



PHILIP WALKER, RECORD STAFF
About 250 children and counsellors from Children's International Summer Villages enjoyed a day at Bingemans yesterday. The summer camp program brings together 11 year-old children from 20 countries.

Camps make world a bit bigger for kids

BY NICOLE O'REILLY
RECORD STAFF

KITCHENER

They stood hand-in-hand, singing and dancing. All of them new friends from close to 20 countries.

The group of about 150 smiling 11-year-olds met at Bingemans in Kitchener yesterday for a day of fun.

The kids — effectively ambassadors for their respective countries — are participating in the Children's International Summer Villages program in Canada this year.

The organization draws kids together from all over the world to promote peace and understanding among different cultures.

"It's a fun way to learn that under all that superficial stuff we're all the same," said Laura Scrivener, president of Canada's organization.

Children's International Summer Villages is celebrating 50 years in Canada.

"This is the best way to celebrate our 50th anniversary, with 150 11-year-olds," Scrivener said.

The villages, which are camps, run for four weeks and started just over a week ago.

This year, Canada's villages are in Toronto, London and Kitchener. Participants from all three sites met in Kitchener yesterday.

Kate Banting, the director of Toronto villages has been involved with the organization since she was 11. She has made lifelong bonds.

"It's had a huge impact on my life," she said. "I'm more confident. I wouldn't be where I am."

After their arrival at the park yesterday morning, the campers planted a tree.

They wrote wishes down on paper and buried

them with the roots, with the hope the wishes will flourish along with the tree.

Each village had a child help with a shovel. Alexa Fisher, from Detroit, Mich., volunteered to represent the London village. Her eyes lit up when asked about her new friends.

"It's really fun, I can't even explain it," she said.

Also at yesterday's event were Lawrence Bingeman, director of Bingemans, and Kitchener Coun. Kelly Galloway.

"Fantastic, this whole program is fantastic, it's a great way to bring peace and understanding," Bingeman said.

Peace and understanding are the main goal of the villages — from Mexico to the Netherlands and from Israel to China. In 2006, there were 51 children's villages around the world.

Children who are too old for the villages can participate in an interchange or summer camp programs.

Tom Norberg, 20, from Sweden is living in Toronto this summer as the junior representative for kids from Sweden.

He's been participating in camps and interchanges since he was 16.

Norberg said he believes the organization makes the world a better place.

"I think all the bad things in the world are because of a lack of education," he said. "I think it's easier to educate kids than adults."

Norberg is staying at Miles Parkinson's home.

Parkinson, who also started out in the villages, said he now has friends all over the world. He has seen friends go through wars and disasters.

"It makes issues far more personal," he said. No'reilly@therecord.com

AROUND THE REGION

PALMERSTON

Teen charged after Internet threats

A 16-year-old boy appeared in a Guelph court yesterday on a charge of threatening another boy with death.

Provincial police say an 11-year-old youth from Palmerston, northwest of Kitchener, was chatting online with other local youths he knows.

He sent a couple of e-mails to the teenager, who allegedly threatened the younger boy over the computer. The 11-year-old boy then logged off the computer, went downtown with some friends and was accosted by the teenager, who also lives in Palmerston.

The teen was arrested Monday and was held in custody pending yesterday's bail hearing on a charge of uttering death threats.

KITCHENER

Girl assaulted, robbed in city park

A 15-year-old girl was knocked to the ground and had her purse stolen Monday night as she walked through a Kitchener park.

The girl was walking through Greenfield Park, near Greenfield and Traynor avenues, around

9:45 p.m. when she was approached by a woman, Waterloo regional police said yesterday.

The woman talked briefly to the girl, knocked her to the ground and took her purse before running away. The victim received minor injuries.

The suspect is described as black, five feet four inches tall with a chubby build.

ELMIRA

Man with knife robs corner store

An Elmira convenience store was robbed of cigarettes and cash early yesterday morning.

A man walked into Mac's Convenience store on Arthur Street South in Elmira brandishing a knife, Waterloo regional police said. He demanded money and cigarettes.

The clerk handed over cash and a carton of cigarettes. The robber was last seen heading north on foot on Arthur Street South.

He is described as white, 18 to 24 years old, about five feet eight inches to five feet 11 inches tall and 160 to 170 pounds, with an average build. He was wearing a light grey hooded sweatshirt, dark pants and white running shoes.

• Record staff and news services

PREMIERES! PERSONALITIES! PAPAZZII!

THE RECORD
PRODUCTION
Celebrity Scene
DIRECTOR
Joel Rubinoff
DATE SCENE TAKE
Starting Thurs. July 19th

RECORD REPORTER JOEL RUBINOFF

As TV networks unveil their fall offerings and parade their stars before the press, Record critic Joel Rubinoff will be there to ask the tough questions and dig behind the media facade.

VISIT THERECORD.COM FOR JOEL'S BLOG!

Factory Authorized Clearance!

THE INNOVATORS OF COMFORT™

Don't miss our huge floor sample sale! We have been authorized to discount select 2006 models to make room for the all new 2007 model Stressless® recliners. Our patented Stressless® system uniquely provides comfort for all. Experience this comfort first hand and take advantage of our valuable savings going on now.

www.ekornes.com

weewatch
enriched home child care

A Licensed Agency

Become a Home Child Care Provider

Operate your own home day care business with Wee Watch.

As a professional Provider with Wee Watch you can focus on what you enjoy most, quality time with the children, because we take care of the rest. Enjoy this rewarding career from your home and you will receive competitive pay rates including pay for children's sick days, statutory holidays and overtime.

- Training, workshops & ongoing support
- Resources, craft supplies & some equipment supplied
- A regular pay cheque
- Provider Enhancement Grant

Caring for children can be very rewarding with Wee Watch.
Become a Provider today. Please call the office in your area.

Waterloo & Central Kitchener Office 519-742-0012
Kitchener Office 519-894-3686

Come in today and take advantage of our floor sample sale.

Factory Authorized Clearance on Selected Stressless Chairs from **\$1195**

Your Passport to Fine Furnishings

IMMEDIATE DELIVERY

INTERNATIONAL HOME INTERIORS

Home of the Stressless Chair

STORE HOURS
Monday - Thursday 10-6
Friday 10-9; Saturday 10-5
Closed Sundays until Labour Day
www.internationalhomeinteriors.ca

Visit Our Showroom at
1373 Victoria Street North, Kitchener
Tel: (519) 742-8501

Features every day

Call 894-3000
1-800-210-5210
For home delivery

THE RECORD