

# Reaching People

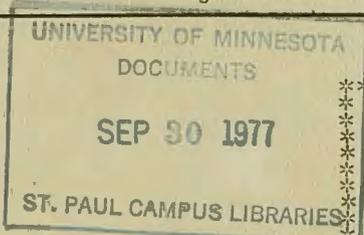
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Department of  
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Agricultural Extension Service

University of Minnesota



September 27, 1977

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THERE'S MORE THAN ONE WAY TO SKIN A CAT -- OR PRONOUNCE A WORD -- The words of Sydney Harris, quoted in last month's Reaching People, have stimulated considerable comment. I especially enjoyed Extension Horticulturist Deborah Brown's remarks. Here's what she said. "I take umbrage (2 syllables) at the suggestion that there is only one correct way to pronounce words. I am an extension horticulturist, dealing with distressed house plants. If someone called me to ask about a sick pom (palm), I would think them slightly balmy (excuse me: bomy). Yours for a sensible approach to the English language."

Deborah's right. There's more than one way to pronounce a word. The dictionary itself often lists several alternatives. Meanwhile Deborah can be "balmy" and I'll be "bomy" although I must admit I was "balmy" for many years until Sydney Harris came along. --Harold B. Swanson.

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YOUTH--DRUG ABUSE STARTS NOVEMBER PERSPECTIVE--Five November programs for Perspective, The Minnesota Public Policy Report moderated by John S. Hoyt, Jr. are announced. They can be viewed on the following television channels: KTCA, Channel 2, Twin Cities, Tuesdays at 10:30 p.m.; WDSE, Channel 8, Duluth, Mondays at 6 p.m.; KWCM, Channel 10, Appleton, Tuesdays at 10:30 p.m.; KEYC, Channel 12, Mankato, Saturdays at 1:30 p.m.; KCMT, Channel 7, Alexandria, Sundays at 7 a.m.; and KNMT, Channel 12, Walker, Sundays at 7 a.m.

November topics and guests include: Nov. 1, Youth--Drug Abuse--George Steiner, director, Comprehensive Health Department; Miriam Pew, assistant professor, Continuing Education in Social Work, University of Minnesota; Ken Beitler, director, Hennepin County Placer Project. Nov. 8, Youth--Child Abuse--Kenneth Schoen, commissioner, Department of Corrections; Louise Hasskamp, public health nurse, Aitkin Public Schools; Shirley Pierce, program coordinator, Children's Services, Ramsey County Mental Health Department; Russell Goodman, Department of Public Welfare. Nov. 15, Federal Farm Legislation and Policy--Merlyn Lokensgard, vice president,

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Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation and Affiliated Companies; Jim Houck, professor, Agricultural and Applied Economics, University of Minnesota; Arlan Stangeland, congressman. Nov. 22, Fall Agricultural Outlook--Bill Walker, state commissioner of agriculture; Paul Hasbargen, professor and extension economist, Farm Management, University of Minnesota; Olaf Haugo, farmer and member, Board of Directors, Farmers Union Grain Terminal Association. Nov. 29, Fall Energy Outlook--Harold Cloud, professor and extension agricultural engineer, University of Minnesota; John Millhone, director, Minnesota Energy Agency; Jerry Everette, Northwest Petroleum Association.

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SOLUTION FOR EFFECTIVE MEETINGS--Or let's subhead that "Selling--the Way Prospects Buy." James N. Leighton, supervisor of executive seminars for the 3M Co., recently spoke to agricultural marketing professionals in Minnesota and adjoining states. Some of his advice applies well to our work for the University.

"When you mismanage people in an open meeting, you risk a pit of rattlesnakes awaiting a chance to strike," he pointed out.

He then suggested several "solutions" for effective meetings, especially the management and planning type. Before you schedule, ask:

Why am I doing this? In business it is not to communicate but rather to influence. He strongly suggested writing out behavioral objectives. We've heard that a lot in education, too, haven't we?

Whom should I invite? Here he suggested we learn to "manage" mavericks in an organization, saying that a dedicated person with a rusty wrench can do more than an indifferent person with a whole bag of tools.

