

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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USO Activities

There is interesting news coming from the activities of the Monterey USO these days suggesting new activities, new groups using the building facing El Estero and new programs. The organization has moved a long way into this problem through a program of personal relationships. Through this it has built up a USO family of well over 100 community groups, any and all, it can count upon as need.

Added to this list last month was the Peninsula Orchid Society of some 80 members. They use one of the meeting rooms on an off night once a month and already have provided the potential for many new friends for the USO. They have already and will continue to provide flowers for special occasions. Their interesting meetings are open to all service personal and families.

The end of June will mark 12 continuous years that the various suppers each Sunday night have been provided at the USO by various church groups and other organizations, amounting to a total of 824 suppers and an estimated expenditure of better than \$30,000. How many have enjoyed them? About 88,000 servicemen or about 18,000 different servicemen for an average of five meals. In recent months, as special guests on Sunday night, the organization has entertained a bus load of trainees from Fort Ord. This has proven to be a good mass media in introducing the USO to the newcomers.

As in the past Mother's Day has been to the USO one of the most important days of the year. From among the active volunteers a "Mother of the Year" is chosen and, with a group of other members, fill the gap for the hundreds of servicemen who cannot be home on this day. A simple program stimulates a lot of thinking and our Mothers of the day find themselves rather busy people. Over the years, the USO has accumulated a file of letters of appreciation from mothers who could not be with their sons on Mother's Day.

An Armed Forces Day open house, a roller-skating party and a concert by the Music Teachers Assn. added to the regular activities. As a community facility, a candidates' forum added some real-life activity. Staff members were busy developing a "board workshop" for boards of

the regular community organizations, representing the USO at four budget hearings in this area, helping our local community chest play hosts to the annual meeting of Chests and Councils of California and representing the Armed Services Department at the Military Off-Post Recreation Conference.

The next coming event will be Sunday, July 9, when a Caravan will leave for San Francisco to attend the Ice Follies. The group will leave the Monterey USO in the morning and the total cost for transportation and the follies will be \$5.50. All reservations are final and the USO has announced that it cannot guarantee either transportation or tickets after Saturday, July 1.