

# *Friends of Kentucky Libraries,*

## *Incorporated*

November - December  
1967

This issue will for the most part, consist of reports of recent events so that members who missed the annual meeting, October 27, in Louisville, and the October 21 meeting in Pikeville will know what has taken place.

If you are not keeping a file of your Newsletters for your own information, it is suggested that you pass this issue to some one who may possibly be interested in becoming a member. It will contain a good deal of background material.

In the rush of getting to the luncheon on time, October 27, many members had no time to renew membership. This is the time of year when renewals are customarily made. You are invited to send your check to Mrs. Houston, along with the coupon which you will find on the final page.

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### Welcome!

The Friends of Kentucky Libraries wish to offer their welcome to the new governor of Kentucky, the Honorable Louis B. Nunn. We look forward to presenting our library program to him and are confident that the next four years will see continued progress in the public library service of the state.

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### The Hearing at Pikeville -- October 21, 1967

How much does your library mean to YOU?

More than seventy people entered their testimonies to answer that question, asked by the National Advisory Commission on Libraries, in Pikeville. Representing the commission were four very patient and interested persons, one woman and three men: Mrs. Bessie Moore, Chairman of the Arkansas Library Commission; Carl Elliott, former congressman from Alabama; Emerson Greenaway, Librarian of the Free Library of Philadelphia; and Carl P. Haskins, trustee of the Carnegie Institution, Washington, D. C. The choice of Pikeville for the hearing was made by Representative Carl Perkins who had intended to be present but whose duties prevented his making the trip. The four commissioners were to report to President Johnson.

How impossible to catch the spirit of the testimony of the earnest librarian, of the concerned mayor and trustee, or of the eager mother of a number of children, of the retired minor, or the business executive! It was a full, exciting day!

The commissioners not only listened carefully to each person. In addition, they asked searching questions.

Kentucky libraries as a whole were seen as vital, growing institutions, almost without exception needing more of everything - especially trained librarians. Again and again, the wonderful progress that has been made in the entire area of library service during the past fifteen or so years was pointed out.

It was heartwarming to see so many community leaders from every part of the state telling of the needs of their libraries, - showing their genuine interest in library welfare. These people included an important newspaper director, lawyers, a bank president, college professors and presidents, authors, mayors, business executives, a former state representative, a minor, librarians, mothers and one eight year old child who reads two books every week only because she cannot get more.

Mention was made that more than a million books have been delivered to counties by the Department of Libraries. Such an enormous figure might lead one to believe that Kentucky now has more than enough money and books but this conclusion is far from correct. As so often happens, the more popular a program becomes, the larger are the demands made upon it so there seems no possibility of catching up with ever-growing needs. Despite the growth, which has occurred in 85 counties, still, "half of the state's population ..has not received these benefits" - that is, the benefits received by the more fortunate half of the state's population.

One of the facts which must have held special interest for the commissioners was that 62 counties have passed library taxes and will soon qualify for state and federal matching funds. If, at that time, federal and state funds are not available to them, Kentucky's library program will inevitably suffer a major setback. Though programs have become exciting for the grass roots through regional library development in 85 counties, there are still 9 counties with no public library service, nor is there yet a really adequate library program in these counties. One testifying citizen commented that public library and bookmobile service should become as universally accessible to all as are electricity and mail service.

Many of the reasons for having public libraries beside education, pleasure and growth of the individual were cited, including the importance to a town of having a library to attract new industry. (among other factors, of course.) This is a fairly recent note and, though crassly commercial, is a telling argument. Even non-readers will understand and approve.

Probably all members of Friends of Kentucky Libraries realize the importance of library service to special classes of people, - the elderly, the blind, the institutionalized, the student, the business man, the homemaker, the youth, the school child and the disadvantaged.

Tribute was paid in several instances to Friends of Kentucky Libraries, to the Department of Libraries, and to the local citizens for their efforts in trying to improve library services.

These hearings continued from early morning until after ten in the evening with only a few minutes of recess for lunch and supper. Many persons waited for hours to give their testimony after coming on long journeys to Pikeville. Some drove, others flew. Some stayed the night, others rushed in, gave their testimony and tried to get home by dark. Those who could not get to Pikeville sent in their written statements and tapes.

