

University of Montana

ScholarWorks at University of Montana

University of Montana News Releases, 1928,
1956-present

University Relations

8-7-1969

Biser family of Gettysburg attends University of Montana family camping workshop

University of Montana--Missoula. Office of University Relations

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/newsreleases>

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Recommended Citation

University of Montana--Missoula. Office of University Relations, "Biser family of Gettysburg attends University of Montana family camping workshop" (1969). *University of Montana News Releases, 1928, 1956-present*. 4996.

<https://scholarworks.umt.edu/newsreleases/4996>

This News Article is brought to you for free and open access by the University Relations at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in University of Montana News Releases, 1928, 1956-present by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.



Information Services • University of Montana • Missoula, Montana 59801 • (406) 243-2522

IMMEDIATELY

bourke/bw
8-7-69
ht + cs +

BISER FAMILY OF GETTYSBURG ATTENDS UM FAMILY CAMPING WORKSHOP

By Kathleen Bourke
UM Information Services

MISSOULA--

Seven years ago, Dr. Walter C. Schwank's wife, Helen, had what he calls a "brainchild."

She suggested that her husband, who is summer session director at the University of Montana in Missoula, start a one-week, University sponsored family camping trip during the summer.

In July 1969, the Biser family from Gettysburg, Pa., participated in the reality of Helen Schwank's idea.

Gareth V. Biser, his wife, Janet, and their three children came West to see the country, learn about camping in the "wilds," and enjoy a cool, relaxed Montana summer.

An Assistant Professor in the Physical Education Department at Gettysburg College, Gettysburg, Pa., Biser wanted to come to a western state to continue studying toward his doctorate in physical education.

Willing to take a chance, he selected the University of Montana from his office bulletin board. Upon inquiry, Biser found to his delight that the University in Missoula, Mont., offered unique summer courses in his field, one of them being the summer camping workshop.

Since 1962, when 26 enthusiastic campers gathered to participate in the first camp, the program has grown to include more than 150 people from all over the country. At the 1969 family camping and outdoor recreation workshop, families from 22 states were brought together.

more

The entire Biser family set out in the family station wagon early in June. They plan to return home at the end of August after a three-week camping excursion around the U.S. The family left Missoula on July 27, after the first summer session. At the end of their travels, the Bisers plan to have driven 10,000 miles.

The three Biser children, Christopher, 10, Kyle, 8, and Courtenay Sue, 4, met dozens of children from all over the country at the week-long camp. More than 40 children under 13 attended the camp with their parents.

Fishing, nature walking and just running and playing under the sun in the Big Sky Country, kept children busy for the entire week.

One afternoon, according to camp tradition, some representatives of the Salish and Kootenai Indian Tribes visited the camp to entertain the campers with their ancient, tribal dances. The Indians own the land used for the camp and are cosponsors with the University of Montana of the annual event.

Campsite for the workshop is on the Flathead Indian Reservation, in the Jocko Valley, 40 miles north of Missoula. Laced with trees, the site runs for one-half mile, bordered on one side by the Jocko River.

The large area allows each family to enjoy the privacy of an individual campsite and still be part of the larger camping group. There is a main campfire near Schwank's campsite, where morning coffee is served daily by the "camper of the day."

Adults may choose between attending the workshop for pure enjoyment or they may enroll at UM to receive credit for the session. Enrollees learn sound camping techniques geared to family camping. Purpose of the camp is to train campers on a nationwide basis.

Dr. Schwank, an experienced camper and avid outdoorsman, teaches the course. He is chairman of the UM health and physical education department, as well as summer session director. Until the end of the first summer session, July 23, the Bisers lived near campus at 927 Rimini Court, Elliott Village, part of the University family housing.

Biser is originally from Jefferson, Md. His wife, the former Janet Stuckney, is from Caledonia State Park, Pa.