

AMONG OURSELVES

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A SHORT COURSE PROGRAM WHICH OUGHT TO BOOST PROFITS BACK HOME

The eighth annual editors' short course at University Farm, St. Paul, May 8-10, is designed to be one that will enable those who attend to return to their offices and put to use ideas which will add to their profits.

In fact, all of the previous short courses have been planned with such results in mind.

The short course of this year, however, will make its attack from a different angle than any of those yet held. It is going to put emphasis on the job-printing end of the country weekly shop.

After consultation with several editors, those in charge of the program have come to feel that there is some room, at least, for the enlargement of the volume of job-printing done in the average country shop, if not, indeed, a good deal of room.

An Unworked Source of Profit

For example, how many local advertisers in country weeklies follow up their display ads with direct-by-mail advertising. Display advertising pays and pays well, but he does not get 100 per cent action from those whose attention it attracts. Action on the part of many more might be obtained by a simple system of follow-up ads, sent through the mails. And every such follow-up ad would mean a printing job to the publisher who printed the original display ad. If one reads the journals of the printing trade, he will see that large enterprises, which spend great sums on display advertising, are also using direct-by-mail material in increasing quantities, and with most satisfactory results.

This field is one of very large possibilities and to present the case the makers of the short course program have secured the services of Louis Burgess, of the Minneapolis Tribune, who is said by advertising specialists to be, perhaps, the best informed man in the Twin Cities on the subject of direct-by-mail advertising. Mr. Burgess is going to discuss the possibilities of this form of advertising from the country publisher's point of view.

America's Master Printer Coming

A great thing in such advertising, however, is the quality of the printing in its production. This phase of the problem is to be presented by "America's master printer," Norman T. A. Munder of Baltimore. Mr. Munder is in great demand among printer organizations of the country. When the printers' supply men of Minneapolis

learned that there was a possibility of Mr. Munder's coming to University Farm for the coming short course, they at once called up the office of the editor of Among Ourselves, to learn whether arrangements could not be made to have Mr. Munder address the printers of the Twin Cities. It is the plan of the short course program makers to have Mr. Munder give two addresses to those who attend the short course—one address on the art of printing or on printing as an art, at

papers do so well. The program makers have secured a promise from H. G. Myser of the Frizzell Advertising agency, St. Paul, formerly a country weekly man, to discuss at the short course methods of building up a classified ad department in the country weekly. From this, also, ought to come ideas which country publishers can take home and capitalize.

To Tell How to Know One's Field

Another great source of profit to the business man is a thorough knowledge of his field. Big newspapers like the Chicago Tribune, the Milwaukee Journal, and others are giving much attention to studies of their territories and their possibilities. A man prominent in this kind of work, and a very effective speaker, is James W. Fisk, merchandising counsel of the Milwaukee Journal, and Mr. Fisk will be one of the short course speakers. He addressed the editors of Wisconsin not long ago, and those who heard him were enthusiastic in their praise of his "message."

Will Talk Business Fundamentals

A fundamental need in any business, also, is a thorough knowledge of one's own enterprise as a business venture. To help toward this end, J. L. O'Hara of the School of Business, University of Minnesota, will give an address. Mr. O'Hara is a specialist in organization, and will deal with the country weekly shop as a manufacturing enterprise, probably having much to say as to the basis for pricing commodities.

A Lawyer on the Program

A noteworthy development in the country weekly business is the growth of a professional spirit. Few have given the matter a great deal of thought, yet it is a matter deserving very serious attention. To stimulate interest in that direction, Justin Miller of the faculty of the Law School, University of Minnesota, will give an address on "The Professional Spirit." Some of Minnesota's editors have heard this address and speak of it in the highest terms.

