



Minnesota Journal

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A publication of the Citizens League

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Volume 15, Number 12
December 15, 1998

Take baby steps as baby boomers age

by Ronald A. Wirtz

Today it's difficult to know a real policy dilemma from merely the frettings of Chicken Little. For many policy gloom-and-doom scenarios—global warming, Y2K—no one knows for sure what's going to happen, or to what degree.

So we hear it for a good old-fashioned, here-it-is policy crisis: aging baby boomers.

The aging of the baby boom generation appears to be one of those "real" dilemmas for a very simple reason: We know what factors contribute to making this a problem and we know these factors will

really happen. Unlike the educated guesswork often involved in financial or ecological forecasts, the factors related to the aging of society—namely demographics—are very tangible and predictable.

For instance, we know there are a lot of baby boomers. We know they will age. We know that statistically they will live longer than previous generations. We know that in the coming decades, the population over age 65 will grow rapidly, while the rest of the population—which the older generation

depends on for support either directly or indirectly—will not grow much, if at all (barring any unforeseen swings in fertility and immigration rates).

To investigate and help frame the implications of the aging of the state's baby boomers, the Citizens League, the Department of Human Services (DHS)' Aging Initiative: Project 2030 and the Minnesota Board on Aging formed a joint task force of 30 citizen volunteers. The group met from June through October and its final report, *Baby*

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At-risk kids do better with early home visits

by David A. Rooney
and Gay Bakken

Parents with school children know "Bobby." Their children regularly recount at the supper table his antics. He is eight years old and small for his age. His clothes are filthy, he has no friends, he daily disrupts the rest of the class and his teacher is at her wit's end. His seizure disorder requires daily visits to the school nurse for medication and monitoring. He tells the nurse one morning that his mom's boyfriend "was hitting on his mom again last night." The neighbor knows that Bobby is regularly left home alone for extended periods of time.

Bobby's classmates give one glimpse of his life, the teacher knows the academic and behavioral challenges, the nurse knows Bobby's medical history and situation at home and the neighbor suspects he is not safe. Each one sees a fragment of the life of one of Minnesota's 10,777 maltreated children.

In last month's *Minnesota Journal* article "School districts need flexibility to change," Ted Kolderie

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PPL thrives through leadership transition

Editor's note: This article is part of the Citizens League's ongoing emphasis on public leadership.

How does a mission-oriented nonprofit survive the leadership transition from its well-known, quietly charismatic founder and longtime executive director to a new younger leader, eager to carry on the organization's traditional missions, as well as push it in new directions?

Grace, in the case of Minneapolis' Project for Pride in Living (PPL), now 26 years into its mission of providing housing, job training, commercial redevelopment

by Dana Schroeder

ment, welfare transition and, new this year, education to residents in some of the Twin Cities' poorest neighborhoods. In 1997, PPL founder Joe Selvaggio turned over the reins of the organization to Steve Cramer, former Minneapolis city council member, who had been PPL's director of housing and development since 1994, following an unsuccessful run for mayor.

PPL began in 1972 at a meeting of concerned parishioners of Saint Joan of Arc Church in south Minneapolis. Selvaggio, a former Catholic priest, and several others

had the idea to buy abandoned inner-city houses on the near south side and renovate them for—and with—the poor and the working class who would buy them at reduced prices.

"We limped along for about a year-and-a-half with just volunteers," Selvaggio said in a recent joint interview with Cramer. "I was still employed with Advocate Services, a bunch of contributors who gave 20 bucks a month to my salary." A \$1 million revolving loan fund committed by Midwest Federal Savings and Loan in 1974 legitimized PPL. Selvaggio began

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What industry clusters can do for Minnesota economy

In the current issue of the *Harvard Business Review*, Professor Michael Porter wrote about an important paradox as we plunge into a world economy. With the world's markets being fed by sophisticated transportation and communications systems, you might expect geography or location to shrink in importance. But just the opposite seems to be true: The enduring competitive advantages in a global economy are often local. These advantages arise from concentrations of sophisticated business services and products and of highly skilled labor. Geographic proximity—not within industrial parks, but within a metropolitan region—makes for closer relationships and powerful incentives to do things well.

Almost a decade ago Porter wrote *The Competitive Advantages of Nations* in which he showed the relationships among cost and quality of business inputs, sophistication of local customers, the nature and intensity of local competition and the local extent and sophistication of suppliers and related industries. This has spawned a movement in economic development called an "industry cluster" approach.

Just what is an industry cluster? In Porter's formulation, clusters are regional or state-based geographic

concentrations of interconnected companies and institutions in a particular field, such as medical devices or value-added agriculture. A particular cluster includes suppliers of specialized machinery, services or infrastructure. Clusters also include firms that produce complementary products or are linked by related skills or technologies. A variety of institutions—from universities to training providers to trade associations—are part of a cluster. The economic aim of a cluster approach is not to pick winners among existing clusters. Rather it is to reinforce the development of all clusters in the region and make way for the emergence of new clusters.

To be effective, the public sector needs to build on existing and emerging clusters, rather than spend energy on creating entirely new ones—the so-called "smoke-stack chasing" approach. Economies tend to move up the "food chain" within clusters that are in place or emerging. Clusters are organic and place-dependent and require careful balance between private- and public-sector

input and guidance. The approach is not a "cookie cutter," but should be adapted to the competitiveness needs of each metropolitan region.

The cluster approach has a number of potential benefits and implications. It should encourage targeting resources to the many, instead of the few, by investing resources on the infrastructure necessary for growth—particularly among small and medium-sized companies where most growth occurs. A cluster-based strategy would tend to invest resources in parts of the economy with proven track records on high wages, wage increases and job growth. Clusters can provide a new model for thinking about workforce development and economic development. Perhaps most importantly, clusters look more closely at cost-benefit analysis of economic development subsidies and consciously invest resources in areas with greater value added and payoff for the state and region.

In its most recent report, *Help Wanted—More Opportunities Than People*, the Citizens League called for an industry cluster approach to

help the region respond to a looming labor shortage expected to last several decades.

The Citizens League board of directors has followed up quickly on that effort by selecting industry clusters as its next citizen study committee topic. The study will delve into how to put the industry cluster approach to work for Minnesota for economic development, for school-to-work transition and for reaching out to historically underemployed or unemployed people. The committee faces a number of key questions: What programs and laws should we use to install a cluster approach at the state level? What is already underway in the region? How should we fit together state, regional and sub-regional cluster approaches?

