

The Debs Foundation Newsletter

P.O. BOX 843, TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA 47808-0843

FALL, 1995

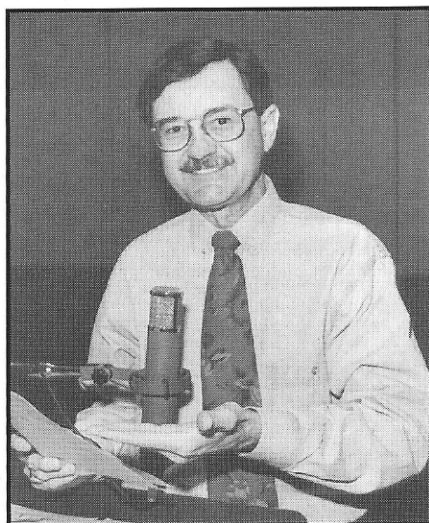


Hightower Chosen for Debs Award

This year's Debs award recipient is a person very much in the Debsian tradition of outspoken, hard hitting advocacy and populism which places him firmly "against the powers-that-be on behalf of the powers-that-ought-to-be." In recent years Jim has been hitting the airwaves with *Hightower Radio*, which is just another chapter in what has been a life of activism.

Right out of college, Hightower went to work as a legislative aide to Texas Senator Ralph Yarborough, a tireless liberal/populist stalwart in a cranky, often conservative state. In the early 1970's, Jim headed up the Agribusiness Accountability Project, writing several books and testifying to Congress about the human costs of corporate profiteering and the value of sustainable, healthy cooperative farming. From 1977 to 1979, he edited the *Texas Observer*, a publication with the reputation of first rate journalism and investigative reporting which has been a thorn in the side of Texas business-as-usual politicians for decades. In 1982, Hightower was elected Texas Agriculture Commissioner, and then re-elected in 1986. The statewide post gave him a chance to fight for the kinds of policy and regulatory initiatives on behalf of family farmers and consumers he had long advocated. It also gave him visibility in national political circles, where Hightower became a prominent supporter of the Rainbow insurgencies within the Democratic Party in the 1984 and 1988 elections.

It would be an understatement to



JIM HIGHTOWER

say that Hightower's accomplishments as state Agriculture Commissioner did not endear him to powerful corporate farming interests, and guess whose side USDA was on. There was plenty of PAC money stacked against his third-term reelection bid in 1990. In the 1990's, *Hightower Radio* has built up a significant national radio presence for left-of-center politics.

Whether he is writing, on radio or in public address, Hightower can be lively, stimulating and entertaining, as

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Culvers Receive Service Award

Periodically the foundation chooses to honor one of its members with a distinguished service award. The award, the Theodore Debs Distinguished Service Award, is named in reminiscence of the vital service Eugene's younger brother, Theodore, rendered to Eugene Debs' career. This year the foundation has chosen to give the award and to return to an early precedent in so doing by designating co-recipients of the distinguished award. The precedent was set with the naming of the very first distinguished service award recipients as Tilford Dudley and Hilton Hanna. The persons so-honored this year are a husband-and-wife team, B.G. (Pete) and Kathleen Culver. The award is to be conferred at this year's annual award banquet November 4.

The Culvers were named for this award because their numerous efforts in behalf of the foundation have shown every indication of being joint endeavors. Rarely missing a fall or spring business meeting, they usually have something to offer or a proposal to make indicating thoughtful consideration of some aspect of the foundation's activities -- what it is doing or ought to try -- and suggestions on how the foundation more effectively can accomplish its mission.

The Culvers' both got their starts in progressive union activities right here in Terre Haute, as members of Barbers and Beauticians Local #499. Pete was

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Come See For Yourself

Banquet day offers the opportunity for an open house so you can see for yourself all that is new or newly restored inside and outside the Debs Home. Outside, the front steps have been replaced, presenting a more attractive entrance. And safer! The workmen said that the old top step collapsed with barely a touch from the jackhammer. Inside are the new window coverings for the parlor and library, and the refinished and reupholstered parlor furniture which had belonged to Kate and Eugene Debs. There also is an enlarged photograph of the Debs which lends authenticity to the furniture and evidences our close approximations to the originals in the choices of fabrics and wallpaper in the restoration.

