

# Update

*A Publication of the  
Leadership Conference of Women Religious*

February 2012

## LCWR Mourns the Death of Former Executive Director Jane Burke, SSND

LCWR's former executive director Jane Burke, SSND died at age 63 on January 11 after a struggle with melanoma.



A native of Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania, Jane held degrees in elementary education, education curriculum, and social work. She was a teacher and principal, before going to Immokalee, Florida to serve migrant and season workers and persons living in rural poverty. She went on to serve as a social worker in community outreach ministries in Hendry County, Florida, before being named executive director of Catholic Charities in the diocese of Venice, Florida.

In 1996 Jane was elected provincial leader of the Baltimore Province of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, a position she held for nine years. She was instrumental in the birth of the SSND Atlantic-Midwest Province, reconfigured from three provinces in December 2005.

In 2007 she became the national manager of Justice for Immigrants, an agency of the US Catholic Mission Association, at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, before coming to the LCWR national office.

During her tenure at LCWR from 2008-11, she offered strong and decisive leadership to the conference, with a great passion for its mission and goals. In her role she oversaw the establishment of two committees that are

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## Nomination Process to Begin

## Reflections on the LCWR Presidency

At the spring LCWR regional meetings, leaders will nominate members to serve as the conference president. The LCWR Nominations and Elections Committee asked the members of the current presidency to share some reflections on their experience in these positions so that their insights could assist this year's nominees as they enter into discernment. These reflections are shared with all the membership so that they could have an accurate understanding of both the demands and the richness of service in the LCWR presidency.

### *Patricia Farrell, OSF*

I have experienced moving into LCWR leadership in much the same way as moving into congregational leadership. It is yet another level of public representation of who I am and what I love as a religious. The biggest step was deciding to accept a nomination. Enough encouragement came from others that I allowed myself to be led into a role I would not have otherwise imagined for myself. There are new challenges, clearly, and additional responsibilities that have stretched my time management skills. However, the work is more containable than I would have thought. Time commitments come in chunks, allowing a more sporadic than constant focus on LCWR issues. The team presidency both harnesses the richness and expands the limitations of the skill and



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*From the LCWR Presidency*

## Contemplative Grappling with Darkness and Mystery

by Mary Hughes, OP — LCWR Past President

The first reading on the second Sunday of ordinary time relates that wonderful story of the call of Samuel. He goes to Eli three times believing it was the voice of Eli that had awakened him from his sleep. Eli, possessing an innate spiritual wisdom, realizes that it was the voice of God that was awakening Samuel and offers him direction as to how to respond. It is a direction that forever changes the life of Samuel. Such biblical stories raise questions for us as to the role of call, of darkness, and of response. These are questions that invite our continual grappling and ongoing discernment.



ness without our need to do a thing. The sleep that occurs in such darkness can bring about refreshment. It is also the place where dreams can emerge only to have us awaken to wonderings about their meaning.

During these winter months when daylight hours are shorter, we are being invited to embrace the darkness that is both outside of ourselves and within our lives and congregations. The contemplative process that we have been using as a part of our LCWR

meetings offers a structure with which to grapple reflectively with darkness and mystery. There are so many unknowns as we try to peer into the future of contemporary religious life. Our first tendency might be to study trends and current literature, listen to voices of wisdom figures, and to create plans. All this is well and good. However, there must be the time to step back and simply allow both our experiences and the fruits of our study integrate and reintegrate within our consciousness. So often in the contemplative process, when pushed to find a word to capture the experience, similar words or the same word emerges over and over again.

Darkness can evoke differing emotions within us. At times it can evoke fear. We know this when cataclysmic events plunge us into a seeming total darkness. Many

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*You and I have already been called,  
but God continues to call us to embrace our future,  
with all its darkness,  
confident that God is present in the dark  
as well as in the light.*

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leaders have needed to deal with events such as suicides, fatal accidents that have claimed the life or lives of sisters, fires, or comparable tragedies. The initial shock can be so severe, it can render one momentarily powerless and numb. It is a struggle to find sufficient light to enable us to move forward.