The new citizen study committee should have an interesting time wrestling (no allusion intended) with a new model of economic development for the state. A cluster economic development strategy—rather than our current heavily real estate-based strategy—should serve well as one of the foundations for a prosperous economy for Minnesota into the 21st century.

Lyle Wray is executive director of the Citizens League.

Viewpoint

by Lyle Wray

Pogemiller: Straighten out roles in education system

Edited excerpts of remarks by Sen. Larry Pogemiller (DFL-Minneapolis), Chair, Senate K-12 Budget Division, to the Citizens League on Nov. 23.

In public education the public thinks we're supposed to educate every child. We have demonstrably shown that we're not doing that through our basic skills tests—something we've all known, but now it's so in front of us that it's hard to ignore. If the task is every child, we are failing. With very simple reading, writing and arithmetic, we have shown that we have at least a 30 percent failure rate at the eighth grade level.

Citizens are pretty smart. They say, Thirty percent's not very good. If you come to an urban district, you've got a 60 percent failure rate.

Nobody who fights to maintain the current K-12 educational cartel should believe they're going to be successful. There is an inevitability that it's going to be decentralized. No matter how hard we fight to save it, we or you will lose.

Look at the way our children are leading their lives. It has no relevancy to the system we've built of top-down management in education. That's not the way they live their lives. So holding onto that, I believe, is not useful.

If you have a failure rate of 30 percent in the eighth grade, it seems to me you should at least ask a question as to whether you should be doing this. If you come from an inner city, you clearly have to ask at 60 percent failure whether this makes any sense.

There's been a great deal of work on what the business community wants. They never say, We want reading, writing and arithmetic, just. They say they want critical thinking, entrepreneurship, ability to synthesize information—higher order abilities for every graduate.

Now the liberal educators can say, Well, that's what we've been talking about forever. We want citizens. The Greeks. We want citizens for democracy.

So the people are back where they thought we were. They have expectations that we're educating citizens for democracy. I think the argument is if someone can't read and write and do arithmetic in the eighth grade at about the fifth-grade level, the odds of them being able to become a productive citizen when they get out of high school

aren't real strong. The folks have said, That's not making a lot of sense.

What we should hold as sacred is not public schools. What we should hold as sacred is education of the public—every child. That is different from holding public schools up as the holy grail. Public schools as we know them are simply a mechanism. School boards as we know them are simply a mechanism. And if they don't work, we ought to fix them.

It seems to me we could think of choice as, I want to put my kid where I think it might work. I want to match my child to the right faculty. All the research indicates that's the critical relationship. It has nothing to do with the school board. It has nothing to do with how

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Editors see Ventura win as party rebuke, call for reform

On Balance

"He that wrestles with us strengthens our nerves, and sharpens our skill. Our antagonist is our helper."—E. Burke

Mankato Free Press said (Nov. 5) gubernatorial candidate Jesse Ventura's election shows that given a chance, Minnesota voters reject political rhetoric and partisan bickering." It said the first order of business for Ventura is "to surround himself with some of the best and brightest in this state." **Red Wing Republican Eagle** said (Nov. 5) Ventura's victory underscores that "it need not cost exorbitant amounts of money to win an election, and therefore there may be hope yet for campaign finance reform." **St. Cloud Times** said (Nov. 5), "People are so disgusted with party politics that they are willing to take a chance on someone who admits he knows little about state government and who offers little indication of what his program for the next four years would be...People want a shake-up in politics at the state Capitol...Now Ventura will have to deliver." **Star Tribune** said (Nov. 5) Ventura's only chance in accomplishing his goal of remaking state government "lies in winning the cooperation of the very government establishment that he lambasted during the campaign. He can no longer be the clever critic. He must become an informed, conciliatory leader."

West Central Tribune (Willmar) said (Nov. 5), "Ventura has, in his words, shaken the world. Now he's got a chance to shake up state government. Let's hope lawmakers in both major parties can

work with him so that the shaking happens in a positive way, not in a way in which the risks get out of hand." **Fergus Falls Daily Journal** said (Nov. 5), "What Ventura's leadership will bring to Minnesota remains to be seen. But there is a chance, at least, that he will be a politician who truly is a voice for the people." **Duluth News-Tribune** said (Nov. 6), "campaign finance reforms enacted in Minnesota in the 1980s were as much a factor in this major upset as anything...Most election analysts agree the Ventura victory would not have been possible without Minnesota's campaign finance system." **St. Cloud Times** said (Nov. 7) the victories of Jesse Ventura and Wisconsin's Sen. Russ Feingold "should breathe new life into the campaign finance reform movement." **Star Tribune** said (Nov. 8), "by winning on Tuesday, Ventura probably has done more already to shake the Republican and DFL parties than study commissions, editorialists, reformers and party dropouts have done over many years. But if he's serious about changing Minnesota politics for the better, he can do more. He can make election reform a priority."

Fergus Falls Daily Journal said (Nov. 12), "The Republicans' fracture at the national level, Minnesota

Republican's long-standing division between ideological conservatives and pragmatic fiscal conservatives, and Minnesota Democrats' lack of a contemporary message, all feed heavily into the idea that the era of multiple-party politics has arrived in Minnesota, perhaps just a tad ahead of its arrival throughout the United States." **Star Tribune** said (Nov. 22) that the threshold (five percent of the vote) for becoming a "major" party in Minnesota—with a claim on the public purse—is too low, now that the state has four major parties. "A plethora of political parties may make even-year Octobers more interesting. But come January, when politicking gives way to governing, the presence of multiple parties is likely to complicate government's task."

Duluth News-Tribune said (Nov. 13) Gov. Arne Carlson is right to push for election reforms in Minnesota. He suggests a party primary in May, instead of precinct caucuses in March, followed by a second, runoff primary in September in races in which voters have a choice of candidates from more than two parties. The two highest vote getting in the September primary would face off in the general election. **Republican Eagle** said (Nov. 9), "It's apparent that precinct cau-

cuses are becoming less and less relevant. Attendance continues to dwindle, and candidate support at the caucuses no longer is critical to launching candidacies."

