

The Debs Foundation Newsletter

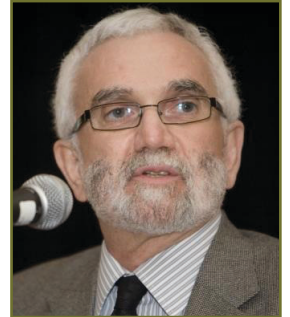
P.O. BOX 9454, TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA 47808-9454



FALL 2016

Debs and Electoral Politics

by Noel Beasley



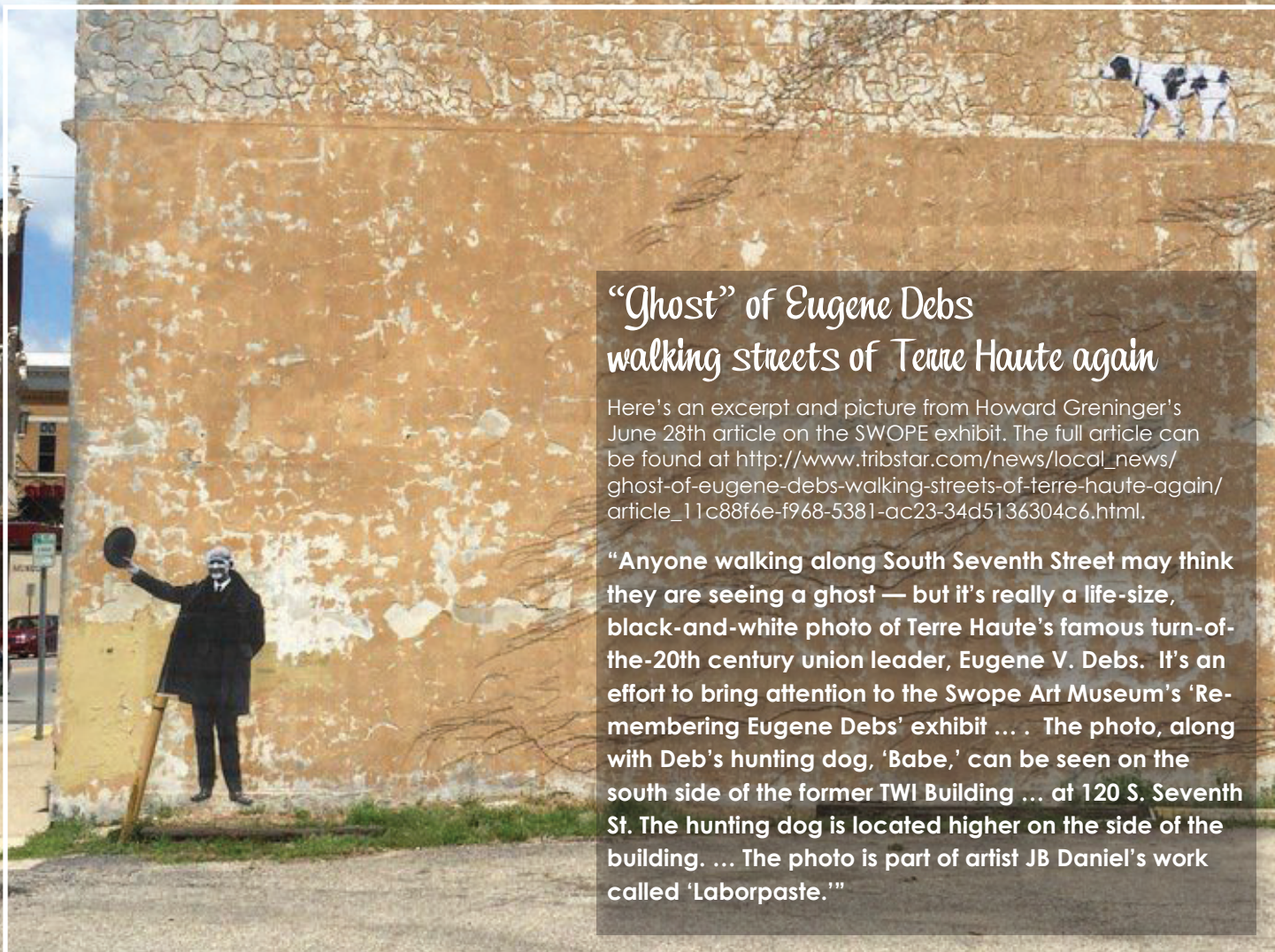
Gene Debs would have understood perfectly the issues that are at the forefront of the 2016 electoral season. The legitimate anger and frustration of the majority of the US population who were betrayed in the aftermath of the global financial collapse of 2008—2009 are clear and understandable. And so are the internal contradictions that continue to divide the working class of our country. In particular, the lynchpin of nationalism that is turned like a screw systematically and effectively by demagogues tightens the fear and insecurity that lead ultimately to the disastrous outcomes of fascism when it is voted into power... the creation and then mass murder of scapegoats, the elimination of any semblance of civil rights in the name of protection of the homeland, the absence of educational opportunities for all but the elite class and those who serve them, and endless war.