Possibilities in Farm Pages

There are possibilities, too, in the farm department of the local weekly. The possibilities here are just beginning to be appreciated. Rudolph Lee of the Long Prairie Leader, whose farm department is one of the most interesting in the state, is to lead a dis-

QUALITY PAYS WELL

Ideas and Salesmanship are Business Getters. The best Business Holder and Business Builder is Quality. Its speech is of golden tongue "tipped with persuasion." It does not argue or plead. It commands. The busy man, listening distractedly or with reluctance to verbal solicitation, is unflinchingly aroused to alert and hospitable attention by a silently offered example of Quality. It speaks a universal language which is understood alike by the expert eye and the untrained. A piece of good work does not simply hold the client for whom it is made. It is procreative. So long as it endures it serves as an eloquent agent for the man who produced it. It is a rising asset. Work without Quality may pay a first profit. Thereafter it stands as a double liability, deterring new customers and serving the old badly. Any economy that affects Quality is a blunder.—Advertising Technique, Chicago.

the annual dinner, and another—illustrated with lantern slides—on practical results with everyday equipment. This feature alone should assure a large attendance at the course.

Classified Ads a Feature

Another field as yet almost untouched by country weeklies is that of classified ads. Carlos Avery at the recent meeting of the Minnesota Editorial association told how the Hutchinson Leader had built up its classified ad department, and that it was his hope to make the department produce an annual revenue of at least \$2,000. The Appleton Press, the Northfield News, the Mower County News, are running about two columns of such advertising every week. But not many

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AMONG OURSELVES

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of the State of Minnesota

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BE A COLLECTOR

There is money in being a collector. We have known of several collectors, men who collected merely for the joy of the game, who afterward turned their collecting into profitable business enterprises. One of these was a collector of rare editions of books. He became an authority, set up a book shop which specialized in old books, and prospered amazingly.

It occurred to us the other day that the local weekly editor could get a lot of diversion out of collecting effective advertisements, and not only a lot of diversion but a lot of information and a lot of material which he could in time turn to profitable uses.

The "ad" is a form of salesmanship on the one hand and a form of art on the other. Or it may be said to be the two in combination. A study of advertising such as is put out by great enterprises, by concerns which have won great success through advertising, is most instructive—educational. A local weekly editor who would take a little time every day from his reading to study advertising in magazines, newspapers, and other periodicals, would soon find definite opinions as to effective forms taking shape in his mind; would find that certain ads attracted his attention, aroused his interest, and whetted desire. Such ads he would file for reference in framing up advertising for his local merchants. After a while, he could from his collection make up a small exhibit, which he could invite his merchant friends to inspect.

To provide such an exhibit would do two things; it would serve to educate one's advertisers or possible advertisers in the art of effective advertising writing and it would serve to establish their confidence in the editor's knowledge of the business of advertising.

We wish some editor would give this idea a real trial, and then report to Among Ourselves, his report to be published for the benefit of others.

One making such a collection would find a common pasteboard letter file a suitable receptacle for his collection, filing ads according to commodities, alphabetically.

MITCHELL A DAILY MAN NOW

H. Z. Mitchell and W. G. Marcum, owners of the Bemidji Sentinel, have bought the Bemidji Pioneer.

The many friends of the men who have made the Sentinel a conspicuous weekly in the Minnesota field and in

the country weekly field of the entire country will watch the Pioneer with interest, and wish its new owners the utmost success.

THE CONFIDENTIAL AD

Every merchant has had the experience of being called on by some friend who had confidence in his judgment for a frank personal opinion as to some article on sale. We know that is true—most of us, because we call on merchants for such opinions, and we know, too, that the merchant comes back—in most cases—with just the frank statement we wish to get.

Now, why should not a merchant put just the kind of talk he gives in answer to such questions into his advertising? It can be done, and it pays. It fosters confidence in the mind or heart of the reader, and gets results.

Study, for example, ads like those of Jim Henry in the Saturday Evening Post. We know of one man who bought his wares just because of the way he wrote about them. He wrote his ad as if it were a personal letter to each reader. And the effect on the one man referred to was doubtless that on thousands of others.