On the other hand, darkness can be a time of comfort. It can connote for us memories of coziness, shelter from the cold, evening prayer, and returning to the warmth of food, family, and friends. Samuel was not busy about many things when he received the call. He was asleep. Sleep often occurs during hours of darkness. It is during that time that the events of our lives and our days integrate and reintegrate themselves into our conscious-

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*As we continue to listen,  
contemplatively and without fear,  
we will know within our deepest being  
how we need to respond.*

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Such words become akin to the voice that interrupted Samuel's sleep. Repeatedly, I have heard the comments, "we cannot name it yet but it is there." "Even though we can't name it, we are not afraid."

You and I have already been called, but God continues to call us to embrace our future, with all its darkness, confident that God is present in the dark as well as in the light. As we continue to listen, contemplatively and without fear, we will know within our deepest being how we need to respond. This contemplative grappling with our reality will forever change our lives.

## Reflections on the LCWR Presidency

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varied life experiences each of us brings. There is no one personality type, background, or giftedness that's magic in the mix. We each bring strengths and vulnerabilities. As in congregational leadership, added privilege accompanies the added responsibility. We are exposed to a large view of church and religious life through contact with a variety of national and international groups. Best of all are the relationships that develop with incredible leaders, women of vision, integrity, and commitment. Do consider it!

*Mary Hughes, OP*

When asked to speak about circumstances of my life, privilege and grace are the words that always come to mind. These same words apply to my experience of the presidency of the LCWR.



Each president comes to this office during a time of differing circumstances and challenges. I was elected during the time of the doctrinal assessment of LCWR and the apostolic visitation. It was a huge challenge but there were so many blessings. The necessity of developing a response catapulted me into a close interdependence with Marlene Weisenbeck, FSPA; J Lora Dambroski, OSF; and Jane Burke, SSND. Together we sorted through questions and discerned the wisdom of our answers. Each of us had differing gifts. It was both privilege and grace to learn from these wonderful women and to experience the support of the conference membership.

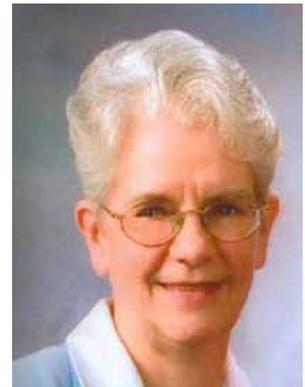
During my year as president, I reaped the benefit of the course LCWR had chosen. I spoke at two of openings of the *Women & Spirit* exhibit, offered a commencement address, and received an honorary doctorate on behalf of LCWR. In addition to the awards, I participated in the InterAmerican Conference, attended the CMSM assembly, and the Religious Brothers' Conference. Because of my involvement in the ministry of education

I also spoke at a number of other conferences. During one eight-day period of time I shook the hands of the apostolic nuncio, the President of the United States, and the Pope. It was a year of relationship-building at both national and international levels. To represent you at these events was privilege and grace.

Sisters discerning the call to national leadership often ask questions about the time involvement. Is there extra time called for? Absolutely. Yet, I can think of no other course or opportunity within which one could learn so much, meet and work with so many passionate and talented leaders, or have one's personal understanding of church so expanded and deepened. There were some times when my own supportive team rearranged council meetings because of my responsibilities. They considered it their gift to LCWR and to the church. My congregation professed to miss me when I was away, but they were also energized by the experiences I shared. We all look at LCWR resources much more closely now. LCWR leadership demands an investment of one's self, but, this is our life. LCWR leadership has been an extraordinary experience of privilege and grace, one that I will always treasure.

*Florence Deacon, OSF*

After being nominated for LCWR president, I participated in the conference call set up so that nominees could discuss the presidency with the three sisters then holding the office. I asked about three areas that would help me explore what the position had required of them:



- Which of your gifts have you used most?
- What were your greatest personal challenges?
- What kind of support did you get as you grew into the position?

