

# The Debs Foundation Newsletter

PO BOX 9454 ■ TERRE HAUTE INDIANA 47808-9454



FALL 2017

## In Honor of the Founders

Noel Beasley

In 1962, an enlightened band of scholars and activists, few in number but rock-solid in determination, created and incorporated the Eugene V. Debs Foundation and raised the money to purchase the home of Debs before it fell victim to a wrecking ball and became a parking lot. It's difficult to imagine fifty-five years later how different some of our lives would have been without the dedicated service of those remarkable leaders. The Debs Home is now an anchor in Terre Haute, Indiana, which insures that the actions and contributions of Eugene and his brother Theodore are not only remembered but continue to inspire those of us who attempt to emulate in whatever way we can their bravery and courage.

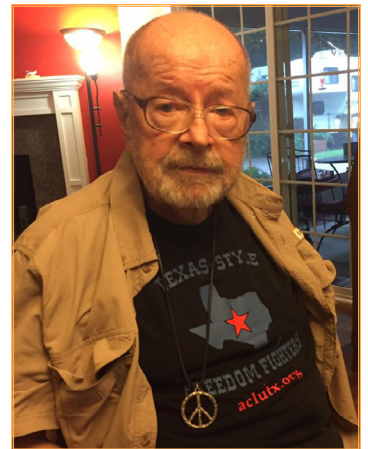
The recent passing in May of this year of Robert Constantine is a benchmark event. He is the last of the founding directors and officers to leave us. Bob served as the first Secretary of the Foundation from 1962 until 1983. In that year he recruited Tim Kelley (currently a Board member) to serve as Secretary. You will find a splendid tribute to Bob penned by Tim posted on the Foundation website.



Bob Constantine (left) with 1966 Debs Award Honoree Norman Thomas

Also on the website are the reflections of Jed Smock, who was a student of Bob at Indiana State University and whose life was heavily influenced by Bob's skill and compassion as a professor.

In 1983, over a couple of beers at the I.S.U. faculty lounge (which Bob informed me at the time was the only place on campus to get a cold one), he recruited me to be the Executive Vice President of the Foundation. I was surprised and humbled to be offered the position. As a result, for the last thirty-four years I have had the privilege of meeting the amazing array of recipients of the Debs Award at the annual Banquet. And I have had the pleasure of working with the Board members who volunteer their time and energy to perpetuating our shared vision of a world that can be achieved by fighting for a global society based on peace and justice.



Bob Constantine in his Texas ACLU t-shirt and peace pendant

Among his many scholarly accomplishments, Bob was the editor of three volumes of letters written by Debs and then he subsequently published an abridged version which he titled "Gentle Rebel." And so with a smile and renewed commitment to our cause, I hoist a cold one in farewell to Comrade Bob, the gentle rebel I was so fortunate to know.

# 2017 Eugene V. Debs Award Banquet

We are pleased to announce that the 2017 Debs Award will be presented to the **Jobs With Justice** national organization together with its regional and local affiliates. **Sarita Gupta**, the dynamic Executive Director of Jobs With Justice, will accept the Award.



For more than thirty years Jobs With Justice has led the way in building broad based coalitions fighting with discipline and effectiveness for the rights of working people. Combining comprehensive research, innovative campaign tactics and a deep network of trade unions, grass roots activists and communities of faith, Jobs With Justice creatively exposes the inequities and essential unfairness of working in America while revealing practical solutions that can

and will reverse the current high tide of exploitation and oppression.

In the opinion of the Debs Board, it never has been more important than now to emphasize that organizations and networks such as Jobs With Justice are essential engines driving social change.

