

League of Women Voters Studies /



Women Voters study problems, members give lectures with supporting exhibitions. The basket

of groceries at the left in the picture could be bought for \$5 in 1939. The much smaller bas-

ket contains \$5 worth of groceries at present prices. Discussing the exhibit after a talk at the

Decatur Woman's club, are, left to right, Mrs. Haskell W. Gilson, Mrs. B. N. Nelson, Mrs.



Major Problems Facing Government



Charles Ruedi, Mary J. Miller and Mrs. John J. Donovan.

Local Unit Has 90 Members

By Russell Bieraugel

Of The Herald and Review Staff

Inflation, streamlining the state Constitution and city manager government at present are major concerns of the 90 Decatur women who make up the League of Women Voters.

A pretty heavy diet for the female mind? Just listen to this partial list of subjects chewed by this group of public-minded homemakers since a reorganization in 1945:



League members often attend meetings of the General Assembly in Springfield and consult with legislators there. And when representatives from the 28th district

are home they can expect frequent calls to explain what is going on over there. Here Mrs. Clifford Smith, left, of the program committee, and Mrs. J. A.

Melrose of the civil liberties committee, quiz Rep. James L. Atkins, left, and Rep. Paul H. Ferguson following a meeting in the Decatur Club.



Women voters interview senators and representatives in Congress when they are home. Here

Mrs. Otis B. Chumbley, left, treasurer, and Mrs. Floyd Birt, president, question Rep. William

L. Springer of Champaign. Reports on these interviews are sent to the state organization.

Comprehensive study of state government,
Possible improvements in state welfare services.
Juvenile court safeguards,
Unit districts for public schools,
Election laws and voting machines,
Gateway amendment,
Civil service,
Civil rights,
United Nations.

AS THE study on inflation nears completion, a group is being formed to study the recommendations of the Hoover commission on conservation.

The women do not shoot a broadside at a long list of interests. They keep three study groups going all the time—one on local problems, one on the state level and one on national. Each group makes a study of one subject, climaxing its research with a report to the general membership and anyone else who will listen.

The inflation group recently gave a demonstration to the Woman's Club of Decatur.

In their studies, members of groups go directly to the public officials who are most likely to have the answers to their questions. Even if you are not on the public payroll, if you are an expert in any field affected by legislation, you are liable to be sought out. Franzy Eakin, head of Eakin associates, business consultants, talked on inflation at a recent general meeting.

O. T. Banton, special legislative writer for The Herald and Review, talked on new state legislation at the last meeting.

The League here is best known perhaps for the five candidate get-togethers held in recent years before elections. All candidates are invited to talk to the public from one platform in the Decatur high school. The meetings are free.

Another familiar sight before elections is the voters service booth set up downtown to distribute information.

LAST YEAR the League put information regarding a city tax-increase referendum on shopping bags for use by grocery stores.

The League never supports nor opposes a political candidate or party. It does take definite stands on issues.

Although pleased with a recent gain in membership, Mrs. Floyd D. Birt, president, thinks the local organization needs still more members.

"We are especially anxious to broaden the representation," she said. "What we need is a cross-section of Decatur with members from every section of the city."



Local public officials are called on to supply background information for the League voters' service. Facts bearing on public

referendums are boiled down by the League and presented to the public. Here Laurence Tangney, county clerk, explains a point to

Mrs. Merle Borden, left, Mrs. Charles Ruedi, center, and Mrs. Neal F. Doubleday.



The League depends largely on contributions, mostly from businessmen, to carry on its work.

Here Mrs. E. L. Simmons, finance chairman, fills out a pledge card as an unidentified supporter

