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## The Voter vol. 6, no. 3 (Apr 1989)

Maine League of Women Voters Staff

*Maine League of Women Voters*

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# THE VOTER

Vol., 6, No. 3

The League of Women Voters of Maine

April, 1989

## KEYS TO THE CAPITAL '89

A record number of League members, friends and legislators attended the 1989 session of **Keys to the Capitol** on January 25. Included were two groups of Senior Girl Scouts and their leaders, one group from Sullivan, one from Fairfield.

In the opening session all of the newly elected House and Senate leaders were presented to the group by Jane Saxl, LWVME President. Of the half dozen legislative leaders present, two were women: Pamela Cahill, Senate Assistant Minority Leader, and Mary Clark Webster, Senate Minority Leader. Other Senate and House Leaders participating included Dan Gwadosky, Francis Marsano, Joseph Mayo, and Charles Webster.

The major workshop topic, **The Legacy of a Throw-away Society--What's to Become of our Trash?**, drew a distinguished panel, experts on many facets of the problem. Senator Judy Kany (D. Waterville), Chair of the Energy and Natural Resources Council; Tom Sawyer, CEO of Sawyer Co., Inc.; Brownie Carson, Executive Director of the Natural Resources Council; George MacDonald, Director, Office of Waste Recycling and Reduction; and Randy Parenteau of MERC/K.T.I.

While it is obvious that Mainers need to greatly reduce output of trash, 2000 tons **daily**, it is equally obvious that it will not be easy. For waste reduction to become a reality, several steps need to be taken: 1) legislation to mandate certain positive steps; 2) commitment to changing lifestyles that contribute to trash production; 3) creation of an economy in which recycling will become profitable; 4) education of all citizens about reasons for and methods of recycling. Unless the economics of recycling are favorable, the technology will not be developed. Pat Cyphers, who holds the LWVME Portfolio on Natural Resources, moderated this panel.

Margaret Tragard, President York County LWV, moderated the panel on property tax relief. Participants were Neil Rolde, representative, Kittery; John Cashman, representative, Old Town; Gary Wood, Director of Legislative Af-

## CONVENTION — CASTINE

In League you often hear the phrases, "grass roots," democracy is not a spectator sport," and "you can make a difference." In League, as in our democracy, that is only true if you act on it. What we study, our priorities and our positions are determined by you. In each of your local Leagues this year you had the opportunity to participate in a consensus, in program planning, and in nominations for State Board. Now comes the most exciting time of the League year. On May 5, 6, and 7 we will meet for Convention at the Maine Maritime Academy in Castine. There will be fascinating speakers, time to plan the League agenda, time to greet old friends and make new ones. Ask your local League president to make you a delegate for State Convention or sign up as an observer!

***See you all in Castine!***

--Jane Saxl

airs, Maine Municipal Association; and Richard Silkman, Commissioner for the Office of Planning and Economic Development. No single solution to the property tax dilemma was offered, but several possibilities were discussed and the audience was afforded the opportunity to voice concerns.

Carol Fritz, Pat Cyphers, Judy Harrison, and Janice Carpenter were League briefers on upcoming legislation, including nuclear waste and low-cost housing as well as issues affecting women and families.

Judy Harrison reviewed legislation, focusing on two especially controversial bills proposed for this session: enacting Parental Consent legislation requiring all girls under 18 to have either parental or judicial consent before termination of a pregnancy. As a counter measure, women's groups are backing a bill called "An Act to Improve Communication with Teenagers," which would fund innovative programs to open lines of communication between parents and teens and give parents guidance and training on how to talk to teens about sex.

--Barbara Bowler

# JOTTINGS FROM JANE

As I write to you, Voter Service season is long behind us and we are in the midst of the legislative part of our year. Thanks to Margaret Tragard, Barbara Bowler, Judy Harrison, and Judy Johnson, the League's legislative season started with a most successful **Keys to the Capitol**. We were greeted by new faces in leadership. A record number of legislators attended the Blaine House reception despite the cold and the fact that the legislature is not in session on Wednesdays this year. Governor McKernan told the group about his proposed legislative initiatives on property tax reform and waste management and was presented with a LWVME membership.