St. Paul Pioneer Press said (Nov. 10) the St. Paul school board is trying to learn from the mistakes of its last round in its school superintendent search last summer. It said salary "should not be the issue this time around that it was before," since the Legislature has now removed the salary cap for superintendents. **West Central Tribune** said (Nov. 24) superintendents' salaries must be competitive if we want to attract and keep top administrators. But it also said, "Now that the salary cap has been lifted, we do expect schools to avoid a major-league sports sort of escalation of salaries. Raises should be reasonable..." **Rochester Post-Bulletin** said (Nov. 30) lifting the salary cap "will enable Minnesota school districts to attract the best qualified education managers...Setting salaries at a low level may be politically popular, but it does no service to the public." **Free Press** said (Nov. 27), "If getting paid up to \$120,000 is not enough incentive for running a school district in Minnesota, known for its strong economy...and general good quality of living, then maybe those aren't the right candidates for this state." It said the Legislature should "consider reinstituting the cap before salary competition grows out of control."

my tax dollars for your child to get a Ph.D. in physics and move to California.

But the deal is simple: Tax dollars for social goods.

This notion that public schools take all children, I believe is just inaccurate.

We have a public school in St. Paul, called Capitol Hill, that has entrance exams. It only takes the best and the brightest, the gifted and talented kids. Now, if I said to you that was DeLaSalle High School, you'd all say, "Oh, private school, private school."

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The Minnesota Journal

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The Minnesota Journal (ISSN 0741-9449) is a publication of the Citizens League, a nonprofit nonpartisan Twin Cities public affairs organization, 708 S. Third St., Suite 500, Minneapolis, MN 55415, George Latimer, president. Articles and commentary are drawn from a broad range of perspectives and do not necessarily reflect League positions on policy questions. The Journal is published once a month. Periodicals postage paid at Minneapolis, MN.

Annual subscription rate for nonmembers is \$40 for 12 issues. Orders may be placed at 612/338-1111, by mail at the above address.

Postmaster: Send address changes to The Minnesota Journal, 708 S. Third St., Suite 500, Minneapolis, MN 55415

Pogemiller

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nice your building is. It really has to do with, Does the faculty member connect with the child. Can they mentor them?

What do we have today? We have a lottery system: If I live here, I go there. It has nothing to do with whether this is the right person for me to be with, the right mentor. It's totally lottery. Well, not totally lottery. We do have a market system at play. If you have a certain amount of income, you get to make some choices of what you don't like.

So this idea of choice, it seems to me, has been trivialized to the extent that when the word comes up, those who are holding onto the public school grail say, I'm for choice, as long as it's only in those buildings.

Why would we get stuck on that? On the other hand, you have people who run around and say they're for vouchers, because they want choice: Give me your tax money and I'll do whatever I want. I would argue that they're both wrong. I would say that what they're both saying is trite. There is an implied deal: You use taxpayer money not for individual achievement; you use taxpayer money to obtain social good. The basic reason isn't to use

Aging

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Steps to 2030, was publicly released this week by the Citizens League and DHS. It will serve as an advisory report to DHS as it prepares its own status report on aging issues to the Ventura administration and the Legislature before the 1999 legislative session.

The numbers involved can be startling. By 2030, the number of people over the age of 65 in Minnesota is expected to double, from 592,000 today to 1,173,000 in 2030. Equally important, the number of people under the age of 65 is expected to actually decline. Today, about one in eight people are over the age of 65; by 2030, that ratio will almost double to about one in four.

Armed with this information, the Baby Steps task force studied three systems with significant roles in the lives of older people: life-cycle communities, the workforce and long-term care. The task force then mapped out a vision for these systems in 2030 and recommended some initial policy "baby steps" that can be taken by government, business and nonprofits to begin preparing for an aging society.

Life-cycle communities

Many communities statewide have failed to think about how "age-sensitive" their communities are for older people. Part of the reason is that some communities are years away from feeling the effects of an aging population. Others on the front-end of this curve often believe that a few big senior housing projects will solve the problem.

In its report the task force argues that there is more to community

than putting roofs over older people's heads. The task force envisioned that by 2030 more Minnesota communities will be transgenerational and life-cycle in nature. Life-cycle communities provide and nurture housing, recreation, services, relationships, health care and many other things that people of all ages need through different stages of their lives. Life-cycle communities provide a variety of mechanisms to support older people attempting to live independently and offer options for older people needing various levels of assistance.

The most important first step for the state and individual communities is to experiment with small-scale projects that break the design mold of typical land-use development and service delivery. While the suburban development model worked for many boomers when raising their families, a new community development and design model is needed that works for older people, as well. Once successful models are identified, government and the building industry need to streamline and scale up the replication of these demonstrations.

Communities also need to rethink how they provide access to information and technology—sort of the "next generation" of library planning that took place earlier this century. Communities hold the key to providing and enhancing access to the information and advanced technology that will enable older people to live and thrive independently.

Workforce

The task force believes the workplace in 2030 will be very different. For one, the workplace will likely depend on older workers much more than it has historically,

because employers will be desperately seeking workers. (See articles in the Oct. 13 and Nov. 17 *Minnesota Journal* on the long-term labor shortage facing Minnesota.)

In an information economy, the workplace will be defined not by age, but by skills and productivity. The myth that older workers are less productive will be dispelled, replaced by an understanding of the unique skills and work niches offered by older people. The demand for workers in general will also create greater access to skill training, opening up "second career" opportunities for older people.

Finally, the workplace of 2030 will be organized around a redefined concept of retirement. In place of an arbitrarily designated age, retirement in the traditional sense will be determined by functional capacity and/or financial ability to leave the workforce. However, more older workers will choose to stay in the workforce, but in a different capacity, possibly pursuing new careers, part-time or seasonal work, or volunteering.

The first step to realizing such a workplace vision is to link income policy with labor policy. Currently, there are disincentives that make work unattractive for older people. For example, Social Security benefits are taxed when older people continue working (or re-enter the workforce) after becoming eligible for Social Security, creating a trade-off in benefits and earnings.

Certain incentives might keep older people working past traditional retirement age. For example, creating a reinsurance pool for employers to provide health-care gap insurance or long-term care insurance to part-time, contingent and seasonal positions—jobs that fit well with older people's lifestyles, but traditionally offer few benefits—might provide enough financial incentive for older people to stay in the workforce a few extra years.