At stake now are virtually all of the advances that were made in our country in the twentieth century. Debs rose to prominence as a vibrant, articulate leader against the inequalities and corruption of the 1880s and 1890s. The rapid growth of trade unions in the 1930s, the battles to expand the rights of women, African Americans and immigrants, and the massive opposition to unjust wars were all foreshadowed by Debs and the Socialist Party. The ferocity of the attacks which now aim to drag us all back more than a hundred years mean that we must rapidly consolidate the political power of those who fight in the interests of the majority. As Debs exemplified, we progress only when we are on the offensive.



We'll be able to talk politics at the Banquet. Bill Breeden will introduce the 2016 Debs Award Winner, Cindy Sheehan. Mr. Breeden is running for Indiana State Representative, 46th District, on a platform Debs would likely have supported. Our thanks to Bill for joining us.

Full Business Meeting
Sunday September 25, 2016 - 9 AM
Hilton Garden Inn
750 Wabash Avenue, Terre Haute



“Ghost” of Eugene Debs walking streets of Terre Haute again

Here's an excerpt and picture from Howard Greninger's June 28th article on the SWOPE exhibit. The full article can be found at http://www.tribstar.com/news/local_news/ghost-of-eugene-debs-walking-streets-of-terre-haute-again/article_11c88f6e-f968-5381-ac23-34d5136304c6.html.

“Anyone walking along South Seventh Street may think they are seeing a ghost — but it's really a life-size, black-and-white photo of Terre Haute's famous turn-of-the-20th century union leader, Eugene V. Debs. It's an effort to bring attention to the Swope Art Museum's 'Remembering Eugene Debs' exhibit ... The photo, along with Deb's hunting dog, 'Babe,' can be seen on the south side of the former TWI Building ... at 120 S. Seventh St. The hunting dog is located higher on the side of the building. ... The photo is part of artist JB Daniel's work called 'Laborpaste.'”

Exhibit: A photo cutout of labor Leader and Socialist presidential candidate Eugene V. Debs can be seen on the side of the former TWI building on South Seventh Street, along with a dog higher on the side of the building, to bring attention to a special Eugene Debs display Friday to Aug. 20 on the second floor of the Swope Art Museum. Tribune-Star/Howard Greninger

Welcome to New Board Members Ralph Leck and Arie Lebowitz

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Wesley Bishop	Ralph Leck
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FALL 2016

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The Eugene V. Debs Foundation
Box 9454

Terre Haute, IN 47808

Website: www.debsfoundation.org

Email: lisa.phillips@indstate.edu

Foundation Officers:

Noel Beasley, *President*

Tom Szymanski, *Executive Vice-President*

Lisa Phillips, *Secretary*

Benjamin Kite, *Treasurer*

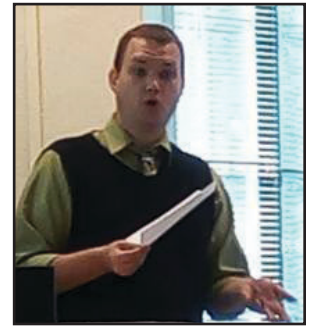
The *Debs Foundation Newsletter* is published twice yearly for distribution to members and friends of the Foundation. The Eugene V. Debs Foundation is a non-profit, private organization which maintains the home of Eugene and Kate Debs as a museum and shrine to labor, and carries on educational and informational 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.