While the gifts, experiences and ministries of the three varied, each identified specific ways that past leadership roles and their lived experience of religious life prepared them for this national role, and stressed the importance of collaboration and solidarity with other

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## *Live the Questions Now*

### LCWR 2012 Reflection Book

LCWR presents a new book, *Live the Questions Now*, a resource designed to invite people to deeper reflection on living within the unfolding mystery of these times, where questions and uncertainties abound.

Using the Hebrew and Christian scriptures, as well as insights from some of the great thinkers of our day, 53 LCWR members offer a reflection for every day from May 31 (Feast of the Visitation) through July 22 (Feast of Mary Magdalen). The writers offer insights and wisdom on living responsively to the changing realities of the world.

Many congregations provide their members, associates, and co-workers copies of the LCWR reflection books, finding them a valuable resource for personal and communal reflection and prayer.

LCWR will print only the amount of copies that are pre-ordered. Special rates are available for ordering in bulk. **Orders must be received with payment by February 14.**

Order forms are available at: [www.lcwr.org/lcwrpublications/2012reflectionorder.pdf](http://www.lcwr.org/lcwrpublications/2012reflectionorder.pdf).

## LCWR Mourns the Death of Former Executive Director Jane Burke, SSND

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significant to the mission of the conference: the Contemporary Religious Life Committee and the Strategic Operational Planning Committee, and the initiation of a leadership formation project, now known as Leadership Pathways. She also saw the conference through the apostolic visitation of its members and the doctrinal assessment of LCWR. To all of her work with the conference members, leaders of the church, and the public she brought professionalism, great compassion, a gentle strength, and an unflinching sense of humor.

Since leaving the executive director position in August 2011, Jane underwent very difficult experimental treatment for melanoma. Although knowing the probability that the treatment would not be beneficial to her, in the spirit of her congregation's commitment to education, she chose the therapy with the belief that her experience would contribute to the body of knowledge about melanoma.

## Reflections on the LCWR Presidency

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major groups and the mentoring model inherent in a three-person presidency. This helped me understand that no one person had to possess all of the gifts needed in this crucial time as the presidency was, indeed, a collaborative effort with a strong support network.

I decided to place my gifts and experiences at the service of the membership if they so desired, relying on the movement of the Spirit. In the past few months as president-elect I have been stimulated, stretched, and supported by meetings such as the LCWR board, and the executive committees of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men, the Council of the Major Superiors of Women Religious, and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, all the while learning from Pat Farrell and Mary Hughes as I grow into the position. I have not been disappointed.

## A Few Spaces Still Available

# The New Leader Workshop

Presented by the  
Leadership Conference of Women Religious

March 15 - 18, 2012

University of St. Mary of the Lake, Mundelein, Illinois

[www.lcwr.org/lcwrprogramsresources/NLWreg12.pdf](http://www.lcwr.org/lcwrprogramsresources/NLWreg12.pdf)

The program features an outstanding faculty and presentations that are tailored to the particular challenges of religious life leadership today.

Nancy Schreck, OSF  
Dimensions of Spiritual Leadership

Simone Campbell, SSS and Lynn Jarrell, OSU  
Leaders and Canon and Civil Law

Lynn M. Levo, CSJ  
Survival Guide for Leading in a Time of Change and Transition  
Working Together in Teams

Judy Carey, RSM  
Leadership and Collaboration

Janice Bader, CPPS  
NRRO Resources for Leaders



Members of the LCWR Strategic Operational Planning Committee: (back) Janet Roesner, CSJ (facilitator); Janet Mock, CSJ (executive director); Theresa Sandok, OSM; Ann Scholz, SSND (staff); Sharon Sullivan, OSU (front) Pat Cormack, SCSC (staff); Beatrice Hernandez, OSF; and Pat McDermott, RSM

## LCWR Strategic Operational Planning Committee Studies Conference Structures

The Strategic Operational Planning Committee met at Washington Theological Union on January 16 and 17. The committee was able to attend the wake and funeral for Jane Burke, SSND in Baltimore on January 15 and 16.

