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Maine League of Women Voters

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THE VOTER

VOL. 10, NO. 4

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MAINE

JULY 1993

TERM LIMITS FOR MAINE ?

On November 2, Maine voters will be asked if they approve limiting the number of terms state legislators and constitutional officers can serve. The following arguments for and against term limits are taken from material circulated by proponents and opponents of the measure. This being a League of Women Voters publication, the editor has deemed it appropriate to list factual material first, claims and assertions later. *(At this writing, it is not known whether the State Board will approve the recommendations of the new State Government Study Committee--see Page 5--for a mail "consensus" on this issue.)*

The "No More Than 4" proposal is: "No state legislator or constitutional officer will be able to serve more than four consecutive two-year terms in office. After eight years, they are free to seek another office, or, after sitting out a term, to run again. Our proposal will apply to state senators and representatives as well as the Attorney General, Secretary of State, State Treasurer and State Auditor."

PRO

- ✧ From 1982 to 1992, the percentage of legislators staying for 5 consecutive terms or longer jumped from 12% to 25% of the legislature.
- ✧ During the 1986, 1988, 1990 and 1992 general elections, Maine legislative incumbents had 93%, 93%, 89% and 92% re-election rates.
- ✧ In 1990, almost 59% of all incumbents were either unopposed or outspent their opponents by a 2:1 margin.
- ✧ Of the 33 general election races in 1992 where candidates ran unopposed, 28 featured incumbent legislators.
- ✧ 78.8% of legislative turnover in 1992 was due to voluntary retirement; only 14 of the 66 new legislators defeated incumbents.
- ✧ Term limits will offer voters more choices. During the 1992 primary and general elections cycle, open legislative seats drew 32% more candidates on average than where incumbents were seeking re-election.
- ✧ Term limits will open up state government to new people and fresh ideas.
- ✧ Experienced legislators are not necessarily effective legislators. The Maine legislature is full of experienced legislators but seems unable to resolve important issues such as the budget.

Continued on Page 2

CON

- ✧ Only a small percentage of legislators have served 4 or more terms. A total of 35, or 23%, of all House members have served more than 4 terms and 7, or 20%, of all Senate members have served more than 4 terms.
A total of 17, or 11.3%, of all House members and 4, or 11.4%, of all Senate members are currently serving their 4th term.
- ✧ There is a relatively high biennial turnover rate among legislators. Approximately 25% of the total number of House Members are replaced every two years. The turnover rates for recent session of the legislature are as follows:

| | |
|---------------------|-------|
| * 113th Legislature | 21.9% |
| * 114th Legislature | 23.2% |
| * 115th Legislature | 24.5% |
| * 116th Legislature | 33.1% |

There is a high turnover rate, in part, as a result of low salaries. The compensation (for both House and Senate members) of \$18,000 for a two year period is insufficient to earn a living. Many legislators leave after a short period of time for better paying jobs.
- ✧ The term limits for the President of the United States and Governors were established as a result of the substantial growth in executive power. No Maine legislator or constitutional officer (or Congressional representative) possesses the power or the resources that the Governor (or the President) possesses.

Continued on Page 2

PRO

- ✱ Many people fear that Maine is moving towards having a full-time, professional legislature. Term limits will help to preserve the citizen legislature that has served our state well.
- ✱ Term limits will reduce the influence of powerful special interests.
- ✱ Term limits will prevent power from becoming concentrated in the hands of a few long-time lawmakers.

CON

- ✱ Voters already have the power to limit legislative terms--in the voting booth.
- ✱ Voters' recent discouragement with legislatures is due in part to the gridlock between executive and legislative branches controlled by different political parties. Term limits will do nothing to resolve that problem.
- ✱ By limiting the terms of legislators, the power of unelected and unaccountable people would be substantially increased. New legislators lean on lobbyists, executive branch bureaucrats and legislative staff for significant amounts of assistance until they know the ropes.
- ✱ Term limits would restrict the power and right of the people to elect the person of their choice as their legislative representative.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters sent to the VOTER Editor will be accepted from LWV members, based on space and appropriateness to current LWV program. Letters must be limited to no more than 100 words, in addition to the author's name, address, phone number and LWV affiliation.

