folks had acquaintance with new topics of conversation. They talked about the recent bond issue for town improvement and the purchase of land for a park. Many said they were ready to vote for the use of public money for additional town improvements as soon as this should be feasible. They asked about progress in elimination of flies and mosquitoes. They discussed the need for the new town well, and were concerned about the children's health.

"Speaking of garbage," commented a woman at a parents' meeting, "we used to save ours for the pigs. We've stopped that. One of the bulletins which Joan brought home from school says that pigs get trichinosis by eating garbage, which often contains spoiled bits of meat. We feed our pigs grain now and send the garbage to the dump. We feel safer about the condition of the pork we eat."

"We're going to dig another well. A deep well. Ours is too near the barn." This from a woman who lives on a farm.

"I'm driving to the school to take some children over to the city dump," said a mother. "They want to get first-hand facts. I thought it would be interesting to help."

The children gained a working knowledge of the community and its services for the protection of the physical and mental health of its citizens. It was as though the walls of their school had been unhinged and laid flat and the barriers between classrooms and community thus removed, so that it was not noticeable where the one ended and the other began. Hospitals, rest homes, restaurants, hotels, places of recreation, the park, the city and county offices, all these, along with their original classrooms had been laboratories of learning, and what is more important, avenues of service.

The Children Have More Self-Confidence and Social Ability

"How do you do, Mr. Bush. This is the committee that I telephoned you about. We have come to talk with you about getting the town rid of insect pests," said a fifth-grade boy as he led a committee of two girls and two boys and a teacher that were gathering facts for one of the projects. The little boy had removed his hat. He waited until his teacher and the girls were seated and then took a chair himself.

Again, a little girl greeted one of the school's out-of-town visitors when they met on the street one morning. "Good morning, Miss ———. We hope you are coming to visit the fourth grade today."

A committee member reported on the lunchroom at noon. "Some of the children are not very polite," she said. "They don't mean to be impolite. They either just don't think how things sound, or else they don't know what is good etiquette. I think we could talk about it in our rooms."

A group of children working together to compose a thank you letter for some courtesy extended a visiting committee by a business man . . . a committee planning an interview with a park manager . . . a child greeting the Mayor . . . a group of children giving helpful information to a visitor to the town . . . a boy or girl courteously addressing the chairman in a formal business meeting . . . children learning to word a letter or questionnaire so that it will draw out information without antagonizing . . . young pupils receiving their teacher who is calling in their home and introducing her to their parents . . . these are some of the experiences that are helping the children gain poise and social ability.

One of the best things about the project is that it draws into the school program real life situations in which the children have opportunity to develop wholesome personality. The activities of the project provide a living curriculum. Through this the pupils are improving their skill in reading, writing, arithmetic, spelling, language, and other subjects; learning ways of good health; and developing techniques of solving problems cooperatively. They are learning to think critically and to evaluate. They are working independently and creatively as individuals. They are gaining in ability to be active citizens. They are learning better how to understand the behavior of others. They are more appreciative of others and of their contributions.

School-Community Good Will Has Been Strengthened

When people first saw groups of children entering a restaurant together or riding on a garbage truck, sometimes in school hours, they wondered why the children were not at their books. But if they reread the note from the principal and observed the children's courtesy and their intentness on some apparently useful goal, they soon ceased to question. When they were met by a polite boy or girl who asked for information about the collection of their garbage or the number of chickens housed in their back yard, they cooperated.

People learned the names of other people's children. As a result, the community became more unified. Winnie Mae is known to nearly everyone and like her forthrightness and her kindness and enthusiasm. If one sees a boy on the outskirts of Petersburg examining the river, the creek, the fish hatchery, the chances are more than even that it is Jimmy Bush and that he is concerned about making Petersburg, in some way, a better Petersburg. People wave to him in friendliness. If they ask him a question about Petersburg, he usually has a well-informed and ready answer. When the Committee on Parks and Recreation visited Mr. Bowman, Chairman of County Recreation Committee, he knew them by name, as he knew their parents by name. He gladly gave them all the information he could.

