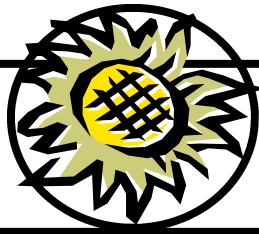


V O T E R



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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.

LUNCH & LEARN: City Commissioners were on October panel COUNTY COMMISSIONERS UP NEXT!

Area citizens have a chance to meet and quiz their commissioners at this fall's Lunch and Learn programs.

After a good meeting with the Salina city commission last month (see article, page 3), Saline County commissioners will make up November's panel. Each panel member opens with a statement of issues or ideas he or she considers most important among the many facets of county business.

All three commissioners plan to attend: Craig Stevenson, Sherry Baragree and Randy Duncan.

Following the commissioners opening statements, attendees are free to ask any questions they have in mind, directed to any or all panel members.

Please join in by attending with a mind full of questions to ask. We hope for a lively and productive interchange.



Saline County Commissioners
Tuesday, Nov. 13, 12:15 to 1:30 p.m.
Salina Public Library, Prescott Room (downstairs)

Lunch and Learn is free and open to the public. Lunch and Learn programs are held monthly, from 12:15 to 1:30 p.m. on the second Tuesday of the month, three times during the fall and three times during the winter-spring. Location: Prescott Room of the Salina Public Library.

Bring your own lunch and feel free to munch during the discussion.

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THE PROGRAM PLANNING MEETING!

League's pivotal meeting of the year—when members decide the issues to be studied during the following year(s)—is the annual program planning meeting, scheduled this year for Tuesday, January 15, 2008. All League members are *encouraged* to attend, at 7:15 P.M. in Martinelli's conference room. Dinner will precede the meeting, at 6:30 in the same room. Please plan to make reservations—to your president or another board member. *All members are invited and urged to attend.* Cost will be announced later.

The Board will hold its regular meeting before the dinner. Any League member may also attend the board meeting if they wish.

A "study" is the process which the League of Women Voters uses to determine its positions on issues. A

League study can last from one to two years, with the goal of determining the most beneficial public policies.



Once a position is settled, League members take action to convince governmental bodies and representatives to promote and pass those policies.

Criteria for choosing a study include:

- ▶ Is the subject timely, of interest to the members and the community?
- ▶ Is a chairperson available with the time, interest and potential leadership skills?
- ▶ Are enough members willing to volunteer for the team to perform the study?
- ▶ How extensive is the research involved?
- ▶ Will the consensus questions lead to a recommended program position?
- ▶ Is this a new study or an update of an old position?
- ▶ Is there a need and is it feasible to plan community action in order to promote change based on our study outcome and recommendations?

Please plan to attend. Your presence is welcome—and important.

—Mary Anne Powell

CALENDAR



NOVEMBER

- 13 Lunch & Learn
- 20 Board Meeting

DECEMBER

No meeting – Happy Holidays!

2008

JANUARY

- 8 Lunch & Learn
- 15 Board Meeting and Program Planning Meeting with Dinner at Martinelli's (see pages 2 & 6)

FEBRUARY

- 12 Lunch & Learn
- 19 Board Meeting

MARCH

- 11 Lunch & Learn
- 18 Board Meeting

YEAR-END REMINDER:

LWV Education Fund

As you do your end-of-year tax planning, remember the League of Women Voters Education Fund. The LWV Education Fund is a 501(c)(3) organization, which means that contributions to the Ed. Fund are tax deductible (unlike contributions to the League of Women Voters itself).

Treasurer Donita Michaelsen tries to remind us often of the usefulness and importance of Education Fund donations. Here are ways we use the funds in the Salina area:

- ✓ to pay for the LWV booth at the Tri-Rivers Fair,
- ✓ to mail questionnaires to candidates before elections,
- ✓ to print the Voters Guides,

- ✓ to finance non-partisan voter registration drives and get-out-the-vote campaigns,
- ✓ to pay any costs associated with local candidate debates,
- ✓ to promote other voter education projects.

If you have any questions about the Education fund, please contact Treasurer Donita or President Mary Anne Powell.

Better yet, just go ahead and contribute via the League's post office box. You benefit two ways: You increase the charitable contributions deductible from your taxable income, and you assist in the good, local work of the League of Women Voters.