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE HAVE NEW COORDINATORS

After years of service to League Members-at-Large Nellik Doble of Brooklin has turned her responsibilities and her files over to new "MAL coordinators". They have already started work and did the membership renewal mailing in June.

Members (or potential members) not affiliated with a local League should get in touch with either of the two coordinators listed below whenever they have questions about their membership status or opportunities for participating in League activities:

Neala Jennings
P.O. Box 116
Wayne, ME 04284

Tel. 685-3669

Jean Smith
RR 1, Box 3323
Wayne, ME 04284

Tel. 685-3679

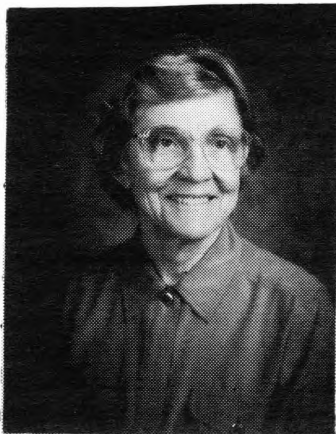
The State Board as well as Members-at-Large thank Nellik for her years of work as both MAL Coordinator and Membership Chair, and wish her well in whatever activity she'll be spending that new-found time on (sailing?).

BRAVO, BRUNSWICK

The Brunswick Area League has a new recruiting tool--one that so impressed the State Board with its simplicity and relatively low cost that, Brunswick willing, the idea may be adapted for use at state level.

It's a blue and white bookmark--the splash of red in the League logo was colored by hand, we are told, to reduce printing costs. At the end of a list of League characteristics (e.g. "Women and Men", "Fosters Citizen Involvement", "Promotes Understanding of Issues") the bookmark asks: 'DO YOU WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE? JOIN US!'

From the President



State convention was a success; the evaluations were positive and everyone was impressed with the location. Janice Carpenter who chaired the Portland Convention Committee did an outstanding job and deserves our very special thanks, which must also be extended to the members of her committee. Working with Janice is an educational (and enlightening) experience!

It is still my pleasure to represent you as the State President and I look forward to the coming year as an opportunity, now that Convention is over, to reorganize, reenergize and to reaffirm our mission without reinventing the wheel.

That mission, as adopted by the National Board, emphasizes our non-partisan, political role in education and active participation in empowering citizens to shape better communities. To do this, we need to increase membership and to deliberately seek diversity in our membership. Here in Maine large parts of the state do not have local Leagues or MAL (member-at-large) units. Organizing and strengthening local Leagues is a must if the League is to continue to be a grassroots organization -- one that works from the bottom up. The new Board and I will work hard to increase membership, take a more active role in being advocates for the League, and to try to make the League more visible. That work will begin when the Board meets on July 15. We would welcome any ideas you may have to share with us.

CROSSROADS PROJECT

This is a brainstorming project that got well underway after the '92 LWVUS Convention in Boston and identified five major areas for attention:

1. Revitalizing the League's Mission
2. Managing the League's Multi-Issue Program
3. Defining Roles and Responsibilities Within our Multi-Level Structure
4. Enhancing Membership Opportunities in the League
5. Making League Leadership More Manageable.

Results of a survey revealed that emphasis was on the grass roots identity of the League, of the need for more members, diversity of membership, making League work more manageable, being flexible. The recurring theme is the strength of the local Leagues.

An interim report was available and discussed at Council '93. The Crossroads Project Committee hopes to complete its work late summer and will send a packet of discussion materials to all Leagues in November 1993. Leagues are encouraged to schedule a meeting in Dec. or Nov. so members can consider and comment on the material. The results of those meetings will be analyzed and a set of recommendations will be prepared for consideration at Convention 1994.

