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Maine Women's Lobby Legislative Alert (1988 - January)

Maine Women's Lobby Staff

Maine Women's Lobby

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P.O. Box 15, Hallowell Maine 04347

JANUARY 1988

LEGISLATIVE ALERT

The Second Regular Session of the 113th Legislature has begun, with more than 300 bills placed in the hopper for consideration. Though less than four months long, this session will be an important one for Maine women: as of press time, we have identified nearly 50 bills directly affecting Maine women and their families, including measures to boost funding for child care, ensure adequate and affordable housing for Maine families, and to provide family medical leave for Maine workers.

At its last meeting, the MWL Board reviewed and placed 17 bills on the Lobby's 1988 "immediate action" agenda (See pp 2-4), with a dozen others pending more information. Keep in mind this is the short session -- we've less than 16 weeks to see our agenda through. The pace will be fast and furious by the end of January, so don't delay: be sure to keep your legislators informed of those issues important to you. . . AND REMEMBER -- YOUR INPUT DOES MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Joanne D'Arcangelo, MWL Lobbyist
can be reached at the following
phone numbers:

State House: 623-1220
MWL Office: 622-5798

Legislators

Mail: State House
Augusta, ME 04333

Phone: 1-800-423-2900 (House)
1-800-423-6900 (Senate)

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEES

Some changes in committee assignments have occurred since last year, so note membership rosters closely:

APPROPRIATIONS -- 289-1635
State House, Room 228

HUMAN RESOURCES -- 289-1317
State House, Room 436

Senators: Michael D. Pearson (D-Penobscot), Chair
Georgette B. Berube (D-Androscoggin)
Jerome Emerson (R-Penobscot)

Representatives: Donald V. Carter (D-Winslow), Chair
Lorraine N. Chonko (D-Topsham)
John Lisnik (D-Presque Isle)
Gregory G. Nadeau (D-Lewiston)
Patrick K. McGowan (D-Canaan)
Vinton T. Ridley (D-Shapleigh)
Linwood M. Higgins (R-Scarborough)
Ruth S. Foster (R-Ellsworth)
Leland C. Davis, Jr. (R-Monmouth)
Judith C. Foss (R-Yarmouth)

Senators: N. Paul Gauvreau (D-Androscoggin), Chair
John M. Kerry (D-York)
Barbara A. Gill (R-Cumberland)

Representatives: Peter J. Manning (D-Portland), Chair
Neil Rolde (D-York)
P. Kelley Simpson (D-Casco)
Bradford E. Boutilier (D-Lewiston)
Margaret Pruitt Clark (D-Brunswick)
Jo Anne D. Lapointe (D-Auburn)
Susan J. Pines (R-Limestone)
Priscilla G. Taylor (R-Camden)
Jean T. Dellert (R-Gardiner)
Wesley Farnum (R-South Berwick)

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEES (Cont'd)

JUDICIARY -- 289-1327
State House, Room 438

Senators: Joseph C. Brannigan (D-Cumberland), Chair
N. Paul Gauvreau (D-Androscoggin)
Henry W. Black (R-Cumberland)

Representatives: Patrick E. Paradis (D-Augusta), Chair
Daniel E. Warren (D-Scarborough)
Harry L. Vose (D-Eastport)
Constance D. Cote (D-Auburn)
Gerard P. Conley, Jr. (D-Portland)
Dale F. Thistle (D-Dover-Foxcroft)
Mary H. MacBride (R-Presque Isle)
Jeanne F. Begley (R-Waldoboro)
Dana C. Hanley (R-Paris)
Francis C. Marsano (R-Belfast)

LABOR -- 289-1333
State House, Room 134

Senators: Dennis L. Dutremble (D-York), Chair
Thomas H. Andrews (D-Cumberland)
Donald F. Collins (R-Aroostook)

