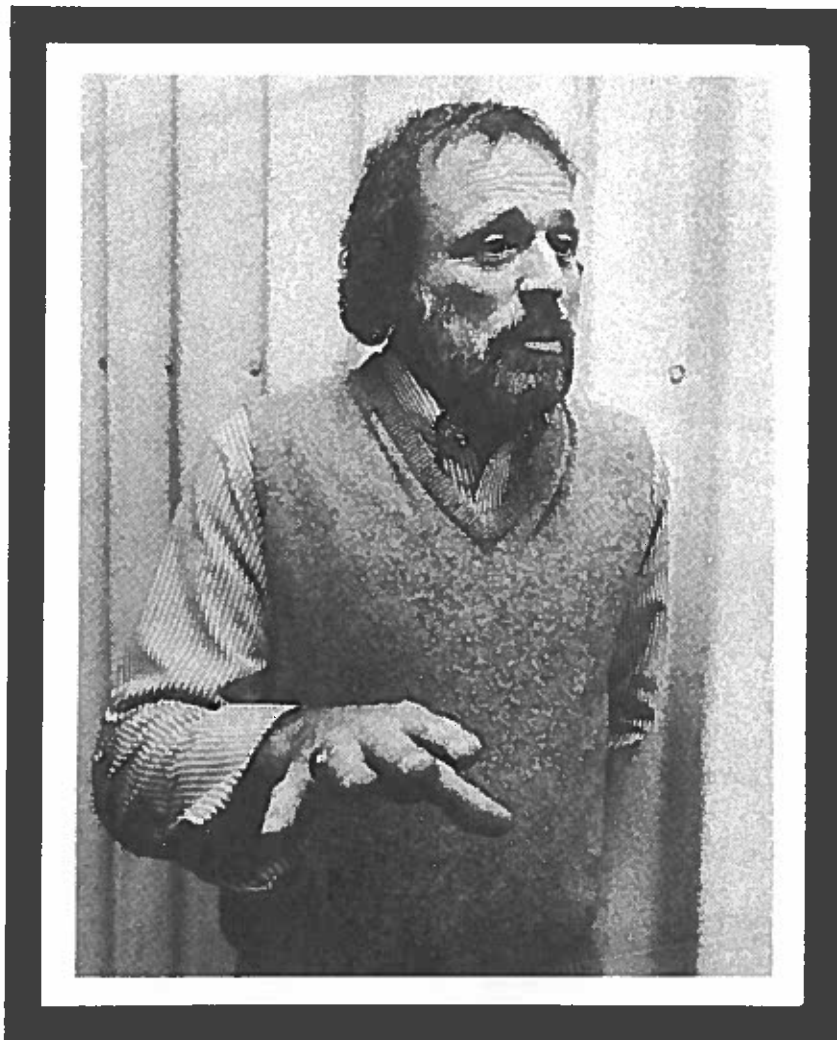


**Annual Report**  
**Wisconsin NEA Directors**  
**WEAC Representative Assembly**  
**April 24, 25, 26, 1987**



**Richard Lewandowski**  
**1940-1986**

JIM BLANK  
MANITOWOC

I spent some time recently rereading the letters and notes I had received from Dick over the years. I would like to share with you the one thing that I noticed which was so typical of the Dick Lewandowski we all knew and loved ... his upbeat attitude toward life.

How many of you remember receiving a note or letter from Dick that started — "A happy day to you" or, "May this find you well and having a productive day"? And the closing would always be an upbeat, caring message such as: "So be well and feel good"; "So wherever this finds you, hope it's a good day."

"And so my friend, be well, and take some time to reflect and think and laugh." "In peace, Dick."

We miss you Dick.

Love Jimmy.

CHIP WULFF  
MINOCQUA

Reflecting on knowing Dick Lewandowski is like trying to explain how I felt when I first saw the star Sirius. Bright, sparkling, colorful, unique, steady, inviting, universal, confident, and special are but a few ways to express how I remember him. His memory invokes in me a desire to be a better, more loving, caring, thoughtful concerned peacemaker.