(continued on next page)



Jobs With Justice Executive Director Sarita Gupta will accept the Debs Award on behalf of her organization

## EUGENE V. DEBS FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER

Spring 2017

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**The Eugene V. Debs Foundation**  
Box 9454  
Terre Haute, IN 47808

[www.debsfoundation.org](http://www.debsfoundation.org)  
[info@debsfoundation.org](mailto:info@debsfoundation.org)

### FOUNDATION OFFICERS

Noel Beasley, President  
Benjamin Kite, Treasurer

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

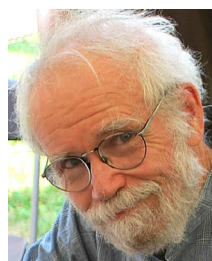
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The Debs Foundation Newsletter is published twice yearly for distribution to supporters and friends of the Foundation. The Eugene V. Debs Foundation is a non-profit, private organization which maintains the home of Eugene and Kate Debs as a museum 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 supporters, a donation form is provided elsewhere in this issue.

## 2017 Awards Banquet Musical Performers

This fall, we are proud to continue hosting the best in labor music:

**Charlie King** is a musical storyteller and political satirist. He has been at the heart of American folk music for half a century and has been writing songs for the past 40 years. Honors include: an "Indie" award for one of the top three folk recordings of 1984; the War Resisters League's 1998 Peacemaker Award given to Charlie and Odetta; and the 1999 Sacco-Vanzetti Social Justice Award for which he was nominated by Pete Seeger; the 2009 International Labor Communications Association award for Best Labor History Story; and the 2014 Joe Hill Award from the Labor Heritage Foundation, a Lifetime Award for excellence in the field of labor culture. His songs have been recorded and sung by Pete Seeger, Holly Near, Ronnie Gilbert, John McCutcheon, Arlo Guthrie, Peggy Seeger, and Chad Mitchell. Charlie's new CD is "Life & Love, Tears & Laughter."



Charlie King



George Mann

A former union organizer and activist based in New York, **George Mann** sings songs from the last century of labor and social activism, and his own songs are powerful and funny takes on the state of the nation. His concerts are part sing-along, part history lesson, and he can make you shout for joy, send chills down your spine or bring tears to your eyes in the same set. George created and produced the "Hail to the Thief!" anti-Bush CD series, which featured such folk legends as Tom Paxton, Utah Phillips, and Billy Bragg, and his work with veterans, unions and anti-war groups has kept him on the front lines for 20 years. He toured and recorded for ten years with Julius Margolin, who lived to 93 before passing in 2009, and in 2008 he directed and produced "A Union Man: The Life and Work of Julius Margolin," a one-hour documentary about Julius and his life as a labor and anti-war activist and singer.

[www.charlieking.org](http://www.charlieking.org)

[www.georgemann.org](http://www.georgemann.org)



## 2017 Eugene V. Debs Award Banquet (continued)

We acknowledge and celebrate the role that Jobs With Justice plays in uniting progressive leaders in common causes.

The Award will be presented by **Joan Suarez**, a veteran labor and community organizer. Joan has been an active leader of Jobs With Justice since its inception and currently serves as the Executive Director of Bread & Roses Missouri.

We will once again be offering a Labor History Tour created by board member **Tim Kelley**. If you would like to register for the tour, you can do so online:

[tinyurl.com/debs-walking-tour-2017](http://tinyurl.com/debs-walking-tour-2017)

We invite all of our supporters to join us for the award banquet. A ticket order form is on the back page of this newsletter, or you can print a ticket form or buy tickets online at our website.

## Museum Director's Report

Allison Duerk

It's been an interesting few months at the Museum with visitors hailing from all over the globe. Some guests of note include Working Class Studies Association Conference attendees from Bloomington, and the Center for Community Engagement and Leadership Development at Purdue University. The author Chris Hedges toured the Museum with a film crew while working on an episode of his web series On Contact. The episode will focus on deindustrialization and has not yet been aired.



With the invaluable help of our museum director Allison Duerk, the Eugene V. Debs Museum continues to offer tours year-round that inspire groups and individuals from across the US and the world.

