

# Michigan Pacing Growth Of Town Hall Lectures

**BY MARGARET MILLER**  
Women's Editor

For several hundred women in Observerland, Town Hall means a day to put on their best dresses and smartest hats and go out for some fine entertainment or mental stimulation. They've been enjoying for several years now the visits four or five times a season of some of the nation's best speakers and personalities. Few of them realize, though,



ROBERT KEEDICK, whose Keedick Lecture Bureau supplies many local Town Hall speakers.

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that town halls have become a big business -- and one that is centered right in the Detroit area.

ROBERT KEEDICK, a Connecticut man who books many Michigan town halls in any other state--a total of 26--and 14 of them in metropolitan Detroit.

In town recently to begin some bookings for the 1968-69 season -- and incidentally to

catch the program put on by singer Hildegarde -- he said the growth of small city and suburban Town Halls has been amazing in the last decade or so.

"The large commercial organizations, like Detroit Town Hall in the Fisher Theater, have been going for a 'lot longer,'" he said. "But the idea of a Town Hall series, with proceeds going to some worthy purpose, began with the Birmingham Town Hall shortly after the war. It's been growing ever since."

THE THREE Town Halls in this area fit into this trend. The Livonia Town Hall raises funds for American Field Service students, and the new Farmington series is earmarking its funds for a new YMCA in the community.

The Northville Town Hall makes contributions to a variety of charities at the end of each season.

Keedick said his agency is one of five major ones, and handles several dozen speakers who cover a tremendous variety of subjects.

Tastes vary greatly among Town Hall leaders, he said, but it's a sure bet that speakers who have had television exposure are usually the best drawing cards.

"Bennett Cerf is our all-time big favorite," Keedick said. "He loves the town hall circuit, and he shows it to his audiences. Financially, there's no much gain for him, and he doesn't need the exposure, but he can plug his publishing house's new books, and I think he collects a lot of the material for his own books this way."

KEEDICK'S AGENCY "delivers" the speaker to each Town Hall to the extent of making travel and hotel arrangements for them.

Sometimes he goes a bit farther, as with Hildegarde, who missed her flight to the Fisher Town Hall last spring because, as she told her audience here, she "simply forgot."

He smiled affably when she told of his several reminders to make sure she got to the place this time. But Keedick hastened to point out that "we weren't handling her at that time."

One of the typical headaches of his business cropped up in connection with Hildegarde's Farmington appearance. She was a last minute substitute for actor Walter Slezak, who was scheduled to appear by a picture he was making.

"This is a big problem with booking actors," he said, "we have to make our schedules well ahead, and sometimes their commitments just can't be kept when motion picture shooting schedules have to be changed."

USUALLY Town Hall leaders want tried and true speakers,

and usually Keedick can tell them he's heard the lecturer in question and can tell them what to expect.

An exception to both rules was one of his very popular speakers a few years ago, young Winston Churchill.

"We added him to our roster on the strength of his grandfather's name," Keedick said, "and before I had a chance to hear him we needed some bookings to save an emergency. So I had to tell the women they knew as much about him as I."

"As it turned out, he was a charming speaker, and the audiences loved him."

Winston the grandson, hasn't been lecturing to Town Hall audiences this season. He's been busy using his charm on Englishmen, seeking a seat in the British Parliament.

But there are many to take his place, and the Town Hall business booms on.

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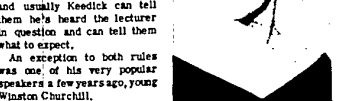
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CHERYL WRIGHT

Mr. and Mrs. G.F. Wright, of Gyde Road, Plymouth, announce the engagement of their daughter, Cheryl, to David John Wurster, son of Mr. and Mrs. Roland Wurster, of Morgan Road, Ypsilanti. The bride-elect will graduate in January from Eastern Michigan University, where she is affiliated with Tau Beta Sigma sorority. Her fiancé is a graduate of EMU and operates a lawn and landscaping business in Plymouth. No wedding date has been set.



LINDA THIESMEYER

Mr. and Mrs. Harold F. Thiesmeyer, of Arcola Avenue, Livonia, announce the engagement of their daughter, Linda Jeanne, to Duane O. Bordin, son of Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Bordin, of Saltz Road, Plymouth. The bride-elect is a graduate of Franklin High School and is attending the University of Michigan, Dearborn campus. Her fiancé attends Schoolcraft Community College and operates a lawn and landscaping business in Plymouth. No wedding date has been set.

## Suburban Gardener

# Plant Trees Even In Middle Of Winter

By BETTY FRANKEL  
Special Writer

Once in a while, an item appears in the news that someone advocates cutting down and eliminating trees from some area or other.

Most of us greet this with a feeling of shock or amazement, because we have an innate feeling of love and respect for trees.

Trees are more than just something nice to look at. They condition wind and temperature, acting as a small-scale climate control, and they help control water run-off and prevent erosion.

They are worth far more than they cost and give big dividends in return for a small initial investment and practically no care and attention.

THERE ARE TWO schools of thought on what size tree to plant.

Some experts feel that it is better to transplant young, small trees. They feel that they suffer less from the shock of transplanting and make a faster recovery and begin growing sooner than a large tree would.

Other experts feel that the gardener should buy as large a tree as his budget will allow. He will immediately have a close approximation of the desired landscape effect and will not have to wait years for the tree to do what he wants it to.

Modern digging machinery and sprays to put on the tree to cut down on water loss have



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## Broadcaster To Address Y Dinner

Paul Williams, public affairs manager of WWJ-TV and radio, will be guest speaker at the first annual Livonia Family Y Dinner meeting Thursday, Nov. 9, in St. Paul Presbyterian Church, Five Mile Road west of Inkster in Livonia.

The veteran broadcaster will highlight an evening that will include a brief business meeting, election to fill vacancies on the Board of Management and a report of building progress on the new \$1 million Family Y Center.

All Y members are eligible to attend and vote as well as present a nomination from the floor, providing the nominee has given consent. For ticket information call Chuck Wise, 261-0370.

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Everyone likes to stop by Skipper's Table Smorgasbord Restaurants... the family place to eat. Two locations to serve you: 3201 Plymouth at Farmington Rd. and 7030 W. 7 Mile Rd., one block west of Livonia. Lunch is only 99 cents weekdays. Dessert and beverage is extra.