He pointed out the importance of bringing in top people by quoting from Andrew Carnegie's headstone, "Here Lies a Man Who Brought into Service Better Men than Himself."

What interests the group? What do you need to do, what aspects of the meeting will help them solve their problems?

Leighton then went on to give some don'ts for a meeting leader.

1. Don't resent questions. He suggests that we acknowledge questions; that we never answer in a monosyllable (e. g. yes, no); that we listen between paragraphs; and that if we're not sure, ask the questioner to clarify.
2. Don't resent disagreement. This is our only safeguard of becoming slaves of our own organization. It is said that former President Sloan of General Motors postponed a decision for 30 days if no questions were asked at a general planning or executive meeting.
3. Don't hog your own meeting; don't kill it with jawboning. Make your subordinates or colleagues look good, he said.

And then on the positive side he pointed out that leaders should meet their obligation of (1) having a strategy worked out before the meeting, (2) starting on time, (3) setting the climate, letting people know the ground rules, and (4) ending on a positive note. --Harold B. Swanson.

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# Publications and Direct Mail

September 1977

## NEW PUBLICATIONS

- Caning. Extension Bulletin 402. Reprinted from publication of the same name printed by North Carolina Agricultural Extension Service. Details explicitly how to restore broken cane in chairs. 8 pages. Available.
- Emergency Grain Storage. Ag Engineering FS No. 23. Harold Cloud and Fred Benson. Discusses the economics of emergency grain storage and describes alternative storage facilities.
- Treatment and Disposal of Milkhouse and Milking Parlor Wastes. M-159. Donald W. Bates and Roger E. Machmeier. Discusses amount of waste water, settling tanks, land surface disposal, lagoon treatment, subsurface treatment, and toilet waste treatment. 12 pages. Available.
- Shade Trees for Southeastern Minnesota. Tree Line No. 7. Jane P. McKinnon. Describes trees appropriate for southeastern Minnesota and includes size, pest problems, and planting limitations. 2 pages. Available.
- Drying Elm Lumber. Tree Line No. 9. Thomas Milton. Describes elm characteristics and uses, seasoning, air drying, and kiln drying. 2 pages. Available.
- The Portable Bandmill for Sawing Diseased Elm and Oak. Tree Line No. 10. Dennis Dark. Describes difficulties associated with conventional sawmills, how the bandmill works, its advantages and disadvantages. Tables give current hardwood lumber prices, wood tie prices, and grades, and prices for lumber sawn from diseased elm and oak trees. 2 pages. Available.
- Basic Specifications for Elm Sawlogs. Tree Line No. 11. Lewis Hendricks. Discusses definition of sawlog, hardwood log-use classes, practices in Minnesota, and sanitation. 2 pages. Available.

## REVISED PUBLICATIONS

- Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program. EFNEP 34. Brochure to be used by EFNEP Program Assistants to explain the program and their services as they call on new clients. Replaces the old "Door Knocker." 6 pages. Available.
- Energy Consumption of Refrigerators, Freezers, and Ranges. Home Economics-Family Living FS No. 31. Wanda Olson. Explains how to select efficiently operating appliances and points out ways to conserve energy when using appliances. 2 pages. Available.
- Street Trees for Minnesota. Horticulture Fact Sheet 22. M. C. Eisel. Gives detailed list of considerations for selecting street trees. Lists recommended street trees for Minnesota as well as a brief list of those not suited for street trees. 2 pages. Available.

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Plant Parasitic Nematodes. Plant Pathology Fact Sheet 31. D. H. MacDonald. Discusses characteristics and habitat of plant parasitic nematodes, how they spread, why and when they are important, and how they can be controlled. 2 pages. Available.

REPRINTED PUBLICATIONS

Roof Snow Behavior and Ice Dam Prevention. Extension Bulletin 399. Howard L. Grange and Lewis T. Hendricks.

Home Canning Fruits and Vegetables. Extension Folder 100. Isabel Wolf and Edmund Zottola.

Cost Estimate of Beef by the Side. Extension Folder 289. Richard J. Epley.

Physical Fitness for You. Extension Folder 339. Mary Darling.

Family Plans for Severe Weather. HO 72, parts 1 and 2. Clifton Halsey.

