

What Is the LWV?

"We want and need new members, but we are really interested in women who want to participate to some extent in the program."

This comment came from a member of the Birmingham League of Women Voters. That the League wants active participants is easy to understand when one considers its many accomplishments in community service.

Gov. George Romney has proclaimed the week of Sept. 22 as League of Women Voters Week throughout the state.

Just what is the LWV? What does it stand for and what does it do? How does it get members and how is it financed? Who decides what programs the LWV will undertake?

THE BIRMINGHAM unit, organized in 1932, is one of 1,100 local Leagues in the nation. Its purpose: To promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government.

The League takes action in governmental measures but does not support or oppose any political party or candidate.

League programming operates at three levels—local, state and national. Two current national study items, foreign economic policy and the U.N., are nearing completion.

On the state level, an LWV study is underway of public welfare and the relationship of federal, state and local programs. A two-year study of Oakland County government was initiated this year.

FOR ITS LOCAL program, the Birmingham unit is making a study of Bloomfield Township and the Bloomfield Hills School System. It will pave the way should the Birmingham LWV wish to reorganize as the Birmingham-Bloomfield LWV.

The LWV follows a course of study, discussion and action. Members do the research; the facts are discussed; a consensus is reached; then recommendations for action are made by the board of directors and voted by the members.

TO IMPLEMENT these recommendations, the League takes part in public hearings, public forums and panel discussions; and makes use of mass media; LWV pub-

lications and letters to local, state and national officials.

Women of voting age who believe in representative government are eligible for membership in the LWV. All members of the local Leagues are voting members.

Members may work on a study committee, the backbone of the League, or may participate by attending meetings and joining in discussions.

WHERE DOES the League get its money? About 25 per cent of its annual budget comes from membership dues of \$5. The rest comes from community support, of which members contribute about one-third beyond their dues.

An average of 60 per cent of the League's funds is spent in the community; about 20 per cent supports the state program; and 10 per cent goes for operation of the national unit.

WHAT ABOUT men? What part do they have in the LWV?

"They participate to the extent of being tolerant husbands and cheerful contributors," in the words of one member. "Any meeting is open to their attendance and their suggestions, and criticisms are accepted and acted upon."

The League cooperates with many organizations, such as the Jaycees, in implementing a drive for a common goal.

TWO REGULAR services offered by the LWV are the Voters' Guides for the various elections and a Speakers Bureau. LWV members claim that the Guide is the "only factual, objective, nonpartisan Guide to local, state and national elections published."

From its Speakers Bureau, the League offers capable, qualified speakers—at no charge—on the subjects of the League, itself, and how it works; how to form a citizen's committee; the structure of political parties; and the U.N.

THE LEAGUE of Women Voters has proved to be an unusually strong and effective force in bringing citizen interest in this area to governmental problems.

It is an active community organization that has rendered great service and holds even greater promise for the future.

It deserves our wholehearted support.

Now Is the Time . . .

Next Saturday at Oakland University in Rochester, an old fashioned political forum will be held, bringing into our area some of the biggest political names in the state.

It is sponsored by non-partisan local organizations, all of whom have been identified in the past with promoting more understanding of and better government.

The speakers' list includes Governor Romney, Senator Hart, Congressmen Broomfield and Staebler, plus many local officeholders in city, county and state government.

THE TWO MAIN themes of the forum will be: "Who's to pay for public services?" and "Is more efficient local government now possible?"

The idea of a citizens' forum is not only a good one, but also long overdue.

It is only too bad that time will limit it to two subjects.

One of the most distressing things about

government today is that the citizens seldom get to see and ask questions of public officeholders except in election years, when they are out campaigning.

THIS IS PROBABLY the worst time to get frank opinions on important questions. When the campaign trails are overrun with weeds is the time to learn and advise.

It is our hope that our readers take the time to get out and listen and that they be given ample time to air their individual views.

