

The University of Maine

DigitalCommons@UMaine

---

Maine Women's Publications - All

Publications

---

2-1-1974

## The Maine Voter vol. XXI, no. 3 (Jan - Feb 1974)

Maine League of Women Voters Staff

*Maine League of Women Voters*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/maine\\_women\\_pubs\\_all](https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/maine_women_pubs_all)



Part of the [Women's History Commons](#)

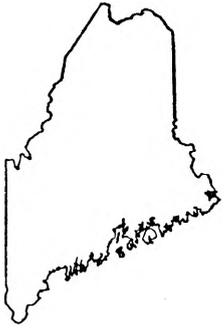
---

### Repository Citation

Staff, Maine League of Women Voters, "The Maine Voter vol. XXI, no. 3 (Jan - Feb 1974)" (1974). *Maine Women's Publications - All*. 752.

[https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/maine\\_women\\_pubs\\_all/752](https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/maine_women_pubs_all/752)

This Newsletter is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@UMaine. It has been accepted for inclusion in Maine Women's Publications - All by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UMaine. For more information, please contact [um.library.technical.services@maine.edu](mailto:um.library.technical.services@maine.edu).



# The MAINE VOTER

Published by The League of Women Voters of Maine

MRS RICHARD WAGNER  
26 MOUNTAIN AVE.  
LEWISTON, ME 04240

VOLUME XXI

JANUARY - FEBRUARY 1974

No. 3

## WE DID IT!

Many, many grateful thanks and much applause goes to all the Leaguers who worked so hard to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment in Maine. I was especially proud to see so many of you at the public hearing on January 14th. It seemed to me that at least half of the audience was made up of members of the League of Women Voters.

A great deal of credit for League involvement goes to Lois Wagner, who has spent the last four months eating and breathing the ERA. And in spite of it, she still came through for us on reapportionment and legislative reform. Other people also devoted a lot of time and effort to the ERA; among them Libby Mitchell, Dauna Binder, Dolores Vail, Margie Oxman, Eileen Larlee, Carol Reiger, Jennie Magaro, Marge Wilson, and Catherine Bell.

Another round of applause goes to those legislators who stayed with us from last year as well as those who changed their votes to yes. I am very sure that their confidence and courage will be commended in the future when the terrible doom prophesied by the opponents turns out to be mere rhetoric.

The League has gained a great side benefit from the ERA campaign. We learned a lot about the art of practical politics as well as making many new friends. I hope we won't forget this when the first session of the 107th rolls around; for as always the League will be there. And this time we will be more ready than ever.

Shirley Knowles

Portland Leaguer Sharon Lawrence has completed a study and paper on public lots. This paper will be incorporated in our statewide land use study. One section of the paper, entitled "The Future of Public Lots," sets forth most of the questions and many of the major suggestions that have been posed concerning these 400,000 acres of state owned lands. Sharon states:

"A joint committee of legislators, headed by Harrison Richardson, has been conducting in 1973 a series of public meetings concerning the future use of the lots. Among the topics that the committee feels are relevant are the following: timber practices, and stream siltation problems; preservation of wildlife habitat; methods of assuring the best balanced sustained yield of timber in the long term; the desirability of locating unlocated public lots by partitioning; the feasibility of organizing any or all portions of the unorganized territories for specific purposes, eg., voting, schools, etc., and the political, economic and social advantages and disadvantages of such organizing; the feasibility of exchanging public lots for higher priority lands for a variety of public purposes such as wildlife areas, recreational areas, educational areas, opportunities for the poor, etc."

*Continued on page 2*

## ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

*LaRue Spiker*

The League legislative committee and state board selected two legislative areas related to environment for action during the special session: public lots to receive top priority and returnable bottles for action. As of this writing no bills have been submitted on either. Whether legislation, growing out of the series of public hearings held this fall by the legislative public lands committee, will be submitted this session remains to be seen. It appears that no legislation on returnable bottles will be submitted, although there were plans to do so as late as early winter.

Our action on public lots legislation, if it is forthcoming, will be based on a number of phases of our preliminary land use consensus of 1972: protection of fragile areas, controlled growth, adequate outdoor recreation provisions for Maine people, environmental decisions made at the state level.