Representatives: Edward A. McHenry (D-Madawaska),
Chair
Tony J. Tammaro (D-Baileyville)
Ruth Joseph (D-Waterville)
Mona Walker Hale (D-Sanford)
Richard P. Ruhlin (D-Brewer)
Anne M. Rand (D-Portland)
Ralph M. Willey (R-Hampden)
Jeanne F. Begley (R-Waldoboro)
Michael F. Hepburn (R-Skowhegan)

MWL 1988 LEGISLATIVE SLATE

Bills will be added to the MWL Slate during the weeks ahead -- we'll be notifying you in future Legislative Alerts. Bills not assigned an L.D. number were not yet printed for distribution as of press time, but should be available within the next few weeks. Please call MWL Lobbyist, Joanne D'Arcangelo, at 622-5798 or 623-1220 for copies of printed L.D.'s or Public Hearing Notices. [*** -- Indicates WLAC-sponsored legislation]

***AN ACT to Appropriate \$2.8 Million to Implement the Job Classification Study of the University of Maine. (Sponsor: Rep. Steve Bost of Orono)

This bill will fund recommendations resulting from a labor-management study of the job classification system at USM, ensuring comparable worth among jobs in clerical, office, lab and technical sectors.

***AN ACT To Provide for Child Care and Child development Training for Student Parents. (Sponsor: Rep. Marge Clark of Brunswick)

This bill will establish and fund child care services and parenting skills training for high school students with children.

*** AN ACT To Establish Child Care Availability for Individuals in the Substance Abuse Treatment System.

Sponsor: Rep. Marge Clark of Brunswick

This bill provides funds to be contracted to community alcohol and substance abuse treatment agencies to establish on-site day care or to purchase child care slots for individuals entering programs run by the agency. The only option now available to women entering long-term treatment programs is to place their children in foster care.

AN ACT To Require Employers to Implement Day Care Plans (Sponsor:
Rep. P. Kelley Simpson of Casco)

This measure will require Maine employers to develop day care policies.

***AN ACT To Correct Inequities in the Maine State Retirement
Systems Statutes (Sponsor: Sen. Nancy Randall Clark of Cumberland)
L.D. 1947

This bill would change the retirement system statutes to permit a state employee to designate any person of his/her choice as a beneficiary. Currently, when a state employee designates as beneficiary someone other than a spouse, child, or parent, they are not eligible for full survivor benefits. This bill would repeal this discriminatory provision

AN ACT To Increase the Minimum Wage (Sponsor: Rep. John Diamond of Bangor)

Will increase the minimum wage by \$.20 effective January 1, 1989, and January 1, 1990.

***RESOLUTION, to Make the Language of the Constitution Gender Neutral (Sponsor: Rep. John Diamond of Bangor)
L.D. #

Proposes to eliminate gender-biased language from the Constitution of Maine.

AN ACT To Establish an InterAgency Task Force on Affordable Housing in Maine (Sponsor: Senator Paul Gauvreau of Androscoggin)

Would establish an interagency task force to develop coordinated proposals to identify the barriers to affordable housing in Maine, and to alleviate the housing shortage for low and middle-income families.

AN ACT to Enhance Provisions of Head Start Services in Maine (Sponsor: Rep. Marge Killkelly of Wiscasset)

Would appropriate funds to provide a (long overdue) 5% increase for Head Start staff salaries, and would reinstate 30 slots eliminated by federal cutbacks.

***AN ACT To Improve the Standard of Living for Maine's Low-Income Families and Children (Sponsor: Speaker John L. Martin of Eagle Lake)

This will appropriate funds to provide a 10% increase in both the standard of need and the payment standard for AFDC families.

***AN ACT To Make Health Care More Accessible to Low-Income Elderly and Disabled Individuals, Pregnant Women, and Children (Sponsor: Speaker John L. Martin of Eagle Lake)

The state Medicaid program currently provides benefits to eligible persons whose incomes average approximately 70% of the poverty level. If their incomes exceed that level, they may regain eligibility only after incurring significant medical costs. As a result of recently enacted federal legislation, Medicaid benefits have been expanded to include elderly and disabled individuals, pregnant women, and young children whose family incomes are below 100% of the poverty level. This bill would establish that option in Maine.

