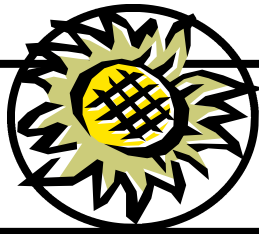


VOTER



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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.

SCHILLING WATER CLEAN-UP

Learn the Latest at January's Lunch and Learn

Clean up of the water pollution resulting from the former Schilling Air Force Base will be the subject of the January 13, 2009 Lunch and Learn session sponsored by the Salina League of Women Voters. The presentation will be held from 12:15 p.m. until 1:15 p.m. in the Prescott Room of the Salina Public Library.

Tim Rogers, Executive Director of the Salina Airport Authority, will discuss what progress Salina has made to date and the direction that will be taken to clean up the pollution. Members of the League of Women Voters Water Committee (Ardean Maxey, Margaret Wyatt and Bruce Wyatt) met in August with Tim, Jason Gage, Salina City Man-



ager, Greg Bengtson, City Attorney for Salina, and Dennis Kuhlman, Dean of K-State University Salina for a presentation on this issue. The Committee came away thoroughly briefed and fully supportive of the direction this "working group" is taking.

The Committee felt that the Schilling water pollution issue would be an excellent subject for a Lunch and Learn session. Interested Salina citizens will

be able to find out more about why the cleanup will be undertaken locally and the variety of clean up procedures that will be needed.

- Margaret Wyatt, *Membership Chair*

LUNCH & LEARN
Tuesday, January 13
12:15 to 1:15 p.m.
Salina Public Library
Prescott Room

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

A big election is behind us! No matter our political leanings, we can all agree on that.

And after it was all over, what a fun time we had at the social event, November 19!! Nearly thirty members and guests gathered to share food, conversation and enthusiasm, followed by the movie, "Iron Jawed Angels." It was a great evening! In case you missed it, we'll try not to wait so long to have another upbeat and sociable occasion to get together.

But back to that big election.

Our candidate forum, co-sponsored with the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce, was a major undertaking, running from 5:30 to 9:00 p.m. October 29. I enjoyed the chance to co-moderate with the Chamber's Mike Hoppock and want to thank the many League members who also played a role – coordinating and planning with the Chamber, setting up the table

with Voter's Guides, gathering and reviewing audience questions, keeping time and making sure the candidates abided by their time limits, changing water pitchers and cups between candidate groups, as well as being audience members and asking good questions.

Concerns about the forum have been discussed – that it was too late in the campaign season, so many people had already advance voted; that the sound on Access Television's recording of it was virtually inaudible; that the schedule didn't allow adequate time for rerunning the Access video before the election; that the Chamber's one-sided sales tax promotion at the end of the forum may not have been in keeping with the League's non-partisan position. We will try to keep track of the concerns so forums in future elections will be even better and more effective

Our local Voter's Guide was posted on our website and linked up to the national League's "Vote411.org" website. Hard copies were also available at the library and at the candidate forum.

With help from LWVUS, the Salina Journal ran a twice-weekly feature, "Electing the President," in the two months leading up to voting day - adapting a series from the national League. According to the Journal's Newspapers-In-Education coordinator, about 4000 students and teachers made it a regular part of their social studies classes.

Coming up in January are two occasions you won't want to miss:

Lunch & Learn January 13 will be an important update on the Schilling-

area water pollution – an issue that caused an uproar a few years ago (as we noticed toxic pollutants heading rapidly toward Salina's municipal water supply) and then seemed to go, well, underground. The committee appointed at last year's January

Program Planning Meeting to investigate the issue has been impressed by the quiet progress made by the city, Airport Authority and other local entities.

Come hear about that from the Airport Authority's Tim Rogers and perhaps others.

Finally, it's time for another meeting to plan our program and efforts for the upcoming year. The board has decided to hold the **2009 Program Planning Meeting** as an informal discussion, rather than the very formal and somewhat confusing format of recent years. Watch for the date, and come add your thoughts to the discussion.

