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We Introduce a Leader in Our Field

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HELEN P. HOSTETTER first sat down in the editor's golden wicker chair in the Washington, D. C., headquarters of the American Home Economics Association four years ago. Since then her work as editor of publications for the Association has kept her busy. Her main task is that of editing the Journal of Home Economics.

Serving her heterogeneous clientele, as HPH calls her readers, is no easy job. She is conscientious to the nth degree and regards her responsibility as editor soberly. But that doesn't mean she put out a somber, highly technical magazine. There are chuckles as well as up-to-date information in every issue.

Home Economists in Business (HEIB), home economics teachers, as well as homemakers, nutritionists, child development and textiles and clothing specialists not only scan the Journal's table of contents, but also take time to contribute articles each month.

Helen Hostetter continues to tailor the Journal to meet the over-all group needs of Association members.

We introduce

A Leader in Our Field

Each issue has at least one article by an outstanding educator, economist, or psychologist designed to broaden home economics horizons.

No one person could be an authority on the many phases of home economics that must be included when it comes to selection of material. Helen Hostetter S.O.S's her corps of Journal advisors who are leading home economists, teachers, homemakers, to read manuscripts and to evaluate them.

Three years ago she enlisted the aid of Reader-Editors. Last spring she enlarged that group by including one graduating college senior from each state. Through a questionnaire she found out what the young home economists entering the field want in their professional journal.

Through questionnaires to other readers and advisers a wealth of tips for future stories and writers is garnered. The officers of the Association also serve as reporters to the Journal and advisers to the editor.

Another group Helen Hostetter calls upon is the book reviewers, outstanding home economists who volunteer to read and critically to evaluate new books. She considers book reviewing in most professional journals to be of the "panty waist" variety.

Several innovations the editor has introduced the past year include monthly symposium or debates that rate high in reader interest, the deleting of boring footnotes (she contends that information in them, if relevant, belongs in the body of the article), and a short editorial foreword to research pieces called "Application for the Homemaker" that points out tersely the significance of findings.

Helen Hostetter gives her authors limitless cooperation. An editor is usually granted the last word, but she devotes much of her heavy correspondence to helping contributors slant and polish articles. No manuscript is sent to the printer until it has the author's OK on the edited version.

With Old Man Deadline (a brightly colored Mexican mask) scowling down at her from his place on the wall, she often works under tension to finish up the last two pages of editorials and the last-minute Washington News page. But she is one person who stands up well under deadline pressure. She works actively at it and does a good job, just as she plays a good game of golf or enjoys a long, fast walk through the park or historic countryside.

Helen Hostetter is an out-of-doors enthusiast and a tireless traveler. She is the eldest of a Nebraska doctor's four daughters. She received her B.A. from the University of Nebraska and shortly after that her M.S. from the Medill School of Journalism, Northwestern University. She spent three interesting years in Canton, China, teaching college English. In her apartment and office she has many Chinese wall hangings and art objects, including an old chest and a brass table, reminders of those years.

For a while she taught journalism at Kansas State College but left to have a try at radio script writing in the U. S. Bureau of Home Economics. She later returned to KSC where she took her B.S. in home economics in 1940. The next year she studied at Columbia University, brushing up on trade and professional journal techniques before being elected.

Helen Hostetter is interested in the gourmet approach to food preparation and thinks that home economists and nutritionists are most successful when they write foods copy from that point of view.

And Journal plans? Her hazel eyes light up: More pictures and more pages! But she will continue to condense!

Reprinted from Matrix by Helen Crane, '40

Home economics students receive invaluable aid from professional magazines such as Editor Hostetter's Journal of Home Economics

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