We would also encourage the sponsoring organizations to make this a tradition, to better the line of communication between the people and their elected representatives, by having them periodically.

Naturally, their decision to do this would be based on the turnout Saturday, so don't let them down.

To modify their own phrase, "Let your voice, as a citizen, again be heard."

From The Eccentric's Point of View . . .

When miners are trapped in Pennsylvania or Utah, or wherever there is a great hullabaloo of public interest. The drama of great hazards and intensive rescue efforts is heightened as suspense rises through hours and days. It is worth noting that less dramatic, though no less hazardous, cave-ins occur with disturbing frequency. Tragedies of this kind are not confined to mining communities; they may occur in any town, anywhere. The reference is to what happens all too often when boys dig caves, or play on sandbanks or in newly dug trenches. There is an outcry: men run to the scene and dig frantically. Sometimes a child buried so abruptly under a heap of sand or dirt is brought out alive. More often, the rescuers are too late. Not all such tragic accidents can be prevented. But parental care, and sensible precautions at digging sites, could greatly reduce their number.

We have been reliably informed that it is possible, if one goes to the right place, to obtain a six-foot sandwich of the genus hero. Hero, gigantesco, no doubt. This tidbit, packed with Italian goodies, serves 30 to 40 adults. News that such a comestible can be had set us to thinking—not surprisingly, since it was near lunchtime—about sandwiches in general. Not the trimmed snippets of bread and oddments served at bridge teas, nor yet such extravaganzas as the hero. What passed along the channels of memory was a parade of delectables—ham and cheese on rye, the not-to-be-scorned bacon, lettuce and tomato, luscious hamburger, cold roast beef or turkey between buttered slabs from a homemade loaf. And so on. If anyone can think (around lunchtime) of a greater contribution to the good life than the sandwich, we'd like to hear about it.

PEOPLE'S COLUMN

Suggests Left-Turn Signal To Aid Telegraph Traffic

To the Editor:
Your article in the Sept. 5 issue on Telegraph traffic contains, of course, much truth; but the only remedy offered is, as usual, a check on speed.

The worst shortcoming in this whole area is the handling of left turns. The left-turn lanes are very important and Telegraph is cursed by a lack of them at the lesser road entries such as turning east from the southbound lane at Lincoln Road and west from the northbound to streets opening for westbound.

The worst is at the 14 Mile intersection since 14 Mile has

been paved. Police records will show accidents there.

I HAVE traveled in many big city districts around the country and as a comparative newcomer have been astonished at the left-turn situation here.

The only answer to this is a left-turn signal. In cities where there is a left-turn signal in the light sequence, the traffic moves quickly and with little danger. The danger is limited to the irresponsible whom we have with us regardless of laws, fines or jails.

I have found that at Telegraph and Maple the only way to accomplish a left turn is to do as the other natives do and get out in front of the cross traffic and turn on the amber light. Some of that is done after the light turns red with the oncomers blowing horns and threatening and running a danger of collision.

To me this situation seems positively ridiculous and it is about time for someone to start a campaign for the installation of left signals instead of nothing but speed.

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People's Column

Better the Cars Than Delinquency

To the Editor:

Visiting my relatives in Birmingham, I have become aware of "Woodwarding." I think it is good that the teen-agers here have an interest in cars rather than delinquency. I think it is too bad that there isn't a local proving grounds for cars available to the teen-agers at a convenient time (5 p.m. to 10 p.m. on weekends) and nearby if not in the Birmingham area.

DONALD W. ROBERTSON
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Michigan farmers sold more than \$2 million worth of peat last year. Nearly 45 per cent of all peat harvested in the United States comes from the thumb area of the state. Onions, potatoes, carrots, lettuce, beets, mint, celery, radishes, cabbage, turnips and corn are crops commonly grown on this organic soil.

THE GOLDEN YEARS

Here is a report on a retirement study made through the middle-South . . . a tour of about 1,500 miles covering areas not usually associated with retirement living.

