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# Clear Lake groups work to aid youth

By CAROLYN CRONIN  
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Long before 18-year-olds received the right to vote, young people in the Clear Lake area were active.

They concerned themselves with problems which confronted them in the present world and threatened their future world, problems such as drugs, pollution, and racial unrest.

Adults there are just beginning to correlate their activity to teen activity. The most successful attempts at correlation have come through communication.

A Rotary-sponsored Youth Forum and a group, Youth For Community Improvement, are beginning to attract the interest of the young. They have been organized by adults, adults are the forum speakers, and adults aid the group seeking community improvement. The teens are listening, and questioning.

The Forum was organized a year ago when Leo Symmank, Martin Rappaport, and Dick Gregg, met with a handful of students from Clear Creek High School to discuss issues students would like aired through a forum.

Topics ranged from school codes and unrest on college campuses to politics in Texas and black power. Their purpose became to provide a forum in which any point of view could be freely aired through discussion.

The first year's topics included "Pollution In The Clear Creek Community," "Marijuana — Why or Why Not?" "The Role Of School Codes in Youth's Life Style Today," "Premarital Sex, Abortion, and Birth Control," and "Obscenity." Attendance ranged from as low as 40 up to 250 students.

This year's topics have not all been selected. The year was opened with a forum on marijuana. Dr. George Garver, former superintendent of the Houston Independent School District, will speak at the second forum at 7:30 p.m. Monday in the Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, 18220 Upper Bay Road, Nassau Bay, on the correlation of education to the real world.

Youth For Community Improvement is just getting started. This group had a purpose before it organized. Leo Symmank, chairman of Rotary's Youth Committee, said concern about the 18-year-old voter led to its organization.

"Our thoughts were that now that the 18-year-old is eligible to vote, he may be interested in community action," Symmank said. "We wanted to help 18-year-olds become involved in the political system."

Youth For Community Improvement is guided by Dick Gregg, attorney for the city of Nassau Bay. John Benson, a student at Clear Creek High School, heads the group.

Benson describes his group's activity as "strictly political."

"We're going to set up workshops for the upcoming 1972 elections and try to get information to the kids on how to become involved," Benson said. "We'll try to provide political orientation."

The group is presently working on a comparative study of police departments in the Clear Lake area, and are studying the function of police departments in local city government.

Just as any idea can be discussed at the Forum, any activity can be suggested to Symmank's Youth Committee for possible organization. This year's Forum sponsored a film festival the first weekend in December. Students selected the films but left interpretation to the individual.

Most students hear of meetings through word-of-mouth. Sometimes there are mimeographed papers announcing Forum speakers and topics. Martin Rappaport, co-chairman of this year's Forum with Chuck Hoover, thinks the hardest part of his work is letting people know when a meeting has been scheduled.

"We'll open it up to anybody," Rappaport said, "but the hardest part is communication."