The next exciting day was when the League joined in coalition with 32 other women's organizations to sponsor **We the People: Women's Day at the Legislature**. As President of the League, I and 22 other organization Presidents met with the Governor's legislative advisor to urge support of the WLAC agenda. Later, I was one of seven presidents who were invited into the Governor's office to plead our case with him. Governor McKernan agreed to meet with the women's coalition four times a year to learn our concerns. He assured us that he would veto any legislation that undermined the intent of Roe v. Wade. He will not, however, veto the parental consent bill which is currently before the legislature. **He needs to hear from you.**

Your League is serious about lobbying passage of many bills which are before the Legislature. The League supports reduction, reuse, recycling, and measures which will insure environmentally sound siting of landfills. We oppose property tax or expenditure caps as a simplistic solution to a complex tax problem. We will again work against parental consent and will favor a bill which supports improved family communication. We are proud of Ann Knowles and Janice Carpenter of the Portland League who drafted "An Act to Create an Educational Bonus for Affordable Housing." We will also be supporting bills reforming campaign finance and absentee balloting procedure.

We are excited about the inauguration of a new publication, Report from the Legislature, to keep you up to date on our legislative priorities. You will be receiving this important new pub in late April. It will contain the number, title, and description of bills which the League is supporting. We urge you to keep in close contact with your Legislators. If you need additional information, do not hesitate to call me or your local League president. As an elected official, I know how much each letter, postcard, or telephone call means. If we organize and act, we can affect the laws of the State of Maine. So when your League leader calls and when you get your **Report from the Legislature**, reach for your pen or your phone.

--Jane Saxl

\* \* \* \* \*

DATES TO REMEMBER: Tuesday, April 4, LWVME Board Meeting  
Friday-Sunday, May 5, 6, 7, 51st LWVME STATE CONVENTION

\* \* \* \* \*

TO REGISTER FOR THE CONVENTION: NANCY FREEMAN needs to have your check for the \$10 registration fee. She also needs to know how many nights and how many meals you will want at the Maritime Academy. Send this information and your check for \$10 to:

Ms NANCY FREEMAN  
27 Meadow Lane  
Saco, ME 04072.  
282-5665

Other fees will be collected at the time of registration. The rates: double rooms, \$50 (\$25 per person); single rooms, \$40; breakfast, \$4.50, lunch, \$8.50, dinner, \$17.00 each. NO CREDIT CARDS.

DEADLINE FOR REGISTRATION IS APRIL 20!

# CONVENTION '89

MAINE MARITIME ACADEMY, CASTINE

## A G E N D A

- Friday, May 5: 10:30-1:00 See off S.S. Maine (?)  
1:00 State Board Meeting  
6:00 Social Hour  
7:00 Dinner  
8:30 Program, Film and Discussion
- Saturday, May 6: 8:30 Welcome by Governor Ken Curtis  
First Business Session  
10:00 Coffee Break  
10:30 Second Business Session  
12:00 Lunch  
1:05 Third Business Session  
2:00 Legislative Update: Senate Minority Leader Thomas R. Perkins  
Proposed Changes in Election Laws and Campaign Finance: Secretary of  
State William G. Diamond  
3:30 Stand and Stretch  
3:45 Program Discussion and Debate  
5:30 Social Hour  
6:30 Banquet: Mystery Speaker  
8:45 Caucuses in individual guest rooms  
Program
- Sunday, May 7: 8:45 Recognition Breakfast  
Speaker: Judith Knight, LWVUS Advisor, State of LWVUS Report  
National LWV Council Report  
10:00 Stand and Stretch  
10:20 Fourth Business Session  
11:30 Check out of Hotel  
Lunch  
1:00 Fifth Business Session