Debs Day

Lots of things have been happening! From Debs Day to an Art Exhibit at the SWOPE to interviews with major news outlets, the Debs is making headlines (or, at least, is on the radar).

In July, the Debs Foundation partnered with Michelle Bennet of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute and Susan Baley at the SWOPE to put on "Debs Day." The day began with two lectures, one on Eugene and another on Kate, given by Debs Board members Wesley Bishop (pictured) and Micki Morahn. Their lectures were followed by lunch then another great talk by long-time Debs Board member, Harriet McNeal, this time in the attic of the Debs House and about the fabulous murals. Afterward the group reconvened at

the SWOPE for artists' talks and a tour of a Debs Exhibit. The SWOPE had commissioned several pieces on Debs that were on display over much of the summer (see the write up to the left on just one of them). "Debs Day" was a success! It is nice to make connections, through Debs, with OLLI and the SWOPE. Some of the artists, including our own treasurer-artist, have volunteered to auction their pieces for a Debs Foundation fundraiser.



Debs House & Museum Updates

The Debs Foundation would like to thank Ms. Debbie Sitarski for keeping the House and Museum open during our recent transition away from a live-in caretaker. Ms. Sitarski did a fantastic job! She gave hundreds of tours, mailed requested merchandise, and provided a friendly face for the Debs Foundation, House, and Museum. We could not have made it through without her. Luckily for the Foundation, Ms. Sitarski has agreed to volunteer whenever our new Director needs her.



On that note, it is our pleasure to extend a warm welcome to our new Museum Director, Ms. Allison Duerk! Welcome, Allison. Allison comes to us a brand new graduate of Indiana State University. She out-competed several good candidates for the position and impressed the search committee with her knowledge of Eugene Debs and labor history, her own experience organizing labor unions, and her enthusiasm. She will bring Debs' history to younger (and older!) generations and has already proven an asset to the House, Museum, and Foundation.



From Ms. Duerk:

"It has been nothing short of an honor to step into the role of Museum Director this Summer. Thank you to the Foundation officers for their guidance and support thus far. If we have not met already, I am originally from Northeast Indiana and moved to Terre Haute four years

ago. I recently completed my Bachelors degree in political science at Indiana State and have been giving tours of the Museum since September of 2015. I officially started the position in late July after completing an out-of-state internship. Up to that point, Deb Sitarski did an outstanding job at the Museum and I extend my sincerest appreciation to her. For your reference, Museum hours are now Tues/Thurs 3-7 and Weds/Fri/Sat 10-2.

Over the Summer, the Midwest Labor Press Association donated some time out of their yearly conference to do some intensive landscaping work around the Museum - many thanks to this great group. A very successful Debs Day was held in July. Student volunteers will do even more landscaping work for Fall Donaghy Day when the semester kicks off at ISU. Further programming is in the works including collaboration with Theta Chi Fraternity and Feminist Majority at Indiana State. I'm also planning to create a catalogue of the Museum's collection and update the Debs Award Wall on the second story landing. I will soon be searching for volunteers to staff an extended Museum schedule as visitor traffic picks up during the coming semester. This is an exciting time at the Museum and I welcome your input as I find new ways to fill this role!"

Debs House and Museum: Executive Vice-President, Tom Szymanski, spearheaded the first phase of renovation of the Debs House' basement. The Foundation is working to ensure that the basement remain structurally sound in what will likely be a three phase process, the first of which was completed in July. Thank you, Tom!

The 2016 Eugene V. Debs Awards Banquet

SYCAMORE BANQUET CENTER, 218 NORTH 6TH STREET, TERRE HAUTE, IN 47809

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2016

6:00 p.m.: Social Hour and Reception (cash bar)
7:00 p.m.: Banquet
Parking: Free for banquet guests in a lot south off Chestnut Street. On 3rd Street, come to the light at Chestnut Street (Shell Service Station on southwest corner). Go east 1-1/2 blocks, then turn right at attendants' booth.

For tickets: Please order on our website at debsfoundation.org or cut and send the information on back page, with your payment, no later than Sept 20th. We will not be selling tickets at the door.