Last Minute Preparation for Windstorms, Winter Storms, Fallout/Tornado Safety Rules. RCD 4. Clifton Halsey.

Close-Up Photography. Information Service Series 18. Donald Breneman.

Writing a News Story. Information Service Series 31. John Sperbeck.

More Effective Posters. Information Service Series 32. A. Balmer.

Chemical Application Record. Agricultural Chemicals Fact Sheet 2.

Feeder Pig Grading Standards. Animal Science Fact Sheet 11. C. J. Christians and R. L. Arthaud.

Small Trees. Arboretum Review 16. Leon Snyder.

Fitting and Showing Dairy Cattle. Dairy Husbandry Fact Sheet 13. M. F. Hutjens.

Controlling Insects in the Home Vegetable Garden. Entomology Fact Sheet 11. D. M. Noetzel.

Plant Galls. Entomology Fact Sheet 23. D. M. Noetzel.

Minnesota Ticks and Their Control. Entomology Fact Sheet 27. L. K. Cutkomp and John Schlotthauer.

Making Fresh Pack Pickle Products. Food Science and Nutrition Fact Sheet 26. Isabel D. Wolf.

Making Fermented Pickles and Sauerkraut. Food Science and Nutrition Fact Sheet 27. Isabel D. Wolf.

Heating with Microwaves. Home Economics Fact Sheet 35. Wanda Olson and Robert Olson.

Tuberous Begonias. Horticulture Fact Sheet 5. C. Gustav Hard.

Culture of Garden Roses. Horticulture Fact Sheet 17. Mervin Eisel.

Garden Chrysanthemums. Horticulture Fact Sheet 38. R. E. Widmer.

Controlling Disease in the Home Vegetable Garden. Plant Pathology Fact Sheet 9. Howard Bissonnette and F. L. Pflieger.

Judging and Grading Live Market and Ready-to-Cook Poultry. Poultry Fact Sheet 33. Melvin Hamre.

Raising Ducks. Poultry Fact Sheet 43. Melvin Hamre.

How to Sample Soil for Testing. Soils Fact Sheet 4. J. Grava and W. E. Fenster.

# THE COMMUNICATIONS SCENE

Department of Information and Agricultural Journalism  
Agricultural Extension Service  
University of Minnesota  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

No. 63

## CAUGHT IN THE COMMUNICATION GAP?

by Harold B. Swanson, Professor and  
Extension Communications Specialist

Have you ever wondered why your kids, wife, husband, or friends don't seem to understand what you mean? Or why city people don't seem to grasp the farmer's problems? Or vice versa? Or why an employee will say, "Why didn't you tell me you wanted it that way?" And all the boss can say is, "I thought I did".

One way to answer these questions is to say that there is a communication gap between a speaker and a listener--or a writer and a reader. Sometimes we can blame this on the listeners. They don't seem to be paying attention, or they're letting themselves be distracted. But there are other explanations, too. And many of these can be traced to ourselves as speakers or communicators.

One explanation for the communication gap is Noise. We live in a noisy world, both in the physical sense and in the communication sense. When we talk about noise, of course, we immediately think of sounds--bangs, jarring music, loud talking, or screaming kids. These compete for our attention, distract us. But there are other, and perhaps more important, noises that interfere with communications--create the gap we're talking about.

The listener has to sort through a bombardment of literally hundreds of messages. This problem becomes all the more severe when we remember that the average person is able to listen at a rate 4 or 5 times the rate of normal speech. This excess listening capacity allows the listener's mind to wander. And that wandering may be triggered by other things than physical noise. For example, the speaker may have a nervous twitching habit or may be wearing a tie or a bikini that draws attention away from what the speaker is saying. In the early days of the popularity of the beard among young people, many older people were upset. They were distracted and didn't hear what youth was saying. And you can't say it was the youth's fault or the older person's fault either. But the beards created noise! They were a communication distraction.

Another reason for the communication gap is found in semantics or study of the meaning of language or words. Words do mean different things to different people at different times. For example, Bradford Boyd of the University of Wisconsin in his book, "Management Minded Supervision" says there are 80 different meanings to the word, "fast". I looked in my dictionary and found 15. Boyd says that:

"By using the word fast to describe a horse, we mean the horse is quick. The same word used to describe the color in a fabric means that the color won't run. When fast is used in a religious sense it means to abstain, but a fast woman.....is something else again."