The parlor had been furnished with attractive period furniture but not that which Debs had owned. The walls were papered in drab olive green, the drapes were dull and no sheers covered the windows. All that has been reversed. We think you will agree that the effects are stunning, and more like what you would expect in a nice, turn-of-century home. Those familiar with the Home will notice also the cheerful effects of the freshly painted ceilings in all first floor rooms, thank to the craftsmanship and TLC which Dave Quesenberry (one of the museum curators) put into that project. There also are four new display cases on the second floor which enhance the appearance as well as the interpretive value of the hundreds of memorabilia items on display.

If you do not make it to the open house banquet day, put it on your calendar for a visit in the near future. You will like what you see.

Murray Finley's Death

Former Debs Foundation President Murray Finley died on July 31, 1995 at the age of 73. Brother Finley served as foundation head from 1982 to 1987, succeeding Patrick Gorman's lengthy term of office. A memorial service was held for Finley on October 10 in Chicago, the place where his union career started in 1949, when he began working as an assistant regional attorney for the Amalgamated Clothing Workers. Finley was elected President of ACWA in 1972. After overseeing the merger of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers and the Textile Workers Union in 1976, he became the first president of the new Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union.

The Debs Foundation is deeply indebted to Brother Finley and his union for support of the foundation and "Debsian" ideals. When he became president of ACTWU, *The New York Times* quoted Finley as saying, "I believe in building a better world -- not just a better house or more material things for myself -- but to better people's lives. And I believe trade unions are necessary to preserve the American way of life, I don't think we can have a free democratic society without a free democratic labor movement."

Errata

A sleepy headed proofing of copy for the last issue of the *Newsletter* of the photograph of the unveiling ceremony last fall for the Charles Luna plaque allowed the United Transportation Union (UTU) officials participating in that ceremony to be designated as TCU officials. Sorry Guys! Fortunately it was correct on the bronze plaque.

DEBS FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER

Fall, 1995

Published by

The Eugene V. Debs Foundation

Box 843

Terre Haute, IN 47808

Foundation Officers:

Jack Sheinkman, *President*

Noel Beasley, *Executive Vice President*

Charles King, *Secretary*

Woodrow Creason, *Treasurer*

The *Debs Foundation Newsletter* is published twice yearly for distribution to members and friends of the Foundation. The Eugene V. Debs Foundation is a non-profit, private organization which maintains the home of Eugene and Kate Debs as a museum and shrine to labor, and carries on educational and informational programs which aim to honor and promote the goals for which Debs struggled: industrial unionism, social justice, and peace. For those wishing to become members, an application form is provided elsewhere in this issue.

Historical Preservation Costs

All the recent improvements at the Debs Home have come at considerable expense. Treasurer Woody Creason is reminding me of this, but he also recognizes that this sort of thing is the foundation's main reason for being. The itemization of expenditures is impressive both as a list of accomplishments and in the dollar amount. The list goes like this: matching share of cost of display cases -- \$2500, refinishing of furniture -- \$450, wall papering (material and labor) -- \$500, ceiling paint (material and labor) -- \$600, upholstery, drapes and sheers (material and labor) -- \$7500, and concrete work -- \$2280. In process are plans to spend just over \$3000 on postcards to sell to our various publics: visitors to the Home, foundation members, interested groups and individuals.

