

The County Club Idea Is Spreading Over the Nation

May Become Nation-Wide—National Organization Will Foster Clubs in All States—Means Untold Good In Uniting County For Betterment.

Rutherford county started a movement nearly seven years ago, Dec., 1922 which may become Nation-wide and mean much to the state and nation.

The Rutherford county club was organized Dec. 1922, when Mr. K. S. Tanner, well known cotton manufacturer invited about 100 leading citizens of this county to be his guest at a luncheon at the Spindale House and Dr. E. C. Branson of the Department of Economics of the University of North Carolina was present and spoke on the "Possibilities of Such a Club." It was here that the county club idea was born. The Rutherford club was the first of its kind in the United States as far as we know, and has functioned independently ever since.

When Ex-Governor A. W. McLean retired as Governor of North Carolina he organized the second county club in the state in Roberson county. This spring there was formed at Washington, D. C. The National County Clubs Association whose purpose is to sponsor county clubs in every county in the 48 states of the Union. Clubs are under formation in Buncombe, Henderson, Gaston, Catawba, Lincoln, Cleveland and many other counties in this state at present. County clubs have recently been formed in Cherokee, Spartanburg, Union and other counties of South Carolina. Col. T. B. Butler, of Gaffney, S. C., Lieut. Governor of South Carolina, is president of the Cherokee county club, while Mr. J. W. Gaston, master farmer of Spartanburg county, S. C., is president of that club and Mr. Ben F. Adams, prominent citizen of Adamsburg, S. C., is president of the new Union club.

By the first of the year, clubs will be formed in some counties in all the states, east of the Mississippi river, if the present plans of the National organization goes through. The county club is merely a

county-wide civic club. There is nothing like it in the country. It is non-political and non-sectarian. Any man of good moral character, who is interested in the betterment of his county can become a member upon application to the board of directors. It takes the cream and furnishes a melting pot of ideas and plans, out of which comes much good.

When the leading citizens of any county come together, think and plan for their common good, exchange ideas, discuss their many and varied problems much good is sure to be accomplished.

One major objective of the new county club is to help the farmer so that he can come together and discuss his problems and exchange ideas as the people now do in the towns and cities in their civic clubs such as Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis, Civitans, Monarchs, etc., and let the farmer have the advantage of the thought and leadership of the leading business and professional men of the town and city. The civic clubs have become a tremendous factor for good in the towns and cities but it is generally conceded that they have not included the farmers in their membership, to any extent. The county club does for the entire county what the civic club does for the town or city. It fills a long felt need in the modern civilization of America and is destined to do much good in moulding public opinion, unifying counties causing them to think as a unit and to furnish a channel for county-wide opinions.

The purpose of a county club is to foster the active interest of every member in the civic, commercial agricultural and moral welfare of his county. It seeks to bring about a reduction in taxes and to make a special study of taxation in the county, state and nation, especially the county. It is estimated that the average loss per year in each county of the country is \$50000 which is due to the carelessness, inefficiency, neglect and dishonesty.

The county club encourages more interest in governmental affairs. The lack of interest in the affairs of government by the majority of the citizens of this country presents a most serious problem. If the state puts before the electorate an important question to be decided by the vote of the people, the majority of voters ignore it and often, "Pass it up," do not study it and seem to

care less about it. The county club encourages respect for law and order. It seeks to help combat the crime wave which is now sweeping over our country. It seeks to prevent boys and girls from going astray by encouraging the better things in life, rather than letting them go to "the bad" and then trying to reform them.

The county club is anxious to cooperate with every other agency in any county for good. In South Carolina it is working with the Natural Measures Commission and is aiding it materially. In North Carolina it will gladly cooperate with the Grange and all civic organizations. A man can belong to a civic club and also be a member of a county club. He can be a member of the Grange and be a member of a county club.

The county club meets monthly, usually at different places in the county. It usually meets in the form of a meal or luncheon. The officers of a county club are similar to those of any civic club, President, Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer and five or more directors, no two being from the same township, unless it is a large and thickly populated township, in which case the directors are divided according to population. Every club has a charter presented it from headquarters in Washington. The cost is smaller than that of any civic club. This is done so as to be within the reach of all who may wish to affiliate with the county club.

This is the day of organization. Every profession is well organized except the farmer. If the farmer does not organize now, the public can say: "In this day and time nothing can be done for any class of people who will not get together and stick together for their own welfare." Leading farmers of every county where the county club is proposed are deeply interested in joining. The Master Farmer of Rutherford

county, Mr. J. O. Holler, is vice-president of the Rutherford county club this year.

The National County clubs association plans to publish a magazine, which will be sent free to all members of any club, beginning about Jan. 1, 1930. This monthly magazine will deal with county problems county affairs, etc. and will contain articles by experts of the nation in taxation county government, agriculture, schools, roads, etc. The U. S. Department of Agriculture has offered all its facilities for information and better farming to the county club association. Diversified farming, more purebred livestock, better seed, better rural schools and country roads will be discussed and stressed thru the clubs.

Outstanding accomplishments of the Rutherford county club are: It has united the county into one factor

for good and has eliminated jealousy, etc., between towns, sponsored the county fair older boys conference, farmer's federation warehouses and potato curing house; more purebred poultry and livestock on the farm; Black Bear Trail, scenic, North to South Highway; defeated proposal to increase telephone rates in Rutherford county; sponsored several county-wide celebrations, the last of which was the Sesqui-Centennial and Home coming on August 16, 1929 and the celebration of the completion of the paving of Highway No. 20, from the mountains to the sea and many other worthwhile things. It has brought many inspiring addresses to the county and sponsored a better County Home, full time County Welfare Officer, Home and Farm Agents and a full time County Physician.

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