

general public.

Vote to Sell

Seventy-seven club members voted to donate the land; 86 voted to try to sell it.

By September of 1978 it was obvious to the committee that no public body could finance purchase of the land.

At that point, the committee agreed the property should be donated to the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District to become a major part of the district's planned Kishwaukee Gorge development.

Three Covenants

Three covenants were to be included in the donation: the land would revert to Rockford Rotary if the Forest Preserve District ever had to dispose of it; the land would be made available for public use; and the land would always include the Rotary name in its title.

In addition, it was understood that the donated land would be used as matching "funds" to obtain \$351,620 in federal grants.

Federal Money

The federal money would be used to buy 155 acres to expand the nearby Blackhawk Springs Forest Preserve.

On Nov. 2, 1978, Rockford Rotarians voted "overwhelmingly" to approve this disposition of the camp and its lands.

It is estimated that more than 100,000 youngsters used Camp Rotary. And even as it closed it was used to assure that a huge tract of the

June 1961



Instruction in the art of self-defense was one of the highlights of a summer at Camp Rotary. The camp's demise came as government regulations increased expenses at the same time increased mobility allowed more family vacations, which cut into enrollment.

most beautiful lands along the Kishwaukee River would remain available to the public.

More than 100,000 youngsters used Camp Rotary

That development project is still on-going and eventually could be Winnebago County's most valuable nature preserve.

Only Regret

The only regret has been that Rockford Rotary has not been able to come up with another public-service project to replace Camp Rotary as its primary philanthropic project.

The Rotary Charitable Association, although of great value to the community, has neither the impact nor the visibility that Camp Rotary provided.