I miss him as a brother and will work hard to do what I can to be as strong and effective. Thanks for the opportunity to share these thoughts.

KARLA KJELSTAD  
INDEPENDENCE

Dick and I carpoled together for seven years. During this time we grew to know each other pretty well, both personally and professionally. I used to kid Dick about a lot of things. One day I accused him of not being very "macho." The next day, Dick drove by himself. As I was coming down the Eleva ridge I noticed a car pulled off to the side of the road. There was Dick standing beside his car with a t-shirt on and wearing a pair of shorts (it was early March). He had made a large sign that read MACHO MAN. Dick was holding a tennis racket, he had a bag of golf clubs beside him, and was wearing a baseball hat. I couldn't accuse him of not being "macho" after that.

Dick was quite a guy. I have a million fond memories I will always treasure. There are no words I can use to express the sorrow I feel in my heart. Dick, you are missed.

PRISCILLA MCDUGALL  
MADISON

At Beryl Watson's funeral, Dick Lewandowski spoke eloquently and lovingly of his friend. When he mentioned Lauri Aragon's son by name and said, directly and gently to the child, "He loved you" I remarked to myself "there is a teacher and a teachers' leader."

When I last saw Dick, at the WEAC offices a week or so before he died, he was exuberating energy and enthusiasm for whatever task he had at hand.

PAT BROWNE  
INDIANA

Richard Lewandowski did indeed touch my life even though I only knew him for a short period of time. He was a profound thinker and compassionate human being who respected the integrity and life force of all living things.

DICK COLLINS  
WAUPUN

Dick and I met in 1976 when both of us were elected to the WEAC Board. It soon became obvious to me that Dick was a special person -- a person who genuinely cared about people, was happy when others were happy, concerned when others were concerned, and hurt when others were hurt.

Dick was willing to speak up on issues when others remained silent. I know that he was bothered when he felt he was standing alone, but that did not stop him. His willingness to stand alone, to speak out, meant that he was a person who could be called the conscience of both the WEAC and NEA Boards. As such, Dick brought out the best in all of us. I, and all of us, will miss Dick.

KAREN KUKER-KIHL  
MARYLAND

In September, 1981, I arrived at NEA for a Board of Directors training. The only other neophytes I knew in the room were Sue Hovey and Roz Schleife. We were "validating" the latest Women's Leadership Module - which included discussing multi-ethnic and sexual stereotypes.

For some reason (probably fear) few male directors showed. One not only showed - but was less sexist, and more liberal, than most directors in the room. He even wore slogan pins like me. Thank God, I found a compatriot in arms - Dick Lewandowski.

From then on, Dick, Roz, Carol and Sue were my close friends. From Board Room to Capitol Hill dinners, we share our ideas, our ideals, our ups, our downs. From boycotts to peace initiatives to R.A. songbooks, Dick reminded each of our responsibility to our members and fellow world inhabitants. Dick always celebrated life - by helping dispel racism and sexism, by promoting unionism and professional excellence ... and most of all, by propagating peace.

Shalom, Dick my friend. L'Chaim. R'Hitraot.

BEVERLY KITZMILLER  
UNION GROVE

Richard possessed the courage to risk living. For him, the true measure of living was not in the acquisition of power or money, but in fulfillment and awareness. He lived the moment intensely and with a keen sensitivity to both the exquisite beauty and the horrid ugliness of life. He acted upon his convictions, knowing that all that "will be" rests upon "now." The moment is our reality; the time to act is now. He lived his days deliberately. Richard was a most precious friend, and while I miss him, I am happy that he fulfilled his mission here and was permitted to move beyond.

HELEN JOHNSON  
STEVENS POINT

Dick was indeed a special person. I remember him as a man committed to peace and justice. He truly cared about all people, and his life reflected that love.

E ANNE MOUDY  
INDIANA

At Dick's memorial service, the minister said that it is better for us to experience this time of grief and loss than to never have known Dick. I totally agree and thank WEAC for being willing to share Dick with the rest of the country.