Most people were not actively aware, until the children began to gather information, that more could be done to have a better community health program. But as the children carried home the facts and posted on the bulletin board in town the stories of their findings and interesting ideas for the future, more people were drawn wholeheartedly into the project. It has been said that each person lives in the lives of all around him and in the lives of all who follow. If this is true, the people of Petersburg are building not only for richer and better lives today, but for future happiness as well.

Children and Adults Are Taking More Responsibility for Their Own Health and That of Others

Before the program was under way here's what you might have heard from John's mother on a morning when John got up with a cold:

“Well, bundle up warm, and you'll be all right in school. Don't go outdoors at recess.”

Now you are much more likely to hear John's mother say:

“No school for you today, young man. I'm not going to have you spreading germs.”

Once it was not surprising to hear: “Dad says no one is telling him that he can't raise chickens or pigs in his own back yard.” Today, people are accepting without complaint, some even with approval, certain restrictions on building chicken houses.

The incidents just cited are significant in themselves. As an index of public spirit and of a consciousness that each of us is “his brother's keeper,” they are of tremendous import.

Taking Thought for Tomorrow

NEAR THE BEGINNING of the third year's work the principal called a teachers' meeting for a "forward look" as he put it, and remarked that to get their bearings they might first wish to "glance backward" at the program that had been going on for 2 years.

One of the teachers said that four words would pretty well describe the way the program had been working in her committee; namely, INVESTIGATE, RECOMMEND, PUBLICIZE, ACT.

"But there really has not yet been a great deal of acting. By acting, I mean doing. That is still ahead of us," she said. "When we started the work, we expected to reserve our doing for the last year, but of course when a project really gets going you can't separate it into steps. Not the way you do a geometry problem. The parts overlap."

Another teacher distributed copies of a list of the major activities in which pupil groups had been engaged. The following list includes most of them:

INVESTIGATING AND RECOMMENDING

- Interviewing town officials regarding public services for health.
- Interviewing parents on subjects in which they have special knowledge.
- Visiting places in town to make health surveys, such as the garbage dump.
- Interviewing business people and others to get their opinion on health matters.
- Saturday trips on bicycles to investigate conditions, such as sewers, or breeding places for mosquitoes.
- Arranging to take the food handler's course provided by the State Department of Health and attending and getting others to attend.
- Surveying the school health facilities.
- Surveying school health practices.
- Studying and improving the first-aid room.
- Arranging for a dental examination and for everyone to have defects corrected.
- Planning and taking opinion poll on harmful insects and on the keeping of livestock and poultry within the town limits.
- Making a questionnaire study of people's recreation.
- Making a questionnaire study of animal pests.
- Studying conditions revealed, pooling information, and making recommendations for their improvement.
- Making maps that show location of health facilities.
- Helping keep study materials organized and usable.
- Writing letters for material and information.

PUBLICIZING

- Keeping a school bulletin board attractive and up to date.
- Keeping a bulletin board display on the project by the town bank attractive and up to date.
- Writing articles for the school news sheet.
- Writing articles for *Grant County Press*.
- Making posters for bulletin boards and other displays.
- Taking part in Grant County School Day.

DOING

- Taking trips.
- Making banners and graphs and floats to be used in Grant County School Day.
- Planning questionnaires, inquiries, and interviews to follow up first year's study and learn about improvements made.
- Planning and carrying out community campaign to rid the town and country of mosquitoes.
- Getting parents interested in town improvements, so that bond issue for improvements could be passed.
- Carrying on Improvement Week in school to make the children more conscious of their responsibility for making and keeping school building and classrooms pleasant healthful places to work.
- Making plans for a whole-school health book on the project.
- Making informal inquiries of committees and interested citizens about things which the school and community need to do in the future.

The principal called attention to the aims (p. 8) they had when they started the health program. A sixth-grade boy had sketched these on a chart.

Pointing to the first aim, To Promote Cooperative Study, Planning, and Action by Community Groups, the principal said: "I don't know about the 'promoting' part. It seems like 'promotion' hasn't been needed in Petersburg. Folks have certainly worked together, though. They've been wonderful about helping develop the school health program. Now what's next, I wonder."

For Further Action in Petersburg

"We've never organized that *school health council*," said one of the teachers looking ahead on the list of objectives.