--MARION HOLSHOUSER



Marion and Janice Carpenter in a rare quiet moment at Convention.

REPORT ON LWVUS COUNCIL '93 JUNE 5-8

National Council is held in Washington, D.C. in alternate years between National Conventions, and brings together League leaders -- State representatives, National Board members, Big City (over 300,000) and Capitol City representatives. The purpose of Council is to give guidance to the National Board on program and methods of work, to adopt a budget and to transact business presented by the National Board. It is also an opportunity to network. The theme this year was "MANY VOICES...ONE VISION".

A number of workshops were held that included "Leadership," "Burn-Out," "Local Leagues" and "Organizing." The major workshop dealing with "Diversity" was enlightening, was enthusiastically presented and renewed League determination to work harder to include broader representation of the community in our membership.

Another purpose of Council is the "Day on the Hill." After a briefing, each state was asked to lobby their Members of Congress on Campaign Finance Reform (which the Senate was debating that very day) and on Health Care Reform, stating our position at this time and not in support of any bill until the Administration's proposals are presented to Congress. Ann Lombardi of the League's Lobby Corps (a Maine native) accompanied me to Representative Snowe's office, where we met with the Representative's Legislative Aide, and to Senator Cohen's office to speak with him and to hear his views on campaign financing. Senator Cohen, as one of five or six Republicans who oppose public financing, was working on a bi-partisan compromise. (The final bill may be history by now.) Representative Snowe also opposed public financing.)

The major speaker at Council was Donna Shalala, Secretary of Health and Human Services. Secretary Shalala is dynamic and a strong advocate for health care reform, improving the health of children and supporting research on women's health.

The Third Annual LWV Education Fund Gala made presentations to seven individuals and one institution. Honorees were:

- Sarah Brady for work on handgun control.
- Representatives Al Swift and John Conyers for work on the 1993 National Voter Act (Motor Voter).
- Warren Rudman and Paul Tsongas for motivating grassroots support for deficit reduction.
- Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall (posthumous), the Carrie Chapman Catt Lifetime Achievement Award for significant contributions to the expansion of civil rights and social justice.
- Barbara Fegan, the First League Leader Award for founding and organizing Coastweek.
- MTV (Music Television) for innovative use of electronic media to attract a new generation of voters to the electoral process.

For the first time since 1980, the League was invited to a Rose Garden ceremony at the White House. The President and Mrs. Clinton spoke, thanked the League for supporting "Motor Voter" and emphasized the Administrations's goals for the country. It was a definite thrill to shake their hands and to exchange a few words with them, and any number of photographs were taken during the hour we were there! Arkansas League members were hugged!!

Attendance at Council is rewarding and well worth the time and effort expended. Those of you willing to take on leadership responsibilities can look forward to renewing your energies and pride in the League by attending meetings such as the National Council. Go for it !!!

--MARION HOLSHOUSER

NEW STATE GOVERNMENT STUDY

State Government structure is a "hot item." Maine's November ballot will include an initiative proposing term limits for Maine's legislators. The Maine House, in the current session, voted for a Unicameral Legislature; the Senate disagreed. Delegates to the LWME convention in May decided it was time to look at our positions on State Government and determine if our current membership still supports them.

A new program item, "to study and reevaluate our State Government positions" was adopted. Ruth Moss will serve as portfolio chair. Ruth asks that all who are interested write or call her (P.O. Box 304, Sorrento, 04677, or 422-3627.)

Our current state government positions are three pages long and reflect consensus reached in various studies dating primarily to the 1960's! With the exception of "Monitor absentee balloting legislation" added in 1987, the last time we updated our positions was 1973! Some of those positions may surprise you:

"SUPPORT OF A UNICAMERAL LEGISLATURE FOR MAINE WHEN FEASIBLE"

"REDUCTION (of Maine House) FROM 151 TO APPROXIMATELY 100 SEATS"

"SUPPORT...FOUR YEAR STAGGERED TERMS FOR SENATORS..."