Report on October 9 LUNCH & LEARN: City Commission Members Address League

With good attendance, lively audience questions and thoughtful comments from commissioners, the October 9 Lunch and Learn was time well spent in the Salina Public Library's downstairs Prescott Room. Comments afterward labeled the commissioners as frank, responsive and open to new ideas.

Four of the five city commissioners addressed the gathering. The fifth, Abner Perney, was away at a League of Kansas Municipalities meeting. Each panel member began with a statement of issues that the speaker considered to be most important to the city.

Mayor Alan Jilka discussed the need for changes in the policies for the area up to three miles outside the city limits. These are necessary in order to resolve some issues now becoming serious problems. This matter is to be negotiated with the county before the first of next year, and then it might be possible to initiate the city-county consolidation study urged by the Salina LWV—or the study “to review governmental services,” as the county commission has phrased it.

Commissioner John Vanier urged citizens to think big, to aim for the type of overall city Salina would like to be. He doubted that the County Expo center should be in Kenwood Park because of the agricultural focus in an area very near downtown Salina. He also was not necessarily in favor of a new swimming pool. He gave an example of Dallas which increased the number of splash parks around town and decreased the number of pools. He favored a higher mill levy for Salina to enable the city to do the things that would allow it to grow and become a city where new people want to live.

Commissioner Luci Larson suggested that until a new pool is built we should get youth to make the pool more attractive – through murals and other decorations. She also felt we should build up the Bicentennial Center as a convention center with a adjacent hotel and catering service, both to serve the Bicenter events and to complement Oakdale Park which is a popular site for weddings. She suggested investigating the Abilene pool which appears to be costing several million dollars less than estimates for a new Salina pool – two million compared to five-to-nine million.



Commissioner Aaron Peck wanted citizens to know that the current commissioners have fresh ideas and that the new city manager is creating more openness and responsiveness to the public, even though that may not always have true in the past. He feels people should speak up, and the city commissioners and city manager will listen and try to resolve issues which are presented to them.

Several other issues were brought up by the audience:

- A question was asked as to whether the organizations whose initiatives are funded by the quarter cent in-

come tax have let the City Commissioners know what the funding has accomplished. Alan Jilka said that the commissioners had not required this from the organizations in the past but beginning this year, all recipients of funding will be required to make a report.

- One audience member commented on the open hostility between city and county commissioners at joint meetings in recent years. She suggested that even if they did not agree with each other, they should treat each other with respect. Mayor Jilka replied that they will try to take that advice to heart.
- In response to concern about water use, commissioners mentioned a possible innovative solution for using the effluent from the city's waste water for irrigation at the municipal golf course, Salina Soccer Complex and East Crawford Recreational Area. The city is considering building a pipeline from the water treatment plan to reach some of these locations as a way to save water in the future. The treated water currently is dumped back into the Smoky Hill River.
- An audience member asked about the status of the Schilling-area groundwater contamination. Jilka stated that the US Corps of engineers is funding further research on the issue.
- Commissioners noted that the city is under water restrictions through the end of this year.

The November 13 Lunch and Learn will feature the Salina County commissioner, and the League hopes for a similarly productive discussion.

DEBATE WATCHING 101

(This article is taken from the national League of Women Voters website: www.lwv.us.org.)

Candidate debates have a long history in American politics. At every level of government—from city council to state legislature, from Congress to President of the United States—candidates participate in debates to help voters understand who and what they stand for.

Watching debates is an important way for voters to learn more about the candidates and the issues before the election, so that they can cast an informed vote. At the same time, voters need to view debates with a careful eye to get the most information. Candidates rehearse thoroughly for debates, making it hard to get candid, spontaneous answers. Debates can emphasize form over substance, such as the candidates' appearance instead of their stands on the issues. You may watch a debate and still not get answers to the questions you have about the candidates and issues.

You can get the most out of a debate by thinking about the issues and candidates in advance, by viewing the debate with care, and by continuing to research the issues and the candidates after the debate. Debate Watching 101 provides background information and tips to help you get the most out of watching a candidate debate.

What Is a Debate?

A debate is an event at which candidates who are running for an elected office meet face-to-face to answer questions that are asked of them. This gives the candidates a chance to state their views and to respond to their opponents' statements. It gives viewers a chance to directly compare the candidates and their positions.

Debates usually take place in front of a live audience and may also be televised or broadcast on the radio or the Internet. A televised or broadcast debate allows many more people to watch and learn about the candidates and issues.

