

# LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SALINA, KANSAS INC.

# V O T E R



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*The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan, nonprofit organization of women and men of every age, race, background and political belief. Through more than 1200 local Leagues, state Leagues and the national organization, League members work to promote citizen action on local, state, and national issues.*



## SALINA CANDIDATES FORUM

TUES., OCTOBER 19  
6:00 to 9:00 p.m.



Held at the Chamber of Commerce Development Center, 140 West Ash, the League of Women Voters of Salina and the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce are sponsoring a candidates' forum. There are five contested races.

### COUNTY COMMISSION DISTRICT #2

Craig Stevenson, Republican, Incumbent, vs. John Divine, Democrat

### COUNTY TREASURER

Brenda Siemsen, Republican vs. Andy Stierwalt, Democrat

### KANSAS SENATE DISTRICT 24

Pete Brungardt, Republican, Incumbent, vs. Alan Jilka, Democrat

### KANSAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DISTRICT 69

Deena Horst, Republican, Incumbent,

vs. Bob Homolka, Democrat, vs. Mike Wilson, Reform

### KANSAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DISTRICT 108

Josh Svaty, Democrat, Incumbent, vs. Timothy Null, Republican

The forum will have two sessions of about ninety minutes each. A panel of local media personnel will begin the questioning in each session, followed by written questions from the audience. County Commissioner and County Treasurer candidates will speak in the first session; Kansas Senate and House of Representatives candidates will be featured in the second. Each candidate will make opening and closing remarks. Profiles of candidates and Voters' Guides from both the League (see p. 7) and the Chamber with the candidates' views on selected subjects will be available.

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# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

We are heading into a very critical election time—I hope you are all encouraging your friends and family to vote on November 2! With the first two presidential debates and the vice-presidential debate behind us at press time, the two candidates are now more clearly defining their positions on key issues. Be sure to watch the **third presidential debate on Wednesday evening, October 13 at 8:00 p.m.**



Also, you will want to be sure to mark your calendars for the **Candidate's Forum** which will be held at the Chamber of Commerce on **Tuesday, October 19 from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.** As you have read on page 1 of this newsletter, the Forum will let you hear the positions of local candidates running for Saline County Commission, County Treasurer, and Kansas House of Representatives and Senate.

Much has happened over the past few months and many thanks are in order. Thank you to Mary Anne Powell for arranging a very interesting Membership Meeting at the library in August with Dr. Rob Winter, USD 305's new superintendent, as presenter. (see p. 7) Through Mary Anne's good work as Membership Chair, we have received four new members! (see p. 6)

I would like to thank Marge Mintun and Mary Kerstetter, Voter Service Co-Chairs, for all of their hard work and planning to increase voter turnout! Several volunteers walked Precinct 23 in Salina resulting in many potential voters taking registration forms and indicating their intent to vote in the November 2nd election. (see p. 7) The Voter Guide

(also p. 7) is hot off the press and ready for distribution, flyers describing DemocracyNet (the LWW's on-line candidate information guide) and business cards with the DNET website ([www.dnet.org](http://www.dnet.org)) are available for giving out. See Marge or Mary if you would like a supply to put in your workplace or handout to your neighbors!

The Lunch and Learn series of presentations is off to a great start! Thank you to Marge Mintun and Jan Mendell, Co-Chairs of Program, for the fantastic program on juvenile justice in Saline County held in September! (see p. 4) The panel of speakers was excellent and the program was well attended. Please mark your calendars for the upcoming **Lunch and Learn** (see p. 3) to be held **October 19 from 12:15 to 1:30 p.m.** at St. John's Lutheran Church—the SAME DAY as the Candidates' Forum! The gift of our presence at LWW'S events is a great way to support and grow the League, so grab your lunch or your dinner and grab a friend – see you October 19!



## CALENDAR



### October 2004

- 13 Advance voting begins
- 18 Voter Registration ends
- 19 Lunch and Learn
- 19 Candidates Forum
- 21 Board Meeting
- 30 Precinct 23 Walk

### November 2004

- 1 Advance voting ends
- 2 General Election
- 9 Lunch and Learn
- 18 Board Meeting

### December 2004

Happy Holidays!