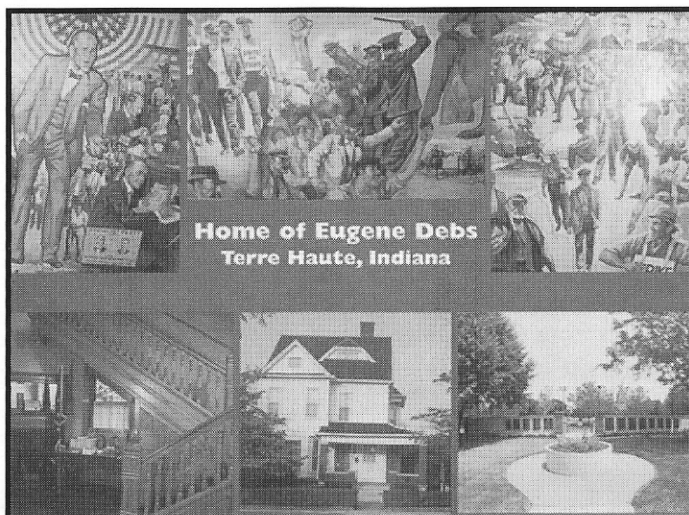
These projects all are important to the foundation's mission. The payoff will be felt for years to come, both in enhanced historical value and in income from card sales, but the bills are due now. The total of the expenditures mentioned above is \$14,780! No wonder that our financial reserves are depleted. There would be justification for drawing money from the endowment fund in this situation, but this may not be necessary if income from a successful banquet in terms of ticket sales and subscriptions to the greetings section of the dinner program comes soon enough and in sufficient amount. We might add that it is hoped that your enthusiasm for and commitment to what the foundation is accomplishing will show in tangible form when it is time for your 1996 dues payments and contributions.

Literary Prize Winner

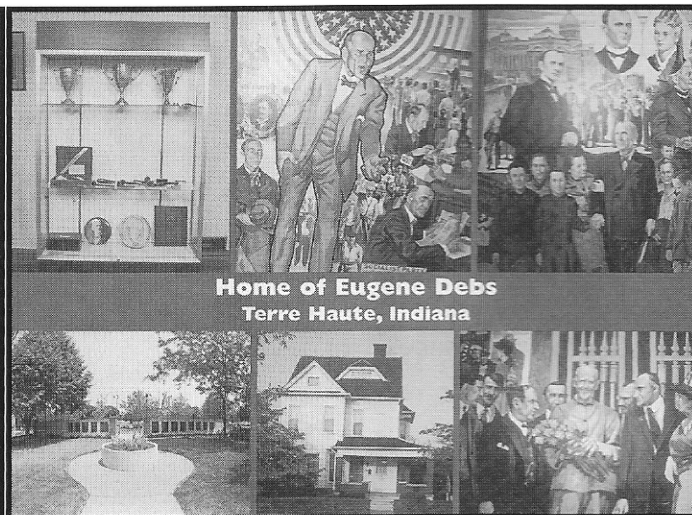
The 1995 winner of the Bryant Spann Memorial Prize is David Ray Papke's "Eugene Debs a Legal Heretic," an essay published in the *University of Cincinnati Law Review*, in 1994. Papke presents Debs as a critic of the America legal system who abandoned the common faith of Americans in the justice of that system. His essay gives special emphasis to Debs' use of the prosecution of American radicals such as himself to demonstrate the inherent injustice of what Debs condemned as capitalist law.

David Papke is Professor of Law and Liberal Arts at Indiana University/Purdue University, Indianapolis, and a member of the Debs Foundation.