"No," he answered. "You think we should do it soon?"

"What would a school health council do?" someone wanted to know.

"Help plan, I'd say," said the principal. "And advise and evaluate, maybe. Help us see changes in the children. And maybe decide what phases of the school program brought about improvement."

"It seems to be the style to have 'councils,'" said a teacher. "I suppose we could start one and see how it works here."

"School health councils are taking root in a good many communities, that's a fact," agreed the principal. "But will a council be good for children of Petersburg—that's the chief thing to be considered, I think, and after that, whether the community desires a council enough to help organize it and serve on it."

"The children's health is so much a 24-hour job that we need the advice of parents practically all the time," said another. "A school health council ought to give us that."

"We need technical knowledge," said another teacher. "Let's ask a doctor to be on the council."

The group decided that working for a school health council should be one of their next steps, but that first a committee would be appointed to consult with the planning committee of the Parent-Teacher Association. The most likely members of a school health council, it was pointed out, would be a parent, the principal, the teachers, pupil representatives, a physician, a dentist, the county nurse, and the janitors. The teachers mentioned things such a council might do, as:

1. Decide what place the school might take in a community-wide continuous health program.
2. Help plan on-going surveys and investigation of school and community health needs to which a school-health program could be directed.
3. Help the school plan ways of getting information and suitable materials to aid in health instruction.
4. Make plans for a standard health examination for each pupil.
5. Advise about making the school lunch educational.
6. See that every child has the opportunities for recreation and personal and social development which he needs.

"When the council's appointed and at work, the members'll probably put their heads together and think of things to do in their own way," said the principal, "but it's good to have these ideas to start off with."

"Whether we have a school council or not," said a teacher, "I think we ought to keep this project going. Good health isn't something you can take an examination on and forget about, even after 3 years."

"It's seemed to me as I've observed our work and study that the things we do to get good health go along with right ways of living," added the principal. "Like eliminating flies and rats each year and maintaining clean and sanitary lunchroom conditions and nutritious menus, and providing plenty of wholesome recreation and having health examinations and nurse's care. Those things have to go on year after year."

"I don't think we can expect that all the same things'll need to be done every year," added another. "One swimming pool, for example, will last us quite a while. But some things will need attention all the time, and every year will probably bring new responsibilities and new needs."

"In other words," said the principal, summing up their discussion of



CHILDREN SEE HOW A PETERSBURG GROCER PROTECTS FROM FLIES THE FOOD HE SELLS.

the health work, "we'll keep our program of health and physical education going, adapting it continuously to the needs of the boys and girls. We'll remember that their needs are changing as they grow up. Let's think over what we have learned about the children's needs and interests and how we can find out more. In our next meeting we can plan first steps for next year's health program."

A third-grade teacher suggested that they consider another point before the meeting broke up. "It's the importance of taking our *entire program into the community* more. I never realized before how much it means to children to feel that they are part of the community. They simply glow when they've really done something to improve Petersburg."

"I feel that way, too," said a sixth-grade teacher. "It's wonderful! I used to think I was doing all that could be expected when I took the children on trips to learn about the community and environment—using the community like a textbook, a source of information. We used to call that kind of study 'using community resources.' But as education, it was far short of what we've done this year when we've actually worked and studied as members of the community to improve ways of living for all of us."

"What more do you think we ought to do in that line?" asked the principal.

"Well, there'll always be some kind of health service that children can help with. But I was really trying to think of something in addition like a town library."

"You know we talked with the Mayor about planting trees in the park once," suggested another.

"It will take a pretty careful study to know what kind of trees to plant,"



CHILDREN AND TEACHERS USE THE BULLETIN BOARD BY THE BANK TO INFORM THE COMMUNITY ABOUT PROGRESS ON THE HEALTH PROGRAM.

said the principal. "But it's a possibility. While we're talking about community services, we might think about a school garden and maybe a school forest. And there must be other things. We really need a study of the community to find out what should be done first. Community groups like the women's clubs and the Kiwanians, and the farm groups would help just as they have done in the health program. I don't think we should take on too much right now, but it is certainly something to which we should look forward. I'll do some thinking about it and report."