Most of our current membership did not participate in the 1960's studies that led to these positions; the need to reevaluate is obvious. The Maine League never studied "term limits", by the way; that subject is a recent national issue.

The fledgling State Government Study Committee held a first meeting in Belfast on June 24. Much time was devoted to a discussion of the large number of bills presented in each legislative session, possible ways of limiting bills and pros and cons of such limitations. It was reported that 2,256 bills were introduced in the last legislature! About 500 of these were later withdrawn by the legislator who introduced them.

However, with the imminence of the "term limits" initiative, the committee decided to present the following suggestions to the State Board (the Board will meet July 15 at Pat Cyphers' home in Hancock):

1. The July VOTER to have a list of pros and cons. (NOTE; the list is on Page 1.) The State Board made a similar suggestion at its post-convention meeting at the Cliff House.
2. Local Leagues to be encouraged to have September meetings on term limits.
3. The October VOTER to have a "check-off and return" form asking members to indicate whether or not they support term limits. (The VOTER should have an earlier copy deadline and publication date.)
4. The State Board to meet early in October to review the results of the returned forms and determine if there is significant member consensus for or against term limits.

The short time span between convention and the November ballot has made this mail survey (strengthened by local League meetings and discussion) necessary. The committee expects to use traditional League methods for determining member views in evaluating other elements of our state government position.

RUTH MOSS and ETHEL SCHWALBE

YEARS OF LEAGUE SERVICE

State Conventions are appropriate times to recognize and honor Leaguers who have served for many years and in various leadership positions.

At Cliff House in Ogunquit this year, delegates honored three past presidents of the League of Women Voters of Maine. Shown below with current president Marion Holshouser are Nancy Masterton, Jane Saxl, and Marlee Turner.



L to R: Saxl, Holshouser, Masterton, Turner

The editor doesn't know all of the positions Emily Farley has held in the Portland Area League and at state level—or the regular committees and special task forces she has chaired, but I do know that an attempt to list her many contributions to the League of Women Voters of Maine would fill this page! Emily is shown here as she prepared to give a brief "oral history" at Convention '93. It must have been difficult for her to select just one bit of the past to share.



ENVIRONMENTAL UPDATE

The Maine House has approved the continuation of the ban on plastic yokes holding beer and soda cans together for nearly another year. The ban was to have been lifted on October 1, 1993. When and if the ban is made permanent, it will be the nation's first ban on these plastic rings.

LD 975 was a bill that would have permitted the reintroduction into Maine of aseptic juice boxes and other lightweight beverage containers. These are the boxes that are composed of paper, plastic and metal. They were previously outlawed because (a) they were not being recycled and (b) because of their composition, they do not decompose in landfills. At this time they would have to be shipped to New York or Pennsylvania for processing, and this would be very costly to communities. All previous attempts to lift the ban have been defeated by the Legislature, although medically related exemptions for soy and rice milk were permitted.

LD 975 has been shelved and carried over until January 1994. The LWV of Maine has opposed the sale of aseptic juice boxes in Maine and has testified to that before the Legislature. LD 975 does not propose to include these juice boxes and milk containers under the deposit system of Maine's "bottle bill." If they were to be included, we must look at what the effect will be not only on the bottle bill, but also the environmental impact of their finding their way into incinerators as waste.

The "chlorine-free paper" bill has been killed for this session. This bill would have encouraged Maine paper mills to manufacture chlorine-free paper as a way to reduce toxic emissions going into our rivers. Scandinavia and other regions are already using technologies that reduce the amount of toxic by-products from papermaking.

The bill was sponsored by Rep. Paul R. Young, R-Limestone, and would have required the State's purchasing agent to give preference to chlorine-free paper starting in 1998. The State would pay 10% more for the chlorine-free paper than for regular paper. It is regrettable that this legislation was shelved, as it would have made a significant contribution to cleaning up our rivers.