The committee reviewed the reports of the region viability discussions held in fall 2011. A summary of the findings and several questions for further discussion will be available at the spring region meetings.

The committee also continued work toward completion of the goals for 2011-2012. They are:

1. To propose a viable national structure for LCWR that is able to serve its membership going forward.
2. To foster ongoing dialogue between the regions and the national board on issues significant for the whole conference.
3. To engage the regions in conversation about regional viability and the deeper questions facing their congregations and religious life today.

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## 2012 LCWR Leading from Within Retreat



**T**wenty-four women religious leaders spent the week of January 15 in retreat at the Redemptorist Renewal Center in Tucson, Arizona. The LCWR Leading from Within Retreat was directed by Regina Bechtle, SC; Maria Elena Martinez, OSF, who were assisted by Annmarie Sanders, IHM (LCWR staff). The retreat centers on pertinent themes for religious life leaders today and provides input, contemplative space, rituals, and opportunities for spiritual direction and sharing. At the conclusion, the retreatants shared on the significant influence they believe this experience will have on their leadership ministry.

The 2013 retreat will be offered at the Holy Spirit Retreat Center in Encino, California from January 20 — 25.

### Congress Accomplishes Little

**T**he first session of the 112th Congress was long on rhetoric and short on legislative action. Once again, legislators pushed action to the penultimate moment and then disappointed most with half-measures and temporary fixes.

#### The Economy

It took the looming Christmas recess to push legislators to pass a bill continuing unemployment benefits for the long-term unemployed and the reduction in payroll taxes paid by workers. Not surprisingly, the extensions must be revisited before both expire February 29, 2012. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) enjoyed a similar fate — funding extended at the 2011 level, but only until February 29, 2012.

Most other safety-net programs were spared immediate cuts in the budget that was finally passed for the rest of fiscal year 2012. But, the failure of the Super Committee on Deficit Reduction to produce a solution practically guarantees continued acrimony in the second session of the 112th.

President Obama's proposed jobs bill met not unexpected opposition in both houses. The only piece of his proposed legislative plan to be enacted was a bill to give tax credits to companies that hire unemployed veterans.

#### Healthcare

Despite Republican attempts to repeal and de-fund the Affordable Care Act (ACA), the final FY2012 appropria-

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## Congress Accomplishes Little

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tions bill actually increased the funding for implementation. However, this is a fight that is not going away. Lots of rhetoric on the campaign trail and news about continuing court battles are expected. The Supreme Court will hear arguments in March on the constitutionality of the individual mandate and the requirement that states increase Medicaid coverage for low-income adults.

### Immigration

Congress took a pass on immigration legislation. The DREAM Act which would open higher education and provide a pathway to citizenship for undocumented youth is alive but continues to lack enough support to see the light of day in either house. Likewise the flawed e-verify system never made it to the floor for debate.

Meanwhile, the Executive Branch did what it could to improve immigration policy at least a bit, implementing two administrative policies: one permitting prosecutorial discretion in deportation proceedings for those who have no criminal record; the other creating a family unity waiver process that will help to keep undocumented spouses and children of US citizens together as they work to regularize their status.

Things do not look much better for the second session of the 112th. While Congress may be compelled to deal with the extensions of unemployment insurance and the payroll tax credit that they pushed off to February 29, 2012 and funding the federal government in fiscal year 2013, most observers expect little other legislative action from a Congress preoccupied with the November 2012 elections. Observers do not expect much bipartisanship in the midst of what could be one of the most partisan elections in recent history. (See [www.networklobby.org/update-new-year](http://www.networklobby.org/update-new-year) for more details.)

## LCWR Members and Friends Fight Human Trafficking

LCWR members, their congregations, associates, and friends are in the forefront of the battle to put an end to modern day slavery — human trafficking. They marked Human Trafficking Awareness Month with marches and prayers, proclamations and promises to put an end to the exploitation of their sisters and brothers.