But writing such an ad for the local paper is not enough. There are many readers of every ad, who are interested but not quite moved to go and buy. Just a bit more of persuasion would make them purchasers. That added bit of persuasion, however, can not be put into the ad in such cases, but it can, and should, be put into a follow-up letter—either typewritten or printed. Consequently every advertiser should have a mailing list of the people of his territory, and should follow up his newspaper ad with a letter. The advertiser who does that kind of thing and keeps it up will be astonished and delighted with the results. He should talk the thing over with his local editor-publisher. A follow-up letter, such as the publisher can turn out quickly on his job presses, will bring in as purchasers many and many of the almost persuaded.

But the kind of thing suggested is not a thing to be tried just once and then abandoned if it does not get whaling results. It is the kind of thing that has to be repeated. When repeated, it gets increasing results—cumulative results.

Advertise for the almost persuaded, and make the ad a confidential talk. It pays.

SPREAD YOUR WINGS

Too many weekly publishers are afraid to go ahead; afraid to spread their wings, afraid to risk a little. The natural result is that they do nothing very clever, and nothing much out of the ordinary, even in the plane they are holding to; they do nothing noteworthy to make their community sit up and take notice, and the community consequently takes less and less notice.—Sam T. Hughes, manager of the Newspaper Information Service, Washington, D. C., in the Service Sheet, New York State College of Agriculture.

THE FIFTH INDUSTRY

Among the industries, printing and paper allied rank fifth.

That is something to think about and take pride in. There is something of inspiration in the thought that one is a part of a great business and contributing to its greatness.

This statement is made on the authority of Charles Francis, an eminent American printer, quoted in the Printers' Album, published by the Challenge Machinery company, Grand Haven, Mich.

In connection with the assertion some interesting figures are given:

The 1919 census shows that more than 510,000 wage earners were then employed in the paper and printing industries. Their annual wages amounted to \$564,000,000. The total capital invested was \$2,423,000,000, and the total value of the products was \$3,012,000,000.

In 1914 the average annual wage was \$775, while in 1919 it had risen to \$1,105.88, an increase of nearly 50 per cent. In the same period the product rose from \$1,233,000,000 to the total in the foregoing paragraph, an increase of about 143 per cent, while the capitalization advanced 94 per cent.

More than 49,000 periodicals, newspapers, and magazines are now being published in the United States.

It Pleases Folks

The St. James Plaindealer has a little four-page folder, large enough to slip easily into an ordinary business envelope, which it uses with good effect. On the front page, with the "You" in big type and all the rest in "display" is this:

A news item concerning you, from a recent issue of the St. James Plaindealer, Will Curtis & Son, publishers. Watonwan County's Newest Newspaper. \$2.00 per year. St. James, Minn.

On the second page is pasted the item, and on the page opposite is this:

This clipping is taken from the Plaindealer of _____ issue.

On page four is a blank form for sending in a subscription.

Young Man After a Job

Among Ourselves knows of a young man who has had experience to a limited extent in newspaper work and who would like to find a place for the summer with some live Minnesota newspaper. He is a student in the Minnesota College of Agriculture. A letter addressed to Among Ourselves, University Farm, will be placed in his hands.

S. E. Farnham of the Madison Independent-Press has been spending the winter in Washington and listening in on the teapot dome investigation and other proceedings in senate and house. Pretty soft.

FIELD-SECRETARY PLAN TO BE TRIED

Just to see what a field-secretary could do for the editor-publishers of Minnesota, at the suggestion of M. J. McGowan, the new president of the Minnesota Editorial association, arrangements have been made for a trial on a small scale. The editor of Among Ourselves has agreed to attempt the field-secretary role, giving such a part of the time as he can spare from the duties of his regular position for the purpose. Mr. McGowan, members of the state association's executive committee, and others who may be selected, however, are to stand "in the wings" and be ready to do any prompt- ing that may be needed.

As a beginning, Mr. McGowan has arranged with the publisher of a country weekly for co-operation in an effort to see what can be done to enlarge his business in the course of the current year.

