



State of Wisconsin

LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU



INTRODUCTION

The design appearing on the front and back covers of each edition of the *Blue Book* is usually one of the last things to be determined in the process of compiling the 1,000 pages of information contained between those covers. For the first 66 editions published from 1853 through the mid-1960s, it was an easy decision for the editors to make. Each volume was bound in a blue-colored, cloth cover with the title, date of publication, and often a gold-colored rendering of the state seal displayed on the front cover. While this was in keeping with the book's title and purpose as the official guide to state government, its sameness did little to distinguish each edition.

The monochrome look continued without interruption until the 1966 edition was published with a 4-color depiction of the state seal prominently displayed on the front cover. At the time, the editor indicated that the change was made in an effort to “bring the Wisconsin Blue Book closer to its statutory goal: to be useful for civics classes in schools”. Whether or not that objective was met, every edition since that time has been printed with 4-color front and back covers. Frequently, the cover has reflected some aspect of our majestic state capitol building. The state capitol has graced the cover on 8 occasions, while the interior of the building has been depicted on the covers of 6 editions.

The 2007-2008 *Wisconsin Blue Book*, the 88th in the series, breaks from that tradition. Although the capitol retains its place of honor, it is surrounded by a sea of multihued dairy cows. The fanciful bovines which form the colorful collages enlivening the front and back covers of the *Blue Book* were members of CowParade Wisconsin 2006[®]. The CowParade was sponsored by the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board, a nonprofit organization of Wisconsin dairy producers, as a means of promoting the consumption of Wisconsin dairy products as well as raising money for charitable causes. One hundred nearly life-size fiberglass cows sponsored by area businesses were transformed into colorful masterpieces by local artists. The artwork was on display from June to October 2006 throughout Madison and the surrounding area and several cows traveled to public events around the state. The event concluded with both a live and online auction that raised more than \$550,000 for the American Family Children's

Hospital and more than 30 other nonprofit organizations. We are grateful to the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board for allowing us to use the CowParade images. The cover design incorporating many of those whimsical and eye-catching images is the work of LRB publications editor Kathleen Sitter.

Also deserving of special mention is the feature article in this edition of the *Blue Book*. “Those Who Served: Wisconsin Legislators 1848 – 2007” was contributed by LRB senior legislative analyst Michael J. Keane with considerable input from publications editors Kathleen Sitter and Crystal Smith. The article fills a long-standing need by presenting a roster including every member of the Wisconsin Legislature from statehood to the present. Given the limitations of sometimes faulty, incomplete, or conflicting information from the early years, the list is as complete and accurate as our current knowledge allows. In addition to name, party, district, and sessions served, there is a wealth of other material that highlights individual members and the legislative institution. As a whole, the article is a testament to the dedication and sacrifice made by the 5,517 citizens who have come to Madison to do the people’s business and give meaning to the term “representative democracy”.

The *2007-2008 Blue Book*, like its predecessors, contains a vast amount of information about Wisconsin state government. Where possible, we have incorporated graphics and an abundance of color photographs in an effort to make the book more attractive and useful. We still are not certain that this will bring the *Blue Book* “closer to its statutory goal: to be useful for civics classes”, but we sincerely hope that all of our readers will find this edition informative as well as colorful.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lawrence S. Barish". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a small blue dot above the letter 'i' in "Barish".

Lawrence S. Barish
Blue Book Editor
July 2007