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GOP Incumbents Tally Commanding Leads in Key Election Races

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II**IWU Bloomington Voters' Survey***GOP Incumbents Tally Commanding Leads in Key Election Races**

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.--Incumbent Republican candidates for Congress, governor, and McLean County Sheriff hold commanding leads over their Democratic rivals as election day, Nov. 8, nears, according to the first Illinois Wesleyan University Bloomington Voters' Survey.

The poll of registered voters in the city of Bloomington reveals:

- Gov. Jim Edgar leads Dawn Clark Netsch in the Illinois governor's race, 71 percent to 16 percent, with 13 percent of poll respondents undecided.
- Rep. Thomas Ewing is outdistancing Paul Alexander in the 15th Congressional District campaign, 60 percent to 23 percent, with 17 percent of those responding to the poll undecided.
- Sheriff Steven Breinen leads Gary Ploense in the McLean County Sheriff's contest, 71 percent to 18 percent, with 10 percent undecided.

The telephone survey was conducted by 28 IWU students enrolled in "Parties, Interests, and Elections," a course taught by Tari Renner, associate professor, chair of the political science department, and a veteran pollster.

Renner explained the students designed the poll, asked the questions, and performed computer analysis of the responses, under his supervision.

The telephone canvass, conducted on Oct. 18, consisted of 19 questions. Out of a stratified sample of 1,200 registered voters in the city of Bloomington, 378 responded to the questions.

The poll also gauged the popularity of President Bill Clinton and Bloomington Mayor Jesse Smart.

Clinton won approval from 36 percent of registered Bloomington voters, responding to the poll, while 48 percent disapproved of his performance as chief executive. Seventeen percent of respondents are undecided, neutral, or have "mixed" views of the Clinton presidency.

Forty-seven percent of respondents approve the way Smart is leading the

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Bloomington city government, while 31 percent disapprove, and 23 percent hold undecided or neutral views.

The three charts that follow breakdown voter attitudes toward candidates in the U.S. House, gubernatorial, and sheriff's races by several demographic factors: gender, party identification, age, religion, income, and education.

Governor's Race **Dawn Clark Netsch (D) vs. Jim Edgar (R)**

	Netsch	Edgar	Undecided- Other
Gender			
Males	15%	73%	12%
Females	17%	70%	13%
Party Identification			
Democrats	46%	37%	17%
Republicans	1%	95%	4%
Independents	14%	67%	19%
Age			
18-30	9%	64%	27%
31-50	14%	76%	10%
51-65	24%	63%	13%
65+	14%	74%	13%
Religion			
Catholic	11%	75%	14%
Jewish	50%	25%	25%
Protestant	15%	77%	8%
Unaffiliated	27%	55%	18%
Income			
Under \$25,000	20%	64%	16%
\$25,000-\$50,000	20%	71%	9%
\$50,000+	15%	75%	10%

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	Netsch	Edgar	Undecided- Other
Education			
Less than High School	36%	54%	9%
High School	14%	75%	10%
Some College	16%	68%	16%
College Graduate	10%	84%	6%
Graduate Degree	26%	52%	22%

**U.S. Congress Race--15th District
Paul Alexander (D) vs. Thomas Ewing (R)**

	Alexander	Ewing	Undecided- Other
Gender			
Males	20%	65%	15%
Females	25%	55%	20%
Party Identification			
Democrats	58%	21%	21%
Republicans	4%	88%	8%
Independents	21%	52%	26%
Age			
18-30	23%	36%	41%
31-50	16%	70%	14%
51-65	28%	55%	17%
65+	32%	49%	19%
Religion			
Catholic	21%	63%	16%
Jewish	75%	25%	0%
Protestant	19%	66%	15%
Unaffiliated	39%	35%	27%
Income			
Under \$25,000	34%	43%	23%
\$25,000-\$50,000	29%	56%	15%
\$50,000+	14%	70%	16%

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	Alexander	Ewing	Undecided- Other
Education			
Less than High School	46%	27%	27%
High School	25%	57%	18%
Some College	24%	57%	19%
College Graduate	15%	70%	15%
Graduate Degree	26%	59%	16%

**McLean County Sheriff's Race
Gary Ploense (D) vs. Steven Breinen (R)**

	Ploense	Brienen	Undecided- Other
Gender			
Males	20%	69%	10%
Females	16%	73%	10%
Party Identification			
Democrats	39%	50%	11%
Republicans	6%	85%	10%
Independents	20%	70%	10%
Age			
18-30	23%	50%	27%
31-50	19%	71%	10%
51-65	17%	78%	5%
65+	15%	74%	11%
Religion			
Catholic	20%	68%	12%
Jewish	50%	50%	0%
Protestant	14%	78%	8%
Unaffiliated	27%	63%	10%
Income			
Under \$25,000	13%	75%	12%
\$25,000-\$50,000	23%	67%	9%
\$50,000+	17%	73%	10%

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	Ploense	Brienen	Undecided- Other
Education			
Less than High School	18%	64%	18%
High School	12%	84%	4%
Some College	18%	74%	8%
College Education	19%	73%	9%
Graduate Degree	22%	53%	24%

Renner, who joined the IWU faculty this fall, was a member of the political science faculty at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh since 1988. Among courses he taught at Duquesne were American government, American political parties, budgetary process, state and local government, urban public policy, research methods, and elections and voting behavior.

He also has taught political science at Washington College in Chestertown, Md., and at American University in Washington, D.C.

From 1986-88, Renner was Director of Survey Research-Senior Statistical Analyst at the International City Management Association in Washington, D.C. He also served for two years as a management analyst with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in Washington, D.C.

Since 1988, Renner has developed and supervised more than 20 public policy and public opinion surveys, including a 1992 statewide Pennsylvania canvass for the presidential election and a 1991 survey of Allegheny County, Pa., for a U.S. Senate election. Other surveys conducted by Renner have focused on the salaries of city and county officials; municipal labor-management relations; finances of police, fire, and refuse collection; and local government personnel practices.

He is the author of 14 publications and has delivered more than 15 papers at various professional conferences on subjects ranging from competition in congressional primary elections to structural diversity in the formal authority of mayors and city managers. Renner is a member of the American Political Science Association, Midwestern Political Science Association, Urban Affairs Association, and other professional groups.

Renner earned a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of

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South Florida, and a master's degree and doctorate from the School of Government and Public Administration at American University.

IWU, founded in 1850, enrolls about 1,800 students in a College of Liberal Arts, College of Fine Arts, and a four-year professional School of Nursing. In recent years, the university's endowment has grown to more than \$90 million; a \$15 million athletics and recreation center opened in the fall of 1994; and a \$24 million science building will open in 1995. The Carnegie Commission for the Advancement of Teaching promoted Illinois Wesleyan to a "Baccalaureate I" institution in 1994, a classification that places it among 164 highly selective National Liberal Arts Colleges in the annual *U.S. News & World Report* rankings. *Barron's Profiles of American Colleges*, another respected college guide, rated IWU "highly competitive (+)" in its latest edition. *101 of the Best Values in America's Colleges and Universities* calls IWU "undoubtedly one of the finest small colleges in the country," adding, "Illinois Wesleyan has surged to national prominence on the basis of its reputation as a school with a rock-solid academic program."