### January 2005

Program Planning Mtg

### February 2005

Finance Drive

### April 2005

- 23 State LWW Convention  
In Salina

# WHAT IN THE WORLD IS HAPPENING AT S.R.S.?

**Winds of change** are blowing at Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services (SRS). Small county offices are closing and are replaced by "Access Sites". Salina SRS Office is now a "Service Center". People who are served by SRS are no longer clients, but are "customers." In the state of Kansas, there are now only six management areas. We are in Northeast Region which consists of 24 counties. SRS's motto now is "Everyone will be helped." Can they live up to that?

Working from outside SRS in the past, League member **Gina McDonald** had great success in advocating for people with disabilities. She helped to assure that SRS did as much for them as the agency could do. So now that SRS is determined to help all of their "customers," Gina McDonald has been

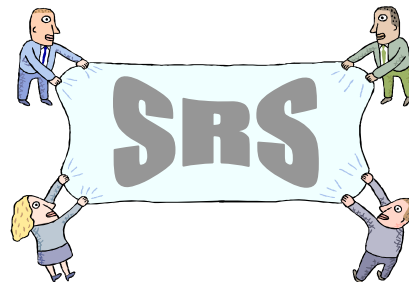
## LUNCH AND LEARN WITH THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS!

**When:**  
Tuesday, October 19, 2004  
12:15 P.M. to 1:30 P.M.  
(Bring your lunch)

**Where:**  
Lantz Hall (IN THE BASEMENT)  
St. Johns Lutheran Church  
302 S. 7<sup>th</sup>, Salina

**Who:**  
**Gina McDonald:**  
SRS ASS'T REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF  
COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS  
**Julie Lemons:**  
ACCESS SITE ADMINISTRATOR

appointed Assistant Regional Director for the Northeast Region in charge of "Community Collaborations." Gina is a



favorite among League presenters, full of enthusiastic opinions and infectious determination.

**Julie Lemons** is a long time SRS employee who recently has helped open SRS "access sites" to replace small county offices as they close.

Gina McDonald and Julie Lemons will let us know what is going on in SRS and why it is happening!

For further information, call Jan Mendell, 827-6811.

## OBSERVER REPORTS:

### SALINA PLANNING COMMISSION

LaVelle Frick, observer

The Salina Planning Commission meets the first and third Tuesday at 4:00 p.m. in the City Commission room in the City-County Building. The Planning Commission determines "what" can be built "where," and if a new business or facility will be allowed in the city.

Formerly called the planning and zoning board, the name was changed but the zoning function is still an important part of the commission's business. The commission determines whether the appearance and purpose of developments or projects fit in with the neighborhood where they are to be located. Planning Commission decisions can be appealed to the full city commission.

The meetings are well planned with

an agenda sent out well in advance of meetings. The staff spends a lot of time researching each agenda item and there is a lot of information prepared ahead of time to help those who must make a decision on the request.

Some meetings are light and easy and some are very intense and difficult for all of those concerned. The meetings are open to the public. Feel free to come and see what makes Salina run.

### SALINA ARTS AND HUMANITIES COMMISSION

Carmen Wilson, observer

The Salina Arts and Humanities Commission meets on the third Wednesday of each month. Their offices are on the second floor of the Smoky Hill Museum. The Commission has a new director, John Highkin. He came to Salina in July, 2004 from San Diego, California, where he was active in many different aspects of the arts.

The activities of the A & H Commis-

sion are many and varied. The most visible of their projects is the Smoky Hill River Festival. The festival has passed its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary and still going strong. The festival from 2004 is still in review and the budget for 2005 is being put together.

The other major item is the Horizons Grant program. It is a very important part of what makes Salina a truly arts friendly place. The funds for these grants that are given to artists and arts organizations come from private donors.

The Smoky Hill Museum is in the middle of a major renovation. The plans are about ready to go to bid. The museum has applied for several grants and has been raising money locally for the project. The planned changes will illustrate how this region developed from open prairie to the community it has become.



# JUVENILE JUSTICE AUTHORITY

The July VOTER carried an article about Community Corrections in Saline and Ottawa Counties. Although Community Corrections is a county agency, the Kansas Juvenile Justice Authority funds most of their programs for juvenile offenders. That article was the **FIRST STEP** in publicizing the state study of League of Women Voters of Kansas regarding the Kansas Juvenile Justice Authority System.