I owe a huge thank-you to **Deb Sitarski** and **Wes** and **Allison Bishop** for all of their help at the Spring Work Day held last May. The original date in April was postponed due to rain. Our Fall Work Day is scheduled for 10:00 am on September 23rd, with a rain date of September 30th. All Debs Foundation members are invited to help prepare the grounds of the Museum for banquet visitors, and lunch will be provided.

On a fun note, I created an Instagram account for the Museum and regularly post photos from our collection. Anyone with an Instagram account can follow us at "Eugene V. Debs Museum".

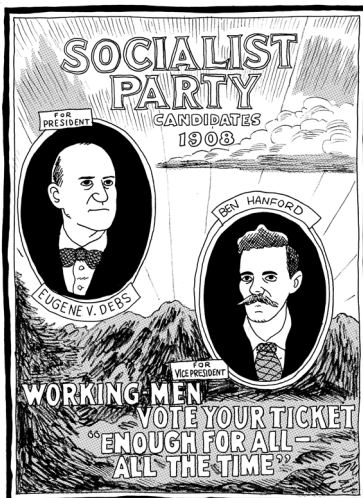
## Debs Graphic Novel in the Works

Historian and author **Paul Buhle** has teamed up with **Noah Van Sciver** to present the story of Debs' life (as well as stories of others like Norman Thomas and Michael Harrington) in the form of a graphic novel.

The Debs Foundation Board of Directors voted to endorse this effort at its Spring 2017 meeting.

The medium has been enjoying increased success including the adaptation of many graphic novels for television and motion pictures. This volume will help bring the story to new generations.

Buhle is the author of over 30 books on Marxism, labor, radicalism, and Jewish culture. Van Sciver has a host of graphic works under his belt including Fante Bukowski and Disquiet.



A Sample Page from the Upcoming Debs Graphic Novel by **Paul Buhle** and **Noah Van Sciver**

The Democratic Socialists of America has offered to match contributions to the Debs graphic novel. If you like, you can contribute here:

[fund-dsausa.nationbuilder.com/debs\\_graphic\\_novel](http://fund-dsausa.nationbuilder.com/debs_graphic_novel)

## Available in Our Gift Shop

### WHAT SOCIALISM DEMANDS

By EUGENE V. DEBS

In his New Book, "Unionism and Socialism"

The earth for all the people.

THAT IS THE DEMAND.

The machinery of production and distribution for all the people.

THAT IS THE DEMAND.

The collective ownership and control of industry and its democratic management in the interest of all the people.

THAT IS THE DEMAND.

The elimination of Rent, Interest and Profit and the production of wealth to satisfy the wants of all the people.

THAT IS THE DEMAND.

Co-operative industry in which all shall work together in harmony as the basis of the new social order, a higher civilization, a real republic.

THAT IS THE DEMAND.

The end of class struggles and class rule, of master and slave, of ignorance and vice, of poverty and shame, of cruelty and crime—the birth of freedom, the dawn of brotherhood, the beginning of Man.

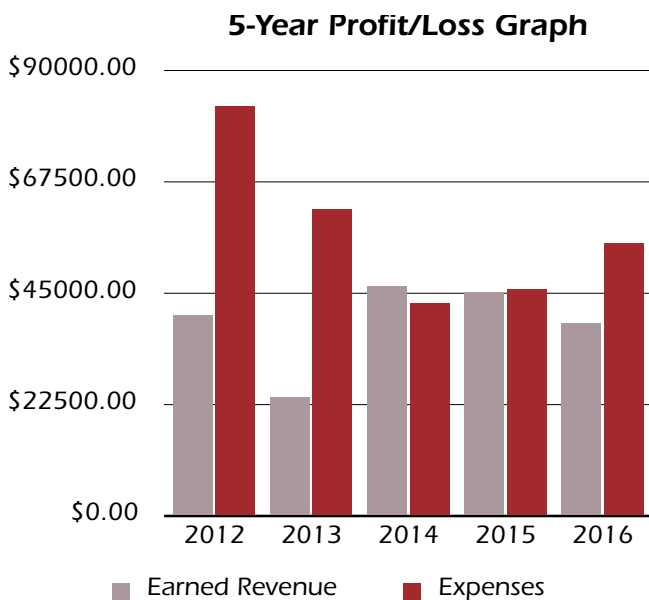
THAT IS THE DEMAND.

