

Where the money comes from and where it goes

(Editors note: The story on Diane Davis concludes the series on the women who make up the membership of the West Bloomfield-Farmington League of Women Voters.)

By LORRAINE McCLISH

Getting the money into the till to balance out a \$2,700 budget in the 1978-79 season for the West Bloomfield-Farmington League of Women Voters was the job of Diane Davis.

"And it will be bigger this year," said the West Bloomfield woman. "We take on new studies and projects. Things keep changing that have to be brought up to date. This year's budget calls for a baby sitting fund for our observers. We would not like to see the lack of one more baby sitting fee get in the way of what we're doing."

The observer corps sits in on council, commission and other government body meetings, as one facet of the overall gathering of information that is the business at hand for the league.

"It is all part of educating the public to be better informed voters. That's the whole function of the league," she said. League of Women Voters are dilged with national, state and local

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS members are dilged with up-to-date information coming in from national, state and local channels that is in turn

dispersed to the immediate area's electorate.

The free Voters Guide is the most visible of its information-dispersing devices, coupled with the open-forum "Candidates Night" sponsored before each election.

Other free booklets and pamphlets appear periodically in public buildings, published and distributed by the league, giving non-biased information on pertinent issues or ballot proposals.

With the local dues set at \$20 per year, and membership fees that must be paid to the national, state and Detroit Metro League, the local branch is in the red before it starts.

"So we get our money from the local community. We have always had enough names on our mailing list to meet our goal, but we are always looking for new people who are willing to support us, and in this area we have always been supported well," she said.

Holding fund-raisers, she explained, consumed more time than the group had to give, taking away from the function of the individual study groups.

The fund drives are generally handled by three or four members who send out letters of solicitation, and intermittently introduce themselves and their work to individuals and groups not familiar with the league.

THE COMBINED expenditures of the national league and its education fund are approximately \$25 million each year, plus approximately \$9 million which is raised at local, state and

regional levels.

All officers, directors and members serve without salary.

Membership to Mrs. Davis serves a number of her own needs, and has since

she joined the local branch when she moved here nine years ago.

"I was looking for something that was educational, stimulating, that would get me out of the house, let me

meet people, and let me know something about where I lived.

"It sounds like a lot, but I found it all in one group and made me a real part of my community," she said.



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Parents team up to help the little people cope

BY JEAN ELLERBROCK

"How does your child relate to other children his own age?" asked Dr. Arlene Brewster, a psychologist from Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit. The question takes on a special significance if your child is one of the little people of the world who will never grow beyond 4 feet, 10 inches.

The 10-member group the psychologist addressed in the Farmington Hills home of Barbara Morris is this area's parent auxiliary of Little People of America (LPA), Inc. Its aim is to help the parents of the little people familiarize themselves with situations they may face in the future, and to share past experiences. One mother in the group responded

to the question by saying that her eight year old son is playing with children several years younger than he because children his own age have a difficult time accepting his size.

Dee Adamick, who has been a member of LPA for four years, offered to share an experience she had with her 7-year-old son, Scott, who is an acro-

plastic dwarf, and his average-size friend.

"After trying to let them work it out themselves, I intervened and played a role reversal game with Scott's friend," she said. "His friend then understood that size has nothing to do with age. MRS. MORRIS, who is the Michigan Chapter president of Motor-City Micro-nauts, handled a similar situation publicly.

Her son David, whose type of dwarfism has not been identified, had been receiving harassment from his kindergarten classmates about his size. With the schoolboard's approval, she took a LPA film on dwarfism and showed it to all the classes in David's school.

"It proved to be informative and educational for the children as well as helping them accept David as a participant in their social activities," Mrs. Morris said.

There are 80 different forms of dwarfism, the most common of which is achondroplasia.

The achondroplasia dwarf has disproportionate short stature; the body size is essentially normal, the head is large and the arms and legs are short when compared to the body length.

