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Reaching Rural People ... with information tools

MAR 22 1957
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March 20 1957

 * Please read, check and circulate *
 * County Agricultural Agent *
 * County Home Agent *
 * County 4-H Agent *
 * County asst. Agent *
 * Secretary for filing *

ACROSS THE EDITOR'S DESK

Many who attended the new agent's conference told me how much they enjoyed Ed Slettom's public relations pointers. Ed was once Rice County agent, then deputy commissioner of Agriculture, and now is Exec. Sect. of the Minn. Assc. of Coops. Here are some of the suggestions he made:

1. Get to know your county.
2. Read reports of previous agents.
3. Become acquainted with people.
4. Don't try to sweep clean--Look and Listen.
5. Pay tribute to predecessors.
6. Take personal interest in people.
7. Keep an orderly office.
8. Answer letters promptly.
9. Don't give impression you're running the whole show.
10. Follow through on requests. Don't promise something you can't deliver.

Another speaker, Bill Nunn, director of Relations, pointed out that "public relations is everyone's business."

No Bulletin Board This Time

We're not enclosing a Bulletin Board. Only two publications that have not been announced will reach you this month. They are enclosed and are:

Info. Serv. Series No. 12 "Say it With a Column", Info. Serv. Series No. 13 "Conducting a Radio Interview"--Harold B. Swanson-

TO THE H.A.'s AND 4-H AGENTS --

Good 4-H Week Promotion

Stearns county's Russ Krech went all-out in promoting Nat'l. 4-H Week. He reports excellent cooperation from local business men and editors in telling the 4-H story. Four of his county papers, for example, ran page spreads, with information on 4-H, county clubs, a 4-H calendar of events and many ads saluting 4-H and using the ad mats we offered.

The st. Cloud Chamber of Commerce sponsored a billboard ad saluting 4-H; local clubs presented three radio programs on KASM; and local clubs set up 16 window displays in eight Stearns county communities. Hats off to you, Russ.

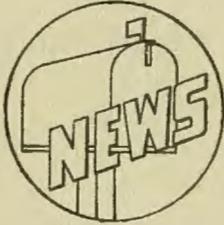
Are You Using Information Series?

Incidentally, Russ reports that club members used tips from Information Service Series 5, "Let's Build a Window Display." He says quality of the displays this year was greatly improved. He gives much credit to that tip sheet.

The Information Service Series (13 in the series so far) was planned for you. We hope the tips prove helpful.

Information Contest Next Year Again

In connection with the annual Extension conference next year, we'll have another information contest. Why not save the clippings from your 4-H Week promotion to enter in the contest? Coverage of an event is one of the classes. National Home Demonstration Week, too, will be a good opportunity to save clippings of your coverage for the week. Be sure to write names of papers and dates on all clippings you save.--Jo Nelson



Follow-up after an event is just as important as writing advance items about the meeting. It lets people know what happened at this event and

stimulates even better attendance for your next meeting.

What the speaker said makes the best lead sentence for a coverage story. Let folks who didn't attend the meeting get the information. If only 60 heard the speaker, a good coverage article can get the information to 600 or more.

Too busy to write coverage articles? If so, ask the speaker to jot down his main points on paper. Then the paper can use these notes as direct quotes.

A weekly calendar of events goes from Houston County Agent Wayne Hanson's office to farm reporters in the county. This practice gives the reporters an opportunity to select events to visit for pictures and coverage, Wayne says.

Public relations-wise Wayne always gives the local papers credit for helping make the year's extension program a success. He makes that statement at organizational meetings.

At the Beginning Agents' conference last week, Bob McDill, Martin county agent, gave this advice to newcomers: Use farmers names in stories, but make sure first that the farmer is well-thought-of locally and doesn't mind being quoted.--

-- Phil Tichenor



With spring just around the corner it's time to freshen up your radio programs and to save your best recording for the annual contest.

Good recordings have a clear tone with no fuzziness or surface noise. The content of a good program is informative significant, timely and interesting. The presentation is easy to listen to, well organized, friendly, sincere and authoritative.

Room noise and "hollow" sounds can be reduced by having acoustical tile on the ceiling and one or more walls, hanging drapes, covering table top with felt and by reducing the recorder volume and working closer to the mike.

Radio-TV Reading - Be sure to read the February issue of Extension Service Review. And don't miss -"How to Conduct an Interview."

Length of TV Programs. Most TV demonstrations can be completed in not more than 6 to 8 minutes. Remember when planning your demonstration, keep it moving. ...do not let it bog down or drag.

The old saying that "variety is the spice of life" is doubly true in television for agricultural workers. Keep the viewers guessing. Keep the show moving. Spring an occasional surprise on the audience.

--Ray Wolf

TIMELY PRESS, RADIO TOPICS FOR APRIL

1. Buying seed, fertilizers.
2. Dehorning beef calves.
3. Pre-field work tractor care.
4. Cutting, peeling fence posts.
5. Pasture planning.
6. Conservation Reserve deadline-- APRIL 15.
7. Tips on weed and brush control.
8. Planning field windbreaks.
9. Caring for pullets.
10. Stretching the hay supply for dairy cows.