### Meeting Planners Code

Nix Conference & Meeting Management ([www.nixasoc.com](http://www.nixasoc.com)) is leading the charge among meeting planners worldwide to help end child sex trafficking. Nix initiated a first-ever Meeting Planners Code of Conduct and is encouraging industry peers to join them in addressing the issue at every hotel where they do business.

LCWR is one of many organizations of women religious that has worked with Nix. In collaboration with the Sisters of St. Joseph, Nix successfully encouraged the Millennium Hotel St. Louis to sign the ECPAT-USA Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism ([www.thecode.org](http://www.thecode.org)) for hotels in July 2011. It was that experience that inspired Nix to develop a similar code of conduct for meeting and conference planners in cooperation with ECPAT-USA ([www.ecpatusa.org](http://www.ecpatusa.org)) -- End Child Prostitution, Pornography and Trafficking.

### Anti-Trafficking Coalition of Boston

For the third year in a row, sisters from congregations in the Boston area hosted a prayer vigil and public witness at the motherhouse of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Brighton to raise awareness and pray for an end to human trafficking. The vigil began as approximately 125 participants gathered in the chapel and concluded with a procession outside. As motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians passed by, the group stood in silence holding dozens of signs proclaiming a single message: "Stop human trafficking."

The annual event is just one of a number hosted by the Anti-Trafficking Coalition (ATC) of Boston area members of LCWR. Its mission is to raise awareness of the reality of human trafficking both locally and globally

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## LCWR Members and Friends Fight Human Trafficking

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and to alert concerned people about how individuals can make a difference in eradicating human trafficking.

### Stop Trafficking in Persons

In Ohio, Members of Stop Trafficking of Persons ([www.stopenslavement.org](http://www.stopenslavement.org)) - STOP sponsored a day-long program, "Pastoral Responses to Human Trafficking," to raise awareness about this modern day form of slavery. Speakers and responders included members of the Lucas County Human Trafficking Coalition and representatives of area Christian, Hindu, Jewish, and Muslim communities.

### Coalition for Corporate Responsibility for Indiana and Michigan

A group of 11 congregations in Region VII is collaborating with state and local officials to curb human trafficking during festivities leading up to the February 5 Super Bowl in Indianapolis. Incidents of human trafficking tend to spike alongside major sporting events like the Olympics, the World Cup, and the Super Bowl to meet the high demand for commercial sex. Ann Oestreich, IHM is coordinating the Super Bowl 2012 Anti-Trafficking Initiative for the Coalition for Corporate Responsibility for Indiana and Michigan (CCRIM). CCRIM has been working with a task force comprising the Indiana Attorney General, Indianapolis Metropolitan Police, and nonprofit organizations to raise awareness about human trafficking and to take steps to prevent it. Since early January, they have been contacting the managers of 220 hotels within a 50-mile radius of Indianapolis. The goal is to raise awareness, assure that hotel staffs receive appropriate training, and to make educational materials available in lobbies and guest rooms prior to the Super Bowl. Ultimately, CCRIM seeks to have area hotels sign on to the Code of Conduct.

### Letter to Hyatt

At the invitation of Region XIV, LCWR sent a letter to Hyatt Hotels corporate offices commending their commitment to the principles embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and their promise to conduct their business in an ethical manner that respects the rights of their associates, protects the rights of children, and seeks to eliminate human trafficking and urging them to sign the Code of Conduct.

## Take the Opportunity to Learn and Network

Opportunities abound during the next couple of months for active engagement with others committed to justice, peace, and the integrity of creation.

This year's USCCB Catholic Social Ministry gathering, "Faithful Citizenship: Protecting Human Life and Dignity, Promoting the Common Good," ([www.usccb.org/about/justice-peace-and-human-development/catholic-social-ministry-gathering/index.cfm](http://www.usccb.org/about/justice-peace-and-human-development/catholic-social-ministry-gathering/index.cfm)), February 12-15 in Washington, DC.