JACK JOHNSON  
MONTANA

Knowing Richard always mad me feel proud that I was a teacher, too. The better I got to know Richard the more I was sure he was one educator I'd want my own children to have in school.

JERMITT KRAGE  
MADISON  
EULOGY AT  
MEMORIAL SERVICE

Richard, Dear Friend, you've made us laugh and you've made us cry. Laugh about ourselves and cry for others. No words can describe your courage or your dedication to a peaceful world. But in our small way we've been with you. You have left us with much to be done, but have taught us how to do it. We have learned through your actions and through your words.

PEACE EQUALITY JUSTICE FAIRNESS SELF-WORTH FREEDOM EQUITY

As a leader, you force us to deal with tough issues, issues like wars in other countries and in our own.

How I enjoyed watching you, with your very special students,  
as you taught them about flowers and fun  
how to cool soup, sew on buttons, trim a Christmas tree,  
and how each of them was very special  
and important in their own way.  
You know they loved you.

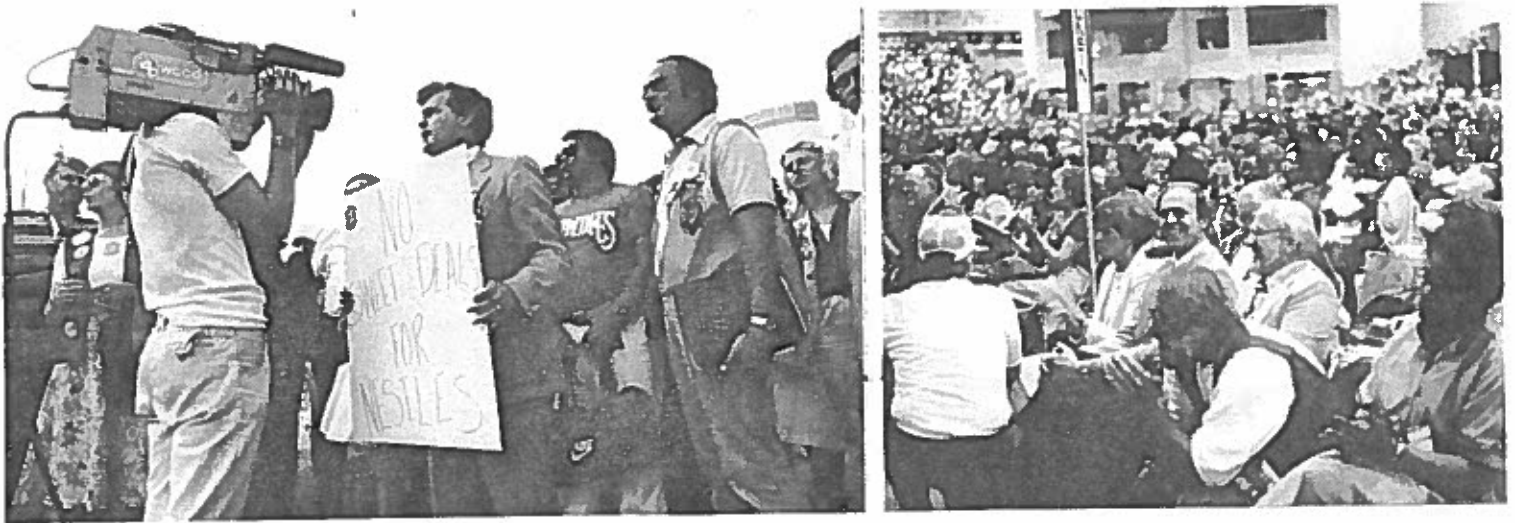
How many of us were at the receiving end of your practical jokes and then we'd laugh about them as we shared a beer. You made us play together and work together. You made us proud to be your friend.

There are some few who walk easy on the earth,  
Passing from childhood to wisdom without a usual turbulence,  
Too aware to be young  
Too alive ever to be old,  
Contemporary and companion to every life  
Beyond discrimination  
Or explanation,  
God's gift to His world  
To make the lonely laugh  
The neglected come alive  
To stir spirits and warm hearts  
To enrich the discordant parts  
Of all the rest of life.

