

League of Women Voters' Aim: Just the Facts

Study in Depth Town, Schools

The League's study program, the backbone of the organization, operates at three levels—local, state and national. State and national programs are chosen at biennial conventions and local programs are adopted at an annual meeting of the membership.

Subjects which the League has studied in the past, but which are no longer on the current agenda, form the basis of the League's responsibility.

Thus current agenda and continuing responsibility programs give the League a number of subjects upon which the members are sufficiently well-informed and up-to-date to support, oppose or propose legislation.

AT ITS convention last May the League of Women Voters of Michigan adopted as its current agenda a study of public welfare and the relationship of federal, state and local programs.

The study will look at the broad areas of public welfare to familiarize members with both public and private agencies. It will then untangle the many threads to learn to whom and by whom public welfare services are provided, whether they are adequate and whether they are equitable and who pays the bill.

The study will look at the implications of federal programs and the relationship of state implementation.

IT WILL TAKE League members into the community to see for themselves as the study concentrates in depth in specific areas.

Finally, as in any League study, the evaluation will produce a consensus from which standards are drawn. From the standards will come the recommendations for changes, improvements and a plan of action.

The local study item adopted at the annual meeting of the Birmingham League is a study of Bloomfield Township and the Bloomfield Hills school system.

This is the same type of study undertaken by the Birmingham League at the time of its organization and from which the book "Know Your Town" was compiled about Birmingham.

THIS IS AN "in depth" study of the township government, its relationship to county and state government, the services provided, tax structure and financing. This will pave the way for future study and action on specific township issues.

In addition to the local program, the Oakland County Council, by agreement of the eight Leagues in the county, has this year adopted a two-year study of Oakland County government.

The study begins with the county budget to learn where the money comes from and how it is spent. It will cover the role of the county board of supervisors, the inter-relationship of local governmental units and will lead to an evaluation of the efficiency of Oakland County government.

THE LOCAL continuing responsibility committee is engaged in compiling an information booklet on the Birmingham School system. This project was undertaken on request of, and in cooperation with, the Board of Education.

Another continuing responsibility project is to study the voter's service through which the League's effort to help individuals to be politically effective is a year-round function.

From the basics up, the voters service committee is studying the mechanics of voting machines at state and county fairs, compares the familiar voter's guide to Birmingham with the one issued in Bloomfield elections and biennially publishes "You Represent You," a pamphlet listing elected and appointed government officials from President to township trustees.

The League's current national program consists of a study of foreign economic policy and a study of the United Nations, both of which will reach consensus this year.

League Never Takes a Stand Without Careful Study First

By MRS. GERVIN BAWDEN
President,
League of Women Voters

The League of Women Voters is different from other organizations because it is aggressively and blatantly Democratic.

We suspect the founding mothers must have had a firm conviction that if the League was to serve its purpose of developing an informed and active electorate it could best teach by example.

If you are going to have government by the people you become involved in all sorts of checks and balances, methods of choosing representatives and leaders, methods of referendum, and the electorate bears a heavy burden of responsibility and knowledge.

OTHER methods of government are much simpler and require little more than allegiance from the mass of people.

In order to guarantee democracy in operation, the League must bear its burden of a difficult and complicated structure. However, this structure makes it possible for Leagues in all 50 states to work independently but under similar standards at the local level and together at the state and national level.

There are organizations abounding to lure every person but it is doubtful that very many require their members to decide that they are going to do it; and then, to reach agreement and act.

THIS is why League members tend to be women who, either by nature or education or both, have a highly developed sense of responsibility. They are women who are concerned about schools, libraries, mentally retarded children, migrant workers, the United Nations, and the vast array of public problems that Leagues all over the country have tackled in their 40-year history.

Some people seem to think we are a bunch of politicians (whatever that means). We're really just housewives who are interested in teacher's salaries, and the like, of the secretariat in the United Nations.

MEMBERS in these organizations do not usually do re-

search or determine policy, but give their support to the decisions of others.

One of the most interesting things about the League is that you never know what you are going to work on next or where it will lead you. It was a tax study that finally led to the decision to work for a new constitution.