LCWR members and their social justice promoters will gather March 5-8 at Bethany Center in Lutz, FL for Systemic Change Think Tank XIV ([www.lcwr.org/lcwr/socialjustice/thinktank.htm](http://www.lcwr.org/lcwr/socialjustice/thinktank.htm)), "Consciousness and Campaigns: Spirituality and Politics beyond Dualism."

Finally, the 10th annual Ecumenical Advocacy Days ([advocacydays.org](http://advocacydays.org)), March 23-26 in Washington, DC, will explore economy, livelihood, and national priorities through the lens of Isaiah 58.

## LCWR Strategic Operational Planning Committee Studies Conference Structures

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A review of the bylaws and statutes as well as a discussion about the relationship of the regions to the national organization and the structure of leadership in the conference were the focus of a good portion of the meeting.

The committee will report its findings to the National Board for discussion at the February 2012 board meeting. An update will be given to members at the national assembly in August.



## RCRI Offers Seminar for Leaders and Treasurers

The Resource Center for Religious will hold its annual Orientation Seminar to the Management of Religious Institutes (OMRI) in Techny, Illinois, April 30 - May 4, 2012.

This five-day seminar affords newly elected leaders and appointed or hired treasurers a foundation of good stewardship and an overview of topics of financial importance to an institute. It also provides open forums for specific questions and guidance regarding available resources. In addition, there is a pre-session workshop to help new lay employees understand the culture, language, charisma, and focus of religious life.

Fees have not been determined and registration (conducted via the RCRI website) is not yet available. Those interested are encouraged to watch the RCRI website ([www.trcri.org](http://www.trcri.org)) or contact RCRI at 301-589-8143 or Sabrina at [shidalgo@trcri.org](mailto:shidalgo@trcri.org) for more information.



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## Upcoming LCWR Dates

### Systemic Change Think Tank

*Bethany Center*

*Lutz, Florida*

March 5 — 8, 2012

### LCWR New Leader Workshop

*Conference Center - University of St. Mary of the Lake*

*Mundelein, Illinois*

March 15 — 18, 2012

### LCWR Assembly

*St. Louis, Missouri*

August 7 — 11, 2012

### LCWR Leading from Within Retreat

*Holy Spirit Retreat Center*

*Encino, California*

January 20 — 25, 2013

### LCWR New Leader Workshop

*Conference Center - University of St. Mary of the Lake*

*Mundelein, Illinois*

March 21 — 24, 2013

### LCWR Assembly

*Orlando, Florida*

August 13 — 17, 2013

### LCWR Assembly

*Nashville, Tennessee*

August 12 — 16, 2014



## Final Showing

The California Museum of History, Women & the Arts  
Sacramento, California  
January 24 - June 3, 2012

## Serving Women and Men Religious in the United States



The staffs of the four organizations housed on Cameron Street in Silver Spring, Maryland (Conference of Major Superiors of Men, Religious Formation Conference, Resource Center for Religious Institutes, and LCWR) held a celebration in the office building prior to Christmas. (Back row) Chris Costello (LCWR); Pat Cormack, SCSC (LCWR); Amy Strickland (RCRI); Rita Waters, RSM (RCRI); Dan Ward, OSB (RCRI); (middle row) Ann Scholz, SSND (LCWR); Carol Glidden (LCWR); Kathy Ennis (RFC); Pat Nash (RFC); Janet Mock, CSJ (LCWR); Christabel Lartey (LCWR); (front row) Annmarie Sanders, IHM (LCWR); Sabrina Hidalgo (RCRI); Bobbi Besley (RCRI); John Pavlik, OFM Cap; Yvonne DeBruin (RFC); and Donna Miller (RCRI)

### Is Your Leadership Term About to End?

If your leadership term is ending this month, you must submit a change of leadership form so that the LCWR membership may be properly transferred to the new leaders. This will ensure that there will be no gap in communications from the national office. Please use the change of leadership form found in the LCWR Members Information section (password-protected) of the website at [www.lcwr.org/members/index.html](http://www.lcwr.org/members/index.html).