Such gentle ones make a lasting mark on every life they touch  
Without trying or preaching, judging or seeking,  
Merely by their presence on the earth.  
A shade tree by a favorite stream  
The morning sun on a damp meadow  
A green hill mirrored in a quiet lake  
A sugar pine silver in the moonlight  
Until the morning comes and they are gone too soon,  
Leaving us in darkness and unspeakable sadness.

Only later in the sunlight do we remember  
When a brook laughs with the same gentle eyes  
Or a frightened fawn leaps in sudden surprise  
Or a dog runs carelessly across a field,  
Remember  
An excited face and a loving heart,  
A death too soon and a life apart.

Missing  
A presence and a touch  
And a smiling face so very much,  
Only grateful that he could stay as long  
Only grateful for the very special song  
He sang to us as long as he could live.  
Grateful above all  
That he walked easy on the earth.



SID JOHNSON  
ARKANSAS

Dear Lewandowski,

I heard that WEAC was doing a little appreciation service for you. Of course, you and I know that, as usual, they are a little slow in getting things done. But then that was part of what made you a memorable person to me. You always knew that it always took the good guys too long to do what you thought should be so obviously clear to everyone that it needed to be done NOW.

Lewandowski, you remind me of the old saying, "There are three kinds of people in the world. One kind makes things happen. The second kind watches things happen. The third kind wonder what the hell happened. You, obviously, belong in the first category with only occasional lapses into the last category.

There's another thing I need to tell you. You were always disturbing my peace and quiet. I mean why should this old boy from the hills of Arkansas spend time worrying about baby formula in Africa, asbestos in Wisconsin, and textiles in North Carolina. See, I still type on a manual typewriter. I had enough problems, but you made me worry about yours, too. You finally got your way on all of them. However, I must say that on some of those occasions I had to translate your Wisconsinese for my fellow Americans. Otherwise, the entire South would have voted against your motions.

I had no idea you were such a creature of revenge until the time I wrote you that castigating letter concerning your total lack of understanding of the plight of your Arkansas friend. The outcome of that was the annual Sid Johnson Day at the NEA Board meeting complete with a Lewandowski banner. Even that action on your part created a counter reaction with the powers-that-be at NEA. They informed the Board that one could not desecrate the NEA symbol by using it in anybody's campaign. Seems as though Arkansas and Wisconsin never could read very well when campaigning.

Furthermore, Lewandowski, you were among the very few people that I addressed or referred to by their last name. It may have been because I was proud I could say it as well as spell it. It could have been that or the fact that someone with your peculiarities deserved an equally distinguishing monicker. Now, I don't have a good friend whose last name ends in "ski". I'll miss that, Lewandowski.

Lastly, I remember a little incident at the Washington, DC RA. I stopped by your delegation to tell you that I appreciated you for your work on the NEA Board. I told you that you had broadened my perspective and had contributed to my being a better person. You started to reply, but the voice cracked slightly, an eye misted, and you just shook your head. I left, but I didn't forget that here was really a very sensitive person who cared that I cared. Thanks for that one, too.

I prefer to believe that you are now in a position to check out today's activities. We never talked about that so I don't know, but I do know this. If you are in heaven, I'm sure you've already approached Gabriel, Michael, Moses, and Saint Peter to go with you to God and request Him to send you all on a special assignment to help the poor and downtrodden of the world. If, heaven forbid, you are in another warmer climate, I'm sure you have already organized the furnace stokers there and have demanded that the Management install air conditioning in the workplace. You had a wonderful sense of humor. Thanks for that memory, too.

It's great that WEAC is honoring you, Lewandowski. See you around sometime.

JACK DEMARS  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

I had been one of those privileged to become a friend of Dick's while in Wisconsin and continued since leaving to consult with him from time to time about his concerns and ideas.

