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Maine League of Women Voters

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The MAINE VOTER

Published by The League of Women Voters of Maine
P. O. Box 151, Orono, Maine 04473

VOL. XVIII

NOVEMBER, 1970

Number 3

State League Officers and Directors

The 1970-71 lineup of the state League's officers and directors follows. Emphasis on this year's program and activities is action at all levels. Board members' portfolio and committee assignments are listed to help give Maine members a clearer picture of Board responsibilities.

President—Willabelle W. Zabel	Member of all committees except nominating.
1st Vice President— Nancy N. Masterton	State Government Task force on policies and procedures Advisor
2nd Vice President— Doris Birkett	Legislative Task Force Tax Committee Advisor
Secretary—Nancy Ziegenbein	Secretary Budget Committee
Treasurer—Mary Snyder	Treasurer Education Fund, Overseas Education Fund Budget Committee Members-at-Large
Directors: Shirley Whittaker	State and National Environmental Resources Advisor
Dorothy Dunton	Income Tax Youth Involvement, co-chairman
Helen Webb	Representative Government U. S. Congress Voters Right
Esther Lacognata	Foreign Policy Youth Involvement, co-chairman
Peg Dunham	Human Resources Nominating Committee
Dorothy Wakely	New Leagues Members-at-Large Established Leagues Advisor
Sue Walker	Finance Environmental Resources Budget Committee Publications
Madeleine Freeman	Established Leagues Task Force, chairman New Leagues Environmental Resources Advisor

Regina Woolford

Joni Averill

Pat Clark

Sukey Allen

Off Board:

Jane Hazelton

Nancy Nolde

Jean Childs

Jackie Russell

Joan O'Toole

All Local League
Presidents

Publications
Speakers Bureau
Advisor

Public Relations
Nominating Committee

Voter Editor
Finance Committee
Task Force
Advisor

Voters Service
Publications
Advisor

Nominating Committee
Chairman

Nominating Committee

Nominating Committee

Budget Committee
Chairman

Task Force Committee

President's Council

Looking Toward Convention, 1971

The nominating committee for the state League will be meeting within a few weeks. State Convention seems very far off, but suggestions for our state Board members and officers should be given now to the local League presidents or to the members of the state nominating committee. On the committee are: Mrs. Paul Hazelton, chairman; Mrs. Dana Childs, Mrs. John Nolde, Mrs. Wolcott Dunham and Mrs. Talbot Averill from the state Board.

* * * * *

What do members want to change or add to our state program? With the 105th Legislature soon to convene, the issues confronting our state legislators may help provide local League members with suggestions for state program. First round proposals are due early in February.

* * * * *

The President's Council met on November 14 in Orono with Willabelle Zabel, state president. Common League problems were aired and ideas for future action and policies were explored. This meeting, following the "mini-workshops" a few weeks ago, continued our effort to arrive at broad cooperation and understanding in all areas of League study.

State and Local Boards Meet

Eighty-nine League members participated in the October 29 and November 5 regional workshops on *Cooperation for Effective Action* held in Portland and Bangor. All local Leagues were represented, every member of state Board participated, and every aspect of League organization and program received some attention. The workshops were financed under the state budget category "Service to Existing Leagues."

One purpose of the sessions was to provide an opportunity for local Board chairmen and their committees to become better acquainted with the goals, guidelines, tools and techniques available in order to pursue their own local League assignment more effectively. To accomplish this end the morning sessions were devoted to a series of mini-workshops conducted by state Board members with the common theme, "How to do *Your League Job*."

Another goal of the regional meetings was to provide local Board members with a sense of the possibilities that exist for cooperation among Board members, among Leagues, and among League levels (local, state, national) for the solution of problems and for increasing the effectiveness of all League efforts. "How to do the *League's Job*" thus became the theme for the afternoon sessions. A skit of a legislative interview with the fictitious freshman legislator, Mr. Lowerhouse, and a demonstration of an action planning session of the equally fictitious League of Women Voters of Puckerbrush, Maine kicked off the afternoon session. This real-life drama was followed by a discussion of the interpretation of League policy as applied to case studies of different types of possible League action.

A sense of eagerness to move forward with the League's work at all levels prevailed at both regional meetings. The experience of becoming acquainted, sharing ideas, and planning cooperative efforts seemed to give new meaning to the League's purpose and encouragement to those responsible for carrying it out.

Consensus on Alternatives to Welfare

League members are alerted by now to the approaching consensus on "Alternatives to Welfare." Reports on this national item are due by December 20 and most of the local Leagues in Maine have already set up the several meetings necessary for adequate study, thought and discussion of this complex and vital subject.

Some change in the present welfare system is undoubtedly indicated. With a gross national product of nearly 900 billion dollars, our nation can and must fight the shameful degradation of poverty and hunger. Congressional action on the President's Welfare Reform proposal is now planned by Senate backers who hope to push the bill through the Senate during the current "lame-duck" session of Congress. This should add fire to League discussion on the subject.

Most local League bulletin publications have listed the consensus questions. Our discussions must consider whether or not we believe that government shares a responsibility for meeting the basic needs of every person. We must decide what levels of government should be responsible for financing, setting standards and administration.

The League must come to a national position from the thoughtful consideration of these issues by every League member. In addition to the *Facts and Issues*, "A Dream Deferred," an excellent factual analysis of various welfare proposals is contained in *Report from the Hill*, July 9, 1970. Also recommended for study: "Current Review Human Resources," No. 6, 7, and 9, and "Improving the Public Welfare System," published by the Committee for Economic Development, 477 Madison Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10022 and obtainable at \$1 a copy.

More on Taxes

The outcome of the November election in Maine revealed some voter reaction to the income tax passed by the 104th Legislature. Analysts have said that the race for governor, with the winner not yet declared, pivoted around the tax. It is certain that taxation was uppermost in the minds of our citizens. League members, concerned about state government, environmental and human resources, land use and conservation, long ago realized that the most equitable method of taxation to pay for new or improved programs was through a tax on personal and corporate income.

Our tax law may well be a model for other states. The exemption rate of \$1,000 is the nation's highest. The bill was passed only a year and a half ago with a projected revenue figure of 50 million dollars for the biennium. This figure has already been revised upward. The money generated by the income tax has been appropriated for school subsidies, health and welfare needs, education, and state employee salary increases to note a few service areas benefiting from the tax.

Members who attended the September 16 workshop on taxes heard Mr. Ray Halperin, State Bureau of Taxation, reiterate Maine's need for an economically sound tax structure, a vital part of which is the income tax. Mr. Samuel Hinds, Assistant Director of Legislative Finance, posed the problem of mounting needs and services for our citizens, while at the same time there is a reaction against increased taxation. He predicted large increases in General Fund expenditures with only moderate economies possible in governmental administration. Professor John Rensenbrink talked of priorities in spending at all levels. He stated that human needs should be given top budgetary priority in the future or there will be more divisiveness in the nation. Those corporations and people who can best afford to pay the bill must do so through progressive taxes. Property taxes must be lowered, especially for low-income groups, stated Mr. Rensenbrink.

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Editor: Mrs. James M. Clark

President: Mrs. Lowell W. Zabel, P. O. Box 151, Orono 04473

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