The **SECOND STEP** in publicizing the state's two year study of the Kansas Juvenile Justice Authority system was a Lunch and Learn with the League held on September 21 and attended by 39 people. The question for the panelists was: How is the Juvenile Justice Authority working in our community?

Panel members were:

**Annie Grevas:** Director of Community Corrections

**Mary Throver:** Assistant County Attorney for Juvenile Offenders

**Dexter Eggers:** Defense Attorney for Juvenile Offenders

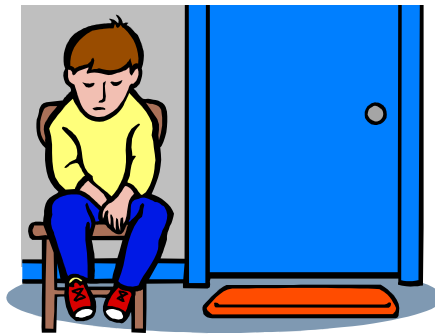
The Juvenile Justice Reform Act was passed in two parts, 1996 and 1997, and the Juvenile Justice Authority was launched in 1997. County planning for implementation of the act occurred in 1998 and 1999, and the county began implementation of the act in 2000. The three fold mission of the Juvenile Reform Act is as follows: (1) to promote public safety, (2) to hold juveniles accountable for their behavior, and (3) to improve the ability of juveniles to live more productively and responsibly in the community.

The panel discussed how this was being achieved in Saline and Ottawa Counties:

- They spoke highly of the pre-trial program, which provides supervision and other services for juvenile offenders after their adjudication as juvenile offenders but before sentencing. This

has been a big success in assuring that juveniles are engaged meaningfully by Community Corrections as soon as they are adjudicated. Because juvenile offenders come under the auspices of Community Corrections immediately after adjudication, they cannot continue to commit crimes with impunity. Fewer detention center placements are required, and the offenders' reactions to services received become part of the evaluation which results in more appropriate sentencing.

- The attorneys work together to assure that the needs of the juvenile



are kept uppermost in the court process.

- Community Corrections does a good job of protecting the community and holding juveniles accountable for their behavior. Many programs are offered in the juvenile's own home. These are utilized before placement of the youth outside his or her home is considered.
- Because the Juvenile Justice Authority has reduced funding every year since 2000 (in spite of increased workloads), the agency director must apply for grants to assure essential services are available.
- The communities in Saline and Ottawa Counties have been unusually helpful in providing services required by juvenile offenders and have worked closely and well with Community Corrections. Similarly, Community Corrections works effectively with Saline and Ottawa County agencies

and organizations.

- Community Corrections is highly motivated to help juvenile offenders live more productive and responsible lives and tries to leave no stone unturned to provide needed services.
- Caseloads are large, sometimes too large for effective work with the offenders, because financial appropriations are often not adequate.
- Centralized juvenile intake, provided by St. Frances Academy at the sites of police departments is a valuable community resource, and its services are not limited only to Juvenile Offenders.

## League of Women Voters Statewide study of Juvenile Justice Authority

The last time that League of Women Voters of Kansas revised their program statement on juvenile offenders was in the 1970's, so it is severely out of date. LWV of Kansas currently has a two year study of the Juvenile Justice Authority in progress. Consensus/discussion questions are being formed by a state committee to discuss with local leagues prior to agreement upon a new program statement.

The League's state committee meets on November 13 to finalize these consensus questions. In the meantime, Salina's League has suggested the following questions.

1. How well does the Juvenile Justice Reform Act fulfill its mission which is:
  - To promote the public safety;
  - To hold juveniles accountable for their behavior;
  - To improve the ability of juveniles to live more productively and responsibly in the community.
2. Is the program adequately funded?
3. Does the Sentencing Matrix, in reducing juvenile correctional facility admissions, also serve to criminalize youthful offenders and hamper rehabilitation?

*(Continued on page 5)*

## NATIONAL ISSUES: SAFEGUARDING YOUR VOTE!

In the wake of Election 2000, Congress enacted the **Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA)** to help ensure that all eligible voters are able to cast their votes and have those votes counted accurately. The law established important new federal requirements for voting systems and election administration. HAVA was to be democracy's lifejacket, protecting eligible voters and valid votes, and providing stronger security for an election process broken and adrift.

