'7 come 11', educational jackpot

PITZER + TUSCARORA = EXPERIENCE

Tuscarora, Nevada has a population of seven people, and at first, even second glance, its deserted state appears to be its most outstanding feature. It sits at 6,400 feet between the Independence mountains and the Tuscarora mountains, and consists of a post office, a tavern frequented by a crone named "Jiggs," a gasoline pump, and a sagging, eight-bedroom hotel and outhouse.

There is little evidence to suggest that the town will ever need more than the one paved road which leads to it.

Yet Tuscarora attracted fourteen students from The Claremont Colleges, eleven of whom were Pitzer College students, for a nine-week stay which nearly everyone jubilantly described as "fantastic."

Early in the year, Dennis Parks, Assistant Professor of Art at Pitzer, suggested that an off-campus art project be held in Tuscarora from early September to just before Thanksgiving. He was familiar with the area, since he and his family owned one of the few inhabitable homes there, and for the past several summers, he had conducted workshops in pottery making and welding. He also owned an art studio and a welding shop. In addition to the native clay, stones, dry grasses, and other materials for art projects, the area combined other features which would make it an ideal location for studies in archaeology and anthropology. A Shoshone Indian reservation was nearby on which linguistic studies could be made. Abandoned mine shafts could be explored and studied. In fact the town's few inhabitants, unusual people, would be interesting biographical subjects.

Also, from his personal experience, Parks believes there is a mystique about the desert and its expansiveness that is conducive to artistic expression.

His hypothesis in suggesting the project: "If learning something, anything, can be experienced with enthusiasm, then enthusiasm for learning can be transferred to all subjects, once it is felt."

He suggested to the Curriculum Committee of the College that he take no more than fifteen students. In addition to their individual art projects, they would attend his lectures and continue their independent studies begun with other faculty members and with whom they could consult upon their return to Claremont. He and his family would live in their house, about one and a half blocks from the Tuscarora Hotel, where the students would be housed.

All students who applied for the project were bright. Almost all had come from urban homes; many had been accustomed to moderate, even lavish comforts. Life in Tuscarora would be primitive. By early summer, plans were made. Living arrangements in the hotel were assigned.

According to Sharon Hare, senior, who supervised the budget and expenditures, "In the beginning, we bought half a beef and stored it in a frozen food locker in Elko. We ate for $1.50 each per day, and I think we ate rather elegantly."

"Just being in the wide, open spaces where you could see for miles around was fantastic."

The beginnings of the endeavor were painful. The mechanics of living together taxed the patience and ingenuity of everyone. Eventually, schedules were worked out for the shopping, which was done in Elko, fifty miles away, the cleaning, and the cooking.

It was the beginning of an intensely close communal living arrangement which resulted in friction, love, fear and artistic productivity.

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As with people in primitive societies, their day began at dawn, and after breakfast, each student worked independently, or in a group of two or three, wedging clay, making pottery on the kick wheels, or firing the gas-heated brick kiln.

One student's project was an enormous foot bridge, which required twenty tons of native rock to build. "Jay's Bridge," as it was known, was a project which inspired the enthusiasm, cooperation and hard work of almost everyone who went to Tuscarora.

Isolated as they were, dependent upon each other for human contact, "We developed a tremendous feeling of closeness and togetherness," said one student. After a day of working on individual projects, students would meet in the hotel in the evening and greet one another with warm embraces. And inevitably, as in close relationships, frictions arose. Problems demanded immediate resolution. There was no escape from them, no diversions. If a problem was relatively simple, the two persons involved would resolve it. If a one-to-one talk failed, the problem was taken to the group at large and dealt with as in encounter groups or sensitivity groups.

The students also devised another solution to ironing out problems, a somewhat unique one. Since there were no bathroom facilities in the hotel, the one outhouse served everyone. Inside the building at eye level was tacked a large piece of paper upon which grievances were jotted. And during the day, responses accumulated, with everyone commenting upon the situations. Perhaps because of the unique role it played in problem-solving for the group, the building was tagged "The Best Outhouse in the West."

While there were trips to Elko, the hotel was the scene of most social life. Occasionally, Mr. and Mrs. Parks and their boys would visit in the evening. The girls crocheted and knitted in the evening, although the generator which produced the only available electric current did not last throughout the nine-week stay.

