

## Sounds of Spencer

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### Lions Camp Badger

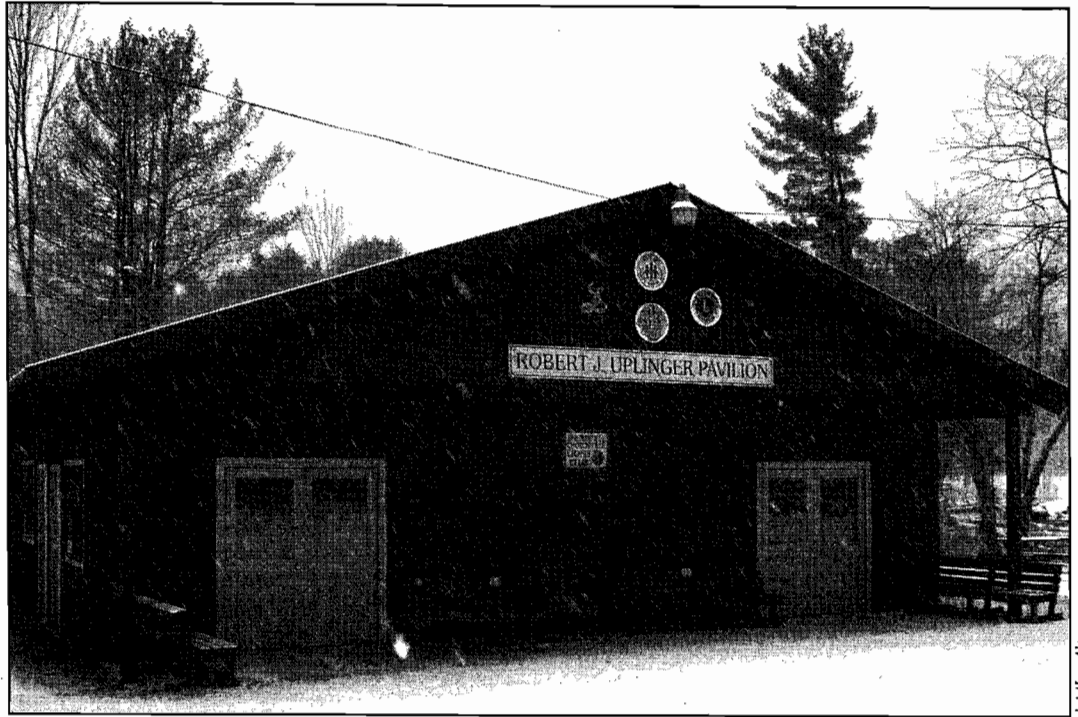
Lions Camp Badger is a camp for a summer clinic for the re-education and correction of stuttering, acute sound substitution, cleft palate speech, and all other speech and voice problems. The Clinic, founded in 1939 in Ithaca as the Ithaca Speech Clinic, was incorporated in 1964 as a non-profit educational organization. That same year the Clinic moved to its present site with 31 students leasing from Ithaca College 519 acres they were leasing from the U. S. Bureau of forestry. The original buildings on the site (Lake House, Dining Hall, and several cabins) were all constructed in the 1930's by the CCC program under President Roosevelt.

The purpose of this program is to improve communicative abilities of children having moderate to severe speech, hearing or language disabilities. The growth of the clinic was great, from a handful in 1940 to over a hundred in 1969 and a staff of 45 or so. "Staff" means full-time live-in staff members working directly and only with the children. Camp maintenance, cook, dishwashers, life guard, resident nurse etc. are extra.

Lions clubs, through former service to the visually handicapped, recognized that there was an ever dwindling number of visually handicapped people because of medical progress. They suggested that money might well be dedicated to speech and hearing handicapped. It was late in 1972 when three Lions Club members and their wives visited the clinic and they were so impressed they started contributing toward the tuition of needy students. Several Lions Clubs found they could contribute not only money but also their labor to improve the buildings and other facilities at the clinic, which had begun to age. Buildings were re-roofed, two new pavillions, new cabins, a shower house and laundry room were rebuilt and the kitchen was remodeled. About 1980 the Lions Clubs of New York State adopted the Clinic as a state project. The Clinic was certified by the N.Y. State Department of Education and received students at state expense to prevent regression during the summer vacation.

The day in camp starts at 7 a.m. with breakfast at 8, then classes from 9 to 12. Two hours of electives follow the lunch hour. Those who do not swim the first hour, chose between electives such as:

### House for Hearing



Lions Camp Badger, founded in 1939, was incorporated in 1964 and moved to its present site in Spencer. The camp helps children with speech and hearing challenges.

boating, arts & crafts, international culture, games, fishing, drama and nature walks. Classes are from 3 to 5 at which time they have an hour for cabin time. Cabin time is a chance for the campers and staff to spend time together doing any activity they like. At 6 p.m., everyone is called to the dining hall for dinner. After dinner there is a camp-wide activity. At 9:30 it's lights out.

Such is a typical day at Lion's Camp Badger. The weekends are scheduled as well. However, instead of classes, the day is spent doing a variety of activities or going on field trips. Some weekend highlights are the Friday bonfire /sing-a-long, the Saturday night dance and Sunday movies.

Ed Badger, leader of the Clinic, looked into securing the property from the U.S. Forestry Service. After a great deal of negotiation, the Bureau of Forestry suggested a land exchange deal where he would find a piece of property in Vermont that the Bureau would like to have. After several tries, he located property in Vermont that suited the Bureau. He then went to the bank in Spencer where he was able to borrow the \$45,000 needed to purchase the entire 519 acres.

It wouldn't be appropriate to tell the story of the Clinic without telling about Edgar Badger. A stutterer himself, he has taught hundreds of disabled children to use their voice in the world. Under his direction in the Clinic, students received approximately 180 hours of therapy in the six week program and were surrounded by counselors who

provided constant reminders and reinforcement of the therapy goals not only during the five daily classes but also during recreation time, meal time, and even in the cabins. From 1937 to 1965 Mr. "B" covered nineteen schools with 550 students requiring therapy per week. He had five therapists covering nineteen schools with 1100 to 1200 students requiring therapy out of a student population of 12,000.

When Ed Badger died in June of 1989, his obituary said that he graduated from Ithaca College in 1937 with a bachelor of science degree in speech pathology and then received a master of arts degree from Columbia University in 1941. He was chairman of the Speech and Hearing Department of the Binghamton public school system for 40 years, retiring in 1977. He became the director of the Ithaca Speech Clinic in 1956 having served as assistant director since 1945. In 1978, he was elected chairman of the board of directors for the Clinic, now the Empire State Speech and Hearing Clinic.

Students have come from all over New York State as well as Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Rhode Island, New Mexico, two from Israel and four from Ireland. There are thirty buildings, of which twenty-three are cabins. The Spencer-Candor Lions Club has adopted cabin number twenty-two. The camp has recently been entirely fitted with handicapped facilities and now expects around sixty students in the coming year.