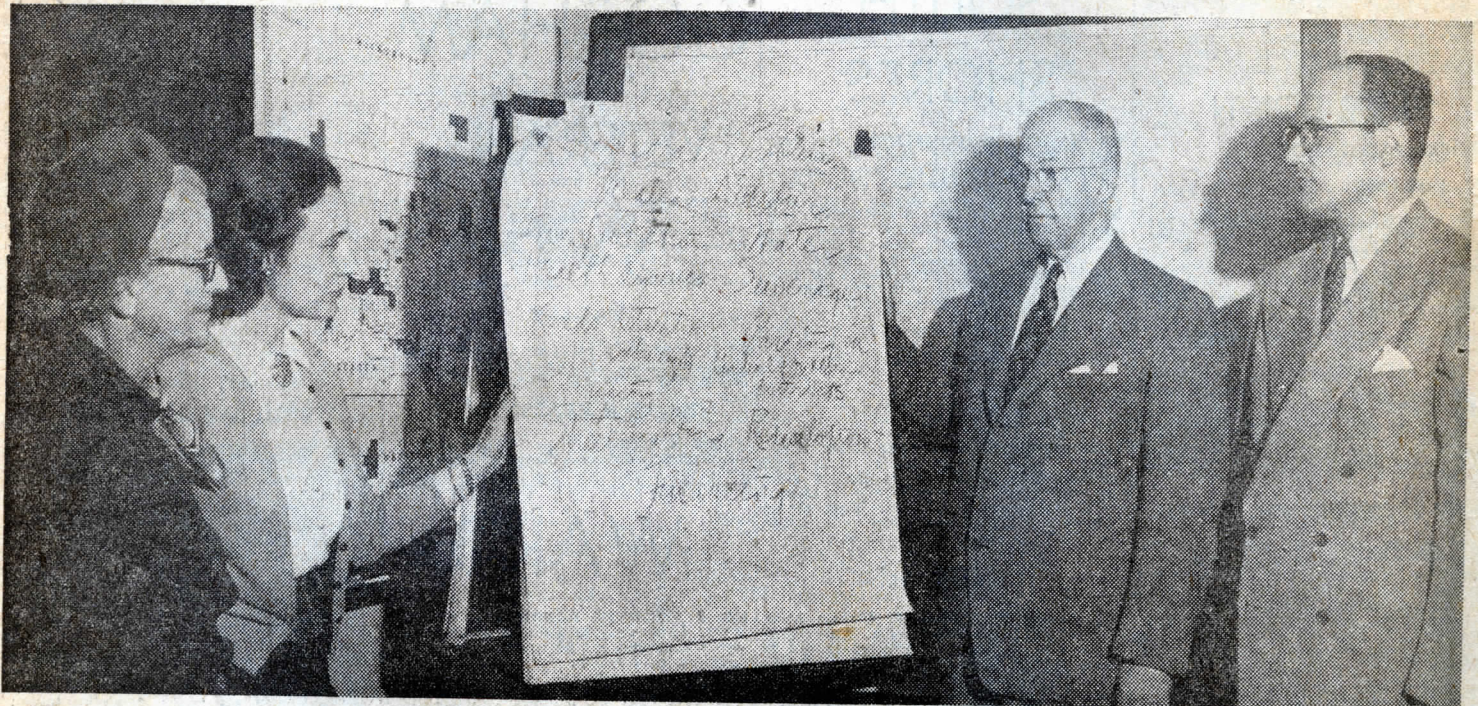
hands over a check. Members also pay dues of \$3 a year.

League members listen with interest at a meeting of the county board of supervisors. Left to

right are Miss Katharine Patterson, Mrs. Clifford Smith, Mrs. G. D. Cox, Mrs. W. A. Kutsch,

Mrs. Oliver R. Etheridge, Mrs. W. E. Watts Jr., Mrs. O. E. Schlachter, Mrs. William J.

Tucker and Mrs. Haskell W. Gibson. Members also attend city council meetings.



The League works closely with Association of Commerce committees concerned with problems

of interest to voters. Here Mrs. John Kuhns, left, past president, and Mrs. Robert E. Lewis, chair-

man of the candidate meeting committee, consult with members of the A. of C. legislative com-

mittee. Explaining listing of city problems is J. R. Holt, left, and Wayne Schroeder.



The League subscribes to a publication service for 10 local institutions, including junior high schools and high schools. In

the picture, Robert C. Young, principal of Woodrow Wilson junior high school, accepts a list of "Significant Roll Calls" of the

82d Congress from Mrs. Oliver Etheridge, left, chairman of the the publications committee, Miss Bernice Wagner, and Mrs. J. D.

MacKechnie, right, social studies teachers, look on. The League also distributes voting records of candidates for re-election.