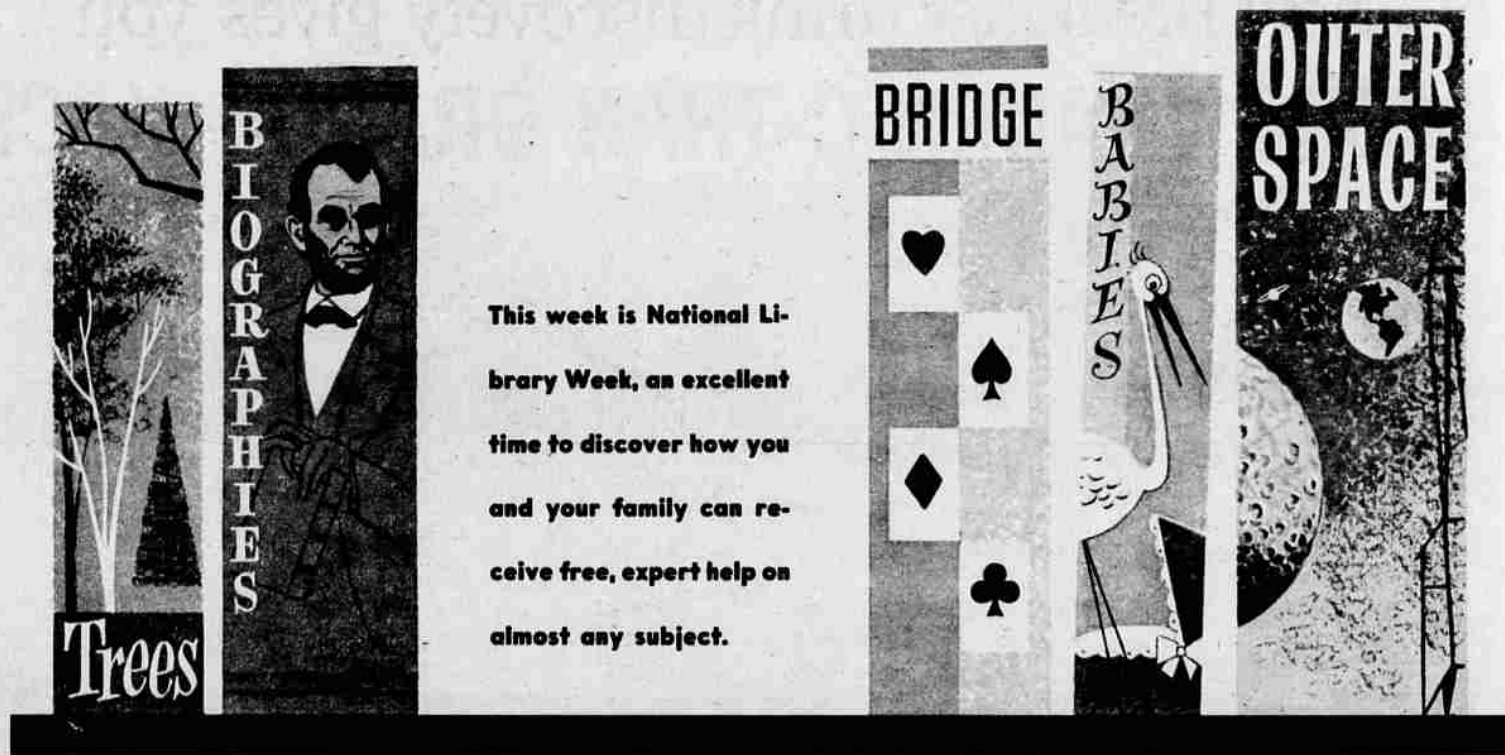




This week is National Library Week, an excellent time to discover how you and your family can receive free, expert help on almost any subject.



by **Everette Edgar Sentman**
Illinois Chairman, National Library Week

How to Enjoy Library Week

The goal of National Library Week, which begins today, is "A Better-Read, Better-Informed America." It is sponsored by the American Library Association and the National Book Committee, Inc. The Illinois state committee suggests these four ways for you to celebrate National Library Week:

1. Read a story to a child—and make story-time a family ritual.
2. Start a home library—or add to the one you have.
3. Visit your public library. Ask what services it offers the family.
4. Give a book as a gift.

Take Your Problems

IF YOU KNOW someone who is getting married, having a baby, buying a home, looking for a better job, or planning to retire, do him a favor and send him to the library. Librarians are happy to help solve these and many other family problems. That's the chief purpose of the modern public library—to serve the family.

