

Our Farmers' Union Page

Devoted to Education, Organization, Cooperation and Marketing

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SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION IN LOCAL UNIONS

JULY

1. How May We Best Cooperate in Marketing This Year's Crops?
2. Debate on Subject to Be Selected.

HOLD A "COMMUNITY FAIR"

Every Neighborhood Will Benefit by Holding Such a Fair and Local Unions Should See to It That They Are Held

HOW about a community fair next fall? The Local Union is in better position to successfully promote a community fair than any other agency. Bringing together in the fall the best that is produced on the farms of a neighborhood helps wonderfully to create a greater rival spirit in better farming. An annual neighborhood exhibit is an index to the agricultural resources of the community and by observing each succeeding annual exhibit one can determine how much progress is being made.

Another good effect of community fairs is in the creation of greater interest in the production of more food crops and in acquiring better grades of livestock and poultry. The biggest economic crime of the South exists in the production of a so-called money crop which necessitates selling in a speculative market during the debt-paying period when prices are lowest and buying food and feed products in a speculative market when prices are highest, when in reality there is no necessity for this double toll-paying policy at all under Southern soil and climatic conditions that are especially favorable for making the farms self-feeding. Anything that tends to correct this suicidal policy should be encouraged, and community and county fairs have this relative tendency and should be enthusiastically supported by the Farmers' Union.

A county fair that is made up largely from the best exhibits that have been placed in community fairs, back in the rural districts, may be expected to have the very best in the county. It is a good plan to have the series of community fairs prior to the county fair so that the prize-winning exhibits in the community fairs may be carried up to the county fair, which in effect makes the community fairs the local units of the county fair.

While fairs are not exclusively for the organized farmers, the Local and county Unions are in position to play the most important part in making the fairs a success since the plan of our organization is in harmony with the idea of local units as a basis for the county fair. The value of active interest in community and county fairs makes it important not only for individual members of the Union to become personally interested, but when it represents organized community activity it places the Local Union in a creditable light before the non-Union farmer. Last year one Local Union made a prize-winning exhibit at a county fair and since then it has doubled its membership

and the average attendance at its meetings has been greatly increased, as has also its volume of cooperative business transactions.

Community fairs should not only be for the purpose of exhibit but they should evolve themselves more into cooperative sale and exchange days, where one farmer who has more seed oats, wheat, rye, or other seed crops than he needs, may sell to his neighbor farmer, or where livestock and poultry may be sold or exchanged. This feature should be emphasized more by agricultural agents and others who promote community and county fairs. The sale and exchange feature will not only bring more exhibits, but it will increase the attendance at the fairs.

J. Z. G.

RECOGNIZE GOOD WORK OF PUPILS

Prof. Wright's County Gives Certificates of Honor for Perfect Attendance, Proficiency in Spelling, and to Those Reading Worthy Books

IN PLANNING the school work for the coming year school officials everywhere should arrange for awarding certificates of merit to those pupils in the public schools of the county who are perfect in attendance for the year.

In our school work in my county this policy has been followed for the past five years, and during this time the average daily attendance has increased more than 25 per cent. This increase is not due wholly of course to this feature, but no little of the credit is due to this one thing. When the announcement was first made at the opening of the session five years ago the teachers began at once to interest the children in this direction. The result was that at the county commencement the following spring there were between two and three hundred children who were entitled to receive these awards of honor. This number has steadily increased until this spring there were more than 800 of these given out. In connection with this our board-made announcement that any pupil perfect in attendance for seven years would receive a gold medal.

Another good plan is to give each pupil who has been perfect in spelling for the term a beautiful diploma, or certificate of merit attesting this fact. This award of honor is something suitable for framing, beautifully lithographed in colors, and something which the child may keep always as a souvenir of his or her school days. The plan has been in operation here four years. The first year about fifty awards were made; the next year nearly one hundred; last year about one hundred and fifty; this year approximately two hundred. Our school officials feel that it is a step in the right direction, and that the ends so far have justified the means, and they are planning to make this experiment one of the permanent features of the educational work of the county. Suppose you mention this matter to your school officials, in case the plan appeals to you.

One other matter which I deem very important is that of awarding "library certificates" to pupils who have read a certain number of books in the school library during the year. Our county put this plan into operation last year and made the requirement twenty-five books. There were a number of certificates given out and this year, the number of those

receiving these awards of honor increased more than 300 per cent.

C. C. W.

Free Traveling and Package Library Service for North Carolina

THE Library Commission of North Carolina lends traveling libraries to rural communities and to small towns having no public library. It lends package libraries to rural schools, to debating and literary societies, to study clubs, and to Farmers' Union locals. The purpose of this article is to give a brief description of the libraries and to explain how they may be obtained.

What Traveling Libraries Are

A TRAVELING library is simply a case of books that is loaned to a rural community without charge for a period of three or four months. A typical library contains about forty volumes, one third being books for children, one-third or more wholesome, entertaining novels, and the remaining third books of travel, biography, agriculture, science, etc. There is generally included at least one book on agriculture or country life; one dealing with domestic science or household economics; and a book giving suggestions for simple parties, plays, entertainments or clubs—something that will be of practical assistance in developing community spirit and community recreation.

As soon as a community reads the books in a traveling library and returns it to the Commission office, another library containing a different collection of books is sent to take its place. Thus it is possible for any community in North Carolina, however remote, to have a constant supply of good books.

The traveling libraries are lent to local library associations, to community service leagues, to women's betterment associations, to schools and to Farmers' Union locals, but always on condition that all the people of the community shall have the free use of the books. Application must be made upon the blank furnished by the Library Commission and must be signed by the officers of the organization applying for the library.

A few simple rules govern the loan libraries. Borrowers agree:

1. To pay the freight charges both from and to Raleigh.
2. To take good care of the libraries and to return them promptly.
3. To be responsible for any loss or damage to books beyond reasonable wear and tear.
4. To lend the books without charge to all responsible persons in the community.

The libraries are absolutely free but borrowers pay the freight charges both from and to Raleigh. Whenever the round trip freight charges exceed \$1 the Commission refunds the excess to the borrower.

Package, Debate, and Teachers' Libraries

A PACKAGE library is a package of literature on a single subject. One of the most important package libraries is known as the Farmers' Library because it contains twelve carefully selected books on Agriculture for North Carolina farmers. This Farmers' Library is lent to a Farmers' Union local or to any other group of farmers for two months, the borrowers paying the postage both from and to Raleigh.

In addition to the Farmers' Library the Commission has a special collection of books on agriculture and country life consisting of more than two hundred titles. A group of farmers can borrow ten of these books for two months or an individual can borrow one or two books for one month.

The Commission also furnishes "debate libraries" to young people engaged in debating, and a collection for teachers containing material for entertainments and commencement exercises.

All requests for libraries should be addressed to Secretary, State Library Commission, Raleigh, N. C.

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