Dick was an uncommon man with a beautiful soul. He had the belief that everyone could contribute toward the evolution of a more perfect world and more humane policies toward people. He was proof of the observation that things don't just "happen"; people make things happen and good people, like Dick, make good things happen. In talking to him about his impending trek across Central America, I smiled to see in him a reflection of all of the best feelings that a true and fine American and NEA member would bring to such an undertaking. He was practicing what we are, too often, just preaching. I remember giving him a hug.

I miss Dick, and will continue to do so. However, I don't recall him with sadness. He was a joy and his smiling image continues to bring forth fond memories. Our job remains; he would want us to search out others like him to continue the struggle for peace and against injustice. We won't disappoint him.

TIM LEWIS  
ANSAS

Dick was one of the most serene people I have ever known. He was always so in touch with himself. He seemed to have the ability to block out everyday distractions. It was almost as if he could envelope himself in a bubble of tranquility.

I remember coming back from lunch at a May NEA Board meeting to find Dick lying in the sun near the statue in the center of Scott Circle. He reclined, shirt off, eyes closed, displaying a look of serenity and harmony with nature. The green grass, May flowers, blue sky and bright sunshine seemed to have been created just for him.

The irony of this serene and pastoral scene was that three lanes of honking, hurrying, screeching traffic surrounded his island of tranquility. Only a unique person could put himself in touch with nature amidst the mechanized chaos of society. But then Richard was most wonderfully unique person.

LARRY STEPHENSON  
SENECA

I remember the day Richard Lewandowski was thrown out of the Congressional gallery. It was the day the Department of Education was created. John Neimeier, Daryl Knoble, Dick and I were in the gallery observing the debate and vote. The guard for our area was a wonderful southern woman who was a bit skeptical of Dick's appearance, so she monitored his behavior very closely. His first sin was to lean intently over the edge of the guard rail to see his Congressman. For that he received a reprimand. He cheered the votes as they were recorded. At that moment, she said to Dick, "Young man, you'll just have to leave. We don't tolerate demonstrations here." Dick was escorted out of the gallery as the vote was being counted.

ALLAN N. SCHAEFER  
INDEPENDENCE

I have many good thoughts concerning my relationship with Mr. Lewandowski. From a school administrator's point of view, I found Mr. Lewandowski to be a very interested teacher not just in his special education program but for education in general. I can remember his memos to me which would begin on the subject of "various and sundry items." Invariably they dealt with a collection of thoughts concerning the educational program here in the Independence Public Schools, clippings of newspaper or magazine articles some of which I still have and which I had not had the opportunity to return although he wanted me to, or his reactions to political matters concerning education. I always felt that he was very pleased to have been appointed to Steve Gunderson's advisory committee on matters affecting education. It was easy to tell that Dick took this role seriously, especially when a recent Congress was deliberating on matters affecting the Chapter I and 2 programs and the bill creating the Job Training Partnership Act.

The Independence Education Association could not have had a better teacher representative than Mr. Lewandowski. He always tried to see an issue from both sides, and while we may not have always agreed on every issue I always felt that I received a fair hearing and I hope that he felt likewise from me.

Dick will be missed by all who knew him. This includes his students and their parents, his fellow teachers, administrators, and school board members with whom he had occasion to work.

KEITH GEIGER  
MICHIGAN

For many years Dick Lewandowski was a conscience for those of us who were privileged to work with him. Although we miss him, his gentle reminders and his sense of fairness will be with us always.

STANFORD JOHNSON  
STOUGHTON

Dick Lewandowski's life to me is so elegantly captured by this quote from the great educator Dr. Benjamin Mays. "Whatever one touches, his aim should always be to leave that which he touches better than he found it." Dick sure made education and educators better with his participation and genuine concern for all people.

SUE HOVEY  
IDAHO

I remember Dick Lewandowski as the Board member who sat on the end at the back of the room and heaven help the individual who took his seat. I would bring him huckleberry jam for Christmas -- mostly because he once went to the National Museum of Art, saw an exhibit of Idaho artists and bought me the book which described the exhibit, because he knew that I would not have a chance to go. He was that sort of person, full of good humor, sensitivity, and with a keen understanding of the needs of those about him. I will miss him -- I do miss him, and I count it my good fortune to have known him.