AN ACT to Remove Discriminatory Language from a Section of the Maine State Retirement Statutes (Sponsor: Senate President Pray of Penobscot)

Hearing Date: Thursday, January 28th, 9:30 a.m.
Room 221, State House

Current law denies full benefits to the surviving spouse of a state retiree who marries after the age of 70. This would repeal that discriminatory provision.

***AN ACT To Require Mandatory Medicare Assignment for Physician Services in Maine (Sponsor: Sen. Beverly Bustin of Kennebec).

Current law allows physicians to refuse payment for services through the Medicare program, placing an undue burden on the limited personal resources of eligible individuals. This measure would ensure that all physicians accept Medicare payments.

***AN ACT To Ensure Family Leave in the State of Maine (Sponsor: Rep. Marge Clark of Brunswick)
L.D. 1984

This bill would provide unpaid leave to Maine workers for the birth or adoption of a child, or the serious illness of a child, spouse, or dependent adult, with the guarantee of uninterrupted benefits and the same or equivalent job upon return.

Bills Held Over from First Regular Session:

***AN ACT To Expand the Medicaid Dental Program to Include Adults (Sponsor: Sen. Bustin of Kennebec; Co-Sponsors: Sen. Gauvreau of Androscoggin, Speaker John Martin of Eagle Lake, Rep. John Diamond of Bangor)
L.D. 467 -- Committee on Human Resources

The Maine Medicaid program currently provides coverage for dental services only to persons up to age 21. Because there is no other state agency or program which provides assistance to low-income adults seeking dental services, this bill will expand Medicaid coverage to eligible adults for basic services.

***AN ACT to Revise the General Assistance Laws (L.D.1705). Reported to the Committee on Human Resources.

Representing the majority report of the Special Select Commission on the Administration and Financing of General Assistance, this bill proposes a number of reforms in the general assistance laws, including provisions to index AFDC benefits to the cost-of-living (the AFDC program is the only entitlement program not tied to the COL); provide a one-time housing allowance for AFDC families; extend AFDC benefits to eligible first-time pregnant women; extend medicaid benefits for AFDC recipients returning to work; and enhance state reimbursement to towns for General Assistance costs.

WELCOME TO NEW MWL BOARD MEMBERS!

ELEANOR GOLDBERG of Portland/North Whitefield is an associate with The Sandy River Group, a "new age" real estate firm specializing in development of health care facilities. Though her home base has been Whitefield since 1983, Elinor worked and lived in Brookline, Mass. until January '87, where she served as community coordinator and Get-Out-the-Vote organizer in a 1986 referendum campaign which successfully defeated a statewide anti-choice initiative. Eleanor joins the MWL Board "with a commitment of time and energy to help protect reproductive rights and achieve economic equality in the workplace for Maine Women."

PHYLLIS O'NEILL of Portland is the Executive Director of Maine Arts, Inc. A ceramist and former Artist-in-Residence at the Portland Housing Authority, O'Neill has contributed to the development and widely-recognized success of The Maine Festival and New Year's/Portland. O'Neill formerly served as Executive Director of the Waterville's Girl's Club and owned and operated Ceres Two, a crafts gallery. Phyllis joins the MWL with the intent of "learning how legislation effects the daily and future lives of Maine women -- and, selfishly, to work towards instituting positive political and social change for my own gender."

LISA MILLER of Somerville is a public health consultant who currently serves as Chair of the Legislative Committee of the Maine Public Health Association and as Treasurer of the Maine Family Planning Association Board. Active in local and community affairs, Miller is also a member of the Somerville Fire Department Women's Auxilliary, and serves as Somerville's Town Health Officer. A long-time advocate of women's health education, Miller joins the Board with a special interest in reproductive health issues, economic equity, and after school child care. "I've been very impressed with the success of the MWL in promoting these issues at the State House, and look forward to contributing to those efforts in the future."

