Home Economics Women Take the Air

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Recommended Citation
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WOMAN’S place is in the home—even the woman thinks so! At least such is the case if the increase in popularity of WOI’s Homemakers’ Half Hour is any indication.

Writing in from almost every state in the union and foreign countries as well, homemakers have swelled the list of requests for talks given on this program from 5,412 in 1929 to 157,756 in 1939, according to a report just compiled by Mrs. Zenobia B. Ness, who this year is celebrating her tenth anniversary as director of the Half Hour.

Proof of the pudding is further evidenced by the fact that during the weeks of last April 4 to 17, inclusive, a total of 1,257 cards and letters were received in the Homemakers’ mail while 7,859 requests were supplied. From April 18 to 24, 1,037 cards and letters came to Mrs. Ness’s desk and 2,199 talks were sent out.

“I think your broadcasts are the most helpful on the air,” is only one of the many excerpts from the Half Hour’s fan mail.

On the air at 10 a.m. each day except Saturday and Sunday, Homemakers’ Half Hour programs are composed of contributions by faculty members from the nine departments of the Home Economics Division, with the Home Economics Extension Staff cooperating.

Varied as the field of homemaking itself, talks numbering 502 were presented to radio listeners during the past year. Most requested talk is “Setting the Stage for a Tea,” by Louise L’Engle, Foods and Nutrition Department, for which there were 1,722 inquiries. Dr. P. Mabel Nelson, head of the same department, wrote “Fruit Cakes,” which ranked second with 1,400 requests. More than 1,825 women asked for Dr. Nelson’s “Gingerbreads” and “Molasses and Spice and Everything Nice.”

Topping the list in the Applied Art Department, as revealed by the report, is “American Glass” by Mrs. Ness. Placing second is “Harmony in Flower Arrangement” by the same author. Leading all requests in applied art, though not presented on the past year’s program, is the late Anna Henderson’s “Furnishing the Living Room and Dining Room” in the School for the Brides series. A close second is “With a Color Scheme I Will Doctor Your Face, and with Paint and Paper Transform This Place” by Joanne M. Hansen, department head.

In the Child Development Department, “List of Books for Children and Parents” by Edith M. Sunderland led all others. Miss Sunderland’s “Have You Made Room for the Children?” ranked next and Lydia Swanson’s contribution, “Will You Be a Good Neighbor?” followed.

“The Adult Goes to School” by Mary S. Lyle, and “Lead Kindly Light” by Marcia E. Turner, placed first and second, respectively, in requests from the Homemakers’ mail while 7,859 requests were also received for Dr. Nelson’s “Fruit Cakes.”

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