LD 1351, a bill calling for the suspension of vehicle registration for cars not meeting the Federal Clean Air Act's emission standards, was passed by the Maine Legislature. The State of Maine is in violation of acceptable ozone levels at least 29 days per year! LD 1351 was sponsored by Rep. John F. March, R-West Gardiner.

On May 27, the University of Maine's "Chemicals in the Environment Information Center" sponsored a "Going Beyond Recycling" conference at the Samoset Resort. Ways to extend recycling programs with comprehensive pollution prevention programs were explored. Dr. Marquita Hill, Director of the Center, spoke on reducing personal risks associated with chemicals that contribute to indoor air pollution in our homes. Marjorie Hundhammer, Extension Educator, University of Maine Cooperative Extension, spoke on "The Pesticide-Free Garden" and "Food Scraps to Fertilizer: Successful Backyard Composting." The Cooperative Extension is a great resource for us to turn to for gardening or insect information as well as alternatives to chemicals.

--PAT CYPHERS, Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Chair



Did you see Jana Lapoint and her family's business featured on "MADE IN MAINE", public TV, June 37 UF Strainrite, one of three environment-conscious industries featured, makes reusable and recyclable plastic containers for industry, but also a variety of totes for personal use. The Portland Area League raised funds last year by selling their "Save a Tree--Reuse Me" lunch bags.

A COMMUNICATION



May 30, 1993

To the Maine League of Women Voters:

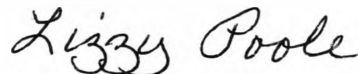
Thank you on behalf of the Maine Women's Lobby for welcoming us as exhibitors to both the State Convention and the Portland Annual Meeting. Now, more than ever, it is vital for the women of Maine to have a strong voice in Augusta from whence come the laws affecting women, children and men.

After the right-to-choose legislation became law, Maine women deserved a rest and praise for a job well done. However, it would be a mistake to become too complacent. Hard won steps towards freedom and equality must be maintained. The work, far from being over, is ongoing and it is vital that Maine women support each other.

Work of the Maine Women's Lobby addresses issues we all care about: an end to sexual harassment in the workplace; better paying jobs with livable wages for women; an assurance for children of a healthy life free from abuse, hunger, and neglect; and a breaking of the chains of poverty and prejudice to insure that the minds of young girls will be encouraged to reach their full potential. These elements of decent living are slowly coming to pass, but will not happen overnight.

Financial support is vital to the work of the Maine Women's Lobby. The money that comes to the Lobby from memberships, grants, and donations stays in Maine to work for Maine women. Thanks again to the Maine League of Women Voters for encouraging us to reach a broader base and by your actions demonstrating that Maine women do indeed support each other.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lizzy Poole".

Lizzy Poole
member, Portland Area LWV
and Maine Women's Lobby

(For tax-deductible giving, or to learn more about the
Maine Women's Lobby, write to:
PO Box 15
Hallowell, ME 04347)



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS BUDGET

| | |
|---------------|------------------|
| | |
| | |
| | 12 MOS BUDGET |
| INCOME | 7/1/93 - 6/30/94 |

| | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| A. BALANCE FORWARD | \$0.00 |
| B. LOCAL LEAGUE SUPPORT | \$3,000.00 |
| C. MEMBERS-AT-LARGE | \$3,300.00 |
| D.FUND RAISING | \$7,550.00 |
| E.PUBLICATION SALES | \$800.00 |
| F.INTEREST | \$300.00 |
| G.PROJECTS, PROGRAMS | \$0.00 |
| 1. DECALS | \$100.00 |
| 2. SHIRTS | \$25.00 |
| 3.TOTES | \$50.00 |
| 4.OTHER | \$0.00 |
| H. STATE CONVENTION | \$0.00 |
| I.QUAD STATE COUNCIL | \$1,000.00 |
| J. LWV ED. FUND | \$2,000.00 |
| K.OTHER GRANTS | \$500.00 |
| L.CONTINGENCY | \$0.00 |
| M.MEMBER CONTRIBUTION | \$1,000.00 |
| N.KEYS TO CAPITOL | \$300.00 |
| O.STATE SALES TAX | \$75.00 |
| P.LOCAL LEAGUES | \$0.00 |
| TOTAL INCOME | \$20,000.00 |