BARBARA REINERTSEN of Topsham is Press Secretary to Cong. Joseph E. Brennan, working in his Portland field office. She has directed public information and legislative efforts for the State Office of Energy Resources, and has worked as a news reporter for WABI-TV in Bangor and for WPOR and WCSH in Portland. Reinertsen is Vice-President of the Maine Public Relations Council, a member of the Child and Family Horizons Steering Committee, the Maine Audobon Society, and the Natural Resources Council of Maine. She comes to the MWL Board with a particular concern for improved child care services and employment and training opportunities for women.

....NEW MWL BOARD MEMBERS (Cont'd)

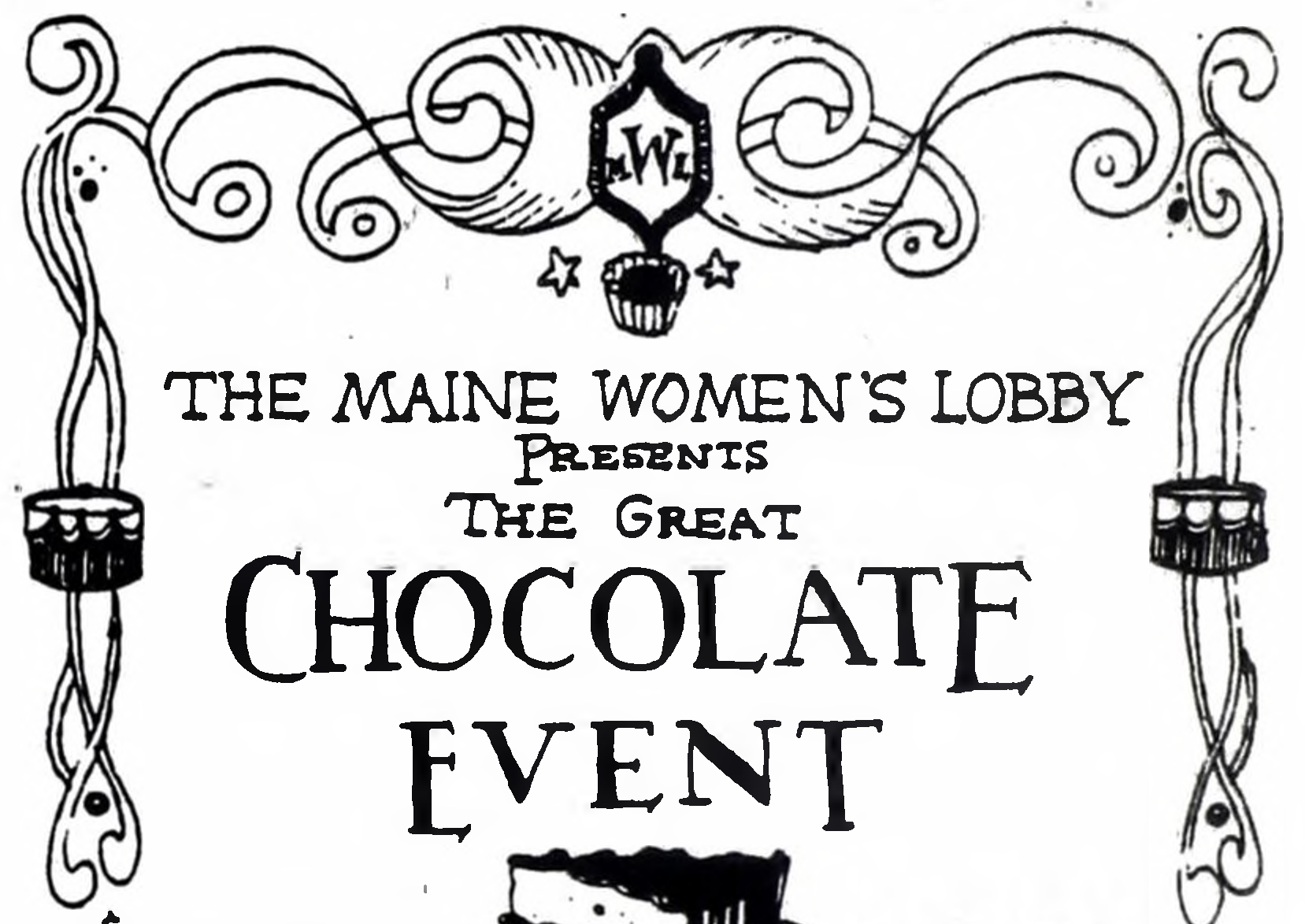
DARRILYN PETERS of Thomaston is Director of Program Development at Medical Care Development in Augusta, and has served as Treasurer of the Maine Public Health Association for the past year. Peters has considerable experience in the health care management field, having directed health and dental clinics in Vermont, the midwest, and the mountain states, and having worked for Project Hope in Africa. Peters has joined the MWL Board with a special commitment to teen pregnancy and parenting issues and pay equity for women.

