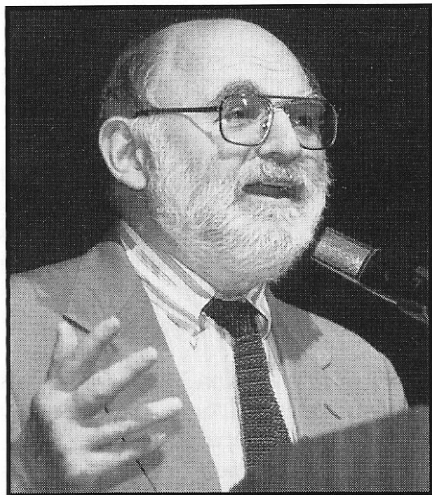


The Debs Foundation Newsletter

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

FALL, 1996

Navasky Chosen For Debs Award



VICTOR A. NAVASKY

The recipient of the 1996 Debs Award is Victor A. Navasky, widely known and respected journalist, scholar and literary figure. His has been a progressive voice and keen insight into current political and social events. Since 1978 he has been editor-in-chief of *The Nation*. Both in his own writings and in his leadership of a leading progressive publication, Navasky has helped to present to the American public a critique and behind-the-commercial news view of contemporary society and national and world events, offering in our times the kind of radical critique of economic and political life which Gene Debs offered to his contemporaries.

Navasky is a Swathmore College graduate of 1954, where he was Phi Beta Kappa with High Honors in the Social Sciences, and a graduate of Yale Law School in 1959. He has taught at a number of colleges and universities, served as a Guggenheim Fellow (1974-78), a Visiting Scholar at Russell Sage Foundation (1975-76), and Ferris Visiting Professor of Journalism at Princeton (1976-77)

where he taught a seminar on "Politics and the Press." During his career Navasky has contributed articles and reviews to numerous magazines and journals of opinion. He was founding editor and publisher of *Monocle*, a "leisurely quarterly of political satire and social criticism" that appeared in the late 1950s and early 1960s. He authored *Kennedy Justice*, a book about the U.S. Department of Justice under the leadership of Robert F. Kennedy, and *Naming Names*, a book about congressional investigations into subversion in the 1950s, which won an American Book Award in 1981, and was re-published in February, 1991. Before his present position at *The Nation*, Navasky worked as an editor on *The New York Times Sunday Magazine*, and wrote a monthly column about the publishing business ("In Cold Print") for *The New York Times Book Review*.

In his day Gene Debs demonstrated the effectiveness of the pen in the dissemination of ideas, this with his editorship of *Locomotive Firemen's Magazine*, and his guest editorials for *Appeal to Reason*. The Debs Foundation annually gives the Bryant Spann Memorial Prize for literature in the critical vein. In 1981 the Eugene V. Debs Award was given to Kurt Vonnegut for his contributions to literature, and it is a pleasure this year to give the foundation's highest award to another literary figure whose life work has been in the area of social criticism.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

You weren't skipped	page 2
Changing Curators	page 2
Literature Prize	page 2
Debs 70 years ago	page 3
Financial Statement	page 4
Individual Program Listing	page 4
Banquet Day Schedule, Ticket Order Information	page 5

Banquet Day Opportunities

Gravesite ceremony at 2:00 p.m.

The annual dinner and award ceremony is the highlight of the day and year for the Debs Foundation. It is at the same time a celebration of the achievements of an individual whose work has been in the "Debsian" tradition, and the opportunity for a host of like-minded persons to meet old friends, make new acquaintances, and be inspired and reinvigorated in spirit. A special feature during the banquet is to hear (and sing) songs which have been such an important part of labors' heritage. This year the guest appearance of Mitch Rice, Bloomington, Indiana labor-songster, will highlight this section of our program. Songs of the Wobblies are among his favorites. This is another reason for you to make every effort to join us this year.