EXPENSES

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------|
| A.OPERATING COSTS | |
| 1.SUPPLIES,STAMPS | \$500.00 |
| 2.RENT | \$900.00 |
| 3.TELEPHONE | \$800.00 |
| 4.STAFF | \$200.00 |
| 5.TRAVEL | \$0.00 |
| 6.FINANCE CHARGE | \$120.00 |
| TOTAL OPERATING COSTS | \$2,520.00 |
| B. BOARD ADMINISTRATION | |
| 1.PRESIDENT | \$500.00 |
| 1A.1ST VICE PRESIDENT | \$100.00 |
| 1B.2ND VICE PRESIDENT | \$0.00 |
| 2.MEMBERSHIP | \$100.00 |
| 3.SECRETARY | \$80.00 |
| 4.TREASURER | \$80.00 |
| 5.PUBLIC RELATIONS | \$70.00 |
| 6.NOMINATING COMMITTEE | \$100.00 |
| 7.BUDGET/BYLAWS | \$50.00 |
| 8.BOARD WORKSHOP/TOOLS | \$0.00 |
| 9.PRINTING | \$700.00 |
| 10.STATE DIRECTORY | \$750.00 |
| TOTAL BOARD ADMIN. | \$2,530.00 |

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| C. CONFERENCES/DELEGATES | |
| 1.STATE CONVENTION | \$0.00 |
| 2.QUAD STATE COUNCIL | \$1,000.00 |
| 3.PROGRAM | \$50.00 |
| 4.MISC EXPENSES | \$0.00 |
| 5.NAT'L CONVENTION | \$2,500.00 |
| 6.REGIONAL/OTHER | \$200.00 |
| TOTAL CONFERENCES | \$3,750.00 |
| D.FUND RAISING | \$1,000.00 |
| E.AFFILIATIONS | |
| 1.LWVUS - MALS PMP | \$2,000.00 |
| 2.OTHERS | \$500.00 |
| TOTAL AFFILIATIONS | \$2,500.00 |
| F. STATE VOTER | \$2,500.00 |
| G. PROGRAM -STATE/NATIONAL | |
| 1.STATE | \$500.00 |
| 2.NATIONAL | \$200.00 |
| 3.VOTER SERVICE | \$3,000.00 |
| 4.PUBLICATION PRODUCTION | \$500.00 |
| TOTAL PROGRAM | \$4,200.00 |
| H. POSITION SUPPORT -ACTION | |
| 1.KEYS TO CAPITOL | \$300.00 |
| 2.ADVOCACY PRIORITIES | \$500.00 |
| 3.ACTION ALERTS & LOBBY | \$200.00 |
| TOTAL POSITION SUPPORT | \$1,000.00 |
| GRAND TOTALS | \$20,000.00 |

Treasurer Madeline Brown



CONVENTION '93

CONVENTION '93 is history, but these memories are among the editor's favorites.



Overhearing someone say: "I'm so glad Tsongas and Rudman didn't come. I've heard their message--and all this is so much more interesting !"

(Apparently, there were too many communication channels between League, the Maine chapter of the Concord Coalition and the Concord Coalition HQ. The League thought we had a commitment.)