NEW LOBBYIST ON BOARD

JOANNE D'ARCANGELO of Portland joins the MWL as its lobbyist for the 1988 legislative session. A member of the Maine Commission for Women since 1984, Joanne is an independent consultant who previously worked as a research associate with Governmental Services, Inc. She has also served as Director of the Maine Democratic Party and as Administrative Assistant to both the Senate President and the House Majority Leaders of the Maine Legislature. We are very pleased to have Joanne on board as our lobbyist -- her experience and commitment will make her an excellent advocate for women and families in Maine!

-- Tory Leuteman, MWL Vice Chair

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR MWL FUNDRAIS



THE MAINE WOMEN'S LOBBY
PRESENTS
THE GREAT
**CHOCOLATE
EVENT**

\$15. PER PERSON
CASH BAR



6-8:30 PM.

TUESDAY ♥ FEBRUARY 9, 1988
THE SENATOR INN ♥ AUGUSTA, ME.

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ENCLOSED PLEASE FIND \$_____ FOR _____ TICKETS.

☐ I CANNOT ATTEND BUT HERE'S MY CONTRIBUTION
FOR \$_____ TO THE MAINE WOMEN'S LOBBY

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THANK YOU!

THANK YOU!

THANK YOU!

THANK YOU!

. . . FOR ALL YOUR SUPPORT: Fundraiser tickets, raffle sales, contributions,
new memberships, renewals, and your phone calls and letters!

LITTLE KNOWN FACT: If our memberships doubled, we wouldn't have to rely on con-
stant fundraisers! ASK A FRIEND TO JOIN THE MAINE WOMEN'S LOBBY -- Today!

Name _____ Town of Legal Residence _____

Address _____

Phone Number(s): Day _____ Evening _____

Would you like to help with: Fundraising? Membership? Phoning legislators?
(Circle one - or more!)

My Contribution to the Lobby is:

_____ Life (\$500) _____ Sustaning (\$250) _____ Sponsoring (\$100)

_____ Supporting (\$50) _____ Contributing (\$25) _____ Individual (\$15)

_____ Other [Please make checks payable to: MWL, P.O. Box 15, Hallowell 04347]

The Maine Women's Lobby is committed to representing women of all economic means.
We welcome any contribution you are able to make.

MESSAGES FROM THE CHAIR

by

Karen Heck

Thank you to all of the members who took the time to send in their responses to the question of whether the Lobby ought to expand its activities to include electoral politics.

The issue arose because of the formation of a coalition of organizations interested in recruiting progressive candidates for legislative office. The Maine Women's Lobby was asked to be a member of the coalition, and before making a decision on whether to join this particular coalition, the Board wanted to get a sense of what the membership felt about expanding our activities beyond the legislative arena.

The arguments for expanding included: 1.) increasing our sphere of influence; 2.) working to get progressive candidates elected enhances our ability to advance our agenda; 3.) supporting those legislators who have been supportive of legislation important to women and families.

The arguments against expanding included: 1.) diluting already strained resources; 2.) lessening our ability to successfully lobby those legislators whom we may not always support but whose help we still seek; and 3.) the desire to remain non-partisan.

Responses of the members and the Board were fairly evenly split and, after much discussion, the Board has decided not to expand its activities at this time. We will be watching what happens with the coalition and we will continue to examine the question of expansion as we debate the direction of the Lobby in its next 10 years.