\* \* \* \* \*

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

The Nominating Committee (Bonnie Anderson, Chair, Portland; Ruth Irwin, Brunswick; Ruth Moss, Ellsworth; Margaret Tragard, York; and Charlotte Wilbur, Portland) report the following slate of candidates for offices of the League of Women Voters of Maine for 1989-1991:

President: Jane Saxl  
1st V.P. Alvin Moss  
2nd V.P. Alysian Hooper  
Secretary: Barbara Bowler  
Treasurer: Nancy Freeman

Directors:  
Alice Conkey  
Pat Cyphers  
Nellik Doble  
Pam Greenman  
Judy Harrison  
Ruth Moss

Nominating Committee: Marion Holshouser, Chair, Portland  
Marlee Coughlan, Portland

# LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MAINE 1989-1990 BUDGET

	12 MOS. BUDGET 4/1/88-3/31/89 :	ACTUAL 4/1/88-3/31/89 :	3 MOS. BUDGET 4/1/89-6/30/89 :	3 MOS. ACTUAL 4/1/89-6/30/89 :	PROPOSED 6/30/89-6/30/90
INCOME					
A. BALANCE FORWARD	550.00 :	:	137.50 :	:	
B. LOCAL LEAGUE SUPP.	3000.00 :	1533.00 :	750.00 :	:	3000.00
C. MEMBERS-AT-LARGE	2064.00 :	1717.00 :	516.00 :	:	2500.00
D. FUND RAISING	5206.30 :	2820.00 :	-451.10 :	:	4000.00
E. PUB. SALES	3500.00 :	1384.00 :	875.00 :	:	3000.00
F. INTEREST	75.00 :	94.56 :	18.75 :	:	75.00
G. PROJECTS, PROGRAMS	500.00 :	1117.00 :	125.00 :	:	250.00
H. STATE CONVENTION	:	:	3500.00 :	:	0.00
I. STATE COUNCIL	1300.00 :	500.00 :	325.00 :	:	1300.00
J. LWV ED FUND	:	10500.00 :	0.00 :	:	
K. OTHER GRANTS	1700.00 :	:	425.00 :	:	100.00
L. MEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS	:	:	:	:	
TOTAL INCOME	17895.30 :	19665.56 :	6221.15 :	0.00 :	14225.00

## EXPENSES

A. OPERATING COSTS	:	1425.00 :	1035.00 :	0.00 :	1200.00
1. SUPPLIES, STAMPS	500.00 :	325.00 :	125.00 :	:	200.00
2. RENT	600.00 :	600.00 :	150.00 :	:	600.00
3. TELEPHONE	540.00 :	500.00 :	135.00 :	:	400.00
4. STAFF	2500.00 :	:	625.00 :	:	
5. BOARD COSTS	:	69.43 :	200.00 :	:	800.00
TRAVEL TO LOCAL LEAG.	300.00 :	:	75.00 :	:	400.00
TRAVEL TO BOARD	500.00 :	:	125.00 :	:	400.00
FINANCE CHARGE	:	69.43 :	0.00 :	:	
TOTAL OPER COSTS	4940.00 :	1494.43 :	1235.00 :	0.00 :	2000.00
B. BOARD ADMINISTRATION	:				
1. PRESIDENT	1500.00 :	2244.00 :	375.00 :	:	1000.00
1A. 1ST VICE PRESIDENT	:	:	:	:	
1B. 2ND VICE PRESIDENT	:	:	:	:	
2. MEMBERSHIP	1000.00 :	:	250.00 :	:	1000.00
3. SECRETARY	200.00 :	:	50.00 :	:	200.00
4. TREASURER	50.00 :	:	12.50 :	:	200.00
5. PUBLIC REL.	200.00 :	:	50.00 :	:	200.00
6. NOMINATING COMM.	200.00 :	:	:	:	200.00
7. BUDGET/BYLAWS	100.00 :	:	:	:	50.00
8. BOARD WKSP/TOOLS	300.00 :	:	:	:	150.00
TOTAL BOARD ADMIN.	3550.00 :	2244.00 :	737.50 :	0.00 :	3000.00
C. CONFERENCES/DELEGATES					
1. STATE CONVENTION	0.00 :	:	3500.00 :	:	0.00
2. STATE COUNCIL	1300.00 :	:	0.00 :	:	3000.00
3. PROGRAM	400.00 :	:	0.00 :	:	200.00
4. MISC EXPENSES	100.00 :	:	0.00 :	:	100.00

