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Role of the Suburban Press Is Chicago Conference Topic

Paul N. Averill, publisher of The Birmingham Eccentric, and Kenneth R. Weaver, managing editor, will participate in a two-day advertising and editorial conference in Chicago Jan. 25 and 26. Averill will introduce the speaker at a banquet Thursday evening, Jan. 25, and Weaver will take part in a panel discussion on "Editorial Page and Policy" that afternoon.

The national conference, for members of the Suburban Press Foundation, Inc., will take place at the Sheraton-Chicago Hotel. Some 100 editors and advertising managers from Foundation newspapers in nine major metropolitan areas are expected to attend.

Averill will introduce Derick Daniels, city editor of the Detroit Free Press, who will speak on the topic "How Can the Metropolitan Daily and Suburban Press Co-Exist?"

THE INCREASINGLY important role being played by the suburban press and its potential for future development will be discussed by panels of experts and leading authorities in the field of communications.

Chester K. Hayes, executive director of the Foundation, said the conference was designed to advance the Foundation program for editorial development and initial organized improvement and development of the advertising service and impact of the suburban press.

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Home Owners Elect Officers

The Council of Troy Home Owners Association elected officers and elected by-laws at its monthly meeting Wednesday.

New officers are Glen Houghton, president of Glen Moor Association, president; Robert Tucker, president of the East Central Troy Improvement Association, vice president; Robert Ohler, president of Meadowlark Association, secretary; and Leo Savoy, president of Troy Villars, treasurer.

Homeowners associations declining charter membership in the council may apply on or before April 11, 1962.

PURPOSE OF THE council is "To promote the welfare of the members of the organization represented in problems of housing, transportation, sanitation, taxation, building and zoning restrictions, streets and sidewalks, schools and all other matters of public interest, and generally to promote and advance the interest of all organizations comprising this Council in person and property, and to advance the welfare of the City of Troy.

The council's next meeting will be held at 8 p. m. Feb. 14.

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Is the Capacity Greater Than for Simple Stories?

By RUTH VOGT
 Special Writer

As a few concerned educators, plus a few authors, have lamented recently that we are stunting our children's ability to become avid readers in their life by reading them, in the first grade, such simple stories as "Dick and Jane" and "Over the Big Dog."

By limiting the number of words through a controlled vocabulary method, these authorities claim that by the fourth grade our little Johnny can recognize only four hundred words on sight while Ivan in Russia, not under controlled word plan, is able to recognize a great many more.

Hence, they say, that is why Ivan shows more fluency than we in high school while ours are content to digest much lighter reading material, if at all.

IMMEDIATELY there is the tendency upon reading this line of sensible reasoning, to nod the head and agree with every word these educators and authors put down. That is exactly what was done—before substituting in the first grade!

"Mr. Educator and Wise Author, have you ever taught your six-year-olds to expose themselves to a teaching of two dozen brand new schoolers, experiencing the confining effects of merely remaining in a safe and using books, pencils and paper for first time, find these situations quite bewildering?"

Then you want to ask them if they have attempted to teach them what "those funny marks mean on a printed page." To them they are just marks. Black marks on a white page with pictures, of course.

LAST WEEK, in a class of 18, the first group of eight gathered about my chair in the front of the room while the others did their work in their seats.

Those eight? They were, after four months, able to read two complete books, to sprinkle their words with "See Jane run to the store, Jane runs fast."

Before returning to their seats, the reading notebooks were taken from the cupboard and handed out, plainly, thoroughly, what they were to do in the notebooks. (It was connected, of course, with Jane going to the store for her mother.)

THE SECOND group of five trooped up to the front. Their reading books were different. They were just a bit more simple.

Even then, two had difficulty with the words introduced the day before, "these and here." It was hard for these two to distinguish. They storked and storked them.

The others were patient; they tried to help. Eventually, by the time this group took the books, with notebooks, all had conquered the two "old words" plus two other words.

The last five had an entirely different set of books as well as work-books. They held their books closer to them; they read much slower. They read, sometimes, jerkily.

However, all of them "worked" just as hard. The joy received when hearing them get a word, without help, by sounding it out, was great. (These little six-year-olds? They know that this month is January. But, as yet, they don't quite sense where "March or April or June creeps into the calendar. This winter? They'll grasp the 12 months as well as telling time by the clock. This is all brand new to their little minds.

AT THE END of this particular fascinating day with these first graders, (and they were, all of them, bright!) all that ran through the mind was—

Just how would these Educators approach the reading problem except through repetition? And would they recommend that "many new

One Foundation
 A church in Exeter, England, ordered that the badminton club stop meeting in the church because it was disturbing the bingo games in the basement.

Split Personality
 Pontiac, Mich., has the story about a fellow who was scheduled for jury duty and also to stand trial in the same court on the matter of a traffic violation.

Sample the Product?
 A Logansport, Ind., man who lost his driver's license for drunken driving asked if he could get a job driving a beer truck.

painting a picture, singing a concert song or dancing ballet. I have only the greatest admiration for those people who do attempt to get the knowledge out of books and into Johnny's head.

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It's a big milestone in their lives when they are able to recognize, without struggling, "run", "shot", "Mother", "dog" and "squirrel".

PERHAPS, AFTER a basic vocabulary has been learned, it might be possible to thrust them into a much wider field; however, this is being accomplished, as far as I'm able to see, through the splendid library program set up in our schools.

Each week the classes have their own period when they go to the library and select the book that interests. Certain minutes, each day, are set aside to "discuss" those library books being read.

Also, scattered about in every classroom are many different kinds of books which a child may "pick up" at his will whenever his work is finished.

And they do pick them up and they do bring them up to you to show you "something new or interesting which took their eye."

WHAT CAN be said in summary here? The wish exists that every parent might have the opportunity to "help into a classroom sometime" just to see the arduous of learning taking place.

It's far more complicated than

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