

Palos and Hickory Form Green Hills Library District

A joint community effort of Hickory Hills and Palos Hills residents resulted in the formation of the Green Hills Library District in December of 1962.

Work on the establishment of a library district to serve both communities began months prior to actual voting. A community wide non-partisan group of residents representing the village of Hickory hills and the city of Palos Hills paved the way. Green Hills Public Library Association, formed early in the venture, sponsored a highly successful dance to raise funds to underwrite the referendum, and realized a neat profit of \$1,300 from the event to get the library rolling. A second benefit dance a year later sponsored by the Friends of the Library helped cover library expenses while waiting for the tax revenue income.

The first six trustees appointed to the library board were Benedict Warren, John Curtis, Herman Conrady, Mrs. Lila Ellison, Mrs. Grace Kordisch, and Mrs. Mabel Muhonen.

Much volunteer effort went into preparations for a grand opening. Volunteer Mrs. Lila Ellison (now Warren) the first librarian, and William McKillop, professional librarian, de-

voted countless hours to the organization of a smooth-running public library lending system, processing and cataloging books, and intensive library training. Other civic-minded groups worked to transform the new store at 10714 S. Roberts rd., made available at a nominal rental fee by owners Mr. and Mrs. Frank Stramalgia of Palos Hills,

Formal dedication was held at open house Oct. 11, 1963, with an initial stock of 2,500 books, including 1,500 on loan from the state of Illinois, 800 from a local book drive, and encyclopedias and other gift books through donations. The district was expanded to serve additional sections of Hickory Hills by special referendum passed Sept. 26, 1964. A summer reading program conducted in 1964 stimulated greater reader interest among students on vacation; a best seller special section is popular among adults.

Library trustees serve without compensation, and serve staggered 6-year terms in deciding policies, preparing a budget, and discussing book selections. Current trustees are: Ben Warren, president; Herman Conrady, treasurer; Mrs. Grace Kordish, secretary; Mrs.

Pat Curtis who succeeded her late husband John Curtis; Mrs. Betty Charles, school district 117 business manager, who replaced Mrs. Mabel Muhonen who moved out of the district; and Donald Henderson, principal at Stagg High School, to replace Mrs. Lila Warren whose recent resignation was accepted with regrets. Election of two trustees to complete staggered terms will be held soon. All registered voters living in the library district are eligible to vote.

Since its inception the library is open 15 hours a week from 7 to 9 Monday, Tuesday, and Friday; 2 to 5 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday; and 1 to 4 p.m. Saturday. Currently staffed by Mrs. Robert Babcock, Mrs. Darrel Kautz, Mrs. Kenneth Vrtis, and Mrs. Don Patterson, and junior helpers, Lois Kautz and April Filis, it has risen from a 13,190 circulation in its first year of operation to a 15,104 circulation in its second year, an increase of 1,914 books. It has expanded from the initial stock of 2,500 volumes to 5,000 volumes presently. Their juvenile, adult, and reference materials are supplemented by book mobile service from the American Lending Library. Upon request, special books may be obtained at no charge from the Illinois State Library. Its storehouse of pleasure and knowledge is available free to resident card-holders, and every resident is eligible to become a library card-holder.