Sometimes the group would invite one of the town residents to dinner, "We became close to everyone in town."

Birthdays were occasions for great festivity. "Everyone made gifts — candleholders, crocheted and knitted hats, scarves and belts. There were ceramic bells, weavings and sketches — all from our own efforts."

Why would such a project attract a group of particularly good students, who were already doing well academically on the Pitzer campus?

According to one, "It struck me as a marvelous place for a social science study. It is a novel location with many art opportunities. And I believe its off-campus location had a lot to do with its success." Certainly there is nothing like Tuscarora nearby.

At the end of the nine-week stay, anxiety pervaded the group. Projects already begun had had to be finished.

And the group who had really learned to live together, had adjusted to each other's idiosyncrasies, were anxious about getting back to civilization where it seemed that relationships were less personal, where people simply cared less about others.

When cars had been packed full with sculptures, pots and drawings, and the students were on their way back from Nevada, one car ran out of gas in California. The students, hoping to get a ride to a gas station, began walking; however no one stopped to help them.

"Back in Tuscarora, people would have helped. When you get back to civilization, people are suspicious. Nobody cares."

That the experience was stimulating and novel is apparent. Whether it had sufficient educational value to bear repeating, will not be determined until reports submitted by the students and Mr. Parks are considered by the Curriculum Committee and then the faculty of the College.

However, the Tuscarora Project, The Appalachian Study, The Course-Plus Program, and the Semester-Abroad are but a few examples of the type of educational innovation, which, in addition to its regular courses, attract faculty as well as students to Pitzer College.
FACULTY PROFILE — CYNTHIA SIEBEL

The audacity! A mini-skirted college teacher who actually hops up and down when she's excited—who adopted twin babies (when she's perfectly capable of bearing children), refers to children as 'kids', and is frightfully informal. Is there a place for such a person on a college faculty? At Pitzer, yes.

Cynthia Sue Siebel ("Cynthia is a good name for birth certificates and things like Junior League, but I like to be called Sue") has a Ph.D. in Psychology, is involved in extensive professional research projects, and uses colloquialisms frequently. "She doesn't have an intellectual air that puts people off," said an advisee.

Sue Siebel came to Pitzer only last year, and among her most valuable contributions is evidence that motherhood and a career go together. "My husband and I bring our kids to as many things at Pitzer as we can. I want my children to share my life as much as possible. And I think it's good for students to see that you can combine a career and family. Students say to me, 'That's neat. You do both.'"

"We often make an artificial dichotomy between home and away from home — they can be combined."

Female faculty members who combine their professions with motherhood are not unusual at Pitzer. Nevertheless the example Sue sets for Pitzer students is notable.

Outside an office that is alive with personal touches, a queue of students is usually waiting for the accessible Siebel. "If there's a student who wants to see me, I'm not satisfied until I've seen her. If a student needs me, I want to be here."

Her students concur, "There's never been a time when I couldn't see her." And if students miss her at her office, they catch her at home — at her option. "When the front porch light is on, that's the signal that students can come; if not, then they don't."

The light is usually on.

At home, the atmosphere is even less formal than at the office. "Once when I was there," said a student, "everyone was crowded in the kitchen while she was feeding the year-old twins — the Great Dane, four cats, and her older daughter, Julie. It was wild."

Sue Siebel began in Buffalo, New York, the daughter of a dentist and a public health nurse. From the beginning, she was sassy and freckled, with reddish-brown hair. She chose Pomona College for her undergraduate work, Berkeley for post-graduate work and finally Claremont Graduate School for her Ph.D. In the meantime, her husband had earned his J.D. degree. He is now working as a legal consultant while waiting to take the California Bar Examination.

About applying for a position at Pitzer College, she said, "Pitzer absolutely intrigued me. The problem is now that I've worked here, I don't know how I'd work anywhere else. Of course, when you count it up, you can say you've worked sixty or seventy hours a week. But at Pitzer, the distinction between work and play goes away — you're living. It becomes your life style."

"Sue Siebel is a radiant person. She exudes buoyancy, enthusiasm, zest for living — all qualities which can't be taught, only felt, perhaps communicated, if one is open to it."

