INTRODUCTION

The 1992 City and Borough of Juneau Budget Survey completed by the League of Women Voters of Juneau is enclosed for your review.

OVERVIEW

This telephone survey of 450 Juneau households is the fifth cooperative effort between the Borough Assembly and the Juneau League of Women Voters in as many years. The stratified random survey results are presented with the usual limitations, which continue to exist due to survey design. The League utilized its computer pool of all of the listed residential phone numbers in Juneau to create the random sample for the telephone polling process. The survey continues to be limited to only those households with telephones. Using information provided by the local telephone company regarding the distribution of residential phones in the Juneau Borough, the following is the proportional distribution of residential contacts in each of the four designated telephone exchanges: in the 364 exchange 45 calls were completed; 118 calls were completed in the 586/463 exchange; 56 calls were completed in the 780 exchange; and, 231 calls were completed in the 789/790 exchange – for a total of 450 completed surveys. The League feels confident that the demographic data and the feedback reported by our volunteer callers substantiate that a very broad cross section of the community was reached in the 1992 survey. The results of this survey are statistically significant at better than plus or minus 5% when the population surveyed was 450; statistical significance at +/- 5% can be achieved when n=387.

The survey was begun on Saturday April 4, at 10:00 AM. League Members placed calls from 10:00 AM until 6:00 PM on Saturday, April 4, and from noon until 6:00 PM on Sunday, April 5, from a central phone bank, and were supervised by officers of the organization with previous experience with this project. As frequently occurs, the weather was phenomenally beautiful, and we experienced some difficulty in making initial contact, necessitating a significant number of call-backs for many of the instruments. Just under half of the surveys were completed the first weekend. Surveys were distributed to members with several years experience to complete from their homes during the following two weeks. We found that some respondents seemed more willing to take the time to participate during the weekend calling hours, and that others found the evening hours to be more convenient. We are not aware of any significantly different types of responses received during the evening calling periods.

As in the prior four years, response to being asked to participate in the survey was extremely positive. Some participants were very forthright in their responses, and seemed genuinely pleased that their number had been selected. Others were more hesitant to participate, and were inclined to ask another member of the household respond. Only a very few who were contacted declined to participate. The League was very appreciative of the article that appeared on the front page in the Friday, April 2, edition of the JUNEAU EMPIRE, which laid a very positive foundation for this project with the Juneau public.
Survey questions were developed from recommendations made by the Borough Assembly, the City Manager and a committee of League members. The final instrument was approved by the Assembly Finance Committee. We had commented that on the instruments developed in previous years, the full range of Borough services was not comprehensively covered. In response to this concern, the Assembly asked that the questions dealing with satisfaction with municipal services be expanded to include more departments. In our previous reports we indicated that the public frequently requested that an additional category ("excellent") be offered in the rating scale, and the Assembly responded positively to this suggestion when designing the 1992 instrument. We are confident that the survey instrument accurately reflects public opinion on those Borough services and issues that are of primary concern to the public. As in previous years, some respondents experienced frustration with the content of several of the questions, and others were concerned about the limitations attached to the answers. This will be commented upon in more detail in the individual question analysis and survey evaluation section.

In our role of promoting the responsibility of citizens to engage in participatory government, the League took every opportunity during the course of the survey to encourage Juneau citizens who wished to offer more information than the survey instrument permitted, to present written or verbal testimony to the Assembly during the scheduled budget hearings.

Each League member was carefully instructed in the process. Volunteers were cautioned to determine that they were speaking to an adult over the age of 18 in each household, to strictly adhere to the scripted survey form.

In spite of the limitations noted above, the League feels that the survey and report meet the goals set by the Assembly in designing the instrument. We anticipate that the information gathered will be useful in budget deliberations as the Assembly deals with the issues that were addressed in the survey. We hope that the demographic information will assist the Borough in a number of enterprises throughout the year. We have, wherever practical, drawn some conclusions with respect to longitudinal trends, as well as identified those questions and responses in which significant changes in public opinion seem to be emerging.