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Mel Byers

MEL EYERS

Mel EYers has forty years of experience in employee services. He is internationally known, especially for his consultant work. Mel is known for his innovation in formulation of ideas as a free-thinker. These ideas have stimulated the development of employee services for many years. He is the father of many of the new concepts and has helped add a sound philosophical base to the field.

Question 1: What has been your role in NIRA (National Industrial Recreation Association)/NESRA (National Employee Services and Recreation Association) through the years.

Answer: My particular role started in 1942. I have served in a number of positions including vice-president, editor of Keynotes, and consultant. My most coveted position has been as consultant and being able to help individuals to better understand the employee service concept, in its broad application. I have also been very involved in the formation of TIRES (Toledo Industrial Recreation and Employee Services Association) which is a local IRC (Industrial Recreation Council) for the Toledo area.

Question 2: What has been your most important role in NIRA/NESRA and TIRES?

Answer: My most important role, especially in NIRA/NESRA has been as a consultant and the publisher and editor of Keynotes. My real contribution, I think, is that I have generated a number of ideas to ponder and research.

Question 3: Were your goals achieved with these organizations?

Answer: No. I have only had the opportunity of making inroads and many times the going has been hard because of individuals not accepting new ideas, easily.

Question 4: What has been your best experience?

Answer: There are always new challenges because the world is moving so fast. My primary role, I feel, has been as a starter because I usually get out of a movement before its objectives are accomplished. NIRA/NESRA and TIRES are both just beginning and they have not nearly reached their potential. As a result I feel that I have not accomplished my goals.

Question 5: Keynotes was such a successful publication for the national organization. What was its basic philosophy?

Answer: Keynotes is idea sharing. It was put together much in the format of the Kiplinger Newsletter in that the information provided is in an abbreviated format and that the information that is provided has some instant application. It is also information that is not readily available to the practitioner. In employee services, there are not many ideas out there that are not new. What I would do is research these ideas and put them in a form usable to the practitioner. Practitioners do not want to read copy, they want something that is useful. They do not want the "Blue Sky" type of thinking.