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Reprint from Radio Series--The Communications Scene

Let's look at some other words, too. What's tall, for example? My wife who is about five feet one considers anyone over 5'4" as tall. My daughter who is 5'6" regards a tall girl as someone approaching 6 feet.

You can imagine, too, the different meanings farmers and consumers have for the words such as target prices, parity, set aside, loan prices, margins, and the like. And talking about farmers, what does cost of production really mean? For example, does it include land at the prices paid 10 or 20 years ago or land at today's inflated prices which some young farmers have had to pay?

There's no question that words have different meanings to different people. So we have to be as precise as we can to overcome this semantic difference.

Still another reason for the communication gap is found in the attitudes of people. People are usually very discerning. They can tell what our attitude is toward ourself, toward what we're talking about, and toward them. Then, too, their attitudes toward us could also cause a communication breakdown:

What can we do about all of this?

First, and perhaps most important, we can be more sensitive to the fact that communication is not an easy task. We need to recognize and remember that a problem exists.

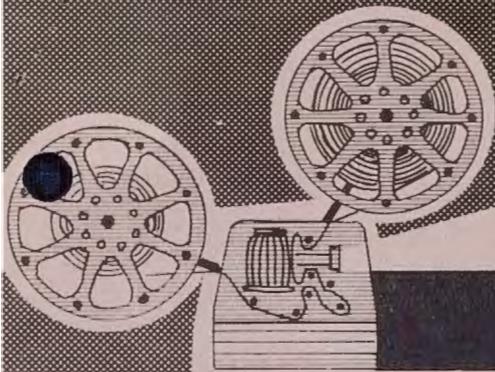
Then, as a speaker or communicator, we need to put ourselves in the other person's shoes or situation. By better understanding the other fellow we'll be able to plan our words and actions in a way that others will understand and accept.

Next we have to watch our semantics, remembering words mean different things to different people.

And finally we should watch for feedback or how the person seems to receive our message. This is often shown by facial expressions or body movement or questions asked or even left unasked.

So, it isn't easy to jump the communication gap, but it can be done by being aware that gaps do exist.

September, 1977



# visual aids TIP SHEET

## Minnesota Agricultural Extension Service

August 1977

|                         |                |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| Artwork-----            | (612) 373-0712 |
| Emergency Bookings----- | (612) 373-1252 |
| Equipment-----          | (612) 373-1254 |

### AUDIO VISUAL LIBRARY REPORT CARDS

Please fill out the brief user report card accompanying a slide set, film, or video tape from the Audio Visual Library.

The information contained on this card is used to compile our media use report so it is very important that the cards are filled out each time the material is used.

Please take time to fill out the lines marked with the x's on the sample below.

Film \_\_\_\_\_ Slide Set \_\_\_\_\_ Date Returned \_\_\_\_\_

Number \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

X County Staff \_\_\_\_\_ State Staff \_\_\_\_\_ Vo. Ag. \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

X Times Shown \_\_\_\_\_ Total Attendance \_\_\_\_\_

X Type of Audience: Adult \_\_\_\_\_ Jr. \_\_\_\_\_ Both \_\_\_\_\_

X Educational Value: Good \_\_\_\_\_ Fair \_\_\_\_\_ Poor \_\_\_\_\_

X Physical Condition: Good \_\_\_\_\_ Poor \_\_\_\_\_

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

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NEW FILMS ADDED TO THE AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION LIBRARY

- # 3035 FIRE IN MY KITCHEN--12 min., color, Film Communicators. (TV-\$3.00) Demonstrates how to cope with kitchen fires, specifically top-of-the-range fires. Includes smothering techniques and use of an extinguisher. Covers wastebasket fires, overloaded circuits, grease ignitions, hazards of clothing ignitions, and child safety in the kitchen. Emphasis on correct way to call the fire department. 1976
- # 3050 HAVE A WONDERFUL EVENING--15 min., color, Film Communicators. (TV-\$3.00) A couple leave their children and home under the care of a baby-sitter, and fire breaks out. Introduces "baby-sitter orientation plan" to inform adolescents what to do in case of a fire emergency. 1976
- # 3051 TIGER IN THE HOUSE--20 min., color, Area 16 Productions. (TV-\$3.00) Depicts fire as a tiger in the house. Gives information on smoke and fire detectors. Emphasizes the need for plans of escape and exit drills in the home in case of fire. 1976