The library helps to get marriageable people off on the right foot. Librarians know that Shakespeare's "lover, sighing like furnace," is the book-borrowing husband and father of tomorrow. The Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore prepares a carefully selected reading guide on love for young adults. Librarian Margaret Rankin of the San Diego Public Library tells of the bridegroom who rushed in frantically and asked, "Is that book on ideal marriage in yet? I'm going to be married Saturday and then it will be too late."

Once the wedding bells have sounded—and the library is an invaluable source of information about weddings—the young couple has new problems. The Baltimore library meets one of these with a purse-size book list, "Before the Baby Comes."

In many cities librarians watch birth announcements to make certain that parents are advised what to do "After the Baby Comes." This is followed in due course by advice on "Your Pre-Schooler," "Your Child from 6 to 12," and on through the ages of man to "The Later Years."

When a child reaches the "Why, Daddy?"

stage, parents should realize there will be no quiet until they introduce him to books that answer questions. Some of these, such as the dictionary and an encyclopedia, should be bought for ready reference at home. Biographies, history and science books, and fiction may be borrowed from your nearby public library. Helen Hart of the New Orleans Public Library tells of the parent who said, "This has been a wonderful Summer, thanks to your reading club. Johnny has spent all the rainy days reading. You can't buy this kind of peace."

Parents of gifted children find the library a bountiful source of help. When librarians recognize a gifted child, they set aside the rules so he can read adult books. Restricting his reading to books for his age level would discourage him.

Sometimes the child has the opposite problem—difficulty in learning. Anne was in the fifth grade when her mother brought her to the children's librarian at the Washington, D. C., Public Library because she was reading on a third-grade level. With patience, careful selection of material, and genuine interest, the librarian helped Anne attain her rightful reading level. By that time, Anne's four brothers and sisters also were enthusiastic users of the library.

THE INCREASING mobility of our population sometimes creates emotional problems for children. A mother and her small son visited the bookmobile of the Dayton, O.,

to the Library

Public Library and asked for "Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel" by Virginia Lee Burton. The mother explained that the family was transferred frequently, so in each new city they went to the library and the boy asked for his favorite book. The library thus helped her son to feel secure in each new home.

Parents usually teach their children the library habit. But in Perrysburg, O., it's often the children who bring their parents to the Way Public Library. This library awards certificates to "Papooses"—preschool children—for books their families read to them. This not only encourages a family reading hour, but also stimulates the borrowing of books by parents, many of whom previously were nonreaders.

Thus the public library serves the youngest and the oldest members of the family. It keeps pace with the needs of the delightful young miss who read only horse and dog books for years, but one day skipped to the desk and said, "I've got a boy friend. Give me some girl books." It helped the Cincinnati lad who needed a course in auto mechanics to get a raise at a service station. It inspired a sixth-grade Philadelphia girl to write, "If I were a librarian I would get to know the better books. If a book gives me a lump in my throat, or makes me happy, sad, or gay, I think it's good."

The library made it possible for Joseph Bennett of Minneapolis to pass the civil-service exam for a fire-department job. It

helped Robert Hughes of Syracuse, N. Y., win a bet with his wife that he could make the slip covers they couldn't afford to buy.

In Toledo, what Director Robert Franklin calls "the community brain" answered a record number of questions last year, ranging from "How can I freeze fish?" to "How does ion propulsion work?"

In Philadelphia, a blind mother borrowed a fairy tale in Braille and the picture book of the same tale for her child to look at as she read. In Providence a devoted father and his three-year-old borrowed books about trains, trees, stores, and parks, then went to see them. The King County Public Library in Seattle received this telephone call: "Does a bookmobile stop near Meridian? We're buying a home, but we don't want to be out of bookmobile range."

Family library visits strengthen family unity. Amy L. Boynton, librarian in Lodi, Calif., says, "We find that people who use the library in groups are aware of one another's interests in books as well as in other things. They read a wider variety of books because each one makes his interests felt. We find families chuckling together over 'Winnie-the-Pooh' or 'Charlotte's Web,' then delving into studies of the Dead Sea Scrolls or the mysteries of outer space."

Thus the library can serve the family in countless ways. Problems have a way of fading, family life becomes richer and fuller when the interest and ingenuity of the librarian are applied to family needs.



Art by Tye Gibson

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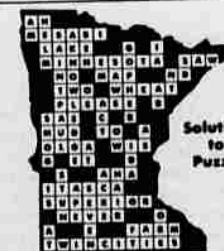
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