She teaches five courses and guides many students in their independent studies. One of her advisees says, "She takes my ideas and makes me feel they're important. I'm free to follow any interest I want and she helps me relate it to what she's doing."

In addition to her regular course work and several committee assignments, Sue Siebel is an advisor for the Course-Plus Program in which twenty-five students are involved in a uniquely unstructured educational program. She is a natural for it.

"The opportunities for study outside the classroom are one of the things which make Pitzer attractive. Many students, through Course-Plus, are becoming inner-directed. Now they are coming to faculty as resource people, saying, 'What direction should I go in now?' This is what education is all about. It's the ability to tackle a problem, whether it's on the level of Einstein's theory or baby feeding."

A true professional psychologist, Sue Siebel is also involved in a major study of perceptual development of children. With two other Claremont Colleges psychologists, she has conducted a five-year test on all children in Claremont, from kindergarten through the fourth grades.

Each summer for the past three years, she has taught a creative activity workshop at Claremont Graduate School, helping teachers to recognize, foster, and promote creative ability in children.

She's everywhere.

A student observed, "She doesn't seem like a career woman or a mother. You can't put any labels on her. I just think of her as a woman."
Avery Hall Completes Pitzer Building Plans

The dedication of Dorothy Durfee Avery Hall on November 11 attracted more than a hundred guests who came to view Pitzer's new building, and to honor the R. Stanton Avery family of Pasadena whose gift made its construction possible.

The dedication climaxed the College's current building program, and brings the total buildings on campus to eight.

Avery Hall, the fourth academic building on campus, was named in honor of the late Dorothy Durfee Avery, a founding member of the Pitzer Board of Trustees. R. Stanton Avery is Chairman of the Board of Fellows of The Claremont Colleges.

Designed by the architectural firm Criley and McDowell of Claremont, the two-story building contains, as a focal point, a 300-seat auditorium having advanced audio-visual capabilities.

A large lecture room dominates the second floor; however, it also houses two seminar rooms, a classroom, and seven faculty offices.

Total cost of the building, exclusive of furnishings, was $447,000. Grants from the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare and the Fleischmann Foundation supplemented the Avery family gift.

"GENERATION GAP" FASHION SHOW THEME

The Parents Association will try to close (or maybe widen) "the generation gap" in a benefit fashion show Friday, March 13, featuring mothers and daughters as models.

The show, with "Generation Gap" as its theme, will feature swinging clothes from the past, present, and future.

According to Mrs. Arthur E. Mann of San Marino, chairman of the event, the program will be preceded by a luncheon at 12:30 p.m. in the Founders Room, McConnell Center.

The Association sponsored a similar event last February, with more than 100 parents in attendance. Those who could not attend donated $5 to participate in a drawing for the grand prize. Proceeds last year went toward a scholarship fund and book acquisitions.

LONG-RANGE PLAN GIVEN TENTATIVE NOD BY BOARD

The Long-Range Plan for Pitzer College, a plan which projects goals and financial needs over the next ten years was at last presented to the Board of Trustees at the December 2 meeting.

Its presentation climaxed months of work by a steering committee of the Long Range Planning Committee.

Dr. Kenneth S. Pitzer, board member and President of Stanford University, moved "that this plan be received for a minimum of five years and for consideration by the new president in developing his recommendations for a plan for the College." The motion carried.

In presenting the Plan, the Committee said, "Our report is organized in accordance with the hopes and aspirations of Pitzer College at its founding six years ago. We take the basic hopes and promises to have been three: (1) that Pitzer would be a liberal arts college with a social science emphasis, devoted to the pursuit of educational excellence; (2) that there would be close faculty-student relationships and participation by all elements of the academic community; and (3) that the College would be committed to educational experimentation and innovation. We propose a reaffirmation of these pledges."

TOP-LEVEL CHANGES

At its December 2 meeting, the Pitzer College Board of Trustees "regretfully accepted" the resignation of Chairman Odell S. McConnell and unanimously elected Howard D. Williams as his successor. Mr. McConnell has been chairman for more than two years, succeeding Dr. Robert J. Bernard, founding chairman.

Mr. Williams has served as chairman of both the Development and Nominating Committees and as a member of the Executive Committee.