...THIS IS SOCIALISM...

A reproduction of a 1904 handbill printed in Terre Haute at the same time as the publication of Debs' "Unionism and Socialism". The reproduction is union printed and is available for \$15 plus shipping. All profits go to the Eugene V. Debs Foundation.

## Expenses Categories over \$1000 (2016)

	2016 Amount
<b>Payroll</b>	\$ 8895.00
<b>Payroll Taxes</b>	\$ 2569.00
<b>Worker's Compensation</b>	\$ 3565.00
<b>Professional Services</b>	\$ 25526.00
<b>Utilities</b>	\$ 4605.00
<b>Printing and Copying</b>	\$ 4160.00
<b>Banquet Advertising</b>	\$ 3267.00
Other Expenses	\$ 2914.83
<b>Total Expenses</b>	\$ 55501.83



## Fall Board Meeting

Sunday, October 15 — 9am

Hilton Garden Inn

750 Wabash Avenue

Terre Haute, IN

## Treasurer's Report

Benjamin Kite

I'm pleased to be able to report on all analytic accounts (expense categories, etc) that were targeted two years ago. While this might not seem very exciting, this will give us more detailed information about the financial state of the Foundation, and we can now properly do budgeting and forecasts.

The Foundation's financial performance was mixed this year. Overall, revenues were down in most categories, although data suggests that memorabilia sales have improved since adding the online store and making a few more products available.

This year's expenses, while not out of line with previous years, included extraordinary items such as the first phase of the renovation of the basement of the Debs Museum (to the tune of \$11,000) and an expensive re-casting of the bronze award plaque that is given to Eugene V. Debs Award recipients. I also requested an experimental advertising budget for the 2016 banquet. While we received great approval from supporters for placing the ads, we did not see a lot of tickets sold as a result of the advertising. The plan is to restrict future advertising to local channels which will provide the best market saturation for our target demographic (and other such voodoo) at what is a pretty competitive rate vs. other markets (Indianapolis, Bloomington, Fort Wayne).

The board voted to eliminate contributions characterized as dues at my recommendation so that all contributions will be tax-deductible. Supporters will continue to receive the newsletter as usual. Likewise, life memberships will continue to be honored.

We are now in the process of completing inspection of the house in preparation for more renovations coming this year and we will likely continue to operate at a loss next year.

We continue to make minor improvements to the website, but the platform is mostly stable for now. Time permitting, I will try to get our online and museum-based gift shops linked up and modernize the point-of-sale with a iPad-based cash register, all of which will make it a lot easier to keep track of sales and inventories.

All in all, we are moving forward with incremental improvements as always, and the coming year should bring significant improvements at the Debs house.





Eugene V. Debs delivers a speech to an attentive Knoxville crowd in 1905.

## In Debs' Words

from *The Socialist Party and the Working Class*, a speech delivered by Eugene V. Debs in Indianapolis, Ind. on September 1st, 1904 during his candidacy for president on behalf of the Socialist party.

"Let us briefly consider the Republican party from the worker's standpoint. It is capitalist to the core. It has not and can not have the slightest interest in labor, except to exploit it.

"Why should a workingman support the Republican party?

"Why should a millionaire support the socialist party?

"For precisely the same reason that all the millionaires are opposed to the Socialist party, all the workers should be opposed to the Republican party. It is a capitalist party, is loyal to capitalist interests, and entitled to the support of capitalist voters on election day.

"All it has for workingmen is its 'glorious past' and a 'glad hand' when it wants their votes.