At the time it seemed that a community study might well grow out of the book which the pupils were making to summarize their work on the project. Or it might grow out of a study of the community's local history. It could be initiated either by the school or by some community group. Techniques of investigation similar to those used for the health study might be helpful. Phases of the study, which might be suggested by a planning group, could well include the following:

1. The area and population of the school community and of Petersburg
2. The people
 - National or ancestral backgrounds
 - Size of families
3. Occupations and sources of income
4. Use of the land and other natural resources
5. Housing facilities and needs

6. Organizations and agencies operating for young people and adults in town and country
 - Nature
 - Membership
 - Activities and services
7. The school system
 - Organization
 - Program
 - Equipment for learning
 - Transportation
8. Relation of school and community
 - Parent-Teacher Association
 - Parent participation in the school program
 - School participation in community activities
9. Recreation and culture
 - Movies
 - Books and magazines
 - Nearest library
 - Service to the community
 - Extent of its use by the community
 - Radio and television
 - Folk customs and culture that should be recognized and perpetuated
10. Problems and needs revealed by the study

For Towns Beyond Grant County

Running through the Petersburg program and through the health programs of the several other health demonstration centers of West Virginia, are qualities which appear to insure worth-while results. They may be useful to schools and communities in similar situations elsewhere. For example, in the more successful school-community health program:

1. Teachers study the children's needs, home background, and out-of-school activities.
2. Surveys of community needs and services are carried on from time to time, cooperatively by the school and other community groups.
3. Health programs are based on the needs revealed by such studies.
4. Boys and girls have opportunities to plan and work on real problems.
5. Teachers, pupils, and parents cooperate in health study. They watch to see if health practices are really being improved.
6. Every pupil gets a complete medical examination. His defects are corrected.
7. An advisory school health council is on the job.
8. If the town or city is large, a community health council works with the school health council.
9. Balanced diets, personal health habits, good posture, plenty of rest and relaxation, wholesome physical activities, and other good health practices are part of the school day.
10. Teaching aids are available such as practically written books and pamphlets, including State and Federal publications; flat pictures; films and posters, and

materials for publicizing the program, including mimeograph or hectograph and typewriter, poster and construction paper, and paints.

11. Boys and girls and teachers, too, seek information from local experts in the health and physical education field, such as public health nurses, physicians, dentists, school nurses, health department sanitarians, public health officers, Agricultural Extension Service workers, American Red Cross personnel, physical education teachers, coaches, and recreation leaders.
12. County curriculum committees of teachers and supervisors exchange ideas and experiences in the development of up-to-date health programs and projects.
13. There is continuous evaluation of activities. Results are shown by improvement in the children's health, by changes in their attitudes, and by the maintenance of better health facilities and resources in the community.
14. Adults as well as boys and girls really work at the job of personal and community health.

What Petersburg did to meet its needs in its way, other towns can do to meet their needs in their way. No two health programs can be exactly alike. They will always be as different as the children who take part; as the physical characteristics of the environments; as the economic conditions and the social and cultural backgrounds of the people.



CHILDREN AND ADULTS HAVE A PLACE IN GRANT COUNTY SCHOOL DAY PARADE

The Project Moves On

As this bulletin goes to press in the third year of the project, Petersburg continues to enrich and extend its health program. A recent letter from the principal describes three activities undertaken since the manuscript

was written. One is the showing of recent films on health, some to the pupils, others to adults. Another is an original health play for American Education Week written and presented by the present committees on the health program, describing the work of each committee from the beginning of the enterprise. A third is school representation in certain adult civic service groups. Excerpts from the principal's description of the last two activities especially show how the health program is continuing to broaden the vision and increase the civic understanding of children and adults in Petersburg.

OUR HEALTH PLAY

ACT I Animal pests are a menace to any healthy community—aren't they?

CHARACTERS: Judge

Girls—Mary Jane, Nan

First Mouse—Tommy

Second Mouse—Mickey

First Rat—Charlie

Second Rat—Jack

Scene 1. (In dialog, Nan and Mary Jane review with somewhat unwarranted satisfaction the findings and work of their committee, which culminated in a campaign, Rat Extermination Week. Just as Nan concludes the conversation with the self-satisfied statement, "Now we can live in peace," the scene shifts, showing that the campaign against rats and mice must be continuous.)

