

Hospital Capsules

Beatrice H. Hill

• The Westchester County Recreation Commission, New York, and the National Recreation Association co-sponsored a one-day institute in White Plains, on February 5, on "Recreation for the Aged, Ill and Handicapped" (primarily those in nursing homes). Westchester County is working very progressively towards a closer relationship between the nursing home owner and the local recreation commission. The outcome will be a carefully formulated recreation plan, with trained volunteers under supervision of personnel indoctrinated in recreation.

• The National Association of Recreational Therapists will hold their annual hospital meeting in Chicago at the Hotel LaSalle, March 20-21. The topic will be "Recreational Care for the Mentally Ill and Mentally Retarded." There will be tours of Chicago hospitals, some very fine addresses by psychiatrists, panels on music, sports, games, clubs, parties, dancing, and special workshops in rhythm band and folk dancing.

• April 28-30, the Third Southern Regional Institute in Hospital Recreation will be held at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. Conferences with doctors, workshops on supervision leadership, adaptation of activities and interpretation will be featured. For further information, write Harold V. Meyer, Box 1139, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

• Teachers College, Columbia University, and the National Recreation Association are planning a conference in June, to consist of two two-week sessions, with or without a two-point credit each, for a University fee of fifty dollars. Preliminary plans indicate an intensive in-service course of training for those hospital recreation professionals who feel a need of expanding and improving the recreation services in their institutions. Emphasis will also be placed on methods and techniques of

the professional worker and of the potential college graduate.

There will be daily class lectures and demonstrations at the college as well as field work in an institution which matches the needs and interests of the student. Further information will be announced in this column at a later date.

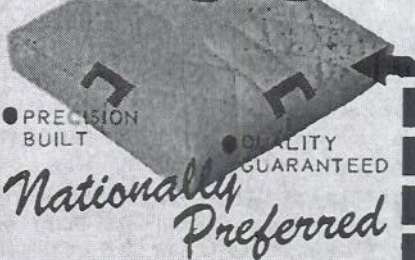
• I wonder how many recreation leaders read the very fine article in the January 3 issue of *Life*, "The Age of Psychology in the U.S.," the first of a series by Ernest Hairmann? I call attention to it because it contains an upsetting aspect . . . a picture of the hospital team that treats a mental patient, with practically every department mentioned with the *exception of recreation*. Recreation in a mental hospital, as we know, is very important in the patient's daily care; and yet, in a national publication like this, we are still so little recognized professionally that we are not mentioned along with the other members of the hospital team.

• Another interesting article, in *The New York Times*, January 13, by Dr. Howard A. Rusk, in his regular Sunday column, tells us that today there are more general hospital beds than ever before; and since the Hill-Burton Hospital Survey and Construction Program started in 1948, the nation has gained 253,000 acceptable new ones . . . "In contrast to this improving picture in numbers and distribution of general hospital beds, the availability of chronic hospital, nursing home and rehabilitation beds has worsened. Studies . . . show we have only about half the nursing home beds needed and almost half of those we do have are not acceptable by state standards of health and safety. Hill-Burton inventories in mid-1956 showed an over-all need for 395,000 nursing home beds. There are now 218,000 such beds, of which 103,000 were not acceptable."

He also notes that, in the entire country, there are only twenty-eight comprehensive rehabilitation centers. He closes by commenting that, as the life-span continues to lengthen, the number of persons affected by chronic disease and physical disability will continue to mount. Thus, dynamic action must be taken for the care of this increasing hospital population. ■

MRS. HILL is the NRA consultant on hospital recreation.

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