5. NAT'L CONVENTION/CON	2200.00 :	364.00 :	0.00 :	:	2000.00
6. REGIONAL/OTHER	300.00 :	:	0.00 :	:	200.00
TOTAL CONFERENCES	4300.00 :	364.00 :	3500.00 :	0.00 :	5500.00
D. FUND RAISING					
1. EXPENSES	500.00 :	609.44 :	125.00 :	:	
2. STIPEND(10% OF D)	473.30 :	0.00 :	-34.35 :	:	
TOTAL FUND RAISING	973.30 :	609.44 :	90.65 :	0.00 :	0.00
E. AFFILIATIONS					
1. LWVUS - MALS	1232.00 :	703.00 :	308.00 :	:	1800.00
2. OTHER(WLAC,NRC)	100.00 :	100.00 :	0.00 :	:	100.00
TOTAL AFFILIATIONS	1332.00 :	803.00 :	308.00 :	0.00 :	1900.00
F. STATE VOTER	1400.00 :	1042.00 :	350.00 :	:	1400.00
G. NAT'S/STATE PROGRAM COMM.					
1. STATE	:	:	:	:	
A. LLW	:	:	:	:	
B. FARMLAND	:	:	:	:	
C. LAND USE	:	:	:	:	
D. ENERGY	700.00 :	553.50 :	:	:	
E. AIR/WATER	:	:	:	:	
F. CAMPAIGN REFORM	:	:	:	:	
G. SOCIAL POLICY	:	:	:	:	
2. NATIONAL PROGRAM	:	:	:	:	
3. VOTER SERVICE	:	8177.00 :	:	:	
4. PUB PRODUCTION	:	736.00 :	:	:	
TOTAL PROGRAM	700.00 :	9466.50 :	0.00 :	0.00 :	0.00
H. POSITION SUPPORT					
1. LEGISLATIVE RECEPTION	200.00 :	:	:	:	500.00
2. POSITION PAPERS	0.00 :	0.00 :	:	:	
3. ACTION	500.00 :	:	:	:	500.00
TOTAL POSITION SUPPORT	700.00 :	0.00 :	0.00 :	0.00 :	1000.00
GRAND TOTALS	17895.30 :	16023.37 :	6221.15 :	0.00 :	14800.00

## MAL TALLY

Every year we report to National how many members-at-large we have as of January 1. In the course of any given year the number tends to change. We began 1989 with a total of 99 MALs, and on January 12, we hit 100! This total includes the 18 Mid-Coast members and the 33 Ellsworth Area members. Each year we gain a few and we lose a few. In 1987, the losses outweighed the gains resulting in a net loss of five. In 1988, it was the other way around with a net gain of 17. Our 1987 by-law revision provides for MAL delegates to state convention. Any MAL interested in attending as a voting delegate should contact the MAL Coordinator right away.

--Nellik Doble, Brooklin Me 04616, 359-4433

# STATE POSITIONS 1989-1991

The Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of Maine recommends readoption of the following positions:

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES: Action to promote wise use and prevent degradation of water and air resources in Maine.

Air Quality: Support wise use and prevent degradation of air in Maine.

Pesticides: Support pesticide control program which includes education, research, strong regulations and strict enforcement.

Water Quality: Support measures to strengthen DEP and support classification of Maine waters and funding of sewage treatment.