Finally, the task force urges in its report finding ways to reward all productivity, whether paid or unpaid. With a mass of untapped productivity looking for a good outlet, we need new models of and incentives for volunteering to unleash the potential for older people to be productive without neces-

sarily earning a regular paycheck. Again, the provision of long-term care insurance might be enough incentive for older people to both volunteer and have long-term care insurance—a policy double p-

Long-term care

When most people think about long-term care, they conjure up nursing homes and very frail elderly—a stereotype that is already out of sync with reality. But the task force envisioned a system by 2030 transformed away from its institutional bias toward a focus on improving people's quality of life through self-care and long-term support. Such a system would include medical care, as well as services related to mental health and everyday living (e.g., chore services).

By 2030, the task force believes people will have changed the way they think about "end-of-life" issues. Instead of resource-intensive medical care near death, resources will be used to promote "functional wellness" that improves the overall quality of life for older people. For this to happen, the task force said, the federal government must shift resources away from acute episodic care. The group also encouraged the state to seek waivers to its Medical Assistance program—which provides most long-term care services to impoverished older people—to test new service-delivery models and to include new services to older people.

But the task force said government, businesses and nonprofits can best face the aging of the baby boomers by moving away from traditional, paternalistic systems that see older people as dependents toward new systems that promote interdependence and independence and help older people lead productive lives. In other words, make aging baby boomers part of the solution rather than merely the problem.

Ronald A. Wirtz is a research associate of the Citizens League and served as staff to the Citizens League/DHS/Board on Aging task force. Copies of the Baby Steps to 2030 report will be available in January and can be ordered by calling the Citizens League at 338-0791. The report will also be available on-line on Dec. 14 at www.citizensleague.net, under the "New Wrinkle on Aging" link.

Leadership

Continued from page 1

drawing a salary as PPL's executive director.

"We just got a bunch of single-family homes from the MCDA (Minneapolis Community Development Agency) and worked on half a dozen at a time," he said. As of 1997, PPL had renovated or built more than 900 single-family and multifamily dwellings.

The mission began to broaden in the early 1980s, when Selvaggio and PPL's board—comprised of neighborhood residents, clients and business people—decided to get into the rental property business. At the same time, Selvaggio and his advisors formed PPL Industries, a successful commercial venture aimed at offering employment to adults without a recent work history. The jobs range from shrink wrapping to building crates, precision gluing, collating and metals salvage.

Over the past decade, PPL increasingly has become a human development enterprise, focused on self-sufficiency. It's become heavily involved in job readiness efforts and moved into the education arena this fall, partnering with the Edison Project and the Minneapolis Public Schools to open a K-5 inner-city school. The school's current enrollment is 314. A middle school will be added next year and then a high school, making the school K-12 after three years.

Leadership transition

Selvaggio said he came to the decision that it was time for him to leave PPL after its 20th anniversary in 1992. "I've always been of the mind that 20 years is enough and that I should get out and let it go on its own," he said. "I started saying by the time we're 25, I'm out of here. I gave people a lot of notice."

"Shortly after that I had a little help from my heart," he said. "I had a heart attack. That really made me think I better get out and slow down. Also, I'd be 60 years old at that time."

"We were very fortunate that Steve lost the mayoral election," he said.

"He sent us a letter saying he was interested in being hired here."

The board agreed to hire Cramer as the director of housing and development in 1994, with the understanding that Selvaggio would be leaving, but with no firm guarantee that Cramer would take over the leadership position at that point.

At the end of 1995, the board decided to designate Cramer as the executive director, starting in 1997. "1996 was sort of a formal transition year," Cramer said. Selvaggio left as CEO in January 1997 to focus on fundraising and other projects, some connected to PPL and some not.

During the three-year transition, Selvaggio said, Cramer "absorbed a lot of responsibility. It was a great relief for me, so we gave him as much as he wanted."

"The board was pretty thoughtful about it," Cramer said. "It was a good plan and it worked out well."

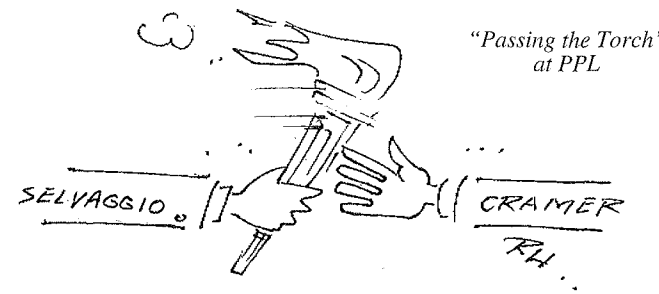
"The first two years I was here, I learned a lot, but I was really focused more on the housing/development part of the organization," he said. "By 1996 my title was chief operating officer. If I started with 10 percent of the organization's responsibility, the idea was by the end of the year I'd have 89 percent of the organization's responsibility. So come January of 1997 there wasn't just this big cliff I'd have to jump off. That worked out well.

"And since 1997, Joe's still been involved with some fundraising and doing other projects, some of which are related to PPL and some of which aren't. But it's clearly known he's associated with us and he connects a lot of people with the organization still. It's a big assist to the organization."

PPL kept its funders and advisors informed as the transition moved forward.

"Throughout 1996, we pretty consciously communicated to people about what was going on," Cramer said. "There weren't any surprises."

"With all the key decision-makers we really had a consensus that we shouldn't have a search or advertise for the position," Selvaggio said.



One funder was in favor of a search, but "everybody else just thought it was so natural, don't bother with a search."

"What do you tell from interviews?" Selvaggio asked. "It's so inferior compared to having someone work on the job like Steve did."

Talking about Selvaggio's importance to the organization, the two men's comfortable respect for each other is obvious.

"I picked issues that people liked in the community," Selvaggio said. "It wasn't that they were following me because they liked my personality, because it's pretty dull. People gradually trusted that I wouldn't waste their money, because we knew what we were doing."

"I think Joe is selling himself a little short," Cramer cut in. "Over the years there have been a lot of people who've been concerned about issues that were current and were important, but not everybody was able to mobilize resources and rally people to the cause. So there's something about Joe and his persona and the genuineness of his approach. He's living with the work. That's maybe what sets him apart from a lot of others.

"I feel that people do and probably always will associate PPL with Joe," he said. "That's an important fact about the organization. It's a part of the transition of leadership. It's great that Joe's continued to be involved here. It's a strength, not a drawback.

