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LWV maine voter

Sally Paterson, Editor
198 Capisic Street, Portland

DECEMBER, 1982

Penny Harris, President
325 Garland Street, Bangor 04401

calendar

January 12 State Board Meeting
Presidents' Council
LEGISLATIVE RECEPTION

February 10 State Board Meeting

March 8 CITIZENS' DAY AT THE LEGISLATURE

March 17 State Board Meeting
Presidents' Council
VOTER (Mar./Apr.)

April 29--May 1 State Convention
Samoset Hotel, Rockland

May National Council
Washington, D.C.
VOTER (May/June)

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league of women voters

Drawing for Nissan Sentra

Postponed
January 12, 1983 at the Legislative Reception. Still time to enter.
We need your help to reach our goal.
Ticket sale to date: 61
Need to sell at least 139 more.
Send check to: LWVME
325 Garland Street
Bangor, ME 04401

The State VOTER is a publication of the League of Women Voters of Maine and is published five times a year. It is available through membership or through direct subscription ($5 per year).

President: Penny Harris
Editor: Sally Paterson

President's Column

Over 60% of Maine's registered voters voted in our most recent election. In Bangor, 77% of the registered voters voted. In Lewiston and Portland, voter turnout was 64%.

The League of Women Voters took action. We sponsored Gubernatorial and U.S. Senatorial Debates which were televised live, statewide. We published informational brochures on three referenda questions. We registered hundreds to vote and produced many local candidate forums. In Bangor, we sponsored Government Month. In Lewiston, we sponsored a forum on the referenda questions, and in Portland we had a debates' analysis party. In Ellsworth, Augusta, Old Town, Mt. Desert and Brunswick, we had "Meet the Candidate" meetings.

There were many League members who worked to bring Maine citizens non-partisan information on election issues and candidates. Julie Howison, Portland, and JoAnne Babcock, Falmouth, were responsible for the referenda flyers. Julie and her committee did the nuclear power question, and JoAnne was responsible for the research and the writing of the flyers on the milk commission and tax indexing questions. The public response was very appreciative. It is no small job to research, write, design layout, print, and mail thousands of brochures to all local leagues and to people across the state of Maine. Thank you, JoAnne and Julie, for sharing your time, skill, and talent.

Thank you to Maxine Harrow for your work on Debates '82. Maxine and I worked together to accomplish our televised debates. It was much work and fun, but we learned a lot, and the response was rewarding.

A thank you to Jane Saxl, Leiba Frankel, and the many Bangor-Brewster members who helped make the debates successful.

Thank you to every local league who worked to bring information and encouragement to all Maine Voters. We can take pride for our part in the large voter turnout.

One small reminder: Election day marks the beginning of our work to bring information to members and citizens. On January 12 at 9:00 a.m. in the Blaine House we will have a reception for newly elected Legislators. All of you are invited to come and learn about issues. After the reception you are invited to attend the state board meeting or attend legislative sessions. This is an excellent time to learn about our action plans and meet the state legislators. (Your representative will be looking for you!)

Thank you all again for great voters service projects and I look forward to seeing you on January 12.

Penny Harris

action

STATE REAPPORTIONMENT

State Reapportionment may sound like a dull issue, but it is full of controversial, political questions. Ten years ago, the Maine Legislature was reapportioned. Again this winter, it will be reapportioned. In 1973, the League and Maine citizens were lucky to have League member Nancy Masterton chair the Apportionment Commission which submitted its plan to the Legislature. The Commission dealt with such issues as--

1. Should college students and military personnel be counted as local citizens?

2. Should districts cross city, town, and county lines? Or is identity with political subdivisions sacred?

3. Should larger towns have multi-member districts (members elected at large) to prevent gerrymandering? Or do multi-member districts discourage minority representation?

4. How much deviation in exact number of constituents should be allowed in "equal" representation?

5. In creating districts using the most recent census figures, is it fair to consider how many incumbents are in a proposed new district?

6. Is it fair to combine a corner of a city with outlying rural areas?

Answers to these and other questions influence the likely number of Republicans and Democrats elected. Thus, it is very hard for the Legislature to reapportion itself. In 1972, the Legislature failed to agree upon a reapportionment plan for the Senate and the job was left to the Maine Supreme Court. In 1974, the Legislature failed to adopt the Commission's plan for reapportioning the House, and again the Maine Supreme Court did it.

Now in 1982, a new commission will be formed with only one nonpartisan member. The LWV of Maine will be observing the Commission to make sure that the interests of the people of Maine (and not just Democrats' and Republicans' interests) are protected. The Commission will be meeting in Augusta during December, January, and February. In March, the League will be lobbying the Legislature for or against the Commission's plan. We also will want to inform Maine people on the issues involved. Please contact your local president if you wish to participate in this exciting League observer corps.

