

Willowbrook

A city within A city

By **Felix Clarke**

Willowbrook is 380 acres of buildings, streets, sewers, people and problems.

Willowbrook has a security force (police) of 11 men and women who are on duty 24 hours a day by shifts. In addition they must help fight fires and drive the ambulance in emergencies.

Not unlike any modern city Willowbrook has crime. Three burglaries reported this year. Television and typewriters taken from buildings. The trouble has been placed at the easy access from the outside and the inability of the small security force to be everywhere.

Vandalism has cost Willowbrook much of its \$102,694 allocated for repairs. Ernest Palsic, business officer, said that most of the repairs can be handled by staff and only in a few cases did they have to send for outside contractors.

Tom Delaney, CSEA President, feels that the same problems exist in the maintenance department as in any other. "How can you expect 5 electricians to do the work of 12?"

Clothes...at times bag-fulls have left the school. "Like a City, we have the same human characteristics," relates one supervisor. "How can you really tell what is missing in a place this size?"

907,805 pounds of clothing go through the laundry every 4 weeks. Mr. Cunningham, only 2 weeks on the job, must supervise 102 employees 5 days a week with a shortage of 6 persons. "Even though 6 sounds like a small number, they are sorely missed," states Cunningham, as we tour the laundry.

On Wednesday, February 9, 1972 six people were absent from the laundry. These people worked in the dirtiest job in the place—the soiled clothing room.

After all the clothes that had been sorted the previous day were washed, nothing else could be done...there was no one to send upstairs to sort clothes. As it was, people were doubling up on duties.

We asked one attendant why she chose the laundry to work in. "I like the weekends of," she said. Another worker stated that she couldn't take the wards.

A laundry worker starts at grade 4 which pays a little over \$5,400 a year. There are only 9 supervising grade 7's for the laundry and the turn over there is quite slow. One man who has been in the laundry for 15 years stated that it was 10 years before he was up-graded.

For 7 years a dress presser has been operating without a safety guard when the steam shoots out. The operator said that it didn't bother her, though she has been doing it for three years and usually burns her arm when she rubs up against another part of the machine.

She is the only one pressing dresses and averages 800 dress a day before quitting time.

The safety officer was there that same day noting all the things which had been reported un-safe. Cummings felt optimistic about the repairs saying, "you know we do the best we can." In fact they have promised me my six other people...maybe in another three months. Turn-over is expected there, as it is in the wards. The work is hard and for women it is difficult being on their feet. Mostly, it is a dead-end job.

Transportation costs Willowbrook \$18,764 (mostly tolls)...automobile costs are rated at \$30,384. There are 25 cars, seven buses (2 not working), tractors for snow removal, jeeps, dump trucks to haul snow. Edward Sonnergren has been garage supervisor for 1 year, after 19 years in maintenance. With Sonnergren are 24 other men. Three of them are mechanics, the rest are vehicle operators.

Overtime is necessary to drive the laundry truck and deliver the food. Rotation is used to equal things out. There is not too much problem with breakdown and parts are not a problem. The Director has a Rambler for his personal use in addition to the three staff cars assigned to the Administration Building.

\$1,472,941 is spent for food at Willowbrook. The food allocation also includes the 220 persons (staff) living on the grounds. Palsic explains the food set-up as follows: Staff personnel are charged by the month for food. The State sets \$20 a month as the normal amount a family of two will spend. They do not have to spend exactly \$20. They are, however, not allowed to exceed what the business office considers necessary.

Five kitchens feed resident and staff. There are 196 kitchen personnel with a State freeze on 25 additional slots. The kitchen operates with 1 Food Administrator, 2 Supervising Dieticians, 1 Assistant Dietician, 2 Food Service Managers, 4 Head Cooks, 20 Cooks, 32 Assistant Cooks, 26 Kitchen Helpers. The civil service grades run from 4 to 20.

Before the cuts, 4 cooks would go to the Hudson River Training School every two weeks for an eight week training course.

The Head Dietician complained that 1/5 of his scheduled staff is out every day. Even though the kitchen is well organized and seemingly in harmony, the absenteeism causes the under-manned staff to work that much harder.

Willowbrook has over 1,000 spastic residents. For them a diet of strained food is mandatory. A case of 6 cans of green-beans, powdered, costs \$12. According to the chief dietician, it still is cheaper because the labor involved in making the solid food eatable for a spastic would be twice as much.

STAFF PATTERNS

As of January 24, 1972 Willowbrook can only employ 3,505 people - to date 2,838.8 of these positions are filled. The State has permanently removed 24.5 and put a freeze on 588.9 positions.

The department with the highest amount of positions allotted is the Psychiatric Attendant, Grade 6, with 1800 - 1520.9 filled.

The Safety Department is allotted only 11 positions and has them all filled.

To best understand the enormity of the employee makeup at Willowbrook following is a list of the departments' maximum allocations and present staffing:

Position	Max.	Filed	Position	Max.	Filed
Maintenance and Support Services					
Administration	14	12	Safety	11	11
Clerical	84	73.5	Housekeeping	55	47
Maintenance & Engineering	92	76	Vehicle Maintenance & Oper.	32	24
Kitchen	221	196	Stores	44	30
Laundry	118	102	Groundsman	15	12
RN-Staff Nurse	40	5	RN-Beginner	45	45
RN-Head Nurse	200	33.6	Nurse		
RN-Suprv. Nurse	34	28	RN-Instructor	13	9.3
LPN	65	58.9	Hosp. Attendant	5	2.5
Psych. Attendant	1800	1520.9	Sr. Attendant	104	82.8
*Others - G4		11	Staff Attendant	89	74.6
Psych. Nurses	21	12.5	Porter-Cleaner	34	28
Physicians			Resident Psych.	1	1
Medical Spec.	5	4	Clinical Spec.	10	9.8
Pathologist	1	1	Dental Serv.	12	10
Psychiatric Services					
Suprv. Psych.	2	0	Professional Psych.	4	4
Trainee Psych.	4	1	Teachers Serv.		
Social Services	17	10.5	Teachers	122	102.6
Occupational Therapy	93	36.5	Physical Ther.	38	16
Recreational Therapy	53	38.3	Speech & Hearing	13	5
			Chaplains	5	5

BENEFITS OF STATE WORK

Benefits provided for 220 employees on the Willowbrook grounds. There are eight houses constructed for administrative personnel and their families and three large apartment complexes.

Rental charges are formulated under section 135 of the Civil Service-Law. The rental computation is figured out by the location and condition of the premises. Willowbrook's residences come under the Urban/Suburban designation.

According to the law, monthly room rates for Willowbrook should be: Excellent \$40 - Good \$29 - Poor \$21. The State charges 100% for the 1st room; 75% for the 2nd room; 50% for 3 to 10 rooms; 50% for 3 to 7 rooms if conditions are good or poor; (no charge for rooms above 7 and 10).

A family of two living on the grounds may pay, on the average, \$20 a month for food. All personnel living on the grounds can order their food from the State.