"Joe has really supported me in what I've done. I'm sure there are decisions I've made that he hasn't thought were the right decisions, but I wouldn't know what they were. He hasn't done anything to raise doubts about my leadership."

"Nary a week goes by that somebody doesn't tell me how good a job Steve is doing," Selvaggio said.

"If part of what I need out of work is somehow being thought of as the founder, this wasn't the place for me," Cramer said. "That wasn't my interest. My interest was working on trying to build on the good foundation that was here and continue to work in ways that made sense to me."

Cramer and Selvaggio said the staff and the funding community have stayed loyal throughout the leadership transition.

"The staff here had confidence that this transition was well thought out and planned well," Cramer said. "They had a chance to get to know me over the three years I was here. We didn't see a big exodus of people. We had continuity at the program manager level."

"And I'd be hard pressed to think of a key supporter or funder that has backed away or diminished their level of support," Cramer said.

Was 25 years the right time for Selvaggio to stay with the organization?

"My style is that you grow things naturally and organically," Selvaggio said. "I'm a little bit of a maverick. Somebody might have been able to do it in 10 years and gotten out. With me, it seemed like the 25 years was coming to the end of my career anyway. It's a good chunk of years. We're trying to start an endowment and with 15 or 20 years, you're not really old enough. But 25 years sounds good."

Will Cramer stay with PPL for 25 years?

"We've started a lot of things and I'm really interested in getting them to a level of sustainability, which is certainly going to take several years," he said. "I don't expect to leave any time soon."

Dana Schroeder is editor of the Minnesota Journal.



Well, yes, but the public school is the system and if you have a public building in a system, then it's OK to do that kind of tracking or segmentation.

And in the largest one about how we don't take all kids, just look at all the demographic data. The metropolitan area of Minneapolis/ St. Paul is one of the most socially and economically segmented metropolitan areas in the country. So it's not clear to me that someone living in my neighborhood can go to Orono Public School.

So I posit the question: If they take all kids, how is Orono Elementary more of a public school than Ascension grade school in my neighborhood? Ascension grade school in my neighborhood has 60 percent kids of color, 55 percent free and reduced lunch.

Where's Orono Elementary? If they've got two percent of either of those, I'd be stunned.

Which one's a public school? Which one is educating the public?

Seems to me we have a problem with this myth that public schools take all kids, because the Orono schools clearly don't take all kids. Let's take Capitol Hill in St. Paul. It doesn't take all kids.

The system's not flexible enough. It treats every kid the same in the

general sense, until they become a deviant, behaviorally or some other way and we move them off to another piece of the system.

But we act as if we have one system for all kids. We don't. Its clearly economically and racially segregated, our public school system. We're filled with frustrated teachers, parents and faculty.

We have a system where the alternatives are becoming the norm.

What should we do and what should the roles be?

We should focus our funding on kids, not on...buildings don't educate, principals don't educate. Teachers educate. It seems to me you can make an argument to give the money to a teacher to get it to the kid. But to give the money to somebody on the way to the teacher makes no sense.

We need to straighten out everybody's role:

Parents' role. Why don't we ask parents to do the best they can to put their kid with the educators who they think can help? Ask them to find the right faculty. A little parental responsibility. Don't just say, Hey there's a building down the street, that's where I go. Some even get obnoxious about it: I have a right to be in this building, no matter what my kid does.

Why? They don't have a right to be in that building or to be with that teacher, to disrupt that classroom. They have a right, an entitlement to

an education. No one said they got their choice of which teacher or which building. But let's ask them to get in the right building. And let's build a deal on the front end: You want to be here; here's the way we do things. Do you agree to do them that way? If you don't, try somebody down the street. It seems fairly straightforward. We can expect parents to take the responsibility for matching their children with the right kind of educators.

Students. What's their responsibility? Be an active learner. If you choose not to learn, don't waste my time. Find somebody who says you don't have to learn.

Teachers. Be able to connect with and mentor the kids you're with. If you can't connect with somebody, be a professional. Get them somewhere else where someone can connect. Otherwise we go through such massive inefficiencies and we're spending \$8,000 a year on a child we know from Day One it's not a match. Why would we do that?

Administrators. Manage resources on behalf of teachers. I would argue that administrators don't work for kids; they work for the faculty. If they're not helping the faculty get the kind of resources they need to do their job, it's not clear to me why we need administrators.

School boards. I think their role should be brokers of services. Their role is not to do the superintendent's job. It's not to teach. It's not this mishy/mashy thing about

we're representing the kids to the general public. What does that mean? Their job is to raise taxes and make sure the money gets spent well. I would argue that a much more efficient way to do this is to be a broker of services. Don't get stuck. Don't say your only choice is to have a manager who happens to be your superintendent.

Intermediate structures. Children, Family and Learning, intermediate school districts, service cooperatives—the only reason these should exist is to service teachers. If they don't service teachers, they should be eliminated, because they just waste money.

Legislators and the Governor. We have two jobs: Set standards and send the money. Otherwise get out of the way.

For every one of these groups I've mentioned in terms of roles, I would argue that each one of them is trying to do someone else's job rather than their own. The reason is because they're humans. It's a lot easier to do something for somebody else for which you have no accountability than it is to do your own job, which you are held accountable for.

Today the culture is, If you give us more, we will do better. Almost no research indicates that that is true.

The first step should be, How much do you need? And second, if we gave it to you, if you delivered, fine. If you didn't, then we've got to do something else.

close, because the wiring process is use-dependent:

- Birth to 18 months: Parent-infant attachment;
- Eight to 24 months: Self-regulation;
- Three to four years: Cognitive and language development.

The idea here is that we spend more to less effect with mistimed interventions. So what does this mean for Minnesota infants and preschoolers?

There are an estimated 63,000

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Neglect

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hs in Minnesota annually and studies show that 10 percent of these infants are at significant risk of being maltreated by their parents and/or caregivers. A Legislative Auditor's report released earlier this year found that Minnesota counties annually receive more than 50,000 calls to report child maltreatment. Counties only investigate about one-third of these allegations. This means over 35,000 calls from concerned neighbors, family members and mandated reporters—people who believe a child's safety and well-being are threatened and care enough to pick up the phone—are not pursued. Children mired in marginal care, but whose living conditions evade the strict interpretation of "imminent harm," are ignored until they show up on the school steps.