Since 2002, debate over how to fulfill the requirements of the law has focused overwhelmingly on new technology, both new voting machines and computerized statewide registration systems. Yet, as election officials well understand, new sophisticated technology alone will not solve the ills that surfaced in the 2000 presidential election. Good administrative practices are equally necessary.

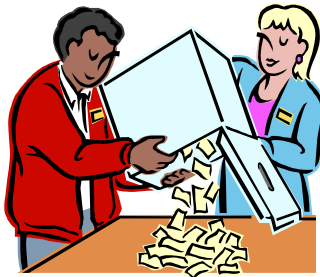
For example, one county moved quickly following the 2000 election, purchasing all new electronic voting machines only to discover during its 2002 primary that the process for running those new machines was a problem. Ballots were loaded incorrectly, and poll workers had not been well trained in how to operate the machines.

As a result, many polls opened late

and some never opened at all.

The new LWV report, *Helping America Vote: Safeguarding the Vote*, released in July '04, sets out recommendations for operation and management of state and local elections. The authors give common-sense steps that are already being used effectively in some states.

The report give tools to improve voting system security, protect eligible voters and ensure that valid votes are counted. Safeguarding our votes must be done in two parts: voting systems and voter registration systems.



### Voting Systems

From the now infamous punch card systems to brand new electronic voting equipment, voting machines no longer have the automatic confidence of America's voters. Personnel training and strict administrative procedures turn out to be as at least as important as the machines

themselves.

The League report recommends testing the machines and practicing with the personnel ahead of time. All procedures must be tracked and documented so audits are possible. State officials must them investigate discrepancies, such as a difference between numbers of voters and numbers of votes. Such procedures are already in use in states such as New Mexico and Georgia.

Many people don't realize that most voters going to the polls this fall will cast their votes on the same type of voting machine they used in the 2000 elections.

But no matter the voting machine being used—punch card or optical scan, lever or touch screen—there are universal steps to be followed in preparing for Election Day. All voting machines, for instance, should meet federal qualifications and state certification standards, and these should not be bypassed on Election Day. Ballot design for each type of machine is vitally important; and aggressive education efforts to show voters how to use the voting machines are essential. The League report provides a "Checklist for Voting Systems" to help election officials and voters.

### Voter Registration

When Congress first began looking

*(Continued on page 6)*

*(Continued from page 4)*

4. Are there gaps in community services for juvenile offenders? If so, what are the more serious gaps in services?
5. What improvements in the program are needed for it to fulfill its mission more completely?
6. Has the program worked better under the umbrella of the Juvenile Justice Authority than when it was operated by SRS? Why or why not?

Salina LWV plans to have a Program Unit Meeting in November, between November 2—the general election—and the State committee meeting November 13, to consider the above questions and making recommendations to the State Committee for Juvenile Justice Authority.

## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS AT TRI-RIVERS FAIR

[As reported in the *Salina Journal*]

At the Tri-Rivers Fair Booth, August 5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup>, The League conducted a poll of fair goers. Two questions were asked.

The first question was "If state funding is not adequate, should the number of Kansas school districts be reduced in order to maintain a high quality of education". 81 of 151 participants answered "No" – almost 54%. Marge Mintun, Voter Chair, said "it seemed that rural people were more inclined to be skeptical of consolidating the schools."

The second question was asked only of Saline County fair attendees "Should Saline and Saline County governments be consolidated? 91 of 141 participants answered "yes" – 64.5%. There were quite a number of people who said that the questions were hard and took their time answering them.

Mintun said, "we are very pleased that we had so many people participate. If nothing else, we like to get people to think about the issues."

## NEW SALINA LWV MEMBERS

### LWV Salina welcomes the following new members!

**Jennifer Kay-Higgins** comes from a family which has always been involved in politics, so she felt League membership was a good way to remain active in politics. This interest led her to teaching history for three years, and she is now in her fourth year of teaching special education. Jennifer came to Salina in 2001 from western Kansas, where she was a member of AAUW. She was married to native Salinan Luke Higgins in November 2003 at Christ Cathedral in Salina. They live at 912 East Minneapolis with two dogs!

