

A Literary Awakening Urged During National Library Week

By BILL DECKER

The week of March 16-22 has been designated as National Library Week, and the Herald and News has arranged a number of articles and picture stories designed to familiarize its readers with the splendid library facilities available in Klamath County.

This department will participate by publishing a series of articles by noted authors on the subject of books in general. It is hoped

that the thoughts of these people to whom the world of books means so much will instill in the readers a desire to read more.

Man has been reading and writing for about 10,000 years, according to historians, and in that time the art of communicating ideas and opinions has become one of the most important aspects of life. Imagine the difference it would make if each generation had to start from scratch, if they did

not have the writings of all the ages which preceded them, and a person will see the importance of the written word. When we have learned to profit by the experiences and wisdom of the thoughts left to us by those who have gone before the ultimate purpose of reading and writing will be near at hand.

Fiction plays an important part in the development of personality, just as any experience adds to the fund of knowledge. The people we meet in books, the emotions evoked and the reactions stimulated all serve to make us more complete and rounded individuals. If a person is a thoughtful reader he grows with every book, he matures with every experience and he finds out more about himself with each character he meets.

A book, a magazine, or a newspaper, is a compact package containing the excitement of living which exist beyond one's door. The printed word can bring a wealth of knowledge he may never know at first hand, can introduce him to the rich and varied experience of other people and other places. It offers him the world and all its learning which he could not acquire so fully and exactly by any other means.

Let these men and women from the world of letters tell of their experiences with books and then, whether reading for entertainment, instruction or escape, "Wake Up and Read!"

in your own time and in your own public libraries. Thus may you demonstrate the art of bringing the world of the past — the world of delighted and delightful imagination — into your very spirits. Thus may you demonstrate this ecstatic occupation to others.

When the first bearded men went tramping in their cloaks from camp to camp and castle to castle, they chanted legends aloud. Such recital, in its way, as the Reading Aloud of early times. Folks were benefited by a voice telling a tale . . . they may accumulate the same treasure in this very moment, and in hours yet undreamed.

Turn off the television for the night! Boldest stallions and fiercest dragons and the most comical hares are not the ones which you will see posturing before you amid a crescendo of studio music. They are those which you hear about while being read to. Their rarest manes and horns and ears are those in which you yourself dress them — not the ones tailored by some unseen producer.

The richest message is not refined and filtered through a dozen other minds. It comes to you across ennobled distances, directly from its source to the happy target which is yourself — and which is as well a child unready to be born and not yet dreamed of — a child whom each of you in your own turn may Read Aloud to, in a year which lies many star-winks ahead.

THE COVER

The cover picture for this week's Herald and News Magazine Section of Klamath Basin Living was taken by staff photographer Don Kettler and is designed to illustrate the purpose of National Library Week. Mrs. F. H. Holmes is shown reading to her daughters Joyce, 4, on the left, and Julayne, 6. A 4 x 5 Crown Graphic camera was used set at f 32 and a 200th of a second with extension flash.

The Tonic Of Reading Aloud

Editor's Note: Author MacKinlay Kantor has come to be regarded as a foremost interpreter of the essentially American flavor and scene. His 30 books include the best-selling "Andersonville" and his more recent "Lobo." He also wrote the original story for the movie "The Best Years of Our Lives," which won 13 Academy awards.

By MacKINLAY KANTOR

"Dear Mike and Tommy and Susan:

You will find the most exalted adventures, the darkest cream of mysteries, the spiciest apples and clearest creeks—all these you will find hiding between the covers of books.

And stimulation will come through the application of that almost forgotten art — Reading Aloud."

This is a benefit valued in those dearest hours when a family may be assembled. I remember that your mother and your uncle Tim thought that it was a captivating rite to be accomplished in bed! . . . Many things which children enjoy doing are very rewarding to the children when the children do these things themselves; but they are not occupations in which parents or grandparents may join with any but pretended enthusiasm.

Reading Aloud, on the other hand, offers the same spice and tonic to the one who reads and it awards to him who listens. We all enjoy being actors at times; there is no happier way in which to be an actor.

Your great-grandmother was an actress before my eyes and to the

response of my eager ears, and she was a good one. It seems sometimes that I can hear her yet — when she was anything from the Mad Hatter to the Lady from Philadelphia; and back again to those delicious moments when she screamed at Tom Sawyer as his poor Aunt Polly screamed, or when she gave every reassurance of the Swiss Robinson mother on a fairly enchanted island, as that good woman delved into her wonderful bag.

In the same way I tried to be Huckleberry Finn and Long John Silver when your mother was young. She swears that I succeeded admirably. So, you see there is double benefit: the joy at the time of doing the thing; and the pleasure of being reminded about it, no matter how many years later.

A story shared by audience and reader is a tale many times endeared and many times endowed. How indeed does the Bible itself become best compelling in drama and in poetry? Surely it is because that great Book has its tales and messages so often Read Aloud.

In an Iowa town where I lived through those years which I spent in your assorted sizes, we were blessed in having a fine public library. A rich man, who boasted few close relatives, had left his entire estate to be used for library purposes. So that library goes on, pouring out its gifts to the community more than half a century later.

If we did not have the noblest stories on our narrow shelves at home, we could find them in the public library. So also may you,



FOLLOWING UP THEIR INTRODUCTION to the world of books at an early age are Pat Pappe, 8, and Dale Petrasek, 9, who are being directed by Mrs. Amy Kolkow who is in charge of the Malin branch of the Klamath County Library. Pat, on the left, is the son of Mr. and Mrs. George Pappe and Dale's parents are Mr. and Mrs. Enoch Petrasek of Malin. The boys were investigating part of the library's International Geophysical Year exhibit.



We live in a complicated and difficult time. We must be well-informed if we are to survive, and as a democratic nation we depend on knowledge as we never have before. You and your family can benefit from the exciting world of reading. Re-discover the delights and the challenge of the written word! Books are about everything — everything that interests you as a thinking person. The world is at your fingertips by merely opening the printed page — science, fiction, history, art — it's all there for the taking. Visit your library, your bookseller, your newsstand today. You'll find reading more will broaden your horizons!



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