Longtime banquet guests will notice the switch in site from Hulman Center to Tirey Hall's Heritage Ball Room. You will use the usual parking lot, but park on its west side, then cross 7th Street. You need to walk under the rotunda and up stairs to enter Tirey Hall, then Heritage Lounge and Ball Room are on your right.

We also occasionally have programs earlier in the day, and this year's special event is at 2:00 p.m., when we will have a wreath-laying ceremony at Gene Debs' grave. This event acknowledges the 70th anniversary of his death. If you have never visited Debs' grave, this will be the opportunity for that first visit. The grave is relatively easy to find in Highland Lawn Cemetery. You may plan to go directly to the cemetery, on east U.S. 40 (Wabash Avenue east), or to meet at the Debs Home and travel there as a group. See you banquet day!

You Weren't Skipped

No, your Spring, 1996 *Newsletter* did not get lost in the mail, it never was written. That's what can happen to projects relying on volunteer labor. In this case the newsletter editor got bogged down in the obligations accruing from his earning a living as professor of Sociology at Indiana State University. Last spring he got swamped with the duties of his instructional role, including the teaching of a class not taught before and using a textbook which he learned to dislike as much as did the students, and by having gotten sucked into the chairperson position of the faculty council. Barely surviving those ordeals, it then appeared that his muse had left him for a season (he couldn't write), and before you know it the time was right for the fall issue of the newsletter. Now we are on track, and hopefully it won't happen again. Thanks for your forbearance and your interest.

On Changing Curators

The Debs Home has experienced a change of curators. Bonnie Busbice and Melinda Estridge, both majors in History at Indiana State University, have replaced Mike Bailey and Dave Quesenbury. Dave had been there three years and Mike had been curator for eight years. They are missed. It was great to know that the curatorship was in the hands of conscientious and knowledgeable persons. Mike's eight year stint at the Debs Home is a record for length and endurance, and the foundation is especially indebted to him for his evidence of commitment and enthusiasm for his numerous responsibilities at the Debs Home. The tribute to curators which follows is intended as a salute to Mike and Dave: curators *par excellence*.

Curators . . . Are a Dedicated Lot

(Remarks of Richard A. Gantz, Director, Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites, in *Hoosierisms Quarterly*, Summer, 1996, p2, excerpted)

Hopefully the people who emerge from a tour... will leave with a better understanding of their heritage. What they will not comprehend are the complex and difficult tasks behind the guided tour.

Curators and directors of historic sites are among the most overworked and least appreciated members of our society. On any given day, they are frequently the first to arrive and the last to leave. They must have a variety of talents. A site curator must be the research authority on the historical figure, family, or event associated with the property. The curator must know architectural elements and every artifact, its origin, and use. Members of the news media expect them to be able to deliver facts and sound bites upon a moment's notice.

In an age of MTV, the staff and volunteers are constantly challenged to deliver their information to visitors with the credibility of Walter Cronkite, the diction of James Earl Jones, the enthusiasm of Julia Child and the humor of David Letterman. A presentation fails if it does not captivate everyone from senior citizens to children. While delivering this

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Fall, 1996

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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.

Bryant Spann Memorial Award

The Debs Foundation recognizes the importance of literature and scholarship in helping spread ideas and provide a critique of contemporary society. This year's Debs Award recipient is special evidence of that awareness, and every year the foundation gives what has become a nationally competitive prize in literature, the Bryant Spann Memorial Award.

The winner of the 1996 Bryant Spann Memorial Award is Harriet Hyman Alonso for her article in *Journal of Women's History*, "Nobel Peace Laureates, Jane Addams and Emily Green Balch: Two Women of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom." In their devotion to social justice as well as opposition to war, both women reflected the essential spirit of Eugene V. Debs, for whom each expressed admiration and support.

Curators... continued

educational yet entertaining program, the guide must deal (in unceasingly good humor) with unruly children who are ignored by their parents and the tourist who "knows" the real story contrary to all historical records and fact.