Child neglect study

The Dakota County Human Services Advisory Committee (HSAC), a 21-member citizen group appointed by the county's Board of Commissioners, recently completed a year-long study of child neglect, its causes and what works to prevent it. The committee found that 66 percent of all maltreated children are victims of child neglect. Child neglect victims account for the largest, and growing, proportion of child maltreatment calls in Dakota County. Child maltreatment includes physical abuse, physical and emotional neglect and sexual abuse.

HSAC members studied a sample of 186 families who had a child-neglect assessment opened during the first six months of 1997 by the county's Social Services Department. Key findings include:

- Child neglect was substantiated in over half (53 percent) of the assessments conducted. This compares to a substantiation rate of 40 percent for all types of maltreatment, including neglect and physical, sexual and emotional abuse.

- Only one-fifth (20 percent) of 186 families were provided with ongoing protective services.

- Seventy-five percent of the families received services from the

county departments of Public Health and Employment and Economic Assistance, including financial grants, medical assistance, child support and collections, disease prevention and health promotion.

- Nearly half (86, or 46 percent) of the 186 families had open cases in Social Services prior to the 1997 child-neglect assessment. Of these 86 families, 39 had four or more (and as many as 19) prior opened cases for child maltreatment.

HSAC members studied these 39 families in depth. These 39 families were made up of 178 individuals, including 100 children and 78 adults. All of the 39 families studied were receiving public financial and/or medical assistance, two-thirds of the families had drug-abuse problems, over half had histories of domestic violence, nearly half had mental-health issues and over a third of the children had multiple behavioral, emotional and medical problems.

Most surprising was the finding that 314 child maltreatment cases were opened for these 39 families. This was an average of 8.2 openings per family over an average case life of five years. Furthermore, over one-half of the case openings were for assessment, with only one-fourth for ongoing child protection services. This represents a significant amount of assessment/investigation and little sustained service.

Home-visiting programs

HSAC members reviewed research that supports the importance of targeted early home visiting to prevent child neglect. Perhaps the most comprehensive review of what works in early intervention for at-risk children and their fami-

lies is the 1998 RAND report, *Investing in Our Children, What We Know and Don't Know About the Costs and Benefits of Early Childhood Interventions*. This report presents the findings on 11 early childhood intervention programs, including Michigan's Perry Preschool, New York's Elmira Home Visiting and North Carolina's Abecedarian.

The studies, which followed children for between 15 and 27 years, showed significant reductions in the rates of abuse and neglect in the intervention groups versus the comparison groups. They also showed the following other advantages for early intervention program participants:

- Gains in emotional or cognitive development for the child, typically in the short run, or improved parent-child relationships;
- Improvements in educational process and outcomes for the child;
- Increased economic self-sufficiency, initially for the parent and later for the child, through greater labor-force participation, higher income and lower welfare usage;
- Reduced levels of criminal activity; and,
- Improvements on health-related indicators, such as child abuse, maternal reproductive health and maternal substance abuse.

The Elmira Home Visiting and Perry Preschool programs also showed significant cost savings for the treatment populations, through reductions in criminal justice system, greater tax revenues as a result of employment and income, less use of special education services and less use of welfare programs. For high-risk families, the county, state and federal government savings-to-program cost ratio ranged from two-to-one to three-to-one.

HSAC members learned that to be effective, early child maltreatment interventions should:

- Be targeted to the families with the highest risk.



The "real" solution: early home visitation.

- Start early, preferably during the prenatal period or shortly after birth.

- Be sustained at least through the child's second birthday, optimally to age four.

- Be frequent and home-based, at least weekly the first two years.

- Be purposeful, practical and therapeutic.

- Have ties to neighborhoods and communities.

Legislators will consider a bill this coming session to expand statewide an existing home-visiting program. The existing program, which includes Dakota County, was started in 1993 and expanded to 23 Minnesota counties in 1996, with grants given competitively by the Minnesota Department of Health. The purpose of the home-visiting program is to prevent child neglect and abuse and promote healthy growth and development. The program routinely assesses pregnant and/or new moms for risk factors (substance abuse, domestic violence, parental school failure and childhood history of maltreatment), provides aggressive outreach to families who have multiple risk factors and delivers sustained home-visiting services.

Each year an estimated 6,300 newborns in Minnesota are at significant risk of not being ready for school when they reach school age. The research is clear: Early and consistent intervention with at-risk families can strengthen families and prevent bad outcomes for our youth. Specifically, targeted home visiting at a cost of \$3,000 per year per family can have these children ready to learn when they set foot in school.

There is another X-factor in the equation for improving outcomes for Minnesota youngsters. That factor is targeted early intervention.

David A. Rooney is the director and Gay Bakken is a planner, both with Dakota County Community Services. Copies of the Dakota County Human Services Advisory Committee Child Neglect Study are available by calling Bakken at 651-450-2810 or e-mailing her at gay.bakken@co.dakota.mn.us.

Neglect

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reported reform-minded superintendents are admonishing legislators, "As you sharpen your expectations of us, you need to relax your prescription for us." For these superintendents the X-factor in improving educational outcomes is flexibility. They say flexibility for school districts to change is paramount, if districts are to meet the needs of children who are not doing well in school.

But obtaining better outcomes for Minnesota students will require

more than high standards and flexibility. As with Bobby, so much of what equips children to do well in school is "history" by the time they set foot in school. During nine months of prenatal development and the first two years of his life, Bobby was bombarded by environmental toxins, in the form of prenatal alcohol and substance abuse, as well as his parents' interpersonal violence and poverty of purse and spirit.

Brain research

Recent brain research shows that neglect and abuse during a child's early years adversely affect normal brain development, resulting in impaired emotional and intellectual functioning. Dr. Craig Ramey at

the University of Alabama found that the "quality of the environment and the kinds of experiences children have may affect brain structure and function so profoundly that they may not be correctable after age five."

During a presentation last month to Minnesota lawmakers and child-welfare reformers at the University of Minnesota's Humphrey Institute, Dr. Paul Steinhauer of the University of Toronto school of medicine likened unwired brain cells of an infant to a vacuum cleaner not turned on. He laid out three windows of opportunity for brain wiring, noting that after these time frames pass, the windows

4-year college enrollment up, other programs down

Despite many well-paying jobs available outside of the traditional four-year college track, it appears that students, parents, the K-12 guidance system and probably even employers have not yet acknowledged two-year and other education tracks as good investments.

