

## 50th Anniversary

# Women Not Always Late; League Starts Observance Early

By Deborah Hansen

Of the Herald and Review

Who says women are always late?

The League of Women Voters of the United States is doing its best to dispel such rumors by beginning its 50th anniversary one year early.

The League has begun its anniversary with a membership fund drive this month, one year ahead of the scheduled 1970 anniversary.

Begun in 1920, after the last meeting of its predecessor, the American Woman Suffrage Association, the League is a non-partisan, non-profit volunteer organization.

Its income is derived from dues and contributions from interested members of the community.

The purpose of the League is to study and act on governmental issues at the local, state and national level.

The Macon County Chapter was organized in 1924; its president was Mrs. Metlin E. Craig. A membership drive was held in January, and in February 50 members gathered for the first citizenship school.

The group's first study group was formed in July of that year and dedicated its time to the study of taxation in the state



of Women Voters is its voter's service program.

This service includes the distribution of nonpartisan information on candidates and issues, campaigns to encourage registration and voting, candidates meetings, courses in practical politics and trips to city halls and state legislatures.

In 1968 the Decatur League's voter's service included demonstrations on the use of voting machines.

The Decatur League of Women Voters' study program for 1968-69 included the study and evaluation of the need for funds by the Decatur Human Relations Commission.

The League also evaluated the need for funds for the fair housing ordinance in Decatur. It supported a new main library building and further study of the needs and operation of the Decatur Public Library. Support has been given to securing of increased funds to provide quality education and adequate space and to study ways to improve public education in Decatur.

**Federal Library  
Accepts Files**



and county.

In 1946 the Macon County Chapter became the Decatur League of Women Voters. Miss Blossom Redmon was the first president.

The Decatur League's 150 members, like those throughout the country, take action in support of or in opposition to selected issues, but not parties or candidates.

### Membership

The membership is made up of women citizens of voting age who believe in representative government.

Delegates to the national and state conventions select topics to be studied, while the membership selects those on the local level.

Program items are thoroughly studied in workshop sessions with the presentation workshop committee reports to the members on the pros and cons of the issues under discussion.

Consensus is then reached by the membership and the League works to implement its position.

Local organizations are often asked to help with state and national studies, however, it is up to the local membership to accept the task of study and evaluation, according to Mrs. Keith Westenhaver, president of the Decatur League.

Because of its nonpartisan studies, the League can furnish unbiased materials on current problems to state legislators.

League studies have led to the support and final passage of the establishment of council-manager form of city government in Decatur in 1953, and passage of the proposed judicial



Staff photo by Ken Kiley

Miss Eugenia Allin, left, and Mrs. Westenhaver browse scrapbook showing club's history.

amendments in 1958.

In 1953 the League initiated and helped bring to a successful conclusion a referendum on interceptor sewers.

The League worked for the establishment of a county health department in 1962 and the passage of the school building bond referendum in 1965. During 1965 they also backed the adoption of an urban renewal program.

In the field of civil rights they worked for the passage of the economic opportunity amendments of 1967.

### Documents Published

In addition to its study and stand on current issues, the League has compiled and

published documented publications which help to educate both members and public.

The first written reference book on the local county government was published in 1960, the Macon County Book.

This book took nine years of research by the members, and it outlined the forms of county, township, city and village government, and how they operate.

In 1963 the League published and made available to the public "Facts About Decatur Schools."

This pamphlet contains a brief history and information about the school system and

program.

Perhaps one of the most important functions of the League

In the Past, Mr. & Mrs. The Opening and wall covered Twenty two years wholesale prov



Decatur, Illinois,

Decatur SUNDAY HERALD AND REVIEW

From League

The League of Women Voters of the United States compiled its historical files, weighing more than one ton, from 1920 to 1944, and gave them to the Library of Congress.

It is the first time files by such an organization have been accepted by the Library. They are available to sociologists, educators, historians and scholars.

Federal aid to education is one of the programs that the League has supported since its beginning.

Mr. and Mrs. Frank B. Kozlik announce the engagement of their daughter, Jean Marie, and Michael M. Brady, son of Mr. and Mrs. Carl M. Brady of 759 S. 22nd St. The bride - elect was graduated from Mother McAuley High School and Rosary College. She received her master of arts degree from the University of Illinois in mathematics and is operations research analyst with Swift & Co. in Chicago.

KOZLIK-BRADY

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