LAND USE: Support the development of a comprehensive land use plan for Maine with emphasis on evaluation of authorities and jurisdiction of state, regional, and local agencies.

FARM LAND PRESERVATION: Support strong preservation at all levels when land use changes are considered.

ENERGY: Support adoption of a soft energy path policy by increased conservation and expanded use of soft technologies as energy sources.

LOW-LEVEL NUCLEAR WASTE DISPOSAL: LWV of Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont support a regional compact which meets League criteria, and development of a single in-state site.

COUNTY GOVERNMENT: Support intermediary form of government such as county government between municipalities and the state.

STATE GOVERNMENT:

Legislative staff: support additional staff.

Length of Terms: Support two-year terms for representatives, four-year staggered terms for senators.

Size of House: Support reduction from 151 to 100 seats.

EDUCATIONAL FINANCE: Support adequate and relatively equal funds on a per-pupil basis.

The Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of Maine recommends dropping "International Relations: National Security: Action to promote use of computer program developed to teach decision-making on avoiding nuclear war" because the program has been completed.

The Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of Maine recommends adoption of the Nuclear Issues section of the Energy Position to be presented at Convention.

The Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of Maine recommends action on the following LWVUS positions:

## GOVERNMENT

Citizens' Rights--Public Policy on Reproductive Choices: Protect the constitutional right of privacy of the individual to make reproductive choices.

## SOCIAL POLICY

Equality of Opportunity: Support equal access to education, employment, and housing. Support ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment and efforts to bring laws into compliance with the goals of the ERA.

Meeting Basic Human Needs: Support programs and policies to prevent or reduce poverty and to promote self-sufficiency for individuals and families.

Child Care: Support programs, services, and policies at all levels of government to expand the supply of affordable, quality child care for all who need it in order to increase access to employment and to prevent or reduce poverty.

## NON-RECOMMENDED ITEMS

The Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of Maine does not recommend that Convention adopt the following program items recommended by local Leagues:

State Government: Update of position recommended by the Bangor-Brewer Area, York County, and Portland Area Leagues. Brunswick recommended dropping the position.

County Government: Update of position recommended by York County and Portland Area Leagues.

Election Process: A study on state campaign finance issues was recommended by the Brunswick Area and the MDI Leagues and the Ellsworth MAL Unit.

Educational Finance: Update and expansion of position recommended by MDI and Portland Area Leagues.

Taxes: Study recommended to replace tax position dropped (except for Educational Finance section) in 1983 by Bangor and York County Leagues.

## 1989-1991 PROPOSED ADVOCACY PRIORITIES

The Board of Directors of the LWVME recommends the League concentrate its advocacy efforts on the following items:

Waste Management/Recycling  
Affordable Housing  
Voter Advocacy

(Ways to implement these priorities through action and education will be presented at Convention.)

The LWVME Board appointed an Action Committee at its March meeting. The Committee will publish an Action Alert outlining bills the League supports/opposes being considered by the Legislature this session. The Action Alert will be mailed to all members in April. Committee members believe this separate publication will make it easier for members to discuss issues of importance to the League with their Legislators.

## BY-LAWS

The Board of Directors of the LWVME recommends to Convention the following changes in its by-laws:

### ARTICLE V

#### Board of Directors

Sec. 5. Regular Meetings. ...The President shall notify each member of the Board of all regular meetings by mailing to each member's last known post office address, at least (two weeks) one week before any such meeting....

Notice of each meeting is mailed as part of the Agenda for each meeting. The two-week requirement results in an untimely agenda, and the Board spends valuable meeting time amending the Agenda. Meeting dates are set for the entire year in June.