*League Day at the  
Legislature Thursday,  
February 14th, 10-12*

*Come and have coffee  
with your legislator on the third floor  
of the State House  
between the Senate and the House.  
Arrange to have lunch with him/her.  
Valentine Day is  
"be nice to your legislator day".*

Among the suggestions for use which she lists are use of some lots for environmental studies for colleges or secondary schools; a "new deal" type work program for rural and or youth corps; a St. John Wilderness Waterway along the 90 mile river.

"The problem of the future use of lots are many," Sharon continues. "The primary, most immediate problem is to return control to the State. Another problem is the current location of many of the lots: the inaccessibility precludes many uses. The immense potential of the lots should provide impetus to the public, the Public Lands Committee, and the newly appointed Director of the Bureau of Public Lands, Dr. R. Barringer, to overcome the obstacles to full public benefits."

LaRue Spiker

### WELFARE

Contained within LD 2289 is an appropriation request we are following with concern during the current Special Session.

It involves an additional appropriation of \$2 million recommended by Governor Curtis for Aid to Families with Dependent Children during FY 75. The increased funding, to be federally matched, would be enough to raise slightly the AFDC grants for the first time in recent years.

Although the cost of living has increased by 23% since 1969, there has been no attendant increase in AFDC grants. Presently, recipients are provided less than one half the amount determined by the State to be required to meet minimum need standards.

While rising levels of unemployment, the energy crisis, and the escalating cost of living make accurate estimates difficult, meeting full need would require an additional appropriation of approximately \$5.1 million (also to be federally matched), rather than the \$2 million requested by the Governor.

We are thoroughly in support of increased payments for AFDC and should be working toward educating legislators on the desirability of meeting full needs.

Kirsten Larsson-Turley

### LEGISLATIVE REFORM

The bill on legislative reform proposed in this special session is probably doomed to the same fate as the reapportionment plan, minus recourse to the Supreme Court, and for the same reason—single versus multi-member districts.

L.D. 2071 provides for abolition of the Executive Council, a 132 member House, single member districts for the House, annual sessions of the Legislature with the second session limited to budgetary consideration, and other less significant changes.

The League, in testimony before the State Government Committee, proposed amendments reducing the House further, to 99 members, and deleting the limitation on annual sessions. We were the only proponents of reform present at the hearing besides the bill's sponsor, Walter Birt of Millinocket.

Nonetheless, the chances for reform become better every legislative session. Our persistence is noticed and our continued attention may, at least, help indicate the direction that reform takes.

Lois Wagner

### EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT

**WE WON!** On Friday, January 18, the Senate voted 19-11 to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. This action affirmed the 78-68 vote in the House of Representatives on Thursday and made Maine the 31st state to ratify. Seven more states must ratify before ERA becomes the 27th Amendment.

Maine is the first state this year to consider ERA; the significant and considered decision here will show legislatures in states where action is pending that sentiment for ERA is strong; and will give encouragement to supporters in those states.

Credit for the victory belongs to all the women and men throughout the state who have given what time and talent they had to educating the people of Maine and persuading the legislators. League members have played a major role in this effort and you all deserve a pat on the back.

But this is the beginning, not the conclusion. Laws at both the state and national level must be carefully evaluated to erase discrimination; work which will take time and thoughtful consideration, and make good use of the experience gained during the ratification campaign.

Lois Wagner

### BRUNSWICK LEAGUE'S MEMBERSHIP OPEN HOUSE

This year we tried something new, — having an "Open House" instead of a tea or coffee. We held the meeting from 8:00 to 9:30 P.M. in a private home. One hundred and forty invitations were sent out with names obtained from the Welcome Wagon, the Brunswick school system (New teachers), Bowdoin College (New women professors and wives), Navy Officers Wives Coffee (sign up sheet), and a most effective list from each board member.

Each board member helped by writing some invitations and then calling their list a few days before the open house to offer transportation if necessary. This personal contact made a big difference in the big turnout.

We served coffee and cider with finger-food desserts. The first hour was unstructured. League literature was available to each guest and everyone had a name tag. The last half hour our president Mary Lee Ward addressed the group with words of welcome and brief comments about the League in general, then a little about our current study and upcoming events.

There were thirty five guests attending with eight joining that night. Seven more have joined since then and several are very interested. It was a most successful evening!

Chris Millar

Membership Chairman

#### THE MAINE VOTER

VOL. XXI

NUMBER 3

Published four times a year in July, October, January and April by the League of Women Voters of Maine.