A serious responsibility is the care of the house and artifacts. Every curator is aware of the danger from too much or too little care. The obligation is to preserve the objects not just for the present generation but for as many generations into the future as possible...

Since people will return on a regular basis to places that are constantly changing with diverse visitor experiences, it is a challenge to maintain interest in the property, vary the interpretation, and undertake special events. Activities and programs take weeks or months to plan and organize, are costly, and are over in a matter of hours. Considering the strain on staff and volunteers alike, it is easy to understand why some of our historic site curators think that tranquilizers should be an allowable expense...

continued on Page 6

Debs In History

Headlines From 70 Year Ago

It was exactly 70 years ago, October 20, 1926, that Eugene Debs passed away in Lindlar Sanitarium outside Chicago.

Word spread rapidly, often in large headlines: Gene Debs is Dead. Even newspapers which had ridiculed and reviled him in life spread the news and reflected sympathetically on the man and his contributions to humankind. *Forward*, the progressive New York newspaper, reviewed in detail the accomplishments of his career, including a photo essay of key events and memorable scenes. The *Terre Haute Tribune*, his hometown's leading newspaper, remembered him as prominent citizen of the city and recognized his prominence as a national figure. A large number of prominent Socialist Party members came to Terre Haute for the funeral service. In those days one did not hop on a plane to attend a funeral half round the world. But there was one foreign delegate, one from the German Socialist Party, a young woman named Tony Sender, happened to be in the country and attended the funeral. Ms. Sender immigrated to the United States during the Nazi years, and served ably as an AFL representative in the U.S. delegation to the International Labor Organization.

The Debs Home's front porch served as a platform for the speakers, and the hundreds of mourners in attendance for the funeral service were seated on nearby lawns. Normal Thomas gave the main address, in which he described Debs as possessing an unusual combination of prophet and lover of mankind. Other speakers were prominent Socialists Morris Hillquit, Victor Berger (who had been influential in Debs' conversion to Socialism), Seymour Stedman, William H. Henry, and William Cunnea (young lawyer who had defended Debs in his Cleveland, Ohio trial for violation of the Espionage Act by speaking out against our involvement in World War I).

There was haggling over where Debs should be buried and how the grave site would be marked. Kate Debs wanted the grave in a conspicuous location near the entrance to Highland Lawn Cemetery, whereas other family members, led by brother Theodore, wanted Gene buried with his parents and sisters in the large family plot (not as conspicuously located in relation to the highway). Kate Debs hoped that Gene's friends and followers would eventually erect a large monument in Gene's honor. Later, the Socialist Party concluded that any memorial to Debs should continue his work. A radio station was started in New York using Debs' initials for call letters: WEVD.

Debs history has to recount accomplishments from his

years as labor organizer and leader, and as Socialist Party leader. His legacy should include his early advocacy of such "radical" ideas as voting rights for women, restrictions on child labor, the right of workers to organize into unions and to bargain collectively, and to strike for better wages and working conditions (although he was a relatively late convert to the idea of using the strike weapon). His impact on the history of organized labor was no less than his lasting impact on liberal political thought. Such unions of the 1930s origin as the United Automobile Workers are industrial unions in the mold of Debs' ARU. Similarly, in the 1960s the United Transportation Union organized railroad workers of all crafts as did the ARU.

At the time of Debs' death, the Terre Haute Labor Council showed its respect and high esteem for Gene Debs by making special request to Kate Debs to allow his body to lie in state in the local labor temple, where for a day-and-a-half thousands filed past his bier. On the day of his funeral, special trains came from Chicago and St. Louis carrying mourners and baggage cars loaded with flowers. Conspicuous among the large wreaths which at the funeral

filled the area below the porch were those from several Amalgamated Clothing Workers affiliates. The Amalgamated's Joint Board in Chicago issued black lapel ribbons to eight thousand mourners crowded into Chicago's Ashland Auditorium for a memorial service. Memorial rallies for Debs were held also in New York, Los Angeles, and other major cities.