Margy Miller
Portland

Pertinent Pub

Send check payable to LVWUS and mail to: 1730 M Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20036
Please add 50¢ handling charge.

Reapportionment: Issues for the Eighties. Discusses the issues related to the reapportionment that will occur after the 1980 census. Summarizes reapportionment history. 1979. EF. 4 pp., **#340**, 40¢.

* * * * * * * *

Join the Reapportionment

OBSERVER CORPS

* Learn first hand how the major policies and minor details of government are decided.

* Be the eyes and ears for other League members.

* * * * * * * * *

TIME FOR ACTION: THE D.C. AMENDMENT

The LWVME has made two efforts in previous legislative sessions to seek ratification of the D.C. Amendment, each time coming a little closer to victory. We told our legislators we would be back again. So here we are! This is the year we will be added to the list of ten state leagues who have been successful in their D.C. campaigns. Let us make this a Big win for League.

Contact will be made to House and Senate legislators who voted for the amendment two years ago, to confirm their support. Particular attention will be made to our new legislators. Local league D.C. coordinators will be seeking member assistance in calling legislators. Members-at-large will be recruited to contact legislators outside the local league areas. Let us make this a statewide team effort.

THE AMENDMENT WILL:

*give 640,000 American citizens who make their home in the District of Columbia full voting representation in the U.S. Congress; 2 Senators and the number of Representatives proportionate to the District's population.

*give citizens representation in the Electoral College proportionate to the District's population.

*give citizens a voice in ratifying Constitutional amendments.

*repeal the 23rd amendment, which gave residents of D.C. representation in the Electoral College no greater than the smallest state.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

It is clear that the founding fathers, who struggled so hard for liberty and equality, never intended to deprive the people living in D.C. their full rights of citizenship.

Until the official transfer of the federal government to D.C. in 1800, area residents were subject to the Maryland and Virginia laws and voted in federal elections as residents of their respective states. This practice ended in 1800 when Congress took over the exclusive jurisdiction of the Districts without making provisions for voting representation for the residents of the area.

The framers of the Constitution did not need to concern themselves with representation in Congress for D.C. residents because at that time the population was simply too small; 14,000 in 1800. Congress at that time was concerned that the people of the District not receive representation until the District's population warranted it. During the 1801 debates on District suffrage there was much discussion of providing representation for the District when its population reached the appropriate size. In 1978, the House of Representatives, by an overwhelming majority, voted to send the Amendment to the states for ratification within 7 years. The LWV has been consistent in its support of D.C. representation since 1924! WE BELIEVE THE TIME HAS COME TO CORRECT THIS INJUSTICE.

Two Questions Frequently Asked By Our Legislators:

Why not give the District back to Maryland?

There are a number of legal and Constitutional questions

that would have to be resolved to make retrocession possible. Full retrocession would subject the federal government to the powers of the state of Maryland and contradict the Constitutional provisions which establish the District as a federal entity. Partial retrocession, enabling District residents to vote in Maryland's Congressional elections would deny them full participation in government, and would seriously infringe upon the political rights of Maryland residents. The Maryland legislature ratified the Amendment in 1980, which is a clear indication of their sentiments on this issue.

What About The Federal Payment?

This is a payment by Congress to the District to compensate for the services which the District must provide and for the loss in revenue to the District because of the federal presence.

*The District police force must be prepared to handle traffic control and other problems caused by marches and demonstrations.

*The District loses enormous amounts of tax revenue because of federal government offices occupying blocks of what would otherwise be commercial property.

*The idea that District residents are "well paid" for their lack of representation is NOT adequate compensation.

KEEP IN MIND: In November, when league members in Maine voted for a Senator and Representative to send to Washington, D.C. leaguers were denied that right.

Doreen Macleod
D.C. Coordinator

LWVME Invites You
to a
Reception
for
Newly Elected Legislators
9:00 a.m.
Blaine House
January 12, 1983

Following Reception:
Informational Sessions on:

D.C. Amendment
Reapportionment
State ERA

Contact your local president or Penny Harris for more information. Storm date: January 19

P U B L I C A T I O N S

1. MAINE: HOW WE GOVERN
State government handbook, 137 pages, $6.00.

2. DEMOCRACY IS NOT A SPECTATOR SPORT
New bumper sticker, white on navy background, $1.00.

FREE TO LOCAL LEAGUES

1. Red and white bumper sticker, "Democracy is not a spectator sport", good for displays, posters, and any voters service activities.
2. Green on beige Membership/Finance brochure.