The tour began in Washington, D.C., went down the coast to the Outer Banks, then across North Carolina, Tennessee, and parts of Missouri and Arkansas.

It left me with the conviction—more—that as far as retirement is concerned, everywhere is pretty much like everywhere else.

Along the Federal highways the towns and cities are as standardized as the alphabet, and only here and there does one find distinguishing features that would make retirement good or bad.

NORTHERN Virginia, heavily populated by government workers in Washington, has a goodly number of retired civil service workers who have chosen to stay on with their red brick houses and grassy plots.

In the main they seem to prefer to coast along rather than take ad-

vantage of the great libraries and museums of Washington, or to attend the sessions of Congress and the other notable public meetings there. Their pensions fare better here than in most areas.

SOUTHERN Virginia is poor; but economical to live in; the Carolina coast is commercial; preoccupied with fish, and bouncing with college kids and litter kids from April to October.

The triangle of Chapel Hill-Durham-Raleigh in Central North Carolina is educational country, with three major universities and a standard of living—pegged to the low-slung university salaries—that is below most large cities.

Asheville, the gateway to the Carolina mountains, has more vacationists than people. Like golf- and fishing-minded Appalachians and many a charming village for those who would like to retire to serene isolation among people with little wealth who would welcome pensioners with \$200 a month.

But Tennessee is a more beautiful state than most people realize and has many small towns where a couple could find a pleasant retirement on about \$200 a month.

FROM TIPTONVILLE westward, through a segment of Missouri and across Northern Arkansas, it is fishing country, retirement country, and vacation country. Pretty in spots, and poor all over.

Here you see TV antennas and backyard privies gracing the same farm houses, and all manner of people who aren't bucking for a million dollars or a vice-presidency.

The average middle-class couple retiring in Northern and Eastern cities would like this country and find a retirement income of \$200 to \$300 a month enough for pleasant living.

Yesteryear Happenings

50 YEARS AGO

Sept. 19, 1913

The school year has begun with an unusually large enrollment in all departments. A large number of foreign and transfer students from other schools have entered the high school department, so that it will be necessary to put in many new seats in order to accommodate these new members. The freshman class has fifty members and the total enrollment of the high school is 126, the largest enrollment to date.

Among the attractive new automobile caps is one of two thick neases of chiffon, made like a sweater. The chiffon is green and blue and is shirred over a wire frame which fits closely about the head and flares out over the face.

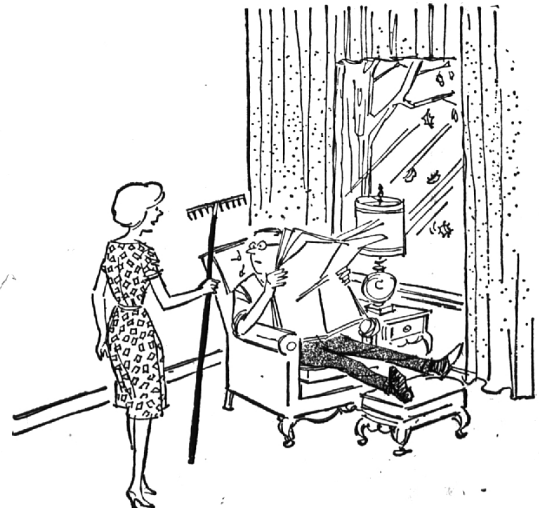
The inside of the bonnet is blue and the outside is green. Raffia is also used for automobile caps. A frill of the silk about the face and neck softens the effect of the raffia.

Walter Nichols of the Village water works is nursing a bruised and mangled right hand which he fell heir to on Sunday last, while oiling the machinery at the pumping station. While the engine was in motion he siled a part while the moving part was up. It caught him on the down stroke and with bad results.