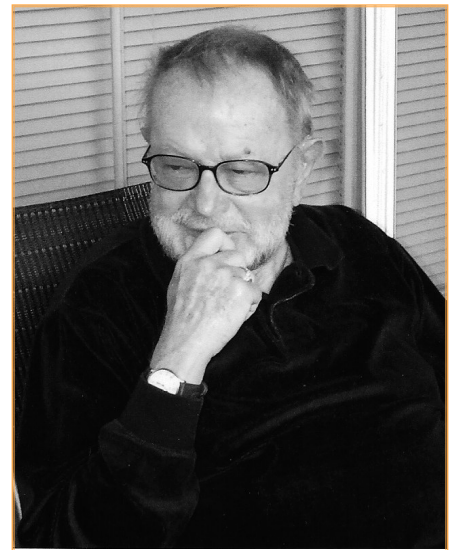
"The Republican party is now and has been for several years, in complete control of government.

"What has it done for labor? What has it not done for capital?

"Not one of the crying abuses of capital has been curbed under Republican rule.

"Not one of the petitions of labor has been granted."

*Eugene V. Debs*



The Eugene V. Debs Foundation  
Gratefully Acknowledges  
Donations Made in Memory of

**Dr. J. Robert Constantine**

by

Aaron Chappell  
The Doritys  
Laurie Jaeger and Bill Wigle  
Ann and Kim Kizer  
Darwin Hamilton  
Stephen Howard  
Tim Kelley  
John Kite  
Melissa and George Libal  
John Nation  
Gail Malmgreen  
Christopher Rickard  
Ron and Jan Schlattmann  
Ann Seltzer  
Silky Shah  
Suzanne VanReed  
Forrest Wilder

The Officers of the Eugene V. Debs  
Foundation

and

The Grassroots Leadership Board  
of Directors



Autumn at the Eugene V. Debs House

## Eugene V. Debs Award Banquet Ticket Order Form

\$43 per ticket, Table of 8 is \$280 ■ Students K-College ½ Price

Purchase Tickets Online at: [www.debsfoundation.org](http://www.debsfoundation.org)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Total Amount Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate your meal preference: {  
Chicken \_\_\_\_\_ Number \_\_\_\_\_  
Vegetarian \_\_\_\_\_ Number \_\_\_\_\_

Tickets must be paid in advance, checks payable to:  
Eugene V. Debs Foundation ■ PO Box 9454 ■ Terre Haute, IN ■ 47808

Your reservation will be recorded and honored at the door.

Inquiries may be directed to Benjamin Kite at 202-538-2845, or  
by email: [info@debsfoundation.org](mailto:info@debsfoundation.org)



PO Box 9454  
Terre Haute, IN 47808-9454

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

## Personal Program Greeting

Name Only \$20.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Greeting \$30.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) and Greeting:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Greetings will appear in the banquet program book,  
either including your name only or your name and a  
brief greeting (20 words max). Copies of the  
program book will be furnished upon request.  
Greetings must be received by September 15th.

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ORGANIZATION  
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**DON'T PITCH YOUR  
NEWSLETTER! PASS IT ON.**

## Support the Eugene V. Debs Foundation

Donate Online at: [www.debsfoundation.org](http://www.debsfoundation.org)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$10 ■ Student/Limited Income  | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 ■ Sustaining Contribution |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 ■ Regular Contribution    | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 ■ Lifetime Contribution   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 ■ Supporting Contribution | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Amount _____              |

Please make checks payable to:

Eugene V. Debs Foundation ■ PO Box 9454 ■ Terre Haute, IN ■ 47808

The Eugene V. Debs Foundation is a 501 (c)3 not-for-profit educational organization. Your contributions are tax-deductible. The Foundation owns and maintains the Eugene V. Debs Home and Museum and offers educational and cultural programs.

**Your Continued Support Makes It Possible!**