Debates can follow different formats, or a combination of formats. The most common formats are:
SINGLE MODERATOR: One moderator asks the questions;
PANEL: A panel of journalists or experts questions the candidates;
TOWN HALL: Questions are submitted by members of the audience or randomly selected voters, in person or by phone or email. The Town Hall format allows for questions to be submitted in advance or during the debate.

The debate usually begins with an introduction of the candidates, who may also be given time to make opening statements. The heart of the debate takes place when the candidates are asked questions and they respond. There usually is a time limit for responses. The questioner may ask follow-up questions to get the candidates to explain or clarify their responses. Some debates give candidates an opportunity to "cross-examine" or ask questions directly of each other. At the end of the debate, the candidates are usually given time to make closing statements.

Before the Debate

Thinking about and preparing for the debate before it takes place will enable you to get the most from watching it. It will familiarize you with the candidates and issues. The preparation will help you focus on what to look for in the debate so that you will get the informa-

tion you need in deciding who to vote for.

It will help if you take some time before the debate to:

- Follow the campaign to learn about the candidates and their backgrounds;
- Find out what the important campaign issues are;
- Decide what issues are most important to you.
- Think about the questions you may have and the information you want to get from the debate to help you in your decision making;
- Open your mind to new opinions/impressions of the candidate regardless of party affiliation.



You may want to make plans to get together with friends or family to watch the debate. Watching the debate in a group and discussing it afterwards helps to clarify your thoughts about what was said in the debate and how the candidates performed.

A debate might not include all of the candidates for the office. Before the debate, note which candidates are included and which are not. If all candidates are not participating, try to find out why. Some debates include only candidates who have significant support, on the theory that the voters should be able to compare the candidates with a realistic chance of winning.

(Continued on page 5)

DEBATE WATCHING 101, continued

(Continued from page 4)

Others invite all candidates who have qualified for the ballot. Sometimes candidates who are invited choose not to participate. Candidates with a strong lead might refuse to participate because they think there is no advantage to be gained by debating a lesser known opponent.

During the Debate

When watching the debate, ask yourself questions like these to help you judge the fairness of the debate and the performance of the candidates.

The debate format and questions:

Does the format give each candidate an equal opportunity to speak and respond to questions?

Are the questions clear, fair and equally tough on all candidates?

Do the questions cover the issues that are important to you?

Is the moderator in control of the debate? Does the moderator need to say less and let the candidates say more?

The candidates:

Do they answer questions directly, or do they evade them or fail to answer the specific question?

Do they give specifics about their stands on the issues, or do they speak in generalities? Do they support their positions and arguments with facts and figures?

Do they talk about their own policies and positions, or do they mostly attack their opponents?

Are their proposals realistic? Can they actually carry out the

promises they are making?

Do they appear sincere, confident and relaxed?

Do they show how their backgrounds and experience qualify them to hold the office?

Are their answers consistent with their previous positions, and if not, do they explain why?

What image are they trying to create?

Do their responses appear overly rehearsed or "canned"?

Media coverage:

If you are watching the debate on television, are reaction shots or other techniques used to create a sense of drama or conflict?

Are you being influenced by comments made by reporters and commentators immediately before and after the debate?

After the Debate

It will help clarify your thoughts about the candidates and the issues if you take some time after the debate to reflect on what you have just seen and heard. You can do this by:

Comparing your impressions with others who watched the debate;

Asking yourself, based on the information you got from watching the debate, which candidate appears most qualified for the office;

Identifying the issues on which you agree with a candidate and those on which you disagree, and deciding whether that makes you more or less likely to vote for a particular candidate;

Asking yourself if you learned something new about the issues or the candidate;

Thinking about whether you have more

questions about the issues or the candidates that you want to follow up;

Getting more information about the candidates' positions from news reports, candidate Web sites and non-partisan voter information Web sites such as VOTE411.org.

Watch later debates for more information or to confirm your current impressions of the candidates.

Conclusion

Candidate debates give voters a chance to hear the candidates speak and respond to their opponents. They give candidates a chance to present their message directly to a wide audience. As a voter, asking yourself the right questions before, during and after the debate can help you make the most of this opportunity to learn about the candidates and the issues.

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Education Fund 2006

LWVUS Preparing New Voters' Guide To Presidential Candidates

At the national LWV Council 2007, a number of Leagues signed a petition asking LWVUS to produce a Voters' Guide for the 2008 Presidential candidates. The LWVUS Board accepted this proposal, and, with the help of Leagues in the DC area, will undertake this crucial voters' service project. Only candidates that meet LWVUS criteria will be invited to complete the LWVUS questionnaire.