At state convention last spring League members decid-

The experience of participating in League work can give a woman a great opportunity for development of mind and heart. We know this because it happens very often.

THE LEAGUE has been known to turn housewives into rather remarkable women. Many a husband has recoiled as his wife carefully explained to him why commodity arrangements can help a country with a primary product problem. He thought the only subjects she was expert on were car pools and infant diets.

At this point we must mention a League position of long standing. Even though we are not able to include them as members (maybe some entering League will think of a way) the League is greatly indebted to men.

They have been great supporters both spiritually and financially. Since women, even wealthy ones, are notorious penny-pinchers, we have relied on men for financial support. We have members who joined because their husbands insisted. May we always merit the support we have received from men.

THE LEAGUE of Women Voters is not a very large organization. The membership in the Birmingham League is only a little over 300. Consider we serve an area of about 60,000 population it is plain that women are not lining up to join.

League work takes time and patience and study along with the fun. But we notice that people are not eagerly flocking to school board rallies (last June with seven candidates running for two vacancies, attendance was not much over 100).

Nor are they lining up at the polls, particularly in the local level where they could be best informed.

WE CAN't trust that there will always be those who do care, who want to be informed, who want to exercise their vote. We must work at being a citizen in a democracy and that they will be strong for the League of Women Voters if we can do it.

It is the League of Women Voters' aim to encourage and train our young people so she may be a strong force for democracy in the community.

Speakers Can Offer Information On Local or Worldwide Topics

Members

The speaker's bureau of the League of Women Voters distinguished itself in the campaign for the new state constitution by giving 82 speeches.

This year these same women are prepared to speak to local organizations on four timely topics. To acquaint the commu-

Start Work In W.B'field

Gov. George Romney has proclaimed this week as League of Women Voters Week throughout the state and national government are invited to attend League meetings.

MR. DEAN BEIER, executive director of the Michigan State Police, reported on the results of a finance drive and the agenda for the West Bloomfield League was discussed.

MEETINGS in October and November will be devoted to study of the United Nations and the U.S. foreign policy.

Locally the League is updating the booklet "This is West Bloomfield" and hopes to have it completed by the first of the year.

All area women of voting age who are interested in their local, state, and national government are invited to attend League meetings.

Conservation Men Sought by State

An open competitive examination will be held Nov. 9 for young men interested in careers as conservation officers.

Applicants must have a college degree in one of the natural sciences, must be 22-29 years old and at least 5 feet 10 inches tall.

Happenings

asked to conduct the campaign in the business district.

Payment of a 5 per cent dividend to depositors of the closed First State Savings Bank of Birmingham was scheduled yesterday by Charles W. Lee, the receiver.

The Birmingham Junior High has laid down definite rules on school attire. Colottes and skirts are to be mid-length and unhemmed. Also, tight pants are no longer acceptable.

B'field Hills Plans Fall Rec. Classes

After-school recreational activities have been set for elementary children in the Bloomfield Hills school district fall semester.

Scheduled for a 10-week period, the activities will be held once a week for each age group.

Activities will include soccer, touch football, basketball, gymnastics, tumbling, volleyball and games.

In all cases, physical education instructors or other qualified teachers will be in charge of each activity.

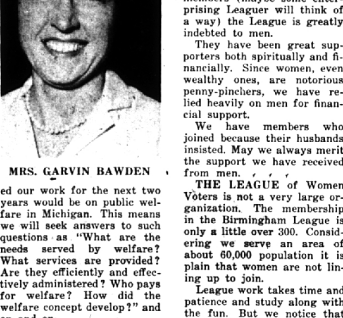
15 YEARS AGO Sept. 23, 1948

Eleven columnar maple trees, each from two to three inches in diameter and protected with heavy steel wire to prevent damage, are going to be planted on W. Maple and Pierce streets in the downtown section.

Recognizing the complaints of a number of citizens that "W. Maple was being degraded" and that it was unattractive by the recent cutting of several aging elms to make way for the recent widening of the street, commissioners decided to spend \$405 to plant the trees.

