

Focusing on 'Great Books, Great Issues' Called Challenge for Humanities Councils

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The challenge facing humanities programs today is to get "back to great books and great issues" and away from issues with political overtones that got humanities councils in trouble in the 1970s, Dr. Walter Capps, president of the National Federation of State Humanities Councils, said in Little Rock Wednesday.

Speaking to the Arkansas Humanities Conference, Dr. Capps, a professor of religion at the University of California at Santa Barbara, said that in the 1970s, humanities councils around the country sponsored projects dealing with social issues that "got a lot of those councils in political trouble."

The emphasis now is shifting back to "great issues and great books," he said, calling this a "winning combination."

Funds Councils

The National Endowment for the Humanities provides money to councils, such as the Arkansas Endowment for Humanities, for programs that investigate values or study the culture and heritage of an area.

In an era when nuclear annihilation is a possibility, it is important for a society to know its values, he said.

"Rediscovering what the humanities are all about" is one way a society can discover those values, Dr. Capps said.

Urges Involvement

In an interview after his speech, Dr. Capps also suggested that humanities councils should get involved in community affairs.

He said the Arkansas Endowment for the Humanities is "one of the very best" of its kind in the country. The AEH has developed programs with "tremendous vitality" and has "gone much further than most states in linking up with state institutions," he said.

Hillary Rodham Clinton, Govern-



—Staff Photo by John W. Cary

Dr. Viralene Coleman with Humanist of the Year award.

nor Bill Clinton's wife, spoke at the conference's luncheon, and Secretary of State Paul Riviere presented the Endowment's annual awards. Dr. Capps pointed to the participation of state officials in the Arkansas programs and said it was "an achievement a lot of other states are reaching for."

Dr. Capps also noted that AEH has raised more money per capita from private sources than any other state. The Arkansas program ranks fourth in the matching amount raised, putting it ahead of much larger and richer states such as New York, he noted. Dr. Capps praised Jane Browning, AEH executive director, for the organization's "exemplary fiscal responsibility."

The AEH requires applicants for its grants to provide a 50 per cent match from other sources for the federal money AEH awards.

Receives Honor

In other conference business, Dr. Viralene Coleman, chairman of the

English Department at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, was named the state Humanist of the Year. She was cited for organizing several programs that made the humanities relevant to other areas.

Also, special appreciation awards were given to Victor Ray, a former *Gazette* reporter and a development consultant to the AEH; the Union Bank of Benton, and Best Foods of Little Rock.

'Prevent Child Abuse' Is Message on Balloons

TRENTON, N.J. (AP) — About 15,000 elementary school children across New Jersey released 200,000 helium balloons Tuesday bearing the message "Prevent Child Abuse" as Governor Thomas H. Kean signed a proclamation declaring April Child Abuse Prevention Month.

State officials said more than 1 million children nationwide were abused and neglected last year.