The Salina League is full of good people who are interested, like you, in becoming better informed. Be a part of our action.

—Ann Zimmerman



CALENDAR



DECEMBER

No board meeting
Happy Holidays

JANUARY

13 Lunch & Learn
20 Board Meeting

FEBRUARY

10 Lunch & Learn
17 Board Meeting

MARCH

10 Lunch & Learn
17 Board Meeting
19 2009 Day at the Capitol

CLIMATE CHANGE TASK FORCE

The LWVUS Climate Change Task Force is releasing a series of articles on climate change featuring handy tips for citizens to utilize in being more responsible in everyday life.

The first two articles in the series are featured in this issue of VOTER. Please watch for the rest of the series to be featured in later editions.

**FUN FACTS:
ELECTORAL COLLEGE**

Ann Zimmerman, Salina LWV President, and Margaret Wyatt, LWV Membership Chair, were invited to give a short presentation to the Salina Board of Realtors, on October 17. Ann talked about the League in general, and Margaret's part of the presentation was to discuss the fact that the League has a number of positions on national issues. She chose to talk about the Electoral College. This is a fascinating subject, and Margaret was asked to write about a few "Fun" facts about the Electoral College for the VOTER. She is not an expert on this subject, but she did find out some interesting things.

In 1970 the National League of Women Voters adopted a position supporting the abolition of the Electoral College to be replaced by the direct election of President and Vice President by popular vote.

The Electoral College was set up in Article III of the U.S. Constitution. The 12th and 23rd Amendments modify the original plan.

The Electoral College currently consists of 538 members. Each state has a total number of electors equal to the sum of its number of senators and representatives. Kansas, for example has six electors, because we have two senators and four members of the House of Representatives. In addition, Washington D.C. has three electors. Hence the total number of electors is 538 (435 representatives, plus 100 senators, plus three Washington, D.C. members). As we all know, 270 votes are needed to elect the President.

Based on statements made by our Founding Fathers, the Electoral College was established (instead of electing the

**MEMBERSHIP MEETING RECAP
RACE, CLASS AND THE DIVISIONS
BETWEEN US: COMMUNITY MATTERS**

In September, a multi-racial audience of local citizens attended the League's Membership Meeting to discuss: "Race, Class and the Divisions Between Us: Community Matters." Local psychologist and League member Paula Fried led a lively discussion of divisive issues and how they affect the Salina community. Participants heard from Ms. Fried about what has recently been labeled "white privilege," the benefits small and large that the dominant culture frequently experiences but may seldom notice and probably takes for granted, but which may not be available to minorities. These include the privilege of having security guards in stores take no notice of you, or having most people in positions of power resemble you or members of your

cultural group.

African-American citizens discussed their own experiences of racism in what local whites perceive to be an open and friendly community. Black citizens expressed special concern about the scarcity of minority school teachers, while staff from local schools and colleges described the difficulty they have in recruiting minority faculty. Discussion also centered on the participation of adult community members of various races in the high schools as a calming influence.

The Membership Meeting was covered in local media. The League has several new members due at least in part to this and other recent important meetings and discussions hosted by the League.

- Margaret Wyatt, *Membership Chair*

President and Vice President by popular vote), because the Founding Fathers were concerned that the ordinary voter might be swayed unduly by a demagogic candidate or be insufficiently informed about Presidential candidates.

Consequently, it would be wiser to put a layer between the voter and the election of the President and Vice President.

- Margaret Wyatt, *Membership Chair*

More "fun" facts will follow in the next VOTER.



**DID YOU
KNOW?**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has launched a new program, WaterSense (www.epa.gov/watersense/), to help consumers identify products and programs that meet tough water-efficiency and performance criteria. High-efficiency toilets are the first product to display the new WaterSense label, signaling that the fixture has been independently certified by a third party to confirm that it meets the EPA criteria.