Ethel Schwalbe
Box 137B
Steuben 04680

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

At next spring's convention, we will be nominating candidates for president, vice-president (2), secretary, treasurer, and six directors. Please consider people for these important positions, and contact Ruth Irwin, (729-1413) with candidate suggestions or to volunteer yourself!

*Janet Greenlaw, Chair of the Portland Nominating Committee, understands how leadership largely determines the effectiveness of the League. The following is an excerpt from an article she wrote. Please consider these words as you identify leaders.

The board of directors is the administrative and policy-making arm of the League. It provides direction and leadership for carrying out member decisions and is ultimately responsible for all of the plans, activities and follow-through in...Program/Action...; Citizen Information/Voters Service...; Organization/Management...

Each board member shares in the cooperative effort of making policy and of planning and carrying out League activities. Basic functions performed by every board member include:

1) seeing that the organization runs smoothly...;

2) involving members in League activities and developing leaders; and

3) advancing League goals in the community.

Experience in a particular portfolio is not necessarily a prerequisite for service on the Board; the ability to transfer skills learned in one job to another and to continue to grow and learn are. You want people who can assume--and also delegate--responsibility, who can inspire others to follow, who have a sense of perspective and a sense of humor, who are imaginative and creative, and flexible.

Important - YES. Overwhelming - NO. The position of an officer or director can be fulfilled creatively and flexibly. As stated above, expertise in a given area is not essential - in fact, the directors' jobs are not formally assigned until the first Board meeting.

BYLAWS

Every two years, during convention year, the state League reviews its bylaws to determine if any updating or editing needs to be done.

The bylaws committee consists of Darrilyn Peters, secretary, Ethel Schwalbe, publications chair, Ruth Moss, Ellsworth MAL Unit vice chair, and myself. The process we are using to review the bylaws is:

1. Committee members read them for possible changes,
2. compile a list of committee suggestions,
3. send the list to local leagues for their reactions and further suggestions,
4. review all proposed amendments and make recommendations to be taken to the convention body for approval or disapproval.

The committee is suggesting the following change:

1. ARTICLE III Convention Section 2. Composition. Last sentence changed to "Member at Large Units may send representatives as voting delegates."

Joan VanRheenen
1st VP, Bylaws Chair

ABC Election Reporting 1982

As the 1982 state coordinator of LWV's election reporting for ABC, I want to express my thanks to all the League members who served as poll reporters.

Not only does this give us an opportunity for service in an area of high interest, but it is an important fundraiser. This year, we covered forty-six key precincts throughout the state from New Limerick to Moscow to Acton. ABC pays the LWVME thirty dollars for each precinct we cover. This provides a welcome addition to our treasury.

Everything went very smoothly on election night, proving once again that Leaguers get the job done quickly and completely. Again, thank you to all who were a part of the project, those who helped with names for recruiting, and especially the key precinct reporters.

Jo Anderson
1982 State Election
Coordinator

FLYER WRAP-UP
* * * * * * * * * * * * *

The LWVME produced flyers on three referenda questions for the November election. Gathering the facts, reducing them to equal pro and con proportions, soliciting comments from both sides as well as from neutral sources, and finally making sure that comprehension was not sacrificed to technicalities was just part of presenting referenda brochures. Fundraising was also a major element in getting information to the voters. A large part came from the LWVEF. Other support from individual League members and several citizens finally made the project a reality.

Special acknowledgement should go to Minuteman Press in Portland (774-5170). They not only donated over half the printing costs, they finished the job early so that Portland and Lewiston/Auburn would have the flyers in time for their bulletin mailings.

JoAnne Babcock

Debates '82 - "The Maine Event"

Betsey Merriam, Bangor, used the words appreciation, pride, respect, thoughtful consideration, healthy participation, and excitement to describe her reactions to the Gubernatorial and Senatorial debates most of us saw on television.

The debates were a service. The candidates displayed good sportsmanship and leadership. People were considerate, and the atmosphere was congenial. There was wide representation from all age groups; families bringing children to experience political participation and teachers bringing students to have an opportunity to talk personally with candidates. It was exciting to see both candidates at a time, rather than through a camera close up, and to feel the interaction between them.

League members can be proud of a job well done.

WHOOPS!

Are you one of the 50 members who didn't receive the September issue of the Voter? While our computerized mailing list has streamlined operations considerably, the updating process is still subject to human error! Call (772-9510) or write Sally Paterson for your missing copy.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
of MAINE
325 Garland St., Bangor 04401

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Brunswick, ME 04011

report from

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