NEW SLIDE SETS ADDED TO LIBRARY

- # 58 COUNTY FAIR DISPLAYS--18 slides, color, Wayne H. Hanson, assistant leader, agriculture/related program industries, University of Minnesota. (\$1.75) Gives ideas on exhibiting clothing, arts and crafts, and horticulture projects. For 4-H leaders and fair department superintendents. 1977
- # 124 INSIDE MY MOM--78 slides, color, cassette tape (both audible tone and automatic, inaudible 50 Hz pulses, time 7:45), March of Dimes. (\$1.75) Focuses on the importance of good eating habits during pregnancy. Combining cartoon animation with actual photos, it offers sound nutritional advice in an informal manner. For adolescent or adult audience. 1976
- # 127 HATS OFF TO LEADERS--80 slides, color, cassette tape (automatic, inaudible 1000 Hz pulses, time 9:15), University of Wisconsin-Madison. (\$1.75) Designed to help 4-H project leaders examine their role in terms of the following concepts: purpose of 4-H, importance of the project leader, using the child-centered approach, involving members in leadership roles, involving parents, using community resources, assessing member growth, and knowing success as a project leader. For use with leaders of a shop or woodworking project or for recruiting and training new project leaders. 1977

REVISED SLIDE SET

- # 523 GETTING ACQUAINTED WITH PORK--75 slides, color, National Live Stock and Meat Board. (\$1.75) Illustrates the story of pork selection, identification, cookery, freezing, and storage. Taste-tempting dishes illustrate the variety of cuts available. 1977