David's sister, Sarah, is an achondroplastic dwarf who underwent corrective surgery last fall on her legs, which were bowed — a common problem among achondroplastics.

After surgery, Sarah wore a body cast for four months.

After Sarah went to school with the cast on, a call came from Sarah's nursery school teacher, in Mrs. Morris' words, "A mother of a girl in Sarah's class had called her (her teacher) and was very upset because her daughter had been exposed to a child who was a dwarf in a body cast."

Mrs. Morris went on to say how difficult it was for her to understand how a mother could be so unsympathetic toward Sarah, the one who was really suffering.

"EVEN THOUGH Sarah has a very good disposition, I don't see how she kept the cast on all that time and never complained, especially since all the children around her were running, jumping and playing," she said.

"Most of all I hope time will teach them to be independent, self-sufficient, have respect for themselves and others, and just generally enjoy life."

— Barbara Morris

Her hopes are that Sarah and David will learn to overcome incidents such as these with ease as they grow older.

"Most of all I hope time will teach them to be independent, self-sufficient, have respect for themselves and others, and just generally enjoy life," she said.

Mrs. Morris, who stands four feet, two inches, believes she is better able to cope with her dwarfed children than the average-sized parents who are confronted with raising dwarfed children.

Statistically, nine out of 10 achondroplastic dwarfs have average-sized parents and no other member of the family is afflicted with the disorder.

However, the problem is hereditary, passed from one generation to the next by a single gene.

When two averaged-sized parents have a dwarfed child, the medical cause is a chemical change in one gene from one of the parents. Two non-achondroplastic parents have little or no chance of having more than one dwarfed child.

"AT FIRST, average-sized parents believe their children will be nothing but freaks or circus clowns," Mrs. Morris said. "But, after the shock has worn off, the parents may become over-protective of the child and the child becomes very special. That is fine as long as the child is not led to believe that he or she is incompetent."

Often, Mrs. Morris believes, parents are not aware of corrective surgery that is available to a dwarf child until they attend a parent auxiliary meeting, or the Growth Clinic, recently established by Henry Ford Hospital.

Dr. Brewster told the members of the parent auxiliary, "The clinic is designed especially for the patients' benefit. Specialists in all areas are brought together, once a month, to examine patients with growth problems and recommend treatment."

It is Mrs. Morris' hope that the meetings to follow will inspire parents, and eventually prove to them that their child can lead a normal and healthy life.

For the child, the meetings offer an opportunity to meet with other dwarfed children.

The agenda for the local auxiliary calls for it to meet once every six weeks.

But meetings will be held every day during the annual national convention of the Little People of America during the week of July 15 in Lancaster, Pa.

Dwarfs will also have the opportunity to meet with some of the most renowned researchers on the subject of dwarfism, from John Hopkins Medical Center in Maryland.

Persons who are interested in learning more about dwarfs, current research or the workings of the LPA and its auxiliary are invited to call Mrs. Morris at 651-1585.



Performing arts director brings 1-man show here

D. Paul Thomas, director of performing arts for Lamb's Ministries in New York City, comes to Farmington Hills for two performances of "A Heart Strangely Warmed."

He will appear in the one-man show at 10:59 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. Sunday, July 22, in First Church of the Nazarene, 30623 12 Mile Rd.

The play, compiled from John Wesley's "Collected Works," is a dramatic presentation on the life of John

Wesley, a scholar, theologian, evangelist and urban reformer.

Thomas' presentation has been heralded as "a unique experience in Christian drama."

Thomas has had extensive experience in theatre, television and film.

He created the role of Van Rydell on ABC's "Edge of Night," and played opposite Jason Robards in the Kennedy Center's production of "Long Day's Journey into Night."

Admission is without charge.



D. PAUL THOMAS

Barbara Morris, who stands four feet, two inches tall, reaches out to parents of dwarf children, hoping to prove to them that their offspring can lead normal and healthy lives. (Staff photo by Randy Borst)