Business To Be Analyzed

The first step to be taken will be a careful analysis of the business as it now exists. This analysis will include a careful study of the publisher's investment, a complete inventory, and an examination of financial condition. It will mean, also, a review of the publisher's payroll; actual and possible subscription list; amount of advertising carried and amount possible at present or increased rates, and the volume of job-printing now done, together with possibilities of its enlargement. A foundation having been laid by taking an inventory and determining the financial condition of the enterprise, a cost system will be installed as a means of disclosing as soon as may be the possibility of cutting down costs. The analysis should also show how nearly the capacity of the enterprise has been approached and how its production may be enlarged either with or without additional help or equipment.

Results Are Problematical

Just what the results will be no one, of course can say. If, however, the study of the enterprise and its field, with the introduction of new lines of attack in building up subscriptions, advertising, or job-printing, should result in some gain in the course of the year, with the possibilities of added gain in future years, it is felt that the way may be made clear for placing in the field a full-time secretary, whose business it will be to serve as a "consulting engineer" to individual publishers and otherwise to promote the interests of members of the state association.

If the preliminary results with the co-operating publisher seem to warrant a broadening of the studies, other publishers later will be invited to join in the effort.

The editor of Among Ourselves undertakes the part assigned to him with a good deal of reluctance, owing to a considerable lack of experience in the business and mechanical sides of country weekly publication. In fact, it is only with the assurance of full co-operation on the part of Mr. McGowan and other experienced editors that he

consents to make the attempt at all. He has, however, a deep-seated faith in the place of the country weekly in American life, and enters upon the task outlined merely in the hope that he may help to point the way to an enlargement in the activities of the state association such as will establish even more solidly the position of the country press and promote the enrichment of the rural life of the state.

PI A LA MODE

The Sleepy Eye Herald-Dispatch of March 13 announced that Sleepy Eye would begin a "Buy in Sleepy Eye" campaign on Saturday, March 22, the campaign to run for ten weeks. Judging from the advertising carried by the Herald-Dispatch of March 13, the campaign is on already.

Four Minnesota papers receive compliments in the March number of the Inland Printer. They are the Biwabik Times; the Evening Tribune, Albert Lea; the St. Peter Free Press, and the Park Rapids Enterprise. The front page of an issue of the St. Peter Free Press is reproduced.

Grant Utley of the Cass Lake Times is evidently prospering. He has purchased the Merchants State Bank building as a new home for the Times.

The Cottonwood County Citizen has passed from the hands of L. C. Churchill to those of D. L. Keith, formerly of the Sleepy Eye Herald-Dispatch.

A site for a new home for the Albert Lea Standard has been purchased.

Carl Nelson has sold his interest in the Fergus Falls Tribune to Harry M. Wheelock, his senior partner, and joined the staff of the Fergus Falls Journal.

C. A. Sherman is now the owner of the Isle Advance.

The Canton Free Lance is now the property of R. W. Bosworth, formerly of Harmony.

Frank Raff of St. Paul has leased the Hill City News from Gay C. Huntley.

Michael W. Grimes, a native Minnesotan and for nearly 30 years editor and publisher of the Le Sueur News, died recently. He is survived by his wife and eight children.

Out again, in again Nels Jahren, who sold the Bird Island Union some time ago, has purchased the Detroit Herald and in company with Carl Lidstrom, who has been running a job-printing shop in Detroit, and will endeavor to put out a newsy paper. Mr. Lidstrom will give his attention largely to the shop.

LOOKS FOR BIG CROWD AT MEETING OF N. E. A.

It is too early to say just how many Minnesota editors will attend the meeting of the National Editorial association, which this year will be held at Oklahoma City, May 22, 23, and 24, but it is certain that there will be a good-sized delegation, says H. C. Hotaling, executive secretary.