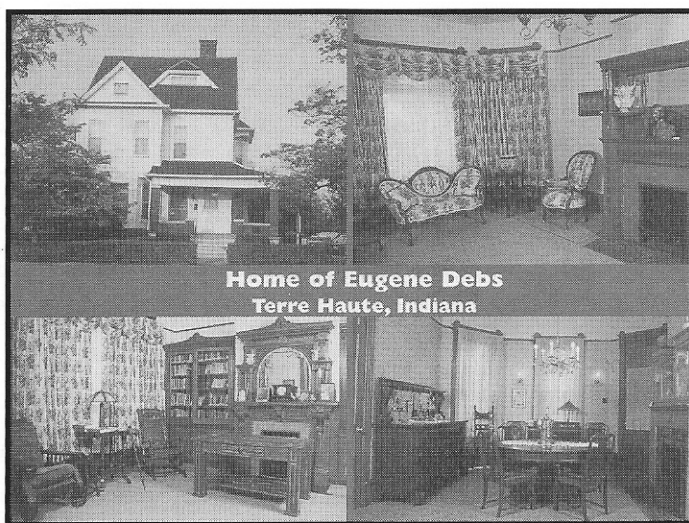
Debs Postcards Now Available



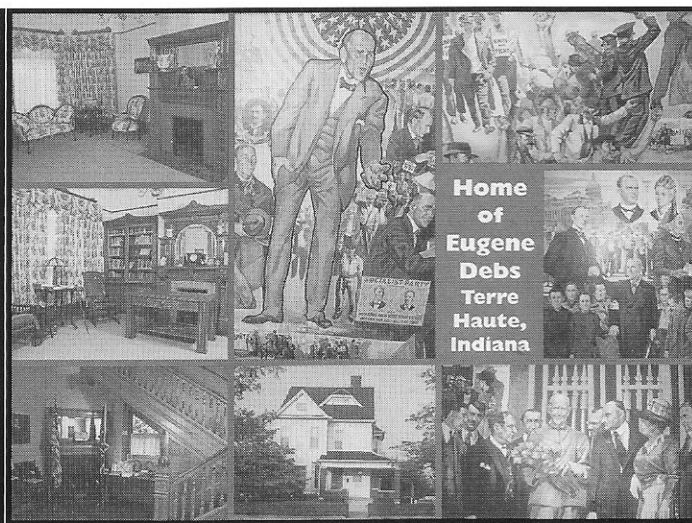
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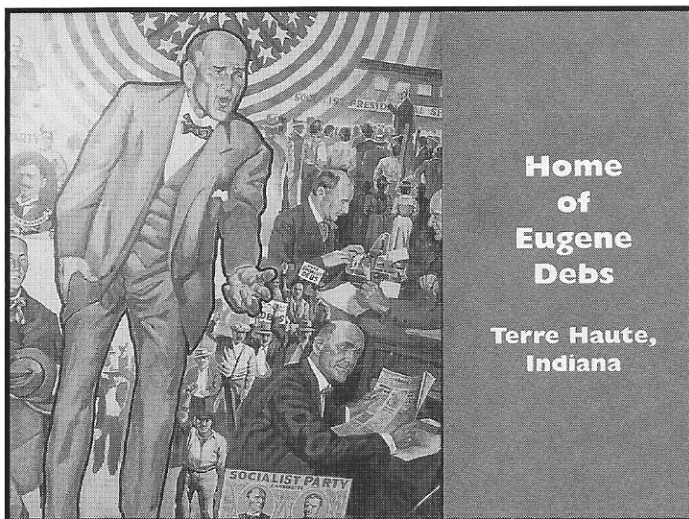
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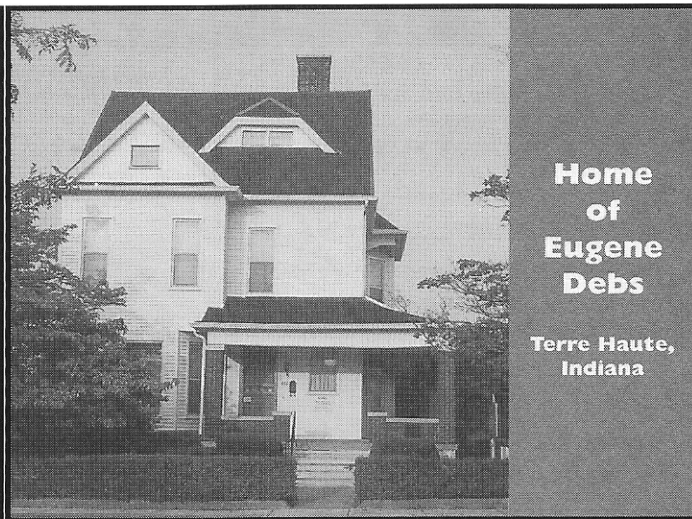
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#6