Two newly elected trustees, Mrs. Sylvia Holden of South Laguna, wife of the late Roger C. Holden, and Mrs. Joel Newkirk of Santa Monica, daughter of the late Dorothy Durfee Avery, attended their first Board meeting in December. Both Mr. Holden and Mrs. Avery were founding Trustees. Mrs. Newkirk is also the daughter of R. Stanton Avery.
Wednesday, January 14, 10 a.m.
* The City: Ancient and Modern, by John E. Murphy, Instructor in Political Studies. Academy Lecture Series, Founders Room.

Wednesday, January 21, 10 a.m.
* City of Pigs, by Dr. John R. Rodman, Associate Professor of Political Studies and Dean of the Faculty. Academy Lecture Series, Founders Room.

Thursday, January 22, 6:15 p.m.
Parents Association Annual Dinner, "Inside/Outside Pitzer," Founders Room.

Wednesday, January 28, 10 a.m.
* Space, Place, and Cities, by Carl H. Hertel, Associate Professor of Art. Academy Lecture Series, Founders Room.

Tuesday, February 3, 1:30 p.m.
Founders Day, Dedication of Pellissier Mall, and dinner honoring founding trustees (following meeting of Board of Trustees).

Wednesday, February 4, 10 a.m.
* Cultural Pluralism: An Epitaph for the Melting Pot, by Dr. Manuel Ramirez, Associate Professor of Psychology. Academy Lecture Series, Founders Room.

Wednesday, February 11, 10 a.m.
* The Urban R's: Responsibility, Representation, Reform, by Irving J. Spitzberg, Jr., Assistant Professor of Philosophy and Social Institutions. Academy Lecture Series, Founders Room.

Friday, March 13, 12:30 p.m.
Fashion Show and Luncheon, by the Parents Association of Pitzer College, Founders Room.

*Advance registration and fee.

THE PARTICIPANT
Pitzer College, Claremont, California

Marriages, Babies, Jobs Top Alumnae News

Dear Alumnae,

Our Alumnae Director, Betsy Barrett Stanton, class of '68, is on a year’s leave of absence in order to accompany her husband, John, to Avon, Connecticut (Box 85). He is working for the Aetna Life Insurance Company. We’ve received several notes from her, saying that life is settling down for them somewhat, but that she misses Pitzer and her friends. She sends her love to all.

In Betsy’s absence, I’m counting on you to keep me up-to-date on the news in your life so that I can pass it on to everyone. In May 1970, a new, more complete alumnae directory will be mailed to everyone for whom we have addresses. If you have any changes in name, address or whatever, now’s the time to send them to me.

Sue Robertson, ’69, found Europe so attractive that she’s staying. She’s working at a hospital in Bern, Switzerland.

Sherry Van Liere, ’69, is attending the Institute for European Affairs in Geneva.

Karen Cole, ’69, recovering from a cultural shock, says she is enjoying graduate school at Duke University. She is working toward her M.A. in French.

Cheryl Sigler, ’69, is in graduate school at Syracuse, New York. She says, “Pitzer seems to be a shining example, now that I am away,” and can’t help but compare it with Syracuse.

Carol Flint, ’69, will be married to Neil Yeager of Claremont Men’s College, in January 1970.

Louisa Francis, ’68, is engaged to Jeff Lasher, also of Claremont Men’s College.


Victoria Mortensen, ’69, married Lloyd Regier and is living at 2161 Garnet, Pacific Beach, California 92109. Both are working toward advanced degrees.

Linda Tremelling, ’68, married John Landau, November 29, and is living in Mountain View, California, at 2650 California St.

Janice Burton, ’67, married Thomas Dobyns on September 20, 1969. Their address is 730 47th Avenue, San Francisco 94121.

Carole Cromwell, ’67, married William Jensen and is living at 4121 Mercury Avenue, Los Angeles.

Please, let us keep in touch,
Margaret Edwards
Alumnae Director

(Editor's note: Mrs. Margaret Edwards, wife of Dr. Robert Edwards of Baxter Medical Center, has been appointed Alumnae Director. In June 1969, Mrs. Edwards completed work on her master's degree in Education and Psychology at Claremont Graduate School. Her Master's thesis was an evaluation of the Experimental Living Unit, a coeducational group, housed in a corridor of Holden Hall last year.)