Did you know that if all inefficient toilets in U.S. homes were converted to WaterSense labeled toilets, we would save enough water to equal 15 days of flow over Niagra Falls?

STAYING WARM AND LIVING GREEN

PART OF A SERIES OF ARTICLES FROM THE LWVUS CLIMATE CHANGE TASK FORCE

By Eleanor Revelle (*LWVIL and LWVUS Climate Change Task Force Member*)

When colder weather strikes, heating bills start to climb. Not only is that hard on the checkbook; it also means increased greenhouse gas emissions. What is a thrifty, ecologically-minded person to do?

First, figure out what your **natural gas** bill is telling you about your energy usage. The meter reading section of your bill reports the number of cubic feet of gas used in that billing period and then converts that figure into **therms**, a measure of the energy content of the gas. (One therm is roughly equal to 100 cubic feet of natural gas.) This number is used as the basis for calculating the various charges on your bill.

How do you know whether the number of therms you used is "reasonable"? The answer to this is . . . it depends. It depends on how cold it was outside.

Your gas bill may give you this information if it reports the total number of **heating degree days** in that billing period. Or you can find degree day records on Weather Underground (www.wunderground.com/). Go to the Detailed History and Climate section of the weather page for your city and indicate the day, week, month or other time period for which you want weather data.

Heating degree day (HDD) is a measure that indicates how much colder the average temperature was outside compared to a baseline temperature of 65°F. (This reflects the observation that houses generally require heating if the outside temperature is lower than 65°F.)

If the average of the high and low temperatures for a particular day was 35°F, that would add 30 HDDs to the total for the billing period.

Dividing the number of therms used by the total number of degree days gives you information about the energy performance of your house.* It reflects the temperature setting of your thermostat, the tightness of your house, and the efficiency of your home's heating system.**

With this calculation, you can compare your energy consumption from month to month, and year to year, despite variations in the weather and the fluctuating cost of energy. And the simple act of monitoring will provide a strong incentive to improve your home's energy efficiency—and help you measure the impact of changes you make.

Improving Your Home's Performance

You have no control over the outside temperature—the number of degree days—the biggest factor in your energy consumption equation. But you **can** control the therm usage of your home.

Dialing down the thermostat is the most direct step you can take. In colder climates like the upper Midwest, every degree that you lower the setting on your thermostat will result in roughly a three percent reduction in the amount of energy used.

Installing a programmable thermostat can also bring significant energy savings. By automatically adjusting the temperature setting for your home, this simple device makes it easy to lower the setting when less heat is needed—for example, when you're asleep or away for the day.



Taking steps to minimize heat loss from your home is next on the list. **Adding insulation** is one of the most cost-effective improvements you can

make, and the attic is the best and easiest place to start. Proper insulation levels in the walls, foundation, and basement or crawl space will also help make your house tighter—and more comfortable.

Sealing air leaks—a major source of heat loss in older homes—is another very important energy-saver.

You can spot many of these problem areas on your own with a do-it-yourself **home energy audit**. Or you can arrange for a professional auditor to carry out a more thorough assessment of your home. Some utility companies conduct audits or can recommend an energy auditor.

The third area for attention is your home's **heating system**. You can improve its efficiency by insulating ducts (if you have a furnace) and hot water/steam pipes (for a boiler) that pass through unheated spaces, changing the air filter regularly (furnace), and arranging for regular professional maintenance.

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STAYING WARM: *Continued*
from Page 4

**NATIONAL LWV LETTER TO CONGRESS:
The Stimulus Package and The Environment**

Your heating service company can also advise you as to whether replacing your existing furnace or boiler with a new, high-efficiency unit would make sense.

If you are planning to remodel your current home or build a new house, you have an opportunity to "build green" from the start. By making it a priority to incorporate energy-efficient design features and take advantage of new technologies and materials, you can have a high-performance home that minimizes energy consumption and maximizes comfort and durability.