The candidates will be advised that the material will appear in print, in Voters' Guides of interested state/local Leagues, on VOTE411.org, and on state and local League Web sites that choose to incorporate this information.

Salina's LWV can include a link on its website to the new Voters' Guide once it becomes available.

★★★ Don't Miss the January 15 evening ★★★
PROGRAM PLANNING MEETING

Tuesday, January 15, 6:30pm Dinner
Martinelli's Restaurant
★★★ Meeting to follow at 7:15★★★

(Board Meeting will begin at 5:30pm)

The League wants your opinion— about both local and national issues. On the evening of January 15, please be a part of the Program Planning meeting, a pivotal event in the League's annual activities.

Was it a good idea for the Salina League to study city-county consolidation? That study began with a decision at the Program Planning meeting.

Should the national League of Women Voters have dived into the immigration issue? That idea came from local members at Program Planning meetings.

Is the Salina League's position on sex education or on solid waste out of date?

These are questions that arise at Program Planning meetings.

In years past, Salina's Program Planning meetings have led to studies of Salina's Public Library, land use, mental health, child in need of care, and many other issues. Once the studies are complete, the resulting positions are used as the basis for lobbying governmental officials and promoting good government.

(NOTE: Check out all the Salina League positions at the "ISSUES" page of our website: www.lwvofsalinaks.com.)

NEVER ATTENDED A PROGRAM PLANNING MEETING? Don't let that stop you. Please meet and eat with your fellow League members, and join the discussion afterwards.

At the meeting, members review the Program Positions gleaned through past studies. If member determine that those

DOES YOUR VOTER HAVE A GREEN STICKER?

A bright green sticker adorns the front of some of this month's VOTER newsletters. If you have one, it's a warning!

In continuing efforts to cut printing and mailing costs, we are discontinuing many of the complimentary issues we have been sending.

But if you are still interested in receiving this quarterly news, just tell a League member, or send a small check to cover costs, or—the best idea—join us!

positions remain valid, they are reaffirmed for the following year. If they have become outdated, members may vote to study them with the goal of updating them.

A similar process at the meeting allows local members to evaluate national LWVUS positions. This is an "odd" year, so national issues are on the table. In "even" years, state issues come to the fore.

Is there a local issue that cries out for better understanding and some in-depth study? Please bring that idea with you!

See you at the Program Planning meeting!

LEAGUE LINGO

Welcome to the League of Women Voters' world of special language! Sometimes new (and not so new) members are confused by the abbreviations and terminology used by the League. We are giving you a list of definitions (in alphabetical order) designed to put you "in the know" with League terms (list continued from last newsletter).

IMPACT ON ISSUES The national League program guide with statements of position, their history and use.

IN LEAGUE An in-depth handbook for League leaders, published by LWVUS.

ILO Acronym for Inter-League Organization, formed by Leagues within a county, metropolitan area or region to act on issues which are beyond the local League area in scope.

LEADERS' UPDATE Publication received

by all national, state and local League board members from LWVUS and received by request to other League members.

LIFE MEMBER Two categories: those who have paid a fee for life membership; or honorary life members who have been in League for 50 years or more and are excused from dues payment.

LOCAL LEAGUE An autonomous organization of League members affiliated with the state and national Leagues. Members belong to all three levels.

LOCAL LEAGUE LIAISON State board member assigned to receive and read local League minutes and Voters. Primary contact for local League presidents with the state board.

MAL Acronym for member-at-large. A MAL

belongs to LWVUS and LWVK, but resides outside the area of and is not enrolled in a local League.

STATE MAL UNIT Eight or more MALs organized into a group when there are not yet enough members in an area to sustain a local League.

"NATIONAL MEMBER" Popular but incorrect terminology. There are no "national only" members, but those who first join LWVUS are referred to appropriate state League, and by them to a local League, if any; otherwise they become MALs.

NONPARTISANSHIP League policy of never supporting or opposing any candidate or political party.

More *LINGO* in your next VOTER issue.

THREE NEW SALINA MEMBERS!