Fortunately, we will have some help in that effort from the Lobby's Intern, Kathy DeLois, who is working with the Lobby for a year in connection with her Master's Degree in social work. In addition to designing the survey you all should have received by now, Kathy is interviewing Board members, legislators, and others who deal with the Lobby to get an idea of where we are and where it should be going in the future. So, if you haven't already done so, please take a few minutes to complete the survey and send us your thoughts. We are especially interested in ideas on how we can improve our services to you. Thank you for your help, and we look forward to hearing from you!

An apology to those of you who may have received 1, 3, 4, or 0 raffle books in the letter sent in December! It was a long stuffing night, and there were some mix-ups. Sorry if it happened to you. If you need more tickets, please let me know and I'll get them out ASAP. You may call me (873-4531) or call or write the Lobby office (622-5798).

Update on the by-laws change: The membership agreed to amend the by-laws and, as a result, Board members' terms will be extended until September of '88 and '89. Thanks for voting and thanks to the Board members for staying on to facilitate the change.

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!

to

***** JOAN AND RICHARD MARSHALL *****

...for their generous and exciting donation of a weekend at their Sugarloaf condominium as this year's raffle prize! Each year, the Lobby's expenses increase and it becomes harder and harder to raise the funds to pay for them -- especially when the raffle prize costs almost as much as the raffle proceeds! For that reason, the Board extends a heartfelt THANK YOU to the Marshalls for their help in lightening the fundraising load with a prize we all want to win!

A clarification on what the prize is: The Marshalls have donated the use of their condominium for two nights/three days between May '88 and April '89 (except for Christmas and February breaks). Use of the outside swimming pool and tennis courts is included. Since Sugarloaf is now a four seasons resort, it's a prize anyone can enjoy!

STATE OF THE SURVEY REPORT

Thanks to the 173 of you who found the time during the holiday rush to return the survey questionnaire.

I am currently in the midst of computer-coding and loading the information, and will hopefully have at least preliminary results for you in the next newsletter.

I was pleased by the number of you who shared your insights and thoughts about the MWL, and impressed by the quality and thoughtfulness of your comments. Those of you who indicated a willingness to be interviewed will be hearing from me soon (if you haven't already)! I look forward to meeting with you.

Again, many thanks to all who responded.

--Kathy DeLois, MSW Intern

COMMON GROUND FAIR

MWL Booth a Great Success!

Many thanks to all of you who donated your time by staffing our booth:

Tory Leuteman
Betsy Sweet
Betty Robinson
Gwynneth Elvin
Bambi Jones
Ann Gosline
Diane Doyen
Joanne D'Arcangelo
Judy Feinstein
Judy Monroe
MaryAnne Turowski
Deb Deatrack
Katherine Greason
Karen Heck

MWL LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Call us if you have questions or comments on pending legislation

Tory Leuteman, Chair
RFD #2, Box 270
Gardiner, ME 04345
582-6269 (H)
1-800-524-7262/x141 (O)

Ellen Golden
Day's Ferry
Woolwich, ME 04579
442-8128 (H)
882-7552 (O)

Judith Monroe
Box 1207, Route 1
Hallowell, ME 04347
622-5544 (H)
Same (B)

Betsy Sweet
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Gardiner, ME 04345
582-2759 (H)
289-3417 (O)

Carol Wyckoff
RFD #2, Box 4020
Farmington, ME 04938
778-3271 (H)
Same (B)

Kathy DeLois, Intern
33 Mayflower Drive
Augusta, ME 04330
623-8923 (H)
Same (B)

“ SAVE THIS DATE ”

 **Maine
Women's
Lobby**

SATURDAY, APRIL 30, 1988

for

THE MAINE WOMEN'S LOBBY

GALA 10TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION!!

Reception * Dinner * Special Guests * and More!

at

The Sonesta Hotel, Portland

(Watch for more information in future newsletters!)

 **Maine
Women's
Lobby**

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