SYMPOSIUM ON ENERGY, FOOD AND THE QUALITY OF LIFE

On April 21 and 22, secondary school and college teachers of science and social studies from the mid-west will travel to Indiana University in Bloomington to participate in a two-day symposium on Energy, Food and the Quality of Life. Speakers will discuss the present situation in the United States and our outlook for the future in terms of fuel, food, water and other natural resources. Specific topics will include solar energy, nuclear power, the environment, food production, population trends, genetic engineering and the social effects of these technologies.

This is the fourth such conference to be held at Indiana University. Every effort will be made to demonstrate the interrelationships between the topics discussed; suggestions will be made concerning means by which the information can be introduced to students at different educational levels.

The conference is supported by the National Science Teachers Association, Indiana Council for the Social Studies, the Mid-American Program for Global Perspectives in Education, and the Offices of the Coordinators for School Science and for School Social Studies at Indiana University. Those interested in obtaining more information on the conference may contact:

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Bloomington, Indiana 47401
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A LABORATORY BIOLOGY TEACHING LIBRARY

A laboratory biology teaching library is being established at The University of Calgary in order to improve communication among persons actively involved in undergraduate biology laboratory instruction.

Jon Glase (Cornell University), Don Igelsrud (University of Calgary), Patricia Paulus (Texas Christian University), and Ruth Von Blum (University of California, Berkeley) have formed a committee to establish the library and are sending a letter requesting written materials to 3500 institutions in the U. S. and Canada. The committee will identify a group of individuals actively concerned with problems of teaching biology in the laboratory so an organization can be established.

The main function of the library will be to collect in one place descriptions of biological systems and supporting materials that the contributor believes are reliable and effective in biology laboratory instruction. The committee is most interested in acquiring information about reliable, possibly unique, biological systems for teaching undergraduates in a laboratory setting.

Contributors are being asked to send their current laboratory manuals and preparatory information for undergraduate laboratory courses indicating
the authors of each exercise and annotating those materials which are particularly reliable and effective. Authors may send only their best materials if they wish. The materials will be used in the following ways depending on the contributor's preference:

1. For identification to help establish an organization and then held in confidence.
2. Available for study by visitors to the library.
3. Released for copying with the author's written permission.
4. Available for copying without permission of the author.

Unless otherwise stated, the library will assume the contributor wishes the materials to be used only to the first extent. With good participation, the library expects to obtain sufficient outside funding to produce a detailed index so persons with specific interests can communicate with each other. An index would be sent to each contributor.

A conference on laboratory instruction is planned for one of the national meetings in 1978 and will be organized in conjunction with the formation of the new organization. By establishing communication among laboratory instructors the group hopes to begin to solve some of the common problems confronted in the laboratory: finding and maintaining reliable living materials, producing modern laboratory exercises involving living materials and investigating inquiry, training others involved in the teaching of and preparation for laboratory classes, developing fair and relevant methods of examination, and so on.

The library was suggested by Don Igelsrud to identify persons actively working in biology laboratory instruction so that communication could be facilitated. The biology departments of the University of Calgary and Cornell University will fund the initial costs of the library. It will be located in the University of Calgary Biology Department which has a strong commitment to laboratory teaching, offers laboratories with appropriate courses, and has eight full-time laboratory instructors, marine and freshwater aquarium facilities, greenhouses, and a large support staff. The facilities and faculty are available during the summer months (May through August) and Calgary's close proximity to Banff and the Canadian Rockies make it ideal for winter as well as summer visits.

The group recognizes a need for an organization that addresses itself to the problems of biology laboratory teachers. Most papers on biological education are philosophical rather than practical in nature. Commercial laboratory manuals are often based on traditional procedures and materials that are unreliable. The methods, materials and experience required to greatly improve laboratory instruction do exist, however. For example, many reliable living organisms are available but have not been widely used in teaching because of poor communication. An organization of biology laboratory teachers would encourage the discussion of common problems and facilitate the improvement of laboratory programs.

Biologists who do not see a copy of the letter but are actively involved in laboratory instruction and are interested in participating should write to Laboratory Biology Teaching Library, Dept. of Biology, The University of Calgary, Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2N 1N4. 403-284-6127