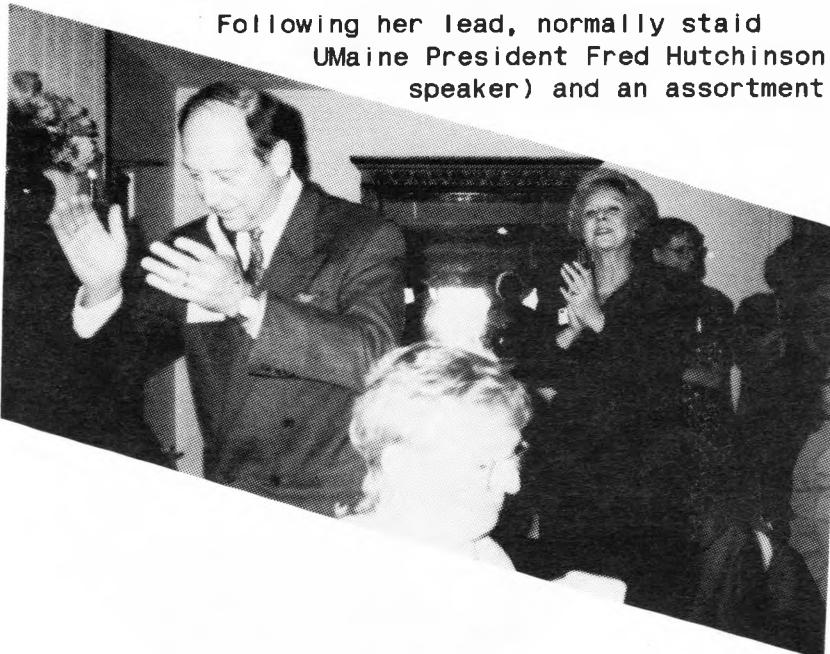
And overhearing this comment:
"These workshops are fascinating! I expected 'Conflict Resolution' to be interesting, but who would have guessed that 'Demographics' would be?"

Anne Barker Schink leading the Conflict Resolution workshop. The League is happy to welcome Anne back to Maine and the League. A native of Presque Isle, Anne served as president of the Pennsylvania League for four years.



Seeing our normally staid president Marion getting up to lead a jazzy single file parade through the dining room when the jazz band furnishing dinner music Saturday night ended with "The Saints Go Marching In."

Following her lead, normally staid
UMaine President Fred Hutchinson (the dinner
speaker) and an assortment of Leaguers.



(Sorry, the photographer wasn't quick enough--missed Marion.)

Leader of the jazz band, by the way, 'Charlotte Wilbur's (LWV-PAL) son.

MORE CONVENTION MEMORIES;



The beautiful flowers donated and arranged by Jana Lapoint (LWV-PAL). When you see them in these photographs, think "tulips in delicate pinks and yellows".



The bi-partisan spirit exhibited by Republican and Democratic elected officials in their panel discussions. No rancor over what was happening in Augusta at the time, no finger-pointing--just a calm discussion of the issues. Maybe split government can work!----- (if the League is watching?)



Helen Muther, Portland Area League, was moderator of this panel of two mayors (one Republican, one Democrat) and two legislators (one R., one D.)

The "two Janes", LWVME's latest contribution to Augusta, were downright friendly in their discussion of their experiences as freshmen legislators.



J. Saxl

J. Amero

Among the memorable points from their discussion:

SEN. JANE AMERO (R-Cape Elizabeth) said "It makes sense for the courts to do reapportionment. It's not realistic to expect incumbent legislators to come up with a fair plan. There is no resemblance to good government when it comes to reapportionment." Jane spoke from experience; though a freshman, she was appointed to the reapportionment committee.

REPR. JANE SAXL (D-Bangor) serves on the Judiciary Committee, which deals with "small" issues like "choice" and discrimination. Much of the work is discouraging, for example, the hearings on the child abuse situation and the "ugliness" in the arguments over the gay rights bill. But the final vote was encouraging--this year was the first time that such a bill has passed both houses.

Also discouraging is the frustration of not being to move the process ahead on things you care about. But in constituent work Jane feels a legislator can make a difference in someone's life.

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DEADLINE FOR NEXT VOTER: SEPTEMBER 1ST
Mail copy to editor at
RR 1, Box 137-B, Steuben, ME 04680



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