

from the CAPITOL

By GOV. GRANT SAWYER



SUPERIOR LIBRARIES to support programs of excellence in education are essential in today's world of changing conditions, new knowledge, and complex problems.

That Nevadans are increasingly aware of the need is evidenced by the establishment of three new libraries during fiscal 1965-66 in Douglas, Clark, and Ormsby counties which will serve approximately 100,000 people.

The first three months of each calendar year finds all departments of local government concerned with budgeting for the new fiscal year. Library boards, boards of school trustees, and school and university administrators become acutely aware of the costs as they attempt to schedule adequate library resources within the financial structure of the local or state governments of which they are a part.

HOW CAN NEVADA rise to the challenge of quality libraries for school children, for undergraduate and graduate students at the universities, and for the general public of all ages in need of continuing and lifelong education, sometimes reeducation? Is there duplication of expenditures and resources? What is the proper balance of support from local governments, state government, and federal government? Have Nevada libraries been too dependent on cash grants from federal programs? How can problems of equalization be solved? When the 1965 legislature was asked to provide State grants-in-aid to public libraries, the finance committees, aware both of the need and of the costs, determined that further study on these questions was desirable before committing large sums of public money to such projects.

Accordingly, the legislature approved an act to create a Nevada Council on Libraries. This Council is studying existing library resources, facilities, and services and formulating recommendations to the end that Nevada can have superior libraries.

ON JULY 1, I appointed seven Nevadans to the Council, people who are representative of the library profession and the general public. I look forward to a report which the Council will provide enabling our state to further reduce the gap between needs and resources.

Realizing that such a study must be objective and in accordance with basic precepts of good research, the Council turned to a proven friend of libraries. The Max C. Fleischmann Foundation of Nevada provided funds to defray the costs of the study. The people of Nevada and the libraries of the State are deeply indebted to the Foundation not only for improved library services at the University and in many public libraries, but for this contribution to planning for the future of library services in Nevada.

THE COUNCIL will contract with the Bureau of Government Research at the University of Nevada to conduct the study. During the weeks ahead Nevada citizens and representatives of all levels of government will be approached by the survey team for cooperation in designing a survey which will provide the data needed for orderly, planned progress.

Good libraries should result from policy establishment and intelligent planning.

A Letter to a Twelve Year Old

My dear Leo Elmore:

I can't remember when a letter to the Editor interested me as much as did your letter to Mr. Waddell that appeared in the last issue of his Las Vegas Examiner.

You have been very much on my mind these past few days. It is not the fact that a 12 year old should exhibit such a deep interest in his community newspapers that caused my preoccupation with you (it is not extraordinary for a youngster to write a letter to an editor); it was not even the unusual circumstance that you took that method to criticize the content of the VOICE, unfounded and unjust as that criticism was, that leaves me utterly fascinated; it was the implied interest that is yours in the society that completely captivated me. For a 12-year-old boy to issue a definitive commentary on the "goings-on" as reported on the society page of a newspaper, frankly, astonished me.

Sunday, as I watched the Green Bay Packer-Cleveland Browns championship football game on TV, I found myself wondering whether you, too, were looking at the game. "Does Leo", I asked myself, "care for sports, either as spectator or participant"? Only recently, the VOICE, has been reporting results of the local flag football tournament as well as other events in the world of sports, and I had a natural curiosity as to whether your newspaper reading included such coverage or was just limited to society news.

You see, Leo, the VOICE has many features that I would think would be of more interest to a 12 year old, particularly a Negro twelve year old. As editor of the VOICE, I have particular pride in two features of the VOICE that, in my opinion, should be of keen interest to our youngsters.

Our "Hidden History" series which reveals historical facts about Negroes and the role Negroes have played in making history since the beginning of chronicled events, it seems to me, would be fascinating reading for a Negro youngster with an ounce of pride in his heritage. In these series, you will swell with pride, perhaps even be astounded at the contributions made by our ancestors in every field imaginable. The astonishment will be understandable because

these recorded events have ever been missing from your textbooks (often with deliberate intent).

I consider, Mr. Dick Miller's "Books for Negro Children" column that appears in every issue of the VOICE an outstanding feature of our paper. Mr. Miller is Librarian at Highland School, and his knowledge of the books he reviews and recommends for reading is peerless. Were I a school teacher, Mr. Miller's column would be required reading in my classes, as would "Hidden History". But if I were a 12 year old as astute as you appear to be, no one would have to require me to follow these educational and fascinating features.

Leo, may I presume to tell you something about newspaper reporting that may not have been brought to your attention? A newspaper has two functions: to report the news, and to editorially serve as the voice of the community which it represents.

I mention this because perhaps it will explain to you that the reason why some people are mentioned in newspapers more often than others is simply because they are doing things that are of interest to the newspaper's readers. Another point is that many people are aware of our limited staff and considerably supply us with news of their activities. We faithfully print all news of social events sent along to us.

Also, Leo, if you have noticed that the single largest coverage we give any one group is that of local school activity--one would think that you might have a passing interest in that.

I would like very much to meet you, Leo. Some day, why don't you drop in on us at the VOICE and become acquainted. It would give me a great deal of pleasure to show you just how we go about getting out the VOICE every week.

One thing more, in closing, Son; those sorority sisters, that you were misled into making slighting remarks about, are some of the finest ladies in our community who receive an equitable amount of space in the VOICE commensurate to the activities in which they are engaged (both for charity, or merely socially) and/or as much as this editor deems fit to give them.

With love and affection,
Alice Key

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