**Dr. Philip Kerstetter** assumed the family membership of his daughter, Jodi Rooney, when Jodi moved from Salina to Pittsburg PA last summer. Philip has spent his entire professional career in academics, at

Thiel College in Greenville PA, at Edinboro College in Edinboro PA and now as president of Kansas Wesleyan University since



2002. He earned his doctorate from Galaudet University in Washington DC. He and Mary both feel that service to the community is important and want to establish a good relationship between Kansas Wesleyan University and the larger community. In addition to daughter Jodi, Philip and Mary have a son David who is study-

ing for a doctorate in Virginia. They live at 130 E. Kirwin.

**Mike Wilson** has been Associate Professor of Electronic Engineering Technology, Kansas State University, Salina since 1984. He has lived in Kansas for 28 years, 20 years in Salina. He is currently running on the Reform party for Kansas House of Representatives District 69. He is a member of the Saline County planning and Zoning Commission and the City of Salina Board of Zoning Appeals. He is a lead usher at the First Southern Baptist Church and a volunteer at Community Access Television. Mike and his wife Shirley live at 422 Jupiter. His web address is [www.tri.net/wilsonstaterp](http://www.tri.net/wilsonstaterp)

Information about new member **Lila (Mickie) Breault** will appear in a later Voter.

## SAFEGUARDING YOUR VOTE, continued

*(Continued from page 5)*

into the election system following the 2000 election, it soon became clear that poorly administered voter registration systems posed a bigger problem affecting more voters than antiquated voting machines. Many eligible voters were disenfranchised because their voter registrations had not been processed and because of other problems with the system.

HAVA required that each state have a statewide computerized voter registration system to help solve this problem. However, as of July when the League's *Safeguarding* was published, 44 states had requested waivers from this new HAVA requirement. That means a vast majority of states are not required to implement this provision until 2006.

The design of voter registration systems is vital to establishing a well-run election process. For good or ill, these systems will have a serious impact.

The League recommends that the states "establish electronic transmission of

voter information to the election authority from motor vehicle and other agencies offering voter registration." Michigan is already doing this, with a unified database shared by the state election agency and the motor vehicle agency. Electronic transmission significantly reduces the likelihood of losing applications.

The fewer lost applications a state has, the fewer provisional ballots will need to be cast. In Los Angeles County, for example, a majority of provisional ballots are cast by voters who registered at a motor vehicle agency but whose registrations either got lost in the system or were not processed in time.

The League also urges states to "ensure the registration process enfranchises all eligible citizens." The voter registration process can work toward a more reliable election process, or it can serve as a barrier to voter participation. States must be clear about which agency is responsible for adding, deleting and updating voter records and for determining who is eligible

and who is not eligible to vote.

For example, if a voter registration applicant fails to provide a driver's license number or transposes numbers by mistake, the database system should help correct that application so it can be processed and accepted. In California, the state searches the motor vehicle database to pull the driver's license number, which then is added to the voter record. The state also compares voter records to health records. These practices help voters as well as ensuring more accurate records.

Maintaining an accurate voter list is an essential job of election officials. Voters must not be disenfranchised by administrative errors, in particular in the provisions of the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA), also known as the "motor voter" law. NVRA requires regular list-cleaning procedures to keep voter registration lists current, including obtaining data from other sources such as the National Change of Address program, death records and felony

*(Continued on page 7)*

## PROJECT VOTE!

### LEAGUE SEEKS LARGER VOTER TURNOUT

On September 18<sup>th</sup>, twenty persons went door to door in Salina Precinct 23, urging people to vote or register and vote. League of Women Voters and American Association of University Women members were joined by students from Brown Mackie and Kansas Wesleyan in this endeavor. On October 30, the same groups will again walk the precinct with door hangers to remind people of the coming election. The purpose is to encourage voters from this precinct to vote and to publicize the effort to increase the percentage of voters in this election.

Tom Bell, Editor of The Salina Journal wrote an editorial praising the League for its efforts to promote the democratic proc-

ess of voting. Marge Mintun's letter to the editor expressed appreciation for his support and made sure that the efforts of the American Association of University Women and the students from Brown Mackie and Kansas Wesleyan were recognized as well as the League of Women Voters.

Precinct 23's percentage of persons going to the polls is approximately the same as Salina's average. It is hoped that our efforts increased the percentage of registered voters in this precinct who vote on November 2<sup>nd</sup>. It would be wonderful if the percentage of people voting in the election increased for the entire city of Salina. This is a very important election!