Scene 2. MICE SLIP IN FROM DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS. GREAT COMMO-TION. GIRLS JUMP AND SCREAM.

MARY JANE. Where did you come from?

T. MOUSE. I came from Farmer Brown's chicken house.

NAN. What have you been living on?

T. MOUSE. I steal feed from the chickens.

NAN (to Mickey Mouse). Where do you live?

M. MOUSE. I live in people's pantries.

JUDGE. What do you eat?

M. MOUSE. I eat cake, cheese, bread, and everything.

THERE IS GREAT EXCITEMENT AGAIN—RATS COME IN

NAN. Oh, here are some rats. You are fat. Where have you been hiding?

J. RAT. I live in sewers.

NAN. Did you come from the sewers, too?

C. RAT. No, I live around the feed mills in Petersburg.

MARY JANE. These are dangerous criminals. (Calls) Officers! Come here at once. (Officers come in). Arrest these pests. We shall try the case of these culprits before a judge. Call the judge.

JUDGE ENTERS. SWEARS IN MICE AND RATS AS THEY TAKE THE WITNESS STAND.

JUDGE. Mickey Mouse, to witness stand. Hold up your right paw. Will you tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

M. MOUSE. Yes.

JUDGE. Do you live in Petersburg?

M. MOUSE. I do.

JUDGE. Are you guilty of stealing food from people's pantries? Do you run over food which is left uncovered?

M. MOUSE. I do.

JUDGE. Next witness. Charlie Rat. (Swears him in.) Where do you live?

CH. RAT. I live around the feed mills in Petersburg.

JUDGE. Have you been eating the feed, running over it, and carrying it away?

CH. RAT. Yes, I have.

JUDGE. Next witness. Jack Rat. (Swears him in.) Have you been eating from uncovered garbage cans?

J. RAT. Yes, I have. People should keep them covered.

JUDGE. (To rats and mice) You, Mickey Mouse, and you, Charlie Rat, are representative of your group. You have admitted stealing food from pantries, chicken house, garbage cans, eating and destroying feed from the mills, and even running over food which is left uncovered. By doing these things, you carry germs which spread disease. You are guilty of breaking the laws of health. Officers put them to death at once. (Officers strike them with clubs; they lie over as if dead).

NAN. Your committee has done a fine job securing information, making recommendations, and in conducting your campaigns. As we have learned, these pests are very difficult to get rid of. There are so many places for them to hide and so many things for them to feed upon that we all need to be on guard at all times in order to protect the health of our community.

Thus ran the lines of the children's play. Acts II-XI presented dramatically other activities of the health program. Through the play, parents and children gained an overview of what had been accomplished and a vision of needs of the future.

The Town Council, Service Club, Kiwanis Club, and Rod and Gun Club have invited to their regular planning meetings representatives of the school health committees. This is a preliminary step toward inviting the school to have representation in these civic groups. In this way the school will be closely tied in with civic groups and the boys and girls will learn what these groups stand for and what they do.

And so—measured by the educational yardstick, "What's good for children," the Petersburg program is proving itself a social and economic contribution to community life. Through it the children are becoming better citizens. Those who remain in Petersburg will be more useful future citizens. Petersburg is a finer community with a higher quality of living for all of its people.

*The Children Dreamed This Map, But When The
Grown Folks of Petersburg Saw It They Worked
Hard To Make The Recreation Center A Reality.*

Recommended Playground Park Plan

Small for the children

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Marks of the

Community-Centered School

• ALL THE PEOPLE OF THE COMMUNITY WORK TOGETHER TO MAKE A BETTER SCHOOL.

• CHILDREN OF THE SCHOOL ARE MEMBERS OF OTHER COMMUNITY GROUPS.

• THE SCHOOL FACILITIES ARE SHARED BY CHILDREN AND ADULTS ALIKE.

• THE SCHOOL PROGRAM DEALS WITH PROBLEMS OF REAL LIVING.