But Debs' legacy should include also that his was a profile in courage and a memorial to the struggles of those who cast their lot with the common man -- including in that lot many groups who are referred to by contemporary politicians as "middle class", and to the courage it requires to stand up for social justice and for such basic human rights as to have a way to earn a living, at a liveable wage. Debs' life is an edifice to humankind's

struggles against oppression and exploitation, a memorial to sacrifice of time and money, of hard work and persistence in the face of set backs along the way. His legacy includes a note of defiance of the norms and values of conventional "respectability" when he said: "While there is a lower class, I am in it,..." There is a challenge to your own character and convictions in his declaration: "I'd rather vote for what I want and not get it, than to vote for what I don't want, and get it." Think about that when you go to the polls next election, and more importantly, make a point of communicating such commitments early and continuously in the opinion shaping and agenda setting stages of political campaigns. There is much to be learned in goals and in strategies from the legacy of Gene Debs, Terre Haute native who was buried here 70 years ago.



DEBS COFFIN BEING
CARRIED INTO LABOR TEMPLE



FLOWERS AT DEBS FUNERAL

1995 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Eugene V. Debs Foundation

Expenditures:

State of Indiana	\$ 15.50
Terminex International	110.00
Hulman Center	935.00
Flowers Plumbing	385.00
Merchants National Bank	15.00
Thomas Jefferson University Press	3,000.00
ISU Library	1,000.00
Galloways	50.70
Association of Indiana Museums	20.00
Sherwin Williams	287.50
Marylla Millard	347.72
Nelson's Marketing (memorabilia)	1,066.71
David Quesenbury	469.00
Chedbourne and Park (legal assistance)	813.82
Highsmith (display cases)	4,137.99
Sappington and Son (moving)	130.00
Macksville Station (furniture refinishing)	525.00
ADT	186.00
Inweld Corp.	15.00
Shorter Upholstery Inc. (material & labor)	7,705.16
Hanna Scholarships	1,200.00
Moore Photography	145.00
Markle Insurance	805.00
University of Illinois Press	867.48
Bay's Electric	489.36
David Ray Papke (Spann Award)	1,000.00
St. Construction Inc.	2,280.00
Gene and Crystal Vanderport	50.00
Jarry Kelly (musician)	100.00
Tribune-Star	269.88
Meier Johan Wengler Inc.	234.35
Azar's Catering	3,331.39
James Hightower	1,582.77
Indiana Statesman	76.00

Heinl's Flowers	57.00
Paitson Bros.	454.88
Indiana Water Co.	212.15
Indiana Gas	1,040.53
GTE North	582.39
PSI Energy	1,713.46
Terre Haute Sewage	152.02
ISU-Controller (printing)	334.26
Jewett Printing	9,456.13
AT&T	512.16
Leilanie Newkirk	97.50

Total Expenditures \$ 54,168.31

Revenue:

Dinner Program	9,630.00
CD	5,250.00
Savings Account	5,000.00
Dues	5,860.00
Endowment Fund	5,000.00
Dinner	6,500.00
Contributions & House	8,632.54

Total Revenue \$ 45,872.54

Expenditures ----> Revenue	(8,295.77)
Balance as of Dec. 31, 1994	\$ 13,973.35
Balance as of Dec. 31, 1995	5,677.81
Balance in Savings Dec. 31, 1995	2,351.98

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. These large listings are too expensive for individuals. It is our feeling that individual participation is important, 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 is the second year individuals have the opportunity to participate in sending greetings. Your greeting may be 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 \$30. 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 November 1. Make checks payable to the Debs Foundation and mail to P.O. Box 843, Terre Haute, IN 47808.

REMINDER: DID YOU PAY 1996 DUES?