POSTCARD ORDER FORM

| | Unit Cost | Number Ordered | Total |
|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------------|----------|
| Entire Set of 6 cards | \$2.00 | _____ | _____ |
| Card #1 | .50 | _____ | _____ |
| Card #2 | .50 | _____ | _____ |
| Card #3 | .50 | _____ | _____ |
| Card #4 | .50 | _____ | _____ |
| Card #5 | .50 | _____ | _____ |
| Card #6 | .50 | _____ | _____ |
| | | Total Order | \$ _____ |
| | | Postage & Handling | \$ 3.00 |
| | | Total Cost | \$ _____ |

All cards are full color reproductions, specially coated for protection against finger prints or smudging. Make checks payable to the Debs Foundation, and mail order to Debs Foundation, P.O. Box 843, Terre Haute, Indiana 47808

A Dinner Program Listing For You

The foundation's souvenir dinner program has a greetings section where large organizations pay to send greetings and congratulations to the award recipient and the foundation. The cost of these listings has not given individuals the opportunity to participate in this feature. It is our feeling that individual participation should be made possible, for the greetings section is both revenue enhancing and an indication of support for what the banquets and award ceremonies accomplish in providing public recognition for those who struggle for certain causes and ideals.

This year individuals will have the opportunity to participate in sending greetings. You may send greetings in two forms. For a listing of your name (one or two persons), send \$20. For a listing by name including your personal greeting not to exceed 20 words, send \$40. Each participant should indicate if not attending the banquet in order that a copy of the souvenir program can be mailed. This order must be received by October 30. Make checks payable to the Debs Foundation and mail to P.O. Box 843, Terre Haute, IN 47808.

Please use this form for new memberships, or for paying 1995 dues. Dues notices for 1996 will be mailed after the fall business meeting.

Membership Dues: The Eugene V. Debs Foundation

NAME _____
 STREET _____
 CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

_____ \$ 5.00 Student Member _____ \$100.00 Sustaining Member
 _____ \$10.00 Regular Member _____ \$250.00 Life Members
 _____ \$25.00 Supporting Member _____ Other

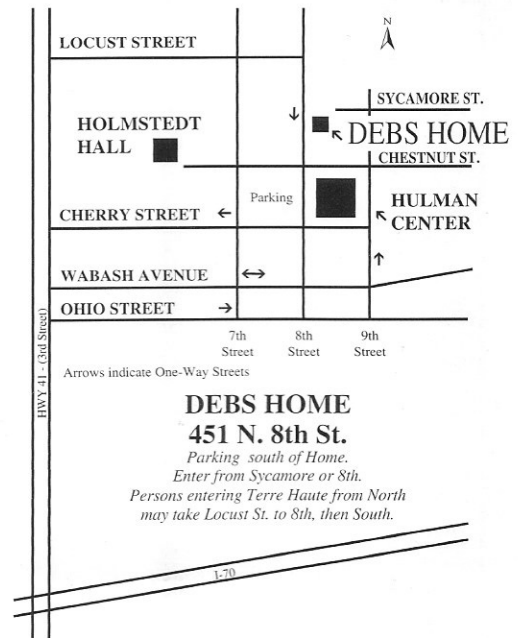
Enclose remittance. Make checks payable to the Debs Foundation.

The Debs Foundation
 P.O. Box 843
 Terre Haute, IN 47808-0843

Your dues and contributions are tax deductible. The Foundation owns and maintains the Debs Home and offers several educational and cultural programs. We are a voluntary organization with no paid staff.

| | |
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| ANNUAL AWARDS BANQUET TERRE HAUTE November 4 1995 Honoring Jim Hightower | |
| SCHEDULE OF EVENTS Afternoon 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.: Open House at Debs Home Evening 6:00 p.m.: Social Hour and Reception (cash bar), Hulman Center (park west of Hulman Center and enter west doors) 7:00 p.m.: Banquet Honoring Jim Hightower | |
| The fall business meeting will be Sunday, November 5, at 9:00 a.m. at the Debs Home | |

Hulman Center Parking is free.



