

Fall 1994

## The LDA Today, Vol. 1, No. 2

Lutheran Deaconess Association

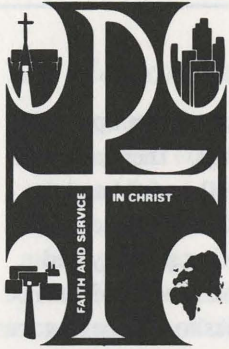
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# THE LDA *Today*

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LDA students at Valparaiso are (standing, from left) Beverly Holland, Lexington, MA; Barbara Lawrence, Downers Grove, IL; Andrea Mohr, Elkhart, IN; Sarah Mielke, Colorado Springs, CO; Liesl Pyle, Arvada, CO; Jennifer Dorr, Cedarburg, WI; (front, from left) Julie Hazewinkel, Grand Rapids, MI; Gretchen Enoch, Indianapolis, IN; and Kathleen Wahlstrom, Houston, TX.

## The more things change . . . .

On the back page of this newsletter is a picture of deaconess students taken in 1919, the year the Lutheran Deaconess Association was founded in Fort Wayne. The women pictured above are today's LDA students.

Changes in dress, expression, and setting over a period of seventy-five years are obvious. But it is that which cannot

be seen in photographs, that which is at the heart of diaconal ministry—faith and service in Jesus Christ—that remains the same, binding together these women and more than 600 other graduates of the LDA.

The women in the first class at Fort Wayne all went on to become nurses, serving hos-

(see *Hearts*, page 2)

## *Among you as one who serves*

**Name:** Deaconess Addie Wilkins

**Ministry:** Coordinator of Social Ministry and Outreach for the LUTHER Plan (Lutherans United to Teach, Enrich, and Reach), a program of the Missouri District, LCMS. Addie has offices at Transfiguration, St. Stephens, Holy Sacrament, and St. Mathews Lutheran Churches, St. Louis.

**Responsibilities:** Advocates for community people with utility companies, the St. Louis Housing Authority, and social service agencies; counsels; teaches life skill planning; writes grant proposals; directs an after school community center; operates a food pantry and a distribution center for clothing and household goods; and serves on the Advocacy Committee of the LCMS.

**Quote:** *The most distressing part of my ministry is seeing the breakdown of the family structure in our society. That is what grieves me the most. But then I remember that God is able, and I am sustained through God's mercy and grace.*

**From Savanna, age 10:** "I like coming to the community center (Transfiguration) because Miss Addie makes it a safe place for my little brother and me."



**"My greatest joy is helping children," says Deaconess Addie Wilkins. "You can't hold them responsible for what their parents do. You just love them."**

*Among you as one who serves*, profiling deaconesses and their ministries, is a regular feature of *The LDA Today*.

*From my perspective . . .*



**Deaconess Louise Williams**

No one in the room could remember the actual beginnings, but we all enjoyed the slides spanning the seventy-five year history of the Lutheran Deaconess Association. We were gathered to celebrate the anniversary of our founding in 1919. We were deaconesses, board members, deaconess students, faculty and staff from Valparaiso University, LDA staff, friends, and supporters. We had a good time.

The pictures showed many changes through the years—changes in the cars deaconesses drove, in the involvement of women in leadership, in deaconess uniforms, in deaconesses' work, in the preparation to become deaconesses, in the

increasing numbers of deaconesses in ministry.

Some things, though, seemed to be constant through the years—the dedication of deaconesses to serve wherever there was need, the courage of the leaders to try new things (educating women for ministry before they were given the vote in the United States, providing the first women to be overseas missionaries, starting parish nursing in the 1920s, leading in inter-Lutheran activities, developing educational options for non-traditional students), and the faithfulness of the LDA's supporters.

What do the pictures of the LDA's future look like? While we are waiting for them from

the photo lab, we can predict several things. There will still be needs in the world and the church, and deaconesses will still be serving in many and varied ways. There will still be opportunities to take courageous steps in the name of the servant Christ, and the LDA will still be doing that. There will still be thousands of people surrounding and supporting the LDA with prayers and gifts.

We look forward to seeing you in the picture.

Sharing Christ's service,

Louise Williams  
Executive Director

**Apryl Brand receives *Diakonia en Christo* Award**

Part of the LDA's mission is to support laity in their diaconal ministries. The *Diakonia en Christo* (Service in Christ) Award is one manifestation of



**Apryl Brand**

that support. The award is intended to praise God for the diaconal service of lay people as they follow Christ's example of care and compassion for those in need in our hurting world.

Apryl Brand, a parish nurse from Appleton, Wisconsin, is the recipient of the 1994 *Diakonia en Christo* award.

She was nominated for the award because she exemplifies Christ-like service to others in her work as a nurse, a clinic volunteer, and a community advocate for the poor and homeless. Apryl, often called the Mother Teresa of Appleton County, founded a free clinic to provide medical, dental, and eye care to homeless and low income adults, youth, and children. She gathered 200 volunteers to staff the clinic and has written grant applications for the clinic's funding. Her 30-40 hours of volunteer service each week are in addition to her full-time work as a nurse.