Please use this form for new memberships, or for paying 1996 dues. Dues notices for 1997 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

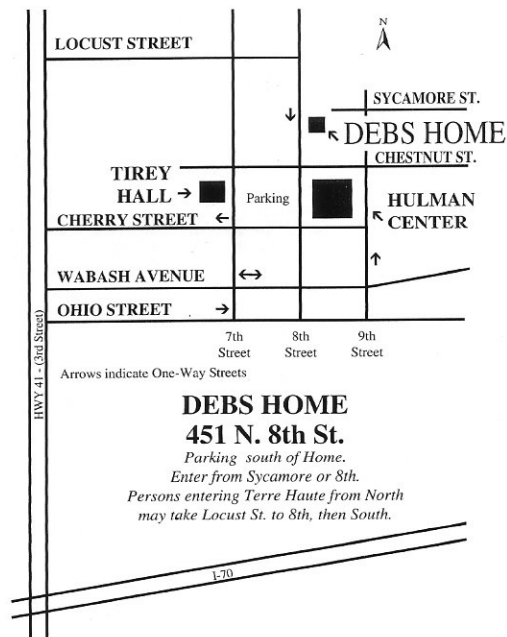
P.O. Box 843

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.

ANNUAL AWARDS BANQUET TERRE HAUTE November 9 1996 Honoring Victor Navasky	
SCHEDULE OF EVENTS Afternoon 2:00 p.m. Gravesite Ceremony, Highland Cemetery 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.: Open House at Debs Home Evening 6:00 p.m.: Social Hour and Reception (cash bar), Heritage Ballroom 7:00 p.m.: Banquet Honoring Victor Navasky	
The fall business meeting will be Sunday, November 10, at 9:00 a.m. at the Debs Home	

Parking is free in lot shared by Hulman Center and Tirey Hall (in which Heritage Ballroom is located). Enter Tirey by south stairs.



NOTE

We offer a choice of entrees. Please indicate your choice of prime rib or fish **when you order tickets and indicate also at the door.**

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 _____
 (actually the preferred way)

☐ 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.

Curators... continued from page 2

Frequently individuals tell me that they think it would be great to work in a house museum. I wonder if they really know what it means. Why do directors and site curators stay at their posts? It is not for the money. Given the amount of education, experience and work required, this group of professionals is one of the most underpaid in our society... most directors of historic sites choose to stay because they have a deep commitment to our heritage and a need to share it with others.

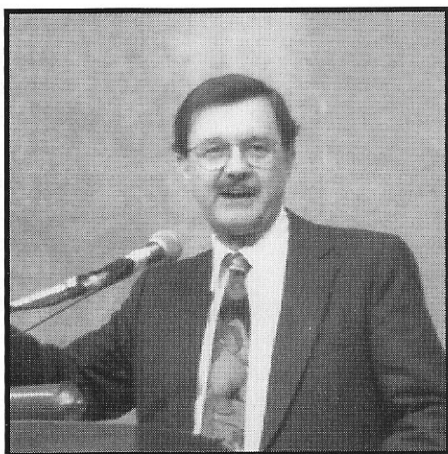
RICHARD A. GANTZ
Director
Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites

"On the same day I visited the Debs home, I visited with Larry Bird and spoke with John Wooden. So I may be the luckiest guy on earth!"

Bill Walton
Former NBA Player
*Quoted in
Terre Haute Tribune Star*

Scenes From the 1995 Banquet

Jim Hightower, Debs Award recipient, has the unusual ability to make you laugh, inform you, and make you mad, all at the same time. No one falls asleep when Hightower is speaking. You go away with a renewed vision and sense of determination to let politicians in our state capitols and in Washington know that we are fed up with business as usual.



JIM
HIGHTOWER

Kathleen and Pete Culver, appreciative recipients of the Theodore Debs Distinguished Service Award, made thoughtful observations on the forces which have shaped their career and public service roles.



KATHLEEN &
PETE CULVER

EUGENE V. DEBS FOUNDATION

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