Overall, Minnesota postsecondary enrollment was flat as a pancake from 1993 to 1997, yet enrollment at four-year programs in the state increased by more than eight percent. The University of Minnesota's four campuses have grown 21 percent, while private colleges and universities saw enrollment grow by 11 percent. Throwing off the curve were the eight state universities, where enrollments dropped by almost six percent. But overall, four-year enrollments grew by more than 13,000 students.

In contrast, enrollments at other postsecondary institutions have seen a drop of more than 12,000 students. Technical colleges (including those also housing community college programs) dropped more than five percent. Community colleges with no technical programs saw their enrollments drop by 23 percent and private career schools saw a drop of 12 percent.—*Ron Wirtz*.

At a meeting in Washington, D.C., recently, the assertion by a veteran civil rights advocate that kids have a right to get out of a low-quality, inner-city school was challenged only by an official of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT).

This sense now that choice is equity is a total reversal of the argument just a few years ago that choice is the enemy of equity.

No mystery why the change: The old rhetoric that suggested "public education" is one great big common school out there has been eroded by a realistic understanding that it is a choice system out there among districts today—except for those too poor to move. What could be less equitable?

Conservatives are now using this reality to press for private-school vouchers, with growing African-American support. Democrats are trying to decide how to respond. The AFT official may have given them a clue: "We have got to

expand the supply of quality public schools, *using any tool we've got.*"—*Ted Kolderie*.

Expecting the worst: A recent run-in with the bureaucracy of the District of Columbia shows the ridiculous ends to which government can come if it assumes the worst about its citizens.

Applying for a handicapped parking permit in Minnesota is fairly simple: have a doctor fill out and sign the application and then return it to a license bureau, either in person, by mail or sent with someone else.

Thinking (mistakenly) the experience would be similar in Washington, D.C., I recently tried to obtain a permit there for my sister-in-law, who'd been injured in an accident. Officials at the city's motor-vehicle bureau told us she should have her doctor fill out and sign an application, have it notarized and then appear in person with the application at the bureau's medical review office (presumably hoping for a close-by nonhandicapped parking spot).

When I questioned the personal appearance requirement, a supervisor insisted it was imperative, so the medical review staff could assess for themselves whether she was indeed disabled enough to merit the permit, but not so disabled that she shouldn't be driving. The only way to avoid the personal appearance would be by submitting her driver's license and a letter with the application, saying she is too disabled to appear and temporarily surrenders her license.

Horried by the prospect of haggling with a motor-vehicle bureaucrat over the future of her driving privileges, my sister-in-law decided to forego the permit and manage as best she could without it.

Vicki Albu, supervisor with the Minnesota Department of Public Safety's Driver and Vehicle Services, expressed surprise at the process used in D.C. "There's been very little abuse" in applications for handicapped permits in Minnesota, she said. "The abuse comes when

Take Note

Audit these policy shorts—no failures here.

the hang tags are out there," she said, and they are stolen or given to other family members.

"It would be a nightmare," she said, to make people surrender their licenses for temporary disabilities. A driver evaluation office reviews cases of long-term disabilities that may require surrendering a license.

Is D.C. rife with handicapped permit fraud or with disabled drivers who shouldn't be behind the wheel? Are Minnesota doctors and drivers that much more honest? Or is this a case of a bureaucracy simply assuming the worst and acting accordingly?—*Dana Schroeder*.

Asked by his friends elsewhere to explain the last election and the new governor in Minnesota, a former legislator has been saying, "We just signed up for a four-year blind date."—*T.K.*

A few interesting tidbits popped out of a recent personal income study by the State Demographic Center. In 1997, Minnesota's per capita income was \$26,295, 13th highest in the nation and about four percent higher than the national average of \$25,298.

Although counties in the Twin Cities metro area have the highest per-capita income in the state, from 1992 to 1996, income growth was slower (by almost half a point) in metro counties than in the rest of the state's 80 counties.

Despite the current low commodity

prices for farmers, the three counties with the biggest reliance on farm income were in the top third in personal income growth over this five-year period. Farm income makes up about one-fifth of all personal income in Murray, Traverse and Renville counties. Each saw personal income grow at least 15 percent higher than the county average of 21.2 percent, with Traverse County seeing income growth of 33 percent.—*R.W.*

The bloom is off the rose of light-rail transit in Portland, Oregon. On Nov. 3, voters said, "No" to the local tax financing for the first stage of the \$1.6 billion north/south line.

The change in voter attitudes in the tricounty area is striking: Only 26 percent voted against the west side line in 1990, but subsequent proposals for further financing drew a "No" vote of 37 percent in 1994 and 44 percent in 1996. This year's request to start local financing on the north/south line was rejected by 52 percent of those voting.

There's a similar trend nationally: The Seattle area voted "Yes" in 1996 but rail transit referenda failed in Denver, St. Louis, Kansas City, the San Francisco Bay area and the Los Angeles area.

This may seem surprising: Times are good. But it is not irrational. A billion dollars is a lot to spend for a system in which everybody stops when anybody stops, especially when nonrail transit systems offer "rapid" without the "mass," at lower cost.—*T.K.*

Contributors to "Take Note" include Minnesota Journal and Citizens League staff members.

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Citizens League Matters

December 15, 1998

News for Citizens League Members

Welcome

New and returning members

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Sharon Mahood
Liz Morque
Kelly Peterson
Larry Pogemiller
Peg Swanson
Martin Waibel
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The Citizens League promotes the public interest in Minnesota by involving citizens in identifying and framing critical public policy choices, forging recommendations and advocating their adoption.

The Citizens League is an open membership organization. Suggested dues for membership are \$50 for individuals and \$75 for families. Please call 338-0791 for more information about membership.

Next study — putting industry clusters to work

On November 24, the Citizens League Board of Directors selected "Putting Industry Clusters to Work" as the topic for the League's next study committee. The topic was one of three recommended by the Board's program task force. The other two topics were "Preventing the Next Crime Wave," and "Small Steps in Public Transportation and Transit."

Numerous suggestions were received from League members in response to the article in last month's Matters. Those not selected for this study will be reconsidered the next time the Board selects a study topic. They will also be considered as potential topics for upcoming Mind-Openers and *Minnesota Journal* articles.

