



By Tsukasa Furukawa

Staff Writer

In a remote town of Numakuma, a typical Japanese farming community in eastern Hiroshima Prefecture, an international group of students from many lands toiled together for two weeks under the blazing summer sun to help build a "Boys' Pasture" for mentally-retarded children.

The campers—from India, Japan, Malaysia, Philippines, U.S., Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam—shared a simple, yet joyful and self-disciplined life. They lived on "tatami" floors in a wooden building in the compounds of an old temple.

Every one did his or her own laundry. They did the cooking by themselves.

The meaning of the work camp was manifold, yet the most important was that the participants learned the true value of international understanding through working and living together.

The day at the camp begins and ends with a meditation. Braving the scorching sun, campers dug ditches at the ranch site on which a home for the mentally-handicapped will soon emerge. While one group cut down trees in the hill, another carried soil for leveling the ground. And, as night fell, laughter and merry singing

The 5,000-tsubo site for "Boys' Pasture" in Numakuma, surrounded by green hills.



Braving the scorching heat, campers pitch into work. They are digging a drainage system for the pasture.



On the improvised stage in front of a temple hall, all campers join in singing in chorus before the villagers on Open House Day.

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## Int'l Students Group Toiling For Boys' Pasture In Hiroshi

echoed in the hills.

The village has never been exposed to outside influence. Villagers stared at campers curiously and inquisitively at first. But, gradually curiosity turned into friendliness, especially after the campers helped busy farmers with rice planting.

The work camp, sponsored by the American Friend Service Committee and held every year with participants from abroad, was a real "peace corps" in action, and it was the beginning of true international understanding on the people's level.

The campers held a colorful international show on Sunday, July 16, to entertain villagers and Self-Defense Forces members who worked with them in the project. Townsfolk played "Koto" and "Shamisen" and introduced their unique folk dance, while campers staged native dances in national costumes.

### 'Boys' Pasture'

The "Boys' Pasture", a Japanese version of the "Boys Town" in America is expected to make a start by the end of this year. It will accommodate about 60 children. The purpose is to teach mentally-retarded children how to live a productive life so that they will not become a burden to society.

The plan was initiated early this year by Father Zeno Zebrowski, a Franciscan missionary in Nagasaki who is well known for the "Anns' Town" he created in the slum of Tokyo. He is supported by Shigemasa Sakashita, veterinarian-turned-

social-worker who runs a nursery in Suita City.

The pasture is to be named "Zeno Boys' Pasture" in memory of the Catholic father who has dedicated 31 years of his life to helping the unfortunate in Japan.

As the campaign got under way, a local millionaire philanthropist, Hideo Kambara, president of the Kambara Steamship Company, offered to lease out 5,000 tsubo of land for almost nothing. The land was originally planned for an athletic field in Numakuma Town, but the townsfolk consented to making it a home for the mentally-handicapped.

In an unprecedented move, the Self-Defense Forces stationed in Hiroshima was mobilized to help in the project. It was the first time that a work team from the Defense Forces was dispatched for any social welfare project.

With the help of bulldozers, and some 40 members of the Self-Defense Forces, the project is rapidly progressing.

Capt. Isamu Saito, in charge of the work team said: "Our men learned the value of working for some constructive and significant purpose." "This has been worth more than hundreds of hours of lecturing on moral education," he said.

Fukuyama City donated two old school buildings for the project.

The now barren field will soon be transformed into a



Back from the campers get water from a wooden building.

green pasture, with pigs, goats, and

"This has been life's dream," said one camper. "I want the boys to teach them the ductive life."

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