The commissioners seemed satisfied with the testimony and impressed by the answers to their questions. They seemed favorably disposed toward the continuation of federal funds for libraries. If this overwhelming, detailed testimony could not convince them, and through them, the President, nothing ever could.

The commissioners were obviously impressed by the great earnestness, the dedication, of so many people in all walks of life, and the almost desperate desire of Kentuckians to have really good library service for themselves and their children. Certainly, all concerned in organizing this hearing are to be thanked and warmly congratulated.

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Thoughts after Attending the Pikeville Hearing - - - Mrs. George Gray

Because of the almost incredible increase in knowledge which gives us a continuous challenge, up-to-date public libraries have now become a primary tool for every citizen in every county.

"Information retrieval" (a new term, now in constant use) is assuming gigantic proportions for public libraries. However, in the midst of the improvement in mechanics, let us not forget the importance of the individual and his growth as he goes through his entire life span.

Yes, it is also important to build a co-ordinated system of libraries of all types for an effective use of specialized information but the individual, whether he be rich or poor, deserves always the patient, sympathetic and skilled help of a public library specialist to discover, and encourage the development of, his latent talents. Especially, in the midst of mechanization, he needs the human touch.

A human being needs to grow in the right direction. He cannot do so without stimulus and guidance.

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Notes on the ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING --- October 21, 2 P.M., Terrace Room, Kentucky Hotel. Mrs. Joy Bale, Presiding

Mrs. Russell Houston, Executive Secretary, after reading the minutes, reported that there has been only one request for scholarship. It was made by Judy Calhoun and was granted, in the amount of \$300 for her junior year. She is attending Morehead State University. On last year's scholarship, she attended college at Prestonsburg.

Suggestion was made and agreed upon that it would be helpful to encourage in-service training in library work among older persons. Several colleges including the University of Kentucky hold these classes, every summer. The Friends of Kentucky Libraries could offer scholarships for these courses, should applications be made. (This is not a new policy.)

Mr. Oldham Clarke read recommended articles of incorporation for Friends of Kentucky Libraries. These articles were formally accepted. This organization, therefore, becomes a corporation to which citizens may make donations for the purpose of building a Foundation for the continued improvement of public library and bookmobile service in the state. The correct name of the organization is now Friends of Kentucky Libraries, Incorporated. (The last word is not to be shortened.)

Much enthusiasm was expressed by the membership for this move which will put the organization on a firmer and more permanent foundation. The need for bequests in wills of interested persons was stressed for they would provide permanent support for continuing aid to needy counties. Bequests made to the organization are tax deductible.

A review of accomplishments for the year showed that scholarships of \$800 were awarded to deserving students, \$300 was granted to Marion County to facilitate a successful campaign for permanent local support for the library program there, \$875 was donated to Wolfe County, one of Kentucky's poorest, for rent of a store building in which as state demonstration of library service was begun and \$60 went to repair a bookmobile to keep it running.

It was noted that grants were made only when sincere local efforts were also made.

A novel idea was offered by Mrs. George Gray for a spring meeting - on the Belle of Louisville. The idea was favorably received.

Rabbi William J. Leffler suggested that an additional meeting be held in April during National Library Week - in Lexington, giving everyone the opportunity to hear an author of national renown. Rabbi Leffler was appointed by the president to be the chairman of a committee to make plans for such a meeting.

The Friends of Kentucky Libraries, Incorporated, adjourned on a note of hope and with a feeling of great responsibility on the part of the membership for further extension of services in the future - through improved local, state and federal participation.

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Invitation just received:

Members and their friends are invited to attend the opening ceremony of the Lewis County Library, at Vanceburg, December 2, at 2 P.M. The speaker will be Mr. Omer Hamlin, Librarian, University of Kentucky Medical College, and the new president of the Kentucky Library Association.

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Issued by the Executive Committee of Friends of Kentucky Libraries

----- (Contributions - tax deductible)

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