ROZ SCHLEIFE  
LAKE HOLCOMBE

Every action of our lives touches on some chord that will vibrate in eternity. E.H. Chapin

Dick touched many chords. He was a teacher, friend, and leader to many people. He voiced concern for his students, he encouraged thinking, and demonstrated caring. His gentle spirit encouraged camaraderie and he shared his many thoughts through brief notes and frequent conversations. Dick used his leadership to demonstrate the value of time spent alone to contemplate ideas and then he shared actions to promote them. The only anger that seemed to rouse him, came when he felt some indignity had transpired. Dick's days were full of living and sharing. That's the way I'll remember my friend and colleague, Richard Lewandowski.

CAROL RUTH CARLIN  
LAKE GENEVA

Dear Richard, I'd like to share some of the stories we shared together, and some of the stories others have shared with me about you. And I sense your smile as I write.

+++ Summer Leadership Conference It was Thursday night, and the tornado sirens sang loudly. Everyone went to the basement to sit out the storm. You observed that it would be wonderful if sirens sounded each time a social injustice was committed.

+++ The Wisconsin NEA Directors decided to give Larry Stephenson a gift as he left the NEA Board. You decided it would be a sculpture. It had to have wonderful tactile qualities and represent Larry's affection for the kids. It was pouring as we walked from store to store on our lunch hour. I found many suitable sculptures, but you insisted we would continue until we found perfection. We did, and Larry loves you for it.

+++ The excitement in your voice was contagious as you explained how you were working with the Massachusetts delegation to get an anti-Nestle rally organized for the next day at the RA. You laughed as you explained that the staff was reluctantly assisting because they knew the event was going to happen and wanted it to be legal. I remember you putting a sign in Willard McGuire's hands as he walked by to lead the rally.

+++ Many people have tried to share their thoughts about you, and have found language limiting and emotion overpowering. I know you'd understand.

+++ Your remembrance of the good works of others was wonderful. Your frequent commendations of the staff for doing what we considered their jobs and you recognized as their unique and significant contributions was great.

+++ I remember your considerable pleasure at placing one of your students in a sheltered employment situation. You arranged for her interview, took her to dinner, bought her a flower, and went with her the first day on the job. Dick, you were special with your special kids.

+++ Several NEA Board members have gone to the Grammercy to tip a beer in fond remembrance.

+++ I never bothered to check on the art museums in the places where we had meetings, because I knew that by the time I arrived you would already have seen the exhibits and let me know what was available.

+++ Many people think you had your personal printing press. And many people saved your letters. After hearing of your heart attack, a common response was to reread your letters. Thanks for sharing so much of yourself with so many.

+++ One cannot walk past a street person without pause after knowing you. You always shared your dinner with someone, and so gracefully. You often had coins to share. And you sometimes promised to come back as a street person to check on the generosity of the rest of us.



LARRY NELSON  
WAUKESHA

On July 21, 1986 I returned home from a trip to Boston to find out that my friend, Dick Lewandowski, was dead of a heart attack at age 46. Besides the shock of a sudden death and the loss of a terrific person, my mind raced back to first meeting Dick 5 years earlier at a WEAC Summer Leadership Conference. Dick was dressed as he usually was in the summers when I saw him: cut-off shorts, fishnet tank top, and a bandanna to keep his curly hair in place which complimented his tan and salt-and-pepper beard. Dick looked like he was a product of the 60's, and the wonderful part was that his political activism showed the 60's revolutionary spirit was not dead.

Even though Dick was (at least in my mind) a big-shot NEA director and I was a neophyte union activist, Dick was warm and friendly right from the start and over the years, would always greet me with the kind of real joy and exuberance reserved for special friends. If there was one person in the teachers' union and the peace movement who was my mentor, helping with thoughts, advice, and action when I needed it, it was Dick.