\* \* \* \* \*

He is unknown,  
The poet who sings  
This greatest  
Of all songs -- SPRING!  
--Shiki  
Haiku Harvest



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# PORTFOLIO UPDATE

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NATIONAL SECURITY - ETHEL SCHWALBE

## LEGISLATION FOR PEACE -- AND SURVIVAL

The League, at both national and state levels, has a broad agenda of natural resource and social policy issues as well as national security and other international relations programs. There is a growing recognition even among "Cold Warriors" that we cannot continue to spend at current levels for weapons and conventional forces and have enough left for the "kinder, gentler" programs, to say nothing of rebuilding our nation's badly deteriorating infrastructure. Our deteriorating economy, our national debt, trade deficit and declining competitiveness in world markets (and in our home market as well) are also related to the amount we have been spending on the military.

The following (based on a workshop at the recent "Common Security -- Structures for Peace" convocation in Washington, D.C.) addresses the critical issue of how we can return to a peacetime economy without massive disruption and economic harm to individual workers.

## DISARMAMENT AND ECONOMIC CONVERSION

Professor Seymour Melman (Columbia University), chair of the National Commission for Economic Conversion and Disarmament, started with some "shockers":

--From 1947 to 1987, the U.S. expended on our "permanent war economy" a quantity of resources sufficient to replace the largest part of what is man-made on the entire surface of the U.S (that's over \$7.5 trillion).

--This pre-emption of capital resources also introduced a system of internal "management" that killed off concern for cost control and productivity. As a result, the U.S. is not capable of producing: 85% of the cars, 30% of the steel, 50% of machine tools, and most of the electronics we use.

--The government's "cover story" for all this is: "The military budget is only 6.5% of the GNP." Unstated is the fact that the "li'l ole 6.5%" includes 75% of all federal research and development expenditures and 32% of all salaries of scientists and engineers.

We no longer have a market economy. We must realize that both the U.S. and the USSR lost the Cold War. Germany and Japan are the clear victors. We have been treated as idiots. There is no place to go with the military power we keep building up. It really is impossible to kill a person more than once, destroy a city more than once. (I should point out that U.S. strategy no longer aims directly at people and cities, but rather at the "enemy's missile silos and command centers. But Professor Melman's basic point still holds -- there is no place to go -- or to stop. The more we build, the more they build, the more we need to destroy what they built, ad infinitum.)

## PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

Legislation is being drafted combining separate bills proposed by three congressmen (no similar action yet in the Senate, unfortunately). The "Weiss, Gedjenson, Mavroules bill" will provide for:

1. Establishing in every military base and defense factory an "Alternative Use Committee" composed of one-half management and one-half employee representatives. Its role would be to plan for termination of military work.

2. Conversion planning far in advance of the Pentagon's plans to terminate a base or military contract. Estimates are that two years would be required.

3. Advance notification of specific contract termination.

4. Highly decentralized planning. Authority would be with the people at the site affected.

5. A community economic adjustment plan.

6. Income maintenance for workers for a specified period of dislocation.

7. Relocation allowances.

8. All of the above would be financed without new taxes. It is proposed to use 1 1/4% off the top of money allocated to the Pentagon for military product purchases. (One-half of appropriated federal funds are on military accounts.)

9. Encouraging all levels of government to engage in capital budget planning for rebuilding infrastructure. It will require \$3,000,000,000,000 (yes, that's trillion) and would provide many jobs.

Professor Melman noted that there is also opportunity for new goods and services to be invented and produced by Americans. This would require a "coalition strategy" of unprecedented scope, bringing together such existing groups as trade associations, professional associations, road contractors, suppliers of hospital equipment -- as pertinent to the product or service envisioned. In answer to a question, Melman said, "Get away from the nonsense about a 'post-industrial society' and 'service economies.' We need to re-industrialize and produce things needed for our lives."

#### IT WON'T HAPPEN WITHOUT CITIZEN PRESSURE

The first speaker in this workshop, Ann Cahn, said she started as a skeptic, because bills had been introduced in the past on economic conversion, but had gone nowhere. We made no progress in 25 years. She thinks one reason lies in the way we have approached the subject. For example, many elements of our population are affected (often adversely) by actions of the federal government. Defense production workers are generally the highest paid; so politically it is a non-starter to ask for special benefits for them without at the same time asking for the same things for other workers.

