

**Alternatives to Incarceration
2002**

Study 2002

Bev Weickert deserves a great thank you for chairing the Alternatives to Incarceration study. She volunteered just when we all thought we might not be able to complete this study. Bev and her committee have managed to pull together and sift through a lot of information provided by the County's Ad Hoc Committee and then to come to consensus after much discussion at a meeting held March 15th at the Library. Following is the consensus reached by those attending the meeting.

ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCERATION CONSENSUS

The LWV State position on Alternatives to Incarceration reads:

“There is a strong need for further development and primary reliance on alternatives to incarceration except for the most dangerous offenders. Citizen education and participation should play an important role in the reintegration of the offender into the community. Use of community based treatment centers and halfway houses should include professional staff, each with a reasonable number of cases, use of trained volunteer aides, paraprofessionals, and wider use of community resources through purchases of services by the Department of Corrections. Unnecessary and unenforceable restrictions on behavior should be eliminated. Pre-trial intervention should be used to provide rehabilitation alternatives to a criminal record for adults who commit minor offenses, particularly first time offenders, and those whose lack of income would ordinarily doom them to jail before trial.”

The Appleton League supports the State position but is specifically advocating the following criteria for our local community. When evaluating alternatives to incarceration the criteria should:

- 1- Be fiscally responsible and advocate programs over the building of a new jail facility.
- 2- Meet public safety issues.
- 3- Satisfy justice for both the perpetrator and the victim.
- 4- Focus on models that reduce recidivism.
- 5- Enhance the return to the community at release (i.e. job placement, housing, anger management).
- 6- Support new innovative models and /or existing models which would include the above criteria.
- 7- Support prevention and early intervention programs in the community which have shown a direct correlation to the justice system numbers.

The County Board created a Jail Options Ad Hoc Committee that has been looking at what could be done to relieve the condition of overcrowding in the jail as an alternative to building another jail. The County Committee compiled a great deal of information addressing the subject. The LWV committee summarized much of the available material as resource for our study and some material in summarized form is available on the Appleton League website.

The LWV of Wisconsin has several positions in the area of The Administration of Justice and some of these are also posted on the web site for your information. The positions apply toward the state prison system but the principals apply equally to the local jails. If you are unable to access the League web site, please call Marlys Fritzell at 731-0736 for hard copies of the material.

The question for the local League is whether we wish to support Alternatives to Incarceration when we have the opportunity and what criteria do we wish to apply?

Discussion questions:

- Does the alternative provide justice to the perpetrator and victim
- Does it provide safety for the public
- What are the comparative costs associated
- Does it lessen the possibility of recidivism
- Does it provide rehabilitation by provision of help where needed

The above material will be discussed and consensus reached at the meeting scheduled for Saturday, March 15 at 10:00 A.M. at the Appleton Public Library.

There are two calendar dates associated with the Alternatives to Incarceration Committee. A tour of the jail has been scheduled for Thursday, March 6 at 6:45 P.M. If we have more than 20 people wishing to go on the tour, we will have to split the group and schedule two dates. I must know the number of people going so arrangements can be made. Please call Bev. Wieckert at 739-2773 by Tuesday, March 4 if you plan to attend.