The award was presented on October 9, 1994 at Faith Lutheran Church, Appleton. ■

*(Heart, from page 1)*

pitals, other institutions of mercy, and overseas missions. Today's students are preparing for ministries in social work, chaplaincy, youth work, overseas missions, and counseling.

Clearly, the shape of deaconess ministry has changed as it has responded to changing needs in the church and the world.

Still, the heart remains. ■

**Next summer several LDA students will be ready for internship. Could your congregation, local hospital, school, nursing home, or social service agency be an internship site? Call Bettye at 219-464-6925 to learn more about being a part of the internship experience. ■**

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## In Memoriam

**Esther Lutze** died on May 14. Esther served two terms as a member of the LDA board. Esther and her husband, Karl, moved to Valparaiso in 1959 to join the staff of Lutheran Human Relations of America. From that time on she was a special friend of deaconesses and deaconess students. Esther was made an honorary deaconess on May 11.

**Lois Hoepfner** died suddenly on June 19. She had served as a part-time book-keeper for the LDA for the past sixteen years. Lois resonated with the ministry of the LDA and was an important part of our life and work.

We mourn the loss of these faithful friends of the LDA. ■

## Board of Directors welcomes, honors members

Three new members were elected to the Board of Directors of the Lutheran Deaconess Association last spring. They are layman Glenn Gustafson, Skokie, Illinois; Deaconess Linda Schaefer, Atlanta, Illinois; and laywoman Marlys Taege, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Also during the spring meeting, Louise Williams, executive director of the LDA, was

## Phonathon rings up record pledge totals

Thanks to our many friends, the LDA's sixth annual spring phonathon was the most successful ever. Pledges this year topped the \$40,000 mark—an increase of one-third over 1993.

Volunteer coordinators, Bob and Ellen Schnabel, worked with LDA board members, students, deaconesses, and friends—fifty-one callers in all—placing 1,300 calls to all parts of the United States.

Thank you for answering our call and supporting the ministry of the LDA in this way. ■



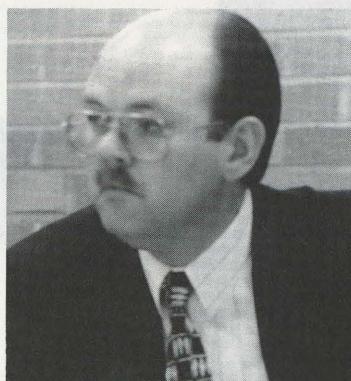
**Lynn Bahls, president of the LDA board, makes a call during the 1994 phonathon.**



**Deaconess Linda Schaefer**



**Marlys Taege**



**Glenn Gustafson**



**Deaconess Jan Janzow**

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LDA?

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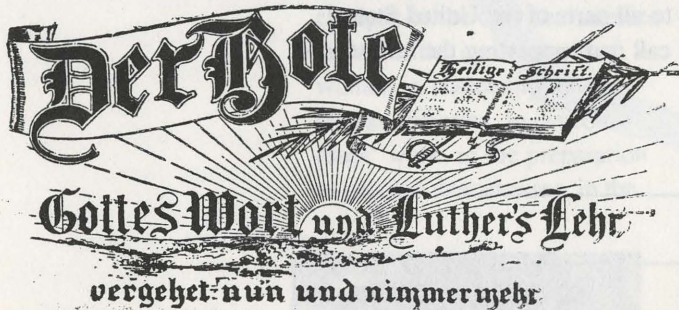
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The nameplate (above) is from the August, 1919 edition of a Lutheran church newsletter announcing the formation of the Lutheran Deaconess Training School for Nurses in Fort Wayne, IN.



*Deaconess students with LDA founders Pastors F. W. Herzberger (back, center) and Phillip Wambsganss (third from right).*



*Among the 150 deaconesses returning to Valparaiso for the Lutheran Deaconess Conference in July were Lisa Scherzer (left) and Karen Westbrooks.*

### Conference considers future of *Diakonia*

**Q.** What do you call 150 deaconesses who gather to worship, study, and enjoy recreation and reunion?

**A.** The Lutheran Deaconess Conference (LDC).

LDC members, all graduates of the Lutheran Deaconess Association program at Valparaiso, have met annually since 1934 to foster professional growth and to strengthen the bonds of their community.

This year's conference titled "A Future with Hope: Visions

of *Diakonia* in the 21st Century," featured several guest speakers, Bible studies, and workshops. The event also included celebrations of consecration anniversaries, the consecration of 1994 graduate **Joyce Schindler**, and recognition of those consecrated since the 1993 LDC: **Virginia Brondos, Leslie Camp, Doreen Leptien, Erma Murray, Ruth Nielsen, Caryl Valentin-Perks, Barbara Wiechman, and Esther Williamson.** ■