

Friends of Kentucky Libraries,

June-July, 1970

Incorporated

NEWSLETTER

REPORT ON THE STATEWIDE DINNER
May 25 Louisville

The program was a real success due both to the excellence and enthusiasm of our speakers, who shared their varied experiences with us vividly, and to the timely and pressing subject itself -- illiteracy in Kentucky.

T.E.A.M.

Our first speaker, Mrs. Sidney Meyer, is well-known in Louisville and elsewhere as the person who organized and initiated T.E.A.M. (Talent, Experience, Ability and Maturity) at Barret Junior High School, six years ago. This is a tutoring program. Since the plan was put into action failures at Barret have become almost non-existent. Not only pupils with problems in subject matter have been helped but also those with deeper problems. It is nice to know that especially gifted and brilliant children were not neglected but were encouraged to take advantage of individual work. Originally, the plan was to use as teachers retired or semi-retired teachers, both men and women. They often gave one whole day or more weekly without pay. However, now that the Board of Education has taken over this work, there will be no age limit for the teachers nor is previous teaching experience required. However, having volunteers who are retired teachers was a very fortunate circumstance. The volunteer workers were, of course, unpaid. The program grew so fast and was so successful that it was taken to other Louisville Schools. Finally, this year, managing it became a full-time job. Mrs. Meyer, a wife, mother and woman of wide interests retired from her position as its director.

Our next speaker was Mr. Owen Clifford, Principal, Barret Junior High School. He gave us a glowing report of the success of TEAM. We all "visited" Barret by way of colored slides, sharing Mr. Clifford's view of teachers and pupils.

Mr. Jerry Summerfield, who, this spring, succeeded Mrs. Meyer, has the title of Co-ordinator of the Volunteer Program for the Louisville Public Schools, a full-time, paid position. However, when he spoke he did not tell of the future of the program but of his first experience working with children in a neighborhood of East Louisville. This was a separate program, unaffiliated with school or church.

Church-Related Group

Mrs. David Cull described still another program. This is under the auspices of several cooperating inner-city churches, a program to help in reading and other subjects and not in any way used to try to bring new members into any church. How interesting to realize that these churches and this work cut across all kinds of lines - religious (some of the churches in the group are Catholic, others are of various protestant sects); race (no restrictions); and geographical. (Children from districts other than inner-city were accepted.)

College-Related

Mr. James O'Rourke, the only librarian among our speakers, told of his work at Blazer, the library of Kentucky State College. What he said was new to almost all of us and we were delighted to have him on the program. He told us how the library of which he is director helps students who enter the school with less than adequate

preparation, whatever the specific subject area may be. Also, he mentioned the close cooperation between Blazer and the Department of Libraries in providing better service to many libraries.

Miss Wills offered help in supplying materials. She also welcomed all, especially those librarians who had made long trips from far places, mentioning an honored guest, Mr. Vernon Cooper, President of the Kentucky Association of Library Trustees, from Hazard.

The speakers, in their enthusiasm, took more time than was originally planned but obviously to good purpose since the attention was absolute.

Mr. Ken Meeker (of Lure of the Library fame) was to have led a panel of questions and answers but his intuition rightly told him that the hour was then too late after so concentrated a program had drained the listeners. With a few gracious words, he dismissed the meeting.

- - -

Note: Due to illness in her family, our president, Mrs. Gwen Davenport, was unable to be with us. The meeting was chaired by another officer - Mrs. Rosemary Brooks who took over at the last moment and, as ever, could be relied upon to do what she was asked to do with competence, good-will and great charm.

Financial Note: We did not gain or lose much financially.

Notes taken by

Marjorie Smith
Secretary

DR. FRANK LAUBACH 1884-----1970

This issue of the newsletter is dedicated, as a small tribute, to Dr. Laubach, through whose persistent effort over 100 million people on this earth left behind their illiterate state. All programs of teaching reading owe something to the inspiration of his life and work.

Dr. Laubach died of leukemia in Syracuse, New York, just last month, at the age of 86.

During the spring, he spoke at a meeting in Louisville. His friends were happy to see him, then, so full of zest and fire even though his senses, so he said, were not all they used to be. It was clear that he was referring to sight and hearing. Plainly, his mind and spirit were undiminished.

Many people in Louisville and throughout Kentucky are now using his teaching material. Some of his books and a biography of him are on the shelves at the Department of Libraries, Frankfort. Books put out by the Laubach Foundation are in use in almost every country of the world.

One can hardly read a biography of Dr. Laubach or any of his works without knowing that he is a modern saint of the most useful and lovable type.