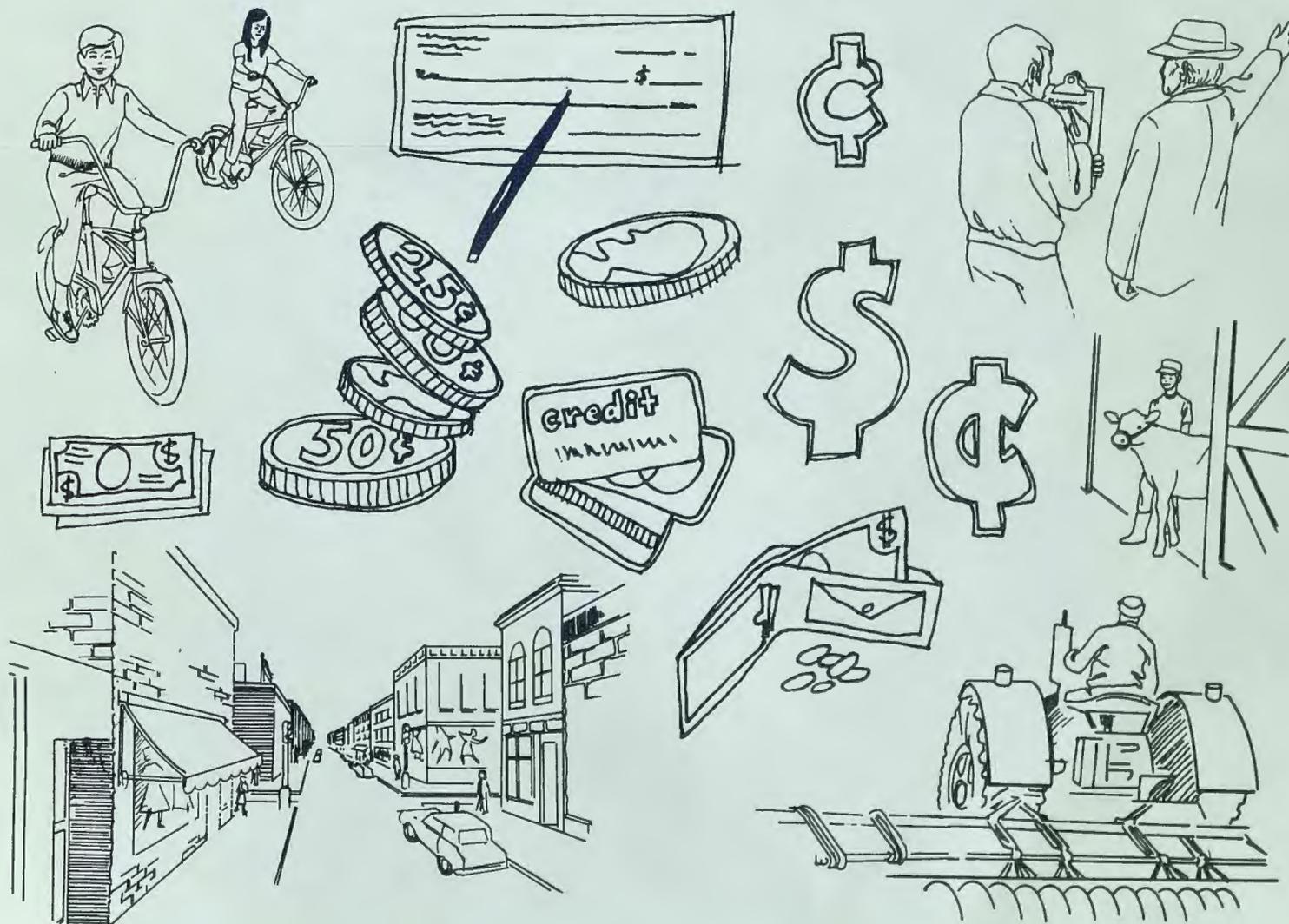
--Gail Tischler and Don Breneman

POSTERS can be easy, even without artistic talent, if you know a few tricks and have some tools. A good guide to designing effective posters is Information Service Series 32, "More Effective Posters," available from the Bulletin Room, 3 Coffey Hall, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN 55108. Also, "A Lettering Guide for Lettering With Felt Markers" is available from the Extension Art Service, 440 Coffey Hall. Two other lettering methods are explained here.

LETTERING WITH STENCILS is easier than freehand. If you do a lot of posters, it would be worthwhile to invest in a few sets, preferably plastic. For design purposes and simplicity you should stick to one style type face. Gothic (or sans serif) is best for posters. Get a variety of sizes of stencils ( $\frac{1}{2}$  inch, 1, 2, and 4 inches, for example) in capitals and lower case, and numbers. These should be available in any stationery or office supply store or art materials store.

With proper care just a few sets of stencils will produce many posters and exhibits. Don't use paint, ink, or felt tip a marker directly on the stencil or it may smear or, if using cardboard stencils, it may soften and deteriorate the letters. Instead, draw guidelines and trace the letters on to the poster-

(over)



board with a light pencil. Remove the stencil and then fill in the letters with whatever media you are using. Also fill in the gaps left by the stencil so the letters look like this **E** instead of this **⌊E**. They will be easier to read and look more professional. Stencils can be used to make cut-out letters, too. Place the stencil backwards on the back of colored paper, trace it with pencil, and cut out with scissors, also connecting the gaps.

USING DRY TRANSFER LETTERS is a more professional method of putting words on a poster, and also more expensive since these letters cannot be used over again. Transfer letters should only be used if you have few words on few posters or if you are only making one poster to be duplicated by offset printing. Letters come in sizes up to 2 or 3 inches and usually are available only in black at a stationery or art supply store, but can be ordered in colors. The waxy letters are rubbed off a transparent acetate sheet directly on to the poster. It takes a little practice to be able to handle transfer letters easily. (They are also handy for newsletter headlines if you print with the offset method.)

PHOTOS clipped from magazines and newspapers make good poster illustrations. Either rubber cement them to the posterboard or trace them using carbon paper and filling in with colored felt markers. If the picture is too small for poster use, enlarge it using your overhead projector (as described in the June Reaching People Art Tips). Also check your clip art file for appropriate art. Are you constantly adding to that file?