Topic selection is an ongoing process for the League Board and suggestions from League members are always welcome. So keep those cards and letters (and emails) coming.

The topic "Putting Industry Clusters to Work" was selected for a variety of reasons, including its natural fit as a follow-up to two recent League reports. In 1996, the League published *Compete Globally, Thrive Locally* which concluded that the health of a region depends on the strength of

major industries within that region — particularly in "adding value" to existing industries and recognizing and nurturing the major industries of tomorrow.

Secondly, the Citizens League's recent study on the labor shortage, *Help Wanted: More Opportunities Than People*, recommended that industry clusters be a central organizing strategy for a "new" way of doing economic development — one that builds on the region's economic strength and competitive advantage.

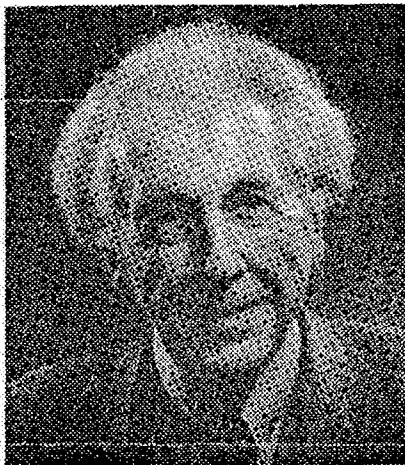
The Help Wanted report outlines numerous arguments and reasons for moving to an industry cluster approach for economic development. This new study will address the specifics of implementing a cluster industry strategy for the Twin Cities region, with an eye to creating a strategy that can be replicated in other metro regions in Minnesota.

Committee recruitment will begin right after the holidays and the committee will begin early next year.

The following are a few of the questions the League's next study, "Putting Industry Clusters to Work," will examine:

- how clusters are defined, formed, and formally recognized;
- the goals or expected outcomes of a cluster strategy, and a performance measurement system for ensuring progress toward those goals;
- the roles of government, individual businesses and non-profits in organizing and implementing a particular industry cluster;
- the relationship of industry clusters to workforce development;
- how clusters might help in school to work transitions;
- how clusters might help in outreach and inclusion of underemployed or unemployed people.

Please consider a year-end contribution to the League—or give a gift membership. Individual contributions and memberships account for about a third of the League's annual budget. We couldn't do what we do without your help.



**FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT TO SPEAK NOV. 27
AT CITIZENS LEAGUE ANNUAL MEETING**

— Open to public without charge —

8:30 P.M., TUESDAY, NOV. 27 -- LEAMINGTON HOTEL

No shortage in media coverage

The Citizens League's latest report, *Help Wanted: More Opportunities Than People*, has received a great deal of attention since its release on November 11. The following is a listing of print and electronic media coverage of the report.

"Are job creation efforts too much of a good thing?"
StarTribune, Nov. 12, 1998, p. D1 (business section).

"Labor Shortage: The state could make it an advantage,"
StarTribune, Nov. 12, 1998, p. A22 (lead editorial).

"Study: Minnesota must prepare for a long-term labor shortage,"
Pioneer Press, Nov. 12, 1998, p. 1E (business section).

"Subsidies worsen labor shortage,"
CityBusiness, Nov. 13, 1998, p. 42 (lead editorial).

"DTED: 'Come home. Please.'" *CityBusiness*, Nov. 13, 1998, p. 5.

"Report: Nurturing workers a must," WCCO Channel 4000,
Nov. 12, 1998.

"Labor Shortage: Companies are desperately seeking workers,"
Minnesota Real Estate Journal, Nov. 16, 1998, p. 12.

"It's beginning to look a lot like...a labor shortage,"
StarTribune op-ed by Lyle Wray and Ron Wirtz, Nov. 27, 1998.

Radio City Network News, Nov. 15, 1998 (1/2 hour taped segment, aired on 11 stations, including KQRS, KDWB, KFAN).

Citizens League past presidents reminisce and talk policy

League president **George Latimer** hosted a dinner on November 19 for past presidents of the Citizens League. **Ray Black**, the League's first executive director who served from 1952 to 1957, flew in from Carefree, Arizona for the occasion.

Black told the gathering that this fall's **Ken Burns** documentary on **Frank Lloyd Wright** filled him with memories of Wright's visit to Minneapolis as the guest speaker for the League's fifth annual meeting. The front page of the CL News from November 9, 1956 is reproduced at left.

Wright was scheduled to speak in St. Louis and Black, who was born in the same town as Wright (Richland Center, Wisconsin) and then-president Charles Silverson enticed Wright to come to Minneapolis. They flew down to St. Louis to pick Wright up in Honeywell's executive plane. The event drew over 1,000 people, the largest gathering in League history. An informal dinner held before Wright's speech cost \$3.85.

The past presidents' meeting was more than just talking about the "good old days." **Steve Keefe**, co-chair of the labor shortage committee, was on hand to outline the League's newest report. It doesn't take much to get League past presidents to talk about public policy and Keefe's presentation more than whetted their appetite for a good discussion.

Thanks to the following past presidents and executive directors for providing their unique wisdom:

Ray Black exec. dir. 1952-57
Jim Hetland 1961-62
Charles Clay 1965-66
Archie Spencer 1966-67
Ted Kolderie exec. dir. 1967-81
Wayne Olson 1971-72
Verne Johnson 1974-75

Wayne Popham 1978-79
Chuck Neerland 1983-84
Terry Hoffman 1987-88
Becky Malkerson 1991-92
John Brandl 1992-93
Bill Johnstone 1994-95
Barbara Lukermann 1995-96

In memorium: On a sadder note, former League president James Pratt died on November 14, 1998. Mr. Pratt was one of only two people to serve two terms as League president, in 1964-65 and again in 1980-81. Our sympathies to the Pratt family.

News report, Capital Report,
Nov. 18, 1998.

News report, WCCO-Ch. 4,
Nov. 23, 1998 (10 p.m. news).

The report was also featured on the following news programs on November 11:
Minnesota Public Radio
WCCO-AM
KARE Ch. 11 (5 p.m. news)
WCCO-TV Ch. 4 (6 p.m. news)

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With appreciation

Special thanks to the graphic design firm of Eaton & Associates for their donation of the software program used to produce this newsletter.