Cindy Sheehan, the 2016 Eugene V. Debs Award Winner

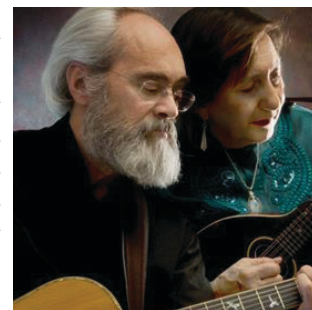
The 2016 Debs Award Winner, Cindy Sheehan

Ms. Sheehan is a veteran of the United States Army who gained national attention during her campaign in opposition to the (second) Iraq War after her son, Casey Sheehan was killed in action during a rescue action. Ms. Sheehan set up a makeshift camp outside of President George W. Bush's

Texas ranch (sometimes referred to as "Camp Casey"), attracting thousands of supporters and drawing tighter focus to the many salient objections to US involvement in Iraq (and wars in general). In subsequent years, Ms. Sheehan has maintained her anti-war activism, including many demonstrations, authorship of two books and appearances in several documentaries. She now hosts a radio program, "The Soapbox" and accompanying blog along with maintaining her continued commitment to activism. The Debs Foundation is honored that Ms. Sheehan will be joining us at the Banquet to accept the award and share her thoughts on Debs and politics.

Musical Guest Magpie (Terry Leonino and Gary Artzner)

With a career that has spanned more than forty years, Magpie has traveled the globe, bringing its unique sound and breathtaking versatility to audiences everywhere. From traditional songs to vintage blues, swing and country to folk classics to contemporary and stirring original compositions, they cover a lot of musical ground. With their powerful voices and harmonies and their excellent instrumental arrangements on guitars, mandolin, harmonica, dulcimer, and concertina, their sound is much bigger than just two people. Award-winning recording artists, songwriters, musical historians, and social activists, Terry and Greg always promise a presentation that is highly entertaining as well as provocative and deeply moving. They will be performing a brand new song they wrote about Debs at the Banquet.



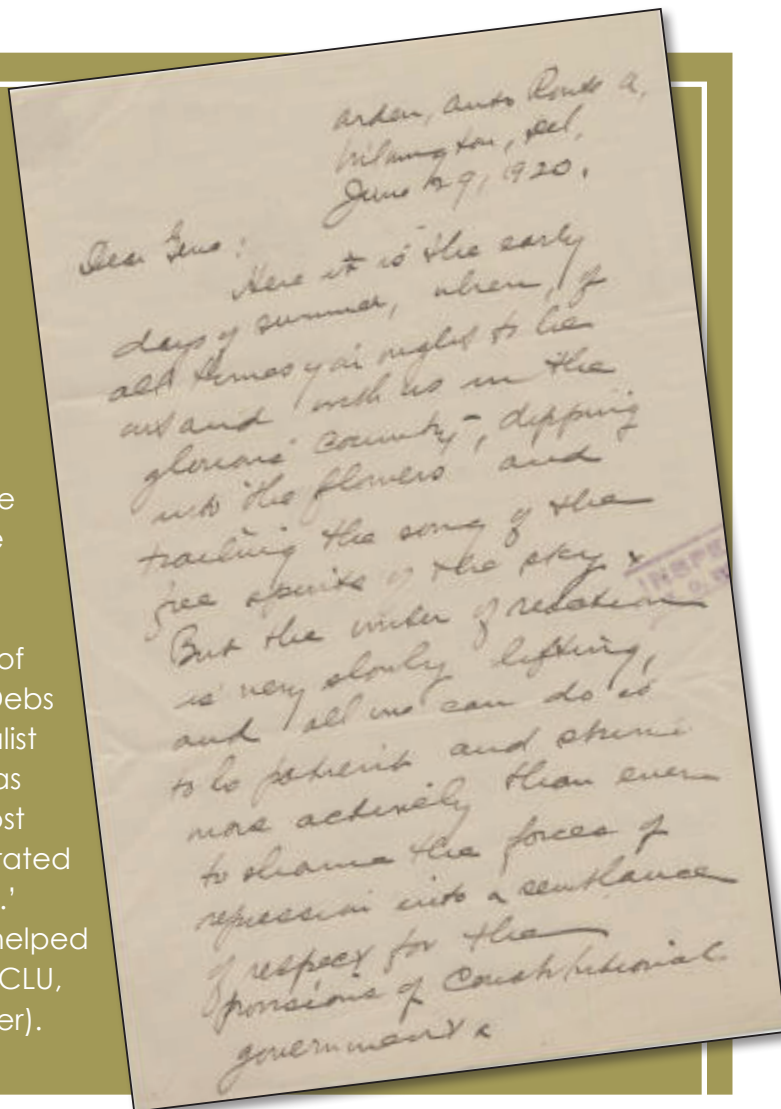
Terry Leonino and Greg Artzner are Magpie, our 2016 Musical Guests