Cahn said we need to do some really basic rethinking on: "What are the obligations of government to its citizens? How do social changes get made?" (Think of slavery, the franchise for women.) But, on a brighter note, she said that there are four recent events that give some hope that for the first time there may be movement on economic conversion legislation:

1. The House leadership has permitted the Weiss bill to go forward. Rose Okar will introduce an amendment to the Defense Production Act, which must be reapproved this year, to deal with that.

2. The START (Strategic Arms Reduction) talks are on people's minds. With an emphasis on 50% reductions, one is forced to think of "what then for the factories and workers?"

3. The yearly budget deficit and accumulating national debt. Even conservatives like Sam Nunn realize they must cut the defense budget \$300 billion over the next five years.

4. The Base Closing Commission set a good political model. It was an admission that "pork barrels prevent progress."

#### ARMAGEDDON -- NUCLEAR OR ENVIRONMENTAL?

Luckily, arms control advocates and environmentalists are not wasting time arguing about which poses the greatest risk -- nuclear war (deliberate or accidental, "limited" or total) or the several environmental threats the world now faces. They agree that both threats must be dealt with -- and are working together.

Something to watch for: a proposed "Global Warming Act," legislation sponsored by Repr. Claudine Schneider (R. of Rhode Island). It sounds very well thought out, defines causes and sources of global warming and sets up a ranking system for solutions in terms of their cost and environmental impact. It ranges from the problems of tropical rain forest destruction (forests are "the lungs of the earth") to the 31% of global warming caused by transportation (i.e., every time we drive our cars).

Your letter for this month might be to Representatives Snowe or Brennan, depending on your congressional district, to ask them if they are co-sponsors of the global warming bill, HR-1078, and encourage them to become co-sponsors if they have not yet signed on.

# AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The affordable housing bill, "The Act to Create an Educational Bonus for Affordable Housing," has come back to the Housing Committee and to the League membership before it goes on to Augusta. Its purpose is to provide grants for education to municipalities that create units of affordable housing. By paying the extra cost until the increased enrollment is covered by the school formula, the grants would eliminate the argument that affordable housing overburdens the educational system.

A unit refers to newly constructed housing or renovated housing that was not habitable or was not available for rent or purchase and is now decent, safe, and sanitary and affordable to persons of low and moderate income. Affordability refers to a mortgage payment, including principal and interest only that does not exceed 30% of the gross income of the buyer.

The deed restriction preserves the affordability of the unit for 10 years from the time the municipality receives the grant. The municipality itself is responsible for setting standards that assure the units are decent, safe, and sanitary and for enforcing those standards. The bill states that tenants of rental units are to report unsafe and unsanitary conditions to the Department of Economic and Community Development (D.E.C.D.).

By October 31, the D.E.C.D. shall determine the number of affordable units in each municipality which qualify for grants and allot a one-time payment of \$2000 for each unit. The payment, based on the number of units in a county, shall not exceed the number of students and in no case shall a community receive less than \$2000 per unit. If funds remain, the D.E.C.D. shall allocate these funds equitably to the communities in which the lack of affordable housing is most severe.

Prior to November 15, the D.E.C.D. shall pay the grants to each community. By November 15 of the following year, each community shall report its use of the money to the department. The department shall evaluate this information and by January 1, 1991, the commissioner of the department shall submit a report of the program to the Legislature's Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development. To continue the appropriation of funds, the legislature must provide sufficient funds equal to 90% of the number of units of the previous year.

The bill, now printed and numbered LD451, will go to the Economic and Community Development Committee first for a workshop which League members may attend but not speak at, then for a hearing where the League can speak for the bill. After the hearing, the bill will be labeled either "ought to pass" or "ought not to pass" or with a divided report. It will then go to the House and Senate for a vote. The sponsors of the bill are Annette Hoglund, Ruth Foster, and Rita Melendy. To obtain a copy of this or any other bill, write to Legislative Document Room, State House, Augusta, ME 04401, or call 289-1408.