Equipping the new Pierce field house, now under construction, reached the two-thirds mark this week with the announcement that the Birmingham-Siderland Quarterback Club would donate \$385 to be used to purchase a whirlpool bath.

Principal of the school will be in charge of the physical education contact in the schools or the Recreation Dept. at 646-0244.



MRS. GERVIN BAWDEN

Members Learn That Work Can Be Fun, Stimulating

The program of the League of Women Voters originates with its members—stands on issues and the action to implement these stands coming from consensus of the membership.

Because the strength of the organization is so obviously centered in the membership, the League was recently explored through interviews with seven local members.

The Eccentric asked each of them why they joined the League of Women Voters, what they have gained from the organization as individuals and what they believe it contributes to the community.

MRS. DEAN BEIER, a trustee of the Birmingham Board of Education, joined the League more than 10 years ago.

"At that time I was relatively new to Birmingham and the state of Michigan," she said. "My husband, a native of Birmingham, was involved in local government so I felt I needed to learn more about my new community."

"When a League member invited me to attend a meeting, I discovered this was the organization that would enlighten me."

Mrs. Beier said that the most valuable training she has gained from the League is the ability to study a problem objectively.

"WHEN LEAGUE members study Gov. Romney's new tax reform they will be objective, listing the pros and cons. Only after thorough investigation and consensus of the entire program will they recommend action to support or defeat the program," she said.

Mrs. John P. Rex of Bloomfield Township is the mother of four young children, two of whom are pre-schoolers.

"One of the basic concerns of my adult life are the government under which we live and the schools that will educate not only my children but also every other child in America," she said.

"Because I hoped to learn how to translate this concern into effective action in support of good government and good schools, I joined the League of Women Voters."

SHE SPOKE UP OF the respect awarded the League by government officials.

"While I was working, before marriage, I decided that when my hours were more flexible, one of the organizations I would like to join would be the League of Women Voters," said Mrs. Zorn.

"HAD HEARD that in all areas of the United States it is reputed to be a thorough, accurate and active group that is concerned with issues first, not party politics.

"The League offers a wonderful method of gaining information and participating in effective action. It provides an opportunity to meet and discuss issues with people who have a representative variety of all beliefs, backgrounds and affiliations.

With the same person you may meet one time and be vigorously opposed the next. Minority opinions are heard thoughtfully, but the wish of the majority is protected."

MRS. RODERICK Spann is from San Francisco where, before a series of transfers brought her to Birmingham 15 years ago, she worked in industrial public relations and foreign travel. She is public relations chairman for the Birmingham League.

"My husband's position has necessitated our transferring three times in the past year; a situation not unusual among Birmingham families. One must be an informed citizen only way to become a part of a community is to participate in its problems.

"I JOINED the League of Women Voters when I came to Birmingham to obtain a window on the community and gained a whole new perspective."

Mrs. Spann said the community benefits from League activities in many ways.

"The League provides an informed, nonpartisan forum for the study of public issues, for information on candidates in the Voters' Guide prior to a general election, and for a government 'watchdog' service through the observer program."

"Its disciplines as well as its nonpartisan study and membership consensus."

Troopers Organize

Organization of a proposed Independent Michigan State Police Troopers Association has begun with election of four temporary officers and rough-drafting of a constitution and bylaws, according to Trooper Howard J. Kelly, of the Pontiac post, president of the group.

Chairman of the speaker's bureau is Mrs. William Chew, 991 Brooklawn, Birmingham.

"YOU AND the UN" is the subject chosen by the fourth speaker, Mrs. Robert Vanderberck.

Mrs. Robert Vanderberck

or the World Health Organization's anti-malarial campaign, which is also part of the UN program."

"Even Democrats and Republicans have to agree on the fact that the importance of political parties today cannot be overestimated, and they attest to the fact that political activity can be and is fascinating."

"As I talk to people about the United Nations, I find that too many groups tend to be all pro-UN or all anti-UN. People who are pro-UN are often vague when asked why and are often at a loss to defend the United Nations."