When I helped found the Wisconsin chapter of Educators for Social Responsibility and needed contacts and help in WEAC to get it off the ground, Dick was there. When I started to go to WEAC RA's, it was Dick who advised me and helped me get resolutions passed on teaching about nuclear war and new business items supporting a nuclear freeze, Jobs with Peace, and against the MX missile and Star Wars. When Dick took this last year off from school to travel in Central America for the Witness for Peace program, I was thrilled at his participation and hopeful that in 15 years I could still have the depth and commitment that Dick had towards peace.

But as much as I fondly remember Dick's activism and help, it'll be his love and zest for life that I hope I'll carry with me for the rest of my life. For besides sharing similar political beliefs, I think Dick and I shared the philosophy that if you can't have fun changing the world, then it's not worth changing. I think of playing volleyball with Dick at summer leadership with abandon and silliness and looking across the dance floor at Dick and seeing one of the few people dancing as crazily as I sometimes do.

Dick's death at such an early age is sad yet I think of driving backwards on a street in Washington, D.C. just to say hello to Dick, and know that he'd be glad that I'm smiling as I write and think of him with love and laughter. As I continue my activism in the teachers' union and the peace movement and at times get discouraged, I plan to think of Dick, smile, and pour my energies back into making the kind of world we dreamed of creating — where the joy and love of life go hand in hand with treating others with respect and kindness in a just and peaceful world.

NADINE POTTER  
CALIFORNIA

Richard changed the course of my life in his total commitment to provide equal educational opportunities for all. His work will always be memorialized in my heart.

SHIRLEY V SHANNON  
RACINE

Dick gave me hope that one day Blacks, whites, and other minority people would be able to sit, talk, and plan ways we can rid our society of racism and sexism. I will always remember Dick with fondness and much admiration.



ROSANNE BACON  
MASSACHUSETTS

The Little Prince by Antoine St. Exupery is my favorite book, and Dick really reminds me of the little prince. "It is only with the heart that I can see rightly ... what is essential is invisible to the eye." At the end of that little book is a passage: "and when your sorrow is comforted (time soothes away all sorrow) you will be content to have known me. You will always be my friend. You will want to laugh with me."

ANNETTE KRAVICK  
APPLETON  
EULOGY AT  
MEMORIAL SERVICE

Dick Lewandowski - a very special man to each of us...a son, brother, husband, father, friend, roommate, co-worker, colleague, a confidant. There are many things you could tell me and others about Dick. Some would touch us, and others would cause a warm smile-

I'd like to tell you about a camping trip we were on a few years ago. Tom, Annie, and I decided to make it a memorable one for Dick. While he was sleeping (a little afternoon siesta), we painted his fingernails bright red, not to be noticed by Dick until he awakened to use the big tree behind the tent - each time he got up to play pool that evening at the local pub he was reminded of his great sense of humor.

Annette Kravick

TOM TUSCHL  
WINNECONNE

It was Dick's style that impressed me. I remember watching in awe as Dick pitched so eloquently for NEAPAC funds. I envied Dick's understanding of issues and the politics behind them. He certainly did his homework and/or was vastly talented. There were issues which I certainly did not agree with Dick's stand but had to admire the courage he would show in arguing his position against large odds. If Dick believed in the rightness of a stand he could not give it up or let it lie no matter who the opposition.

Over the years I developed a sense of awe of this man and was very surprised when we could relax together and talk about the good old days. At those times Dick would certainly talk to me as an equal and in fact mentioned at times how he looked up to me. He was able to make everybody a partner in his march even if he couldn't get them to agree.

ROGER SCHULTER  
BURLINGTON

Dick had a rare sensitivity for the forgotten and neglected in our society. His humanistic approach on behalf of ethnic and social minorities, world peace, and our environment, will long stand as a positive model for me and others.

TERRY CRANEY  
GREEN BAY

I feel honored to have known Dick Lewandowski. I will always remember his sense of humor, his integrity, and most of all, his sensitivity. His greatest attribute was a genuine concern for all people. Dick's loss has created a void within WEAC, NEA, and all of the education community that will be difficult to fill.