--Marge Weeks  
Affordable Housing Committee  
Portland Area League

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## NEW PRIORITY FROM LWVUS

Having withdrawn from the Presidential debates, the League of Women Voters U.S. has decided to refocus its energies and become an "advocate for the voter." The League will study the impact of political campaigns on voter turnout, and work with Congress on electoral and campaign reforms. As funds become available, LWVUS expects to offer training workshops and pass-through grants for local League projects.

## DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION POLITICIZED

In the waning days of the 113th Legislature's regular 1988 session, a rider was added to the voluminous appropriations bill to reclassify six management positions in the Department of Environmental Protection making them political appointments. The rider had not been debated by the legislature, and most of the members who voted to pass the appropriations bill were not aware of the provision affecting the DEP. When it was made public what had been approved, the Legislature quickly passed a bill repealing the offending clause. Governor McKernan, having signed the appropriations bill into law, used the short time left in the session to pocket veto the rescinding measure. A new bill to restore the six affected DEP positions to their former status has been submitted for consideration by the 114th Legislature.

The new bill to remove the DEP positions from the arena of political appointments was submitted in December, 1988, by State Representative Harriet A. Ketover of Portland, District 29, and by State Representative James V. Oliver of Portland, District 26. Support for this bill from a broad spectrum of interests in the state will be important to its becoming law. The past actions of the Governor and his support for new legislation to politicize even more DEP positions make it imperative that the weight of public and legislative support for the restoring bill be sufficient to discourage or to override a veto.

--Joan Saxe, Brunswick League

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## SENATOR COHEN SPONSORS ERA

Senator William S. Cohen recently resubmitted legislation to make the Equal Rights Amendment part of the U.S. Constitution. In his congressional interview with the League, Cohen said he was "taking a lot of heat" from constituents for reintroducing the ERA. Please write or call the Senator to thank him for resubmitting this vital legislation. Urge the other members of Maine's congressional delegation to support Cohen's efforts.

Sen. William S. Cohen  
322 Hart Senate Bldg.  
Washington, D.C. 20510  
(202) 224-2523

Sen. George J. Mitchell  
364 Russell Senate Bldg.  
Washington, D.C. 20510  
(202) 224-5344

Rep. Olympia Snowe  
2464 Rayburn House Bldg.  
Washington, D.C. 20510  
(202) 225-6306

Rep. Joseph E. Brennan  
1428 Longworth House Bldg.  
Washington, D. C. 20515  
(202) 225-6116

(For numbers of their offices nearest you, check your local telephone book.)

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## VISA REPORT CARD

If you have not yet requested your League VISA card, do it now! Contact your local League President of MAL Coordinator Nellik Doble, Brooklin, ME 04616, 359-4433, for an application. By the end of 1988, only one member of the Bangor-Brewer Area LWV had been issued a card. By using her LWV VISA card, however, she earned \$20 for her local League. That will cover her \$18 per member payment to National. So don't delay! Apply for your LWV VISA card today! and start earning \$\$\$\$ for your League!

THE BANGOR-BREWER AREA LWV plans a series of four programs:

TRASHING OUR PAST -- RECLAIMING OUR FUTURE.

The series will begin on Tuesday, April 25. Topics to be included are:

The Legacy of a Throw-away Society  
Buy It, Bag It, Burn It, Bury It  
Reduce, Recycle, Reuse  
Waste "Knot," Want "Knot."

All sessions will be free to the public and will be held at the Abraham Lincoln School in Bangor. Persons attending will be asked to bring an item of trash as their "ticket" of admission to each session. They will also be asked to bring their own coffee cups for refreshments. Those attending the final session will be asked to sign a "contract" pledging to create less trash. For information call

--Judy Harrison, 942-1545



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