Second class postage paid at Winthrop, Maine 04364

Editor: Ola-Mae Wheaton, RFD 2, Winthrop, Maine 04364

President: Shirley Knowles, RFD 1, Winthrop, Maine 04364

Subscription price 50¢ per year as part of membership dues.

**HOUSE REAPPORTIONMENT**

The Maine Supreme Court will reapportion the House of Representatives, as it did the Senate. The Legislature recently rejected a reapportionment plan because of an amendment calling for single member districts state-wide.

The issue of single versus multi-member districts has created a partisan impasse on both reapportionment and legislative reform. The political balance in the House of Representatives is 78 Republicans to 73 Democrats. Democrats, who are usually strongest in urban areas with multi-member districts fear the loss of seats with single member districting, while Republicans hope by redistricting to solidify a rather shaky majority.

However, the Leagues in Maine have been unable to reach consensus on districting for quite other reasons, indicating, perhaps, that there are rational, as well as partisan, objections to single-member districting.

The League, while unable to break the districting deadlock, will have an important educational role to play when the Court produces an apportionment plan. Districts and polling places will change in some areas and local agencies will welcome the help of Leagues in publicizing those changes.

In preparation for this task, each League should become familiar with the plan developed by the Reapportionment Commission, as the Court plan is likely to be very close to the Commission plan. Copies of the Commission report and the reapportionment bill have been sent to each League.

The regular session of the Legislature established the Commission, composed of one Senator and two Representatives from each political party, a public member from each party, and a third public member chosen by them. This non-partisan public member, Nancy Masterton, was chosen chairman of the Commission.

The Commission developed a list of guidelines, and then proceeded to carve up the state into districts as nearly equal, compact, and contiguous as possible while crossing city and county lines as little as possible. It had also to avoid, as much as possible, putting two incumbents in the same district. The job was a difficult and tedious one; the result was a plan providing districts with a maximum variation from the mean of 1.60%. Quite an accomplishment.

Some questions come to mind for our future consideration: What should be the composition of an apportionment commission? Should such a commission's plan carry a self-enacting provision, i.e. automatic acceptance if the Legislature does nothing? Is it possible to avoid the kind of partisan deadlock which shunted this plan into Court? Is it possible to interest citizens in the apportionment process?

Lois Wagner

**FROM INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS . . . .**

Without the impetus of a school focused specifically on trade, it is hoped that each League will seek other available resources to keep trade and/or other areas in International Relations alive! First of all, to keep up with the Trade Bill (H.R. 6767), we must read the daily newspapers—in particular, the New York Times and the Christian Science Monitor. To quote from the January 6th Times, "Although the House eventually passed the Trade Bill (took over 2 months), the Soviet issue ('most favored' status, dependent on the Soviet Union easing its restrictions on emigration of Jews and other minority members) was not really resolved, and will arise this year in the Senate." That's here and now—read the newspapers!

Secondly, sponsor or organize a Great Decisions 1974 group. Study the excellent background material in the booklet available for \$3.00 from Maine Public Broadcasting Network, Alumni Hall, University of Maine, Orono, Maine 04473 or the Foreign Policy Association, New York City. The series begins the week of February 10th and runs 8 weeks with presentations at specified times on WAAB. Another condensed study book, published by the U.N.A.—U.S.A., is *Foreign Policy Decision Making: The New Dimensions*, for \$1.00 or less for quantity. Write to:

U.N.A.—U.S.A.  
833 U.N. Plaza  
New York, N.Y. 10017

Lastly, our own Department of Commerce and Industry publishes a leaflet called *News: Commerce, Industry, and Community Development*. The Department in Augusta has assured us they will cooperate with us in every possible way. The Orono League reported they recently drew upon this resource for a "truly exciting meeting. We found that Maine is involved in international trade to a greater degree than most had realized." Frank M. Piveronas, Director of the Marketing Foreign Trade Division, is the person to contact. A recent newspaper article urged the establishment of free trade zones in Portland and Bangor. Would these free trade zones help? What does a free zone mean? This is a good place to begin.

Doris Lindquist

**BACKGROUND ON IMPEACHMENT**

The League of Women Voters is committed to orderly governmental processes and promoting citizen confidence in public officials and the institutions they are responsible for. Recent developments on the national scene have undermined that confidence and disrupted those procedures to the point where the House of Representatives, specifically the House Judiciary Committee, has begun an inquiry as to whether there are grounds for recommending that impeachment proceedings be instituted to remove the President from office.