Terre Haute Labor History Tour

This year, long-time Board Member and former Foundation Officer Tim Kelley will give a Labor History Tour of Terre Haute the afternoon before the Banquet. With twelve sites on the tour, including Eugene Debs' birthplace and gravesite, the site of the Terre Haute general strike, among others and all accompanied by expert narration, the tour promises to be an educational treat! It will begin at the Debs House at 1:00 on Saturday, September 24, and conclude about 3:00. Transportation will be provided. For tickets, please go to: goo.gl/nr8gDR.

In Debs' Words...

In honor of our awardee, Cindy Sheehan, and with this a Presidential Election year, we include here a picture of the first page of a letter housed in Indiana State University's Special Collections and available online at <http://visions.indstate.edu:8888/cdm/compoundobject/collection/evdc/id/2973/rec/6>. Dated June 29, 1920, Joseph Cohen, a member of the Socialist Party and author of the 1909 book *Socialism for Students*, wrote "all we can do is be patient and [try?] more actively than ever to shame the voices of repression into a semblance of respect for the provisions of Constitutional government." Cohen assured Debs (on the next page not pictured) that the Socialist Party's campaign was both "intensive as well as extensive." The 1920 campaign was Debs' most famous, the one during which he was incarcerated in the Atlanta Penitentiary for criticizing the U.S.' involvement in World War I, and the one that helped launch the ACLU (for more on Debs and the ACLU, see Ernie Freeberg's book *Democracy's Prisoner*).



Of Note...

With the Foundation's support and in conjunction with the Illinois Labor History Society, new Board member **David Rathke** is working on an historical marker in Woodstock, Illinois to commemorate "Free Speech." Debs was imprisoned in Woodstock after his involvement in the Pullman Strike. The Foundation welcomes making connections with the ILHS through our great Board members.

ISU Students Cleaned Up the Yard at the Debs House! Thank you Alison Duerk, our Museum Director, and Jessica Starr, from ISU's Center for Community Engagement, for organizing a group of students to work at the Debs House as part of ISU's Donaghy Day in August. They cleared "several bags" worth of yard waste.

Debs Foundation Treasurer **Benjamin Kite** was interviewed by NUVO news in August.

Joseph Varga, Labor Historian at IU-Bloomington, will bring members of The Working Class Studies Association to the Debs House and Museum as part of the WCSA's Spring, 2017 Conference.

Dinner Ticket Order

\$43 per ticket, Table of 8 is \$280 | Students K-College - 1/2 price

Name _____

_____ X \$43 = \$ _____
tickets \$ enclosed

Tickets must be paid in advance, checks payable to The Debs Foundation,
P.O. Box 9454, Terre Haute, IN 47808. 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:

NOTE

We offer a choice of entrees. Please indicate your choice when you order tickets and again at the door.

Chicken Dijonnaise _____

Number

Vegetable Marinara _____

Number

EUGENE V. DEBS FOUNDATION

P.O. Box 9454

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Membership Dues: The Eugene V. Debs Foundation

NAME _____

STREET _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

_____ \$10.00 Student/Limited Income _____ \$100.00 Sustaining Member

_____ \$25.00 Regular Member _____ \$250.00 Life Members

_____ \$50.00 Supporting Member _____ Other

Enclose remittance. Make checks payable to the Debs Foundation.

The Debs Foundation • P.O. Box 9454 • Terre Haute, IN 47808-0843

We are a not-for-profit organization, so your dues and contributions are tax deductible. The Foundation owns and maintains the Debs Home and offers several educational and cultural programs.