The fare for the round trip from St. Paul to Oklahoma City, including the circle trip in Oklahoma, is \$50.07, aside from the Pullman charges. If those attending desire to continue on to Mexico, they can secure a fare of \$43.45 from Oklahoma City to Laredo, returning via Brownsville, Galveston, Houston, San Antonio, and Fort Worth. In Mexico the members of the party are to be the guests of the Mexican government, and the expense will be extremely light, the transportation and Pullmans payable in advertising.

In Oklahoma, the entertainment provided by the various towns will be lavish, and will include banquets, luncheons, picnics, barbecues, etc. Miller Brothers, of the 101 Ranch, will stage one of their wonderful performances with hundreds of Indians and cowboys. There will not be an idle moment from start to finish. It is the first time in many years that the editors have been able to get a reduced fare, and indications are that the attendance will be very large.

The Minnesota party will travel via the Great Western railway, leaving St. Paul on the night of May 16. Secretary Hotaling is now making reservations and hopes to have at least a carload out of St. Paul. Those wishing to make the trip may secure particulars by writing to the Executive Secretary, 131 East Sixth street, St. Paul, Minn.

The News of Ironton has been leased by Miss Anna Hinrod, editor and publisher, to Ben A. Wagner of Pequot. Mr. Wagner is accumulating a string of papers and the News is No. 3.

W. T. Noonan, the paragrapher with a punch, recently put out an edition of his paper, The Baudette Region, in which alfalfa and clover growing, dairying, and other farm enterprises were featured. County Agent R. J. Bibelhausen and other farm bureau officers co-operated with the editor, who has been flat on his back on account of a rheumatic attack, in getting out the edition.

Mrs. L. A. Ericson, the better half in the partnership of Ericson & Ericson, publishers of the Northern News at Spooner, has been appointed postmaster.

F. E. and G. F. Langworthy have chronicled the birth and death of 13 papers in Spring Valley since they have been connected with the Mercury of that place. The Mercury recently entered upon volume 45. It is crowded with business ads and paid matter.

SKELETON OF THE AD THAT MAKES THE SALE

Every effective advertisement contains a skeleton. The ad is a salesman, and, of course, a salesman has a skeleton. Just so, the advertisement.

The skeleton of an effective selling plan as pictured in a book recently published—Scientific Selling and Advertising by Arthur Dunn, Harper & Brothers, New York—is this:

Attention.
Confidence.
Education.
Desire.
Volition.

Well, if those are the things which a salesman must get or give or create or develop in order to make a sale, they are the things which count in an advertisement.

Appeal That Gets Attention

The first thing is to get attention. To get this, the ad-writer may resort to any one or more of a great number of methods. Perhaps, however, the best way is to appeal to some common need or desire. For example, every one in America wears shoes and most folks have to buy one or more pairs a year. Very well, then, you can attract the attention of the ordinary man, say, with an attractive picture of a good style of shoe, and the display of the price—also in attractive figures—for most shoe-buyers in the world have to count the cost of the shoes they buy.

Confidence Is Won by Frankness

The next thing to be won is confidence. Confidence is won by frankness and restraint rather than by extravagance and boasting; simplicity of statement, directness, as of man-to-man speech. Elaboration of claims begets distrust. There is a lot of sound psychology in the quotation, "Me thinks he doth protest too much." Quiet confidence in one's wares begets confidence in possible purchasers.

Education means merely giving the facts as to what is advertised, in the most direct and simple words possible. And the facts the prospect, or possible prospect, seeks are told by answering the questions, What? Why? Who? Where? Thus an advertisement tells what is for sale, why one should buy it—on account of quality or price or both, who has it for sale, and where the advertiser is located. It is worth while, too, to emphasize seasonableness, answering the question, When?

How Advertising Clinches Sales

But there comes a difficulty in moving the reader of the ad in any case to action. The advertiser can not bring the prospect to a decision always. Getting attention, winning confidence, giving desired information, and whetting desire, will often—very often—result in action, but, again, they will leave very many just short of action. That is where follow-up advertising counts. By follow-up advertising is meant direct-by-mail advertising, a letter, printed or typed, sent through the mails. Such advertising does the "mopping up" that the display ad can

not always do. Action without direct-by-mail advertising is, however, obtained by repetition in many cases. The repetition of an advertising appeal, presented in some new way, will often serve to clinch a deal.