(SAFEGUARDING, Continued from page 6)

records. This data, while useful, must always be verified. One jurisdiction in 2000 matched the voter list against a tax assessor's list which turned out to be ten years old. Anyone whose address was not on the list had to cast a provisional ballot. Voters should not be penalized for inaccurate or out-of-date record keeping.

Election Day is fast approaching, but our nation's election officials still have time to take some of the necessary steps to protect our votes this November. Good management practices will go a long way to strengthen the election process and assure our fundamental right to vote. *Safeguarding the Vote* is an important contribution to the ongoing national debate over the health and security of our election system.

## ODDS & ENDS

### Kenya Goes to Washington

The Salina League of Women Voters is contributing \$100 from their education fund to help send Central High student Kenya Gillespie to the "National Young Leaders Conference" in Washington DC, this fall.



NYLC offers select students the opportunity to discuss current events and issues with top policy makers in Washington, D.C., analyze concepts, and then put them immediately to work. League members hope Kenya will later present his experiences to Salina students—other potential young leaders—upon his return. Kenya is the son of Gerald and Mineko Gillespie, Salina. According to conference officials, Kenya was selected after he participated in the PSAT given by the College Board.

Students are nominated based on their PSAT scores and their extra-curricular activities. There are several sessions offered during the fall; each session has 400 students attending at a cost of over \$1200 apiece. More information regarding the program is available at [www.cylc.org/nylc](http://www.cylc.org/nylc).

### Membership Meeting, August 12<sup>th</sup>

The Salina League of Women Voters was honored to have Dr. Rob Winter, the new Superintendent of USD 305, as speaker at the Annual Membership Meeting on Thursday evening, August 12<sup>th</sup> in the Prescott Room at the Salina Public Library. This was one of Dr. Winter's earliest public appearances after his move to Salina. His presentation, and audience questions, touched on his core educational values and beliefs and his plans for the Salina public schools. His friendly, open manner impressed many League members and guests. The meeting also resulted in the enrollment of a new member, and those in attendance sampled delicious home made pastries by League members Emma Doherty and Jeanette Peroli-Ecklund!

### VOTERS GUIDE Ready For Election 2004

The League's Voter's Guide for Election 2004 will be available for the Candidates' Forum and copies will be placed at the Library and outside the County Clerk's office where advance voting will be taking place. In addition to all county and state office candidates who are in competitive races, the following unopposed candidates have contributed to the Voters' Guide:

Saline County offices—  
 Commissioner, Dist. 3: Sharon Barragree  
 Sheriff: Glen Kochanowski  
 County Clerk: Don Merriman  
 Register of Deeds: Rebecca Seeman  
 State of Kansas office—  
 Board of Education: Kathy Martin

### Project Vote Smart

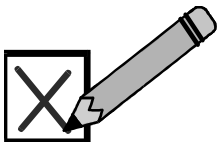
For information on national races, check out the Philipsburg, Montana-based "Project Vote Smart." An extraordinarily thorough and unbiased source of information, it publishes the "2004 Voter's Self-Defense Manual." Find out more at [www.vote-smart.org](http://www.vote-smart.org) or 1-888-VOTE SMART

**League of Women Voters of Salina**

PO Box 502

Salina, KS 67402-0502

**JOIN US**



**This is a good time to join the League or to renew your League Membership.**  
The new League year has begun and this year's agenda has something of interest for everyone. It is a perfect time to join the League to ensure you do not miss the action. Please take a moment now to become a member of The League of Women Voters of Salina.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Yes, I want to add my voice to yours by joining the League at the following level:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Single Membership (circle one)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ *Contributing Level* \$50.00
  - \_\_\_\_\_ *Sustaining Level* \$40.00
- \_\_\_\_\_ Family Membership (circle one)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ *Contributing Level* \$75.00
  - \_\_\_\_\_ *Sustaining Level* \$60.00
- \_\_\_\_\_ Student/supported or other \$20.00

\_\_\_\_\_ **I am unable to join the League at this time, but enclosed is my contribution of \$\_\_\_\_\_.**

For more information, please contact: **Mary Anne Powell, Membership Chairperson**  
**1022 Funston, Salina, Kansas 67401**  
**Telephone: 823-8041**

*Make checks payable to: The League of Women Voters of Salina, and mail to PO Box 502, Salina, KS 67402-0502.*