

by Evelyn Lauter

# They Write Their Way to Health

HOSPITALIZED VETERANS have had occupational therapy for a long time—things like weaving, leathercraft, wood carving—but now they're turning to graphotherapy, or writing, to get well.

Actually, the vets are trying their hand at authorship not just for its therapeutic value but to win prizes in a national writing contest sponsored just for them.

The Hospitalized Veterans Writing Project began more than ten years ago when a professional newspaperwoman, Mrs. Everett Fontaine, decided she'd heard a lot about keeping veterans busy with their hands and feet, but not much about stimulating their minds. So she started corresponding with hospitalized vets. When her first writing contest was held, the contributions piled into Mrs. Fontaine's home so fast she had to get some writer friends to help her with the judging.

By 1950 the Veterans Administration added the annual contest to its service program in VA hospitals across the nation. The professional women's journalism fraternity, Theta Sigma Phi, also joined in. Members offer help by correspondence, by visits to hospitals, and by giving writing courses for the vets.

The two-month writing contest starts annually on Feb. 15. Prominent writers and editors act as judges, and magazines and publishers underwrite prizes.

How much good does the program do? One VA hospital administrator summed it up in three words: appreciation, understanding, and motivation, each a vital objective in the therapy program for hospitalized vets.

And the vets accomplish some remarkable things. One ex-GI, in bed for months with critical internal injuries suffered when a land mine went off under him, listened to soap operas much of the time over his hospital radio. He didn't think the stories were very good, so he wrote a script (with the help of a Theta Sigma Phi adviser). It sold for \$250, and he has marketed a dozen since!

Another veteran, a paraplegic in a West Coast hospital, devised a tool to help him type—two spools with pencils projecting through the ends and a loop to go over his little fingers. With this arrangement, he could let his arms drop to the typewriter keyboard and the pencils hit the keys at a 25-word-per-minute clip.

Result? An article, "Rehabilitation Through Writing," which won him first place in last year's contest and the satisfaction that he had contributed something to his fellow veterans and to the world.



Winner of last year's Hospitalized Veterans Writing Contest was paraplegic vet (right) who devised his own typing tool.

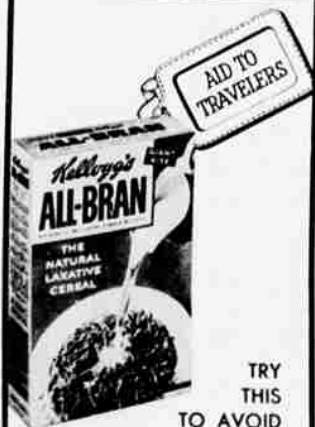
## Betty's BLUE

PERIODIC  
PAIN

Don't let the calendar make a slave of you, Betty! Just take a Midol tablet with a glass of water... that's all. Midol brings faster relief from menstrual pain — it relieves cramps, eases headache and chases the "blues".



## Betty's GAY WITH MIDOL



Take along a box of Kellogg's All-Bran. Eat a serving (½ cup) with milk every morning. This gives you all the natural laxative bulk you need daily to keep on schedule. Delicious, inexpensive, ready-to-eat Kellogg's All-Bran. Also available in the aluminum foil "Individual" packages at restaurants along the way.