*Continued on page 4*

### MEN IN LEAGUE?

One item that is sure to come up at the National Convention in May will be the admittance of men as regular members of the League? Some Leagues already admit men as Associate members, but with no voting privileges. How do you feel about it and how do you want your delegates to vote at the Convention? Fill out the coupon below and mail it to Shirley Knowles, 193 Main Street, Winthrop, 04364.

Men should be admitted to the League with full voting privileges

Yes  No

If yes, the name of the organization should be changed to the League of Voters.  yes  no

The name should stay the same  yes  no

Men should be admitted as associate members only.  yes  no

### MEN IN THE LEAGUE - A Poll

*Taken from Connecticut Voter*

#### Letters to the VOTER

"The Westport League wrote the original proposal to delete the word 'women' from the membership section of the by-laws. We feel this is a moral issue. If we are against discrimination by virtue of race, sex or religion, how can we properly exclude men in our organization!"

As pointed out in the Con section of the VOTER, men do not have the time for research and watch-dogging, but they *are* interested in our research and reports. They *do* have a different point of view which we should hear when coming to consensus.

"We see no rush of men joining or taking over the League. We merely want to practice what we preach and admit to full membership all voters who are interested in our organization."

*Charlotte Belser, Westport*

"I agree with Gloria Steinem that the League should not admit men at this point in time, because the League . . . provides a place where women can develop their leadership qualities, increase their self-confidence, and begin to believe that they CAN think and do without men around to protect and guide them!"

*Mary Meyer, West Hartford*

"While it is inevitable that the name of the LWV would be changed if men were admitted to full membership, the change in name should not be undertaken at least until after the Equal Rights Amendment is passed. It may mean tokenism for a period of time, but those men who join the League of *Women* Voters will be men who, like the pro women-suffrage lawmakers, will encourage women to enjoy their fullest potential in the business world and in political life."

*Edith Neece, Bloomfield*

"I have observed on mixed committees that the average man won't do a job if there's a woman to do it for him. He will, however, give his opinion. Keep the 'W'!"

*(No name, please) New Canaan*

"Why not? If men really feel the need to be voting members - so be it. They may soon become discouraged when they see the amount of time it takes!"

*Gail Roth, Simsbury*

"With a *clear conscience*, 200 men at the Veterans of Foreign Wars convention in August 1973 denied women the material benefits that VFW membership would entail . . . (There are approximately 7,750 women veterans in Connecticut.)

"For the League of Women Voters to deny membership to men withholds no material benefits which they cannot enjoy as associate members . . ."

*Mildred B. O'Neil, Newington*

"I don't think the role of associate member is 'terrible' . . . But then again, as a woman, if I were assigned only an associate membership in an all-male organization . . . You know, it's really a hard question."

*Secretary of the State Gloria Schaffer,*

*Woodbridge-Bethany LWV*

*(quoted in the West Hartford NEWS)*

*Continued from page 3*

That inquiry has just gotten underway and it is essential that it be carried out in a manner that will help restore citizens' confidence in the ability of their elected officials to govern responsibly and equitably. The impeachment process is established by the Constitution and is dealt with in more detail in the enclosed fact sheet. On November 15, the House voted an appropriation of one million dollars to the House Judiciary Committee for expanded staff and services in order to investigate whether or not impeachable offenses have been committed by the President.

### THE LEAGUE POSITION

The League considers the impeachment process a legitimate constitutional means whereby the representatives of the people (Congress) can determine whether or not there are grounds for removal from office of a member of the executive or the judiciary. The League does not prejudge whether an individual is guilty or innocent nor does it have a position on what causes impeachment might be based upon.

We believe, however, that whatever the outcome, the American public must be convinced that a fair and thorough inquiry has been made. To assure that end, the Chairman of House Judiciary should guarantee to the minority staffing, and that the minority will be represented in all planning for staff, strategy and timing. In addition, a Special Counsel with the highest qualifications should be appointed quickly and hearings begun as expeditiously as possible. In line with its U.S. Congress position, the League believes that the Committee hearings must be open so that the public can follow all major developments and lines of inquiry. This openness should also cover acquisition and publication of documents pertaining to specific charges that can be released within the limits of national security and protection of individual rights as determined by the Supreme Court.