30 YEARS AGO
Sept. 21, 1933

The "Buy in Birmingham" campaign sponsored by the Retail Merchants' Association is well advanced. (See HAPPENINGS, 3-B)

The First Sign of Autumn



Eccentricities

By HANK HOGAN

"If not now, when? And if not us, who? These were the closing words of Governor Romney last week in his address to the legislature concerning fiscal reform.

It points to the crux of the whole tax situation. Everyone in the state is aware that our tax setup is inadequate to meet both future needs of the state and attract new business to eat into our unemployment problem.

Yet no one wants to pay more taxes. And no politician wants to vote for more taxes if he is put on record.

The single thing that may come between salvation and more financial woes is political courage.

WE CAN PICK holes in the governor's program; particularly because we are probably more affected by it than any other community in terms of more dollars going to Lansing.

But to fight it directly will not solve the problem, only prolong it. It will be plaguing us until we face the financial facts of life that an income tax in this state is definitely upon us, somehow, sometime.

We have two resources: Either to search out some other taxing solution which will take care of our state's needs which has escaped the "experts" up till now, or to make our influence felt in modifying the effect of the program on us.

IF WE DON'T do either, we might as well lie on our backs and play dead, because we will pay more taxes now, and even more next year, because the silent voice is always pushed around.

We can modify the program, for example, by writing the governor and our legislators asking that deductions be allowed from gross income as is allowed on our federal return. This would soften the blow.

We can tell the governor and our legislators what benefit we are willing to give up to get this and other modifications.

We can get together and start looking for state programs that we are willing to forego, in order to bring expenses down.

It is not going to be done for us, because "if not us, who?"

Now is the time for all good men to come to their own aid, but not panicking, but by getting together, looking over the program and making their thoughts known. "If not now, when?"

City Beat

By KEN WEAVER



In recent months, Bloomfield Township Supervisor Homer Case has severely criticized the Oakland County Road Commission.

His latest blast came last week when the road officials refused to lower the speed limit on Westview Road in front of Eastover School.

For some time now, Case and other township officials and residents have been concerned over the commission's inaction on requests for lower speed limits in school areas and for road improvements.

The trouble is that the road commission is virtually an autonomous unit of government. Where do you go when you get no results from the commission?



THAT CASE is concerned over the state of affairs is understandable: His township is experiencing the pangs of growth.

The supervisor points out that in 1932 Bloomfield had 36 square miles and an equalized valuation of \$30,572,395. The next year, Birmingham and Bloomfield Hills became cities and the township's land area dropped to 25 square miles and the valuation to \$8,363,785.

In 1940, there were 1,771 people in these 25 square miles.

By 1950, the population had risen to 3,851. Of these, 2,100 were registered to vote. The equalized valuation amounted to \$14,451,218.

THEN CAME the population boom. Ten years later, Bloomfield Township had 22,530 people, with 10,275 of them registered to vote. The valuation had jumped to \$129,009,185 in 1960.

This year, 26,000 people reside in those same 25 square miles; 14,464 of them are registered to vote; and the valuation stands at \$149,544,817.

And the population boom continues. More houses are going up every day in the township. So far this year, construction permits totalling nearly \$12 million have been issued.

CASE POINTS out that the average cost of homes in the township is \$30,000. Lot sizes range from 16,000 to 22,000 square feet.

More people require more services. In 1950, Bloomfield had a one-man police force and a three-man fire department.

Today, it has 23 paid and 5 auxiliary policemen; 20 paid and 30 auxiliary firemen; and 4 fire stations, besides the Bloomfield Village station.

WITH THIS kind of growth, any community is bound to have problems—and to look in every direction for solutions.

No wonder, then, the concern and anxiety when results from the county level bring so much frustration.

ESTABLISHED IN 1878

A Free, Responsible and Aggressive Press Is Democracy's First Line of Defense

Published every Thursday at Birmingham, Mich., in The Eccentric Building, 1225 Powers Street Telephone Midwest 4-1100



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