Advertising built on the lines—the skeleton—indicated is sound. It is the kind of advertising that pays—that sells goods.

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discussion on the subject—on the farm department as a business promoter of the soundly legitimate kind.

Efficient Print-Shop Plans

Efficient print-shop arrangement as a means of cutting costs of production is another means of adding to net revenues. The print shop of the University of Minnesota has just occupied new quarters, and the arrangement of the equipment was superintended by the efficiency engineers of the American Type Founders company. The program of the short course provides for a visit to this shop and an explanation of the arrangements adopted, by M. W. DePuy, manager. A visit to another large plant in Minneapolis, said to be the largest west of Chicago, is also a possibility.

A Banquet, of Course

Of course there will be a banquet. It may have to be a "Dutch treat" this time, but it will be worth the price of admission. The program of speakers has not yet been fully arranged, however.

Two Contests This Year

Two contests will be open to all country weekly comers this year. One of these will be a contest for the best papers setting forth reasons for maintaining an editorial column in the country weekly. Papers are to be limited to 800 words, and are to be sent in without identification marks, along with a letter from the person submitting in each case, so that the judges may pass on them without knowing their source. The prizes will be \$15 for the best and \$10 for the next best. The other contest will be the old standby, for front-page make-up. The prizes will be \$10 for the best and \$5 for the second. Further announcement as to the contests will be made by letter later, but with the foregoing information, editors may set to work preparing their entries. Papers for both contests should be at University Farm a week in advance of the course—by May 1.

The Regular Round-Table

The regular round-table discussion of print-shop problems will be another feature of the course. Editors having problems which they wish to hear discussed should send them in in advance, and then, when the day comes, follow them up by coming to the course to join in the discussions.

Come On, Let's Co-operate!

The program makers feel that they are offering exceptional things this year, but the mere making of a good program is not enough. They must

HELPFUL HINTS

A. K. Shenoweth of the Madison Press, London, Ohio, reports in Editor & Publisher that an Ohio paper increased its classified advertising more than 100 per cent through the use of readers in its society column, calling attention to bargains advertised in the want columns.

With the coming of spring and the arrival of new stocks in local stores, a good story or series of stories on "new things" is a possibility. Such a story or series should be a stout peg on which to hang a page or more of special advertisements by local merchants.

Contests—not circulation getting contests—but contests to try the wits of readers seem to be highly effective in promoting interest in a newspaper. Why not a contest for the best 100 or 200 word statement of the most interesting thing in "last week's paper"? Or a contest for the best statement of reasons for buying from home merchants? The woods is full of possible contests that will engage the interest of local readers.

The experience of one dry goods store shows that advertisements containing cuts average 33 per cent more pulling power than those unillustrated.—The Country Merchant.

The steady worker, the plugger, we sometimes call him, is the man who moves on to success.—Meredith's Merchandising Advertising.

John P. Mattson of the Warren Sheaf is enjoying life and building up health and strength in Florida. Meanwhile the paper, under the command of Thorval Tunheim, is one of the top notchers in the state.

Mrs. Lena Behnke has again taken possession of the Triumph-Monterey Journal office, its publishers, Piffner and Alexander, having given it up. She has changed the name to the Triumph-Monterey Progress.

The little city of Barnum has become celebrated as the center of successful poultry and co-operative creamery industries. Now to spread its fame still further, the Herald has bought and installed a linotype.

have the co-operation of the editors of the state to make the course of greatest value. It is not only in getting but in giving that professional men profit. The short course has become an institution, and it is felt that it deserves the support of the publishers of the state even to the extent of some sacrifice in attending. It is a co-operative enterprise. The press has been urging co-operation in other directions, why not co-operate in this?