Janet Juhnke is a retired English professor from Kansas Wesleyan, where she worked for 32 years; for six of these years she was Academic Dean. Janet joined the Salina League because she is impressed by the people in the League of Women Voters and thinks they do good work.. She and her husband, Ted Hale, live in Salina and have a daughter, Elizabeth, who has four children and lives in New York, and a son, Eugene, who lives in Wichita.

Since retiring, Janet has spent a lot of her time volunteering at her church, the Salina Mennonite Church, where she also serves on the board and plays the piano. She loves to read and lectures on various books at libraries across the state for the Humanities Council. She also serves on the judicial nominating committee for the State of Kansas for Supreme Court and Appellate Court judges.



Welcome Janet Juhnke, Cynthia Nelson and Sr. Esther Pineda!

Cynthia Nelson joined the Salina League of Women Voters because she wants to be involved in current issues, and she desires knowledge – the more, the better. Cynthia is a semi-retired university professor in Educational Administration and Supervision. She taught at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, Arizona, and lived in Flagstaff for 25 years. She says, “I have always been involved in community committees in Flagstaff and at Northern Arizona University and want to continue to be informed.” She holds a doctoral degree in Educational Administration.

Cynthia currently lives in Lincoln, Kansas. Her daughter, Jasmine, son-in-law, Eric, and grandson, Kieran, live in Concordia. She is planning to move to Salina (where she was born) and has been home shopping. Currently, she

manages her family’s farm in Lincoln County.

For over 30 years, she has enjoyed collecting farm antiques, but she is slowly letting go of that. She loves to read, especially about history and Native American issues, and to watch documentary movies.

Sr. Esther Pineda joined the Salina League of Women Voters because, “I believe in their philosophy of bringing forth the issues relevant to our community!! I like to be informed of these issues with their complexity and nuances.”

Sr. Esther is the coordinator of the Sisters of St. Joseph Justice and Peace Center. She has been a teacher and has been on the leadership of the Sisters of St. Joseph Congregation. In addition, she has worked at NETWORK, a Catholic social justice lobby in Washington, D.C. She has also worked at Catholic Charities U.S.A.

Sr. Esther enjoys reading mysteries, playing cards, and photography.

TRI-RIVERS FAIR BOOTH “PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY” yields surprising results

With no primary, Kansans have little input into nominations for President.

So Salina League members took matters into their own hands, with a straw poll at the county fair. Voters could choose only one candidate, even though all the major Republican and Democratic candidates were listed.

Nine Republicans and 8 Democrats were on the ballot; 358 persons voted; 36 ballots were discarded because they had votes for two candidates.

Votes for Republicans outnumbered votes for Democrats 55% to 45%, but Republican votes were split more widely among candidates. Hillary Clinton received the most votes (22%) of

any candidate. Sam Brownback was second—and the top Republican vote getter—with 16%. Rudy Giuliani (Rep.) received 13.7% and Barack Obama (Dem.) received 10.25%.

The Salina Journal headlined its report on the poll, “Straw Poll Backs Brownback.”

League members also registered nineteen new voters (to vote in “real” elections), and one person expressed interest in membership.

The booth had three large posters made by Ann Zimmerman with short descriptions of all the candidates.

These members staffed the booth: Emma Doherty, Dina Giron, Wendy

Lebahn, Donita Michaelson, Jennifer Kay Higgins, Jan Mendell, Marge and Ted Mintun, Mike Wilson (who expressed concern at the lack of third party candidates), and Carmen Wilson.

During the fair, significantly fewer organizations set up booths at the Bicentennial

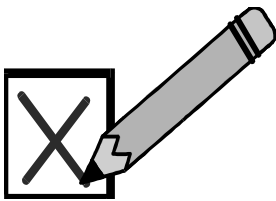
Center than in past years, though the number of visitors to the booth seemed as plentiful as usual.



League of Women Voters of Salina

PO Box 502
Salina, KS 67402-0502
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JOIN US



JOIN IN THE ACTION: Become a member of the League of Women Voters of Salina or renew your League Membership. There is no better time than NOW for you to join the League. Please take a moment now to become a member.

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____
CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____
PHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

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

- _____ Single Membership (circle one)
 - Contributing Level \$55.00
 - Sustaining Level \$45.00
- _____ Family Membership (circle one)
 - Contributing Level \$80.00
 - Sustaining Level \$65.00
- _____ 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: **Margaret Wyatt, Membership Chairperson**
4401 W. State Street Road, Salina, Kansas 67401
Telephone: 823-2806 Email: gretchenskiski@aol.com

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