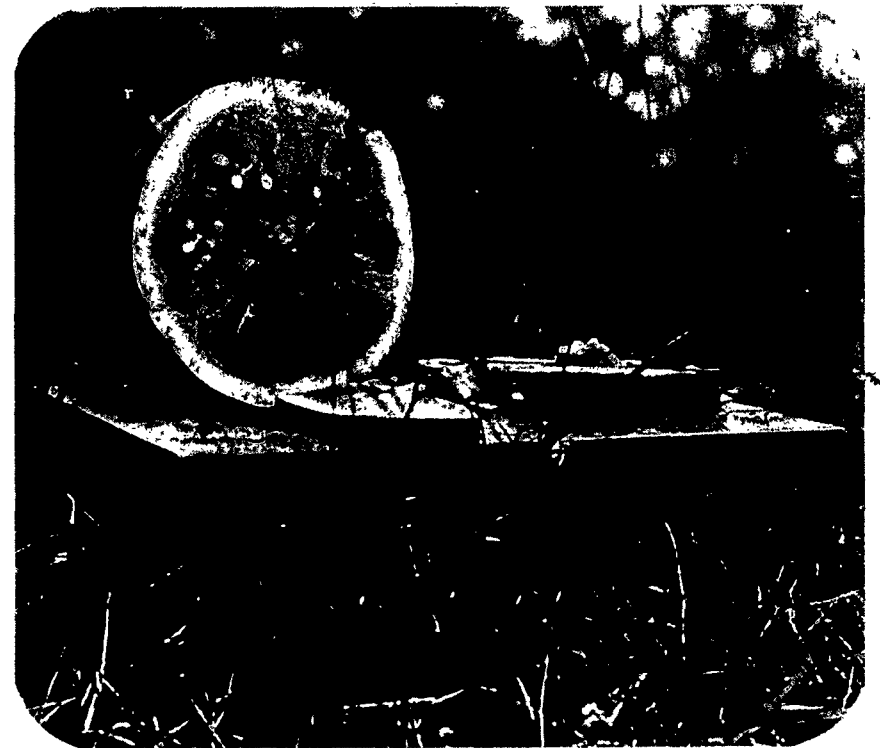




Text by Carman J. Viglucci. Photos by David Stothers



PICNIC

In many ways it was just another picnic.

You couldn't say the weather was uncooperative but it did fluctuate just enough between too brisk to swim and too warm to wear a sweater.

There was watermelon; hamburgers and hot dogs sizzling on the grille; picnic lunches; coffee; soft drinks; a bottle of beer here and there. A picnic.

The fathers and sons played volleyball, softball; many went on short hikes in the surrounding country; there was a peanut hunt in a field for the kids.

True, the setting was exceptional: the rolling grounds of the activity-oriented Richard Knoblock home in Fairport. Still in most respects it was just another picnic.

What made it different was that many of the frolicking children were adopted members of the families there. And more, they had once been part and parcel of the limbo of the hard-to-place, homeless children.

The picnic was the first of what will probably be annual picnics of the Council of Adoptive Parents, an organization of families that have adopted hard-to-place children. Such youngsters are divided into four groups—the older child, those with medical problems, those of a minority group, and biracial.

The group works through area adoptive agencies to promote the adoption of these children who wait.

But the kids at the picnic were no longer waiting. They romped and squealed and bawled and made messes of themselves chomping on watermelon—just as any other kids.

They played with their dads, gave their mothers a hard time, fought with their siblings, shyly made new friends—just as any other kids.

They are now members of typical families—well, almost typical.

Just as it was almost a typical picnic.