NOTE

We offer a choice of entrees. Please indicate your choice of prime rib or fish when you order tickets. If you **prefer fish, indicate this also at the door the evening of the banquet**

Dinner Ticket Order

(\$25 per ticket)

Name _____

_____ X \$25 = \$ _____
number of amount
tickets enclosed

Prime Rib Dinner(s) _____

Fish Dinner(s) _____

Tickets must be paid in advance.
Please check one of the following options.

☐ Hold tickets at the door, in the name of _____

☐ Mail my tickets to the following address:

Make checks payable to the Debs Foundation.
Mail to the Debs Foundation, Box 843, Terre Haute, IN 47808.
Inquiries may be directed to Charles King, 812-237-3443.

Hightower... continued

he uses his platform to ravage the political Right and poke fun at the privileged. He described George Bush as "a man who was born on third and thinks he hit a triple." Of Newt Gingrich he said: "There's a guy who can strut sitting down." In expressing his populist view he says that the real political spectrum in America is not right-to-left, "its top-to-bottom. And the vast majority of people aren't even within shouting distance of the economic and political powers at the top."

Like Debs, Hightower has at times paid a price for his commitments and concern for social justice, conservation and environmental protection, and food contamination as caused by corporate farming and food preservation practices. The big chemical companies didn't like him, and political conservatives don't either.

The presentation address will be given by Jack Sheinkman, Foundation President and former president of ACTWU. Jack is known for his advocacy of numerous social justice causes as well as for his progressive unionism. With Hightower and Sheinkman speaking, this banquet promises to be stimulating and exciting, and certainly it is the occasion to honor a person who has been and still is in the trenches for the common men and women. Do join us for this event.

Culvers.. continued

elected President of that union in 1963. He served several years as Director of Community Services for the Wabash Valley Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO, beginning in 1968. Then the Culvers moved to Chicago in 1977, when Pete was appointed Mid-American Regional Director for the Labor Participation Department of the United Way of America. When Pete retired from that position in 1991, the Culvers returned to Terre Haute, and Pete served one term as President of the WVCLC.

Pete has served as a Vice President of The Debs Foundation since his election to that position in 1965. Wherever they have lived and worked the Culvers have been evangelists for the Debs tradition and for the foundation's work. Traveling regionally and even nationally, on every occasion getting in a word about Debs and the foundation, Pete has

made countless numbers of union members aware of Debs' role in shaping the American labor movement. The Culvers can aptly be described as cheerleaders for the Debs Foundation, and the products have been in more than recruitment of members and enhanced awareness among union members; it also has caused several valuable items of memorabilia to be donated for display in the Debs Home.

While officially retired, the Culvers have maintained an extensive number of service obligations in their community. There has been no burn-out, no taking of a back seat in involvement in the community as well as in the Debs Foundation. Many of you locally and state-wide know Pete and Kathleen and will want to attend the banquet to show your endorsement of this accorded recognition.

CONGRESS' SNEAK ATTACK ON THE NATIONAL PARKS

On September 19, H.R. 260, the bill that would have established a commission to select parks for closure, was defeated by the House of Representatives by a vote of 231-180. Later that day, the bill was resurrected from the legislative graveyard by Rep. James Hansen (R-UT), Chairman of the House National Parks, Forests and Lands Subcommittee. He inserted H.R. 260 as an amendment to the House Resources Committee's provisions to be included in the budget reconciliation bill. By tacking park legislation to this bill, the likelihood of another vote on H.R. 260 is extremely remote since the budget legislation would be forced through without debate. So much for the will of the people!

EUGENE V. DEBS FOUNDATION

P.O. Box 843

Terre Haute, Indiana 47808-0843

FORWARDING AND ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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| NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION U.S. POSTAGE PAID PERMIT NO. 977 TERRE HAUTE, IN |
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