* If you use **heating oil**, note the date on which you fill your oil tank and the date on which it needs refilling. Divide the number of gallons of oil used by the number of HDDs for that time period. This will give you a baseline figure of the amount of heating oil you use per HDD.

** The number of therms used also reflects the energy consumed in heating water and any cooking done with gas. Your summer gas bill will give you a rough idea of how much those uses contribute to your energy consumption year-round. Easy things you can do to cut water heating costs include turning down the setting of your water heater (to 115-120° F); insulating the water heater and hot water pipes; installing low-flow fixtures and a more efficient dishwasher and clothes washing machine; and replacing an older water heater with a new, high-efficiency model.

Another article in this Climate Change series, "*Water—Let's Use This Precious Resource Wisely*" is located on Page 6 and 7 of this VOTER.

Dear Leader Reid, Speaker Pelosi, Minority Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Boehner,

Economists, business leaders, and American workers all agree, as do we, that our economy needs quick attention from Congress. As you consider how to deliver that aid, whether in a stimulus bill during a November lame duck session or in January, we urge you to invest taxpayer dollars in green infrastructure and green jobs development that immediately puts people to work and reinvigorates the economy. (At the same time, it should be noted that this package is a down payment on prompt action in 2009 to enact a comprehensive energy package including a cap-and-invest program.)

Investments in transforming our energy infrastructure, updating clean water infrastructure, boosting transit funding, restoring lands, and training our workforce will yield significant economic growth and job creation.

In fact, "green" investments, on average, create more than twice as many jobs per dollar invested compared to traditional fossil fuel-based generating technologies, by redirecting money previously spent on inefficient energy use and imported fuel toward advanced technology, modern infrastructure, and skilled labor.

The stimulus package could include near-term spending on a range of transportation, manufacturing, construction, building efficiency, neighborhood revitalization, natural resource restoration and workforce development programs and some changes to the tax code. The job creation benefits of many of these programs have been outlined in a report released by the Center for American Progress and the University of Massachusetts's Political Economy Research Institute, entitled "Green Recovery: A Program to Create Good Jobs and Start Building a Low-Carbon Economy." 2 Other spending listed below would inject dollars into clean water infrastructure and transit projects that are

waiting on state, tribal and local "ready-to-go" lists to ensure rapid start-up of new construction or maintenance projects.

This multi-billion clean energy and green infrastructure stimulus could include:

Transit agencies and ready-to-go transportation projects: Provide \$2 billion in assistance to transit agencies to reduce transit fares and expand services, and begin construction on ready-to-go rail and other projects.

Home efficiency tax incentives: Congress should extend through 2011 tax credits for efficient new homes and high efficiency heating and cooling equipment. Congress should also 1) adopt a new tax credit for home efficiency retrofits that is based on the percentage of energy savings achieved by theretrofit, 2) make the home efficiency incentives refundable, and 3) include installation costs in the incentives.

Energy-Star Home Equipment Deployment: Provide EPA with \$10 billion to provide consumers with rebates for purchase of Energy-Star certified appliances, windows, and other residential products.

Workforce investment in the Green Jobs Act: Increase appropriations for the Green Jobs Act, authorized in the 2007 Energy Independence and Security Act, to \$250 million to provide job training and workforce investment in energy efficiency and renewable-energy installations.

Technical fix to renewable energy tax incentive provisions: Address effects of the credit availability crisis on the renewable energy industry by making the renewable production tax credit, investment tax credits and provisions governing accelerated depreciation fully refundable.

Clean renewable energy bonds: Increase CREB funding for consumer-owned utilities to \$5 billion to jump-start renewable energy projects.

The Weatherization Assistance Program: Fully fund the Weatherization Assistance Program at \$900 million,

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Letter to Congress—Continued from Page 5

the amount Congress has authorized to spend on the program in FY 2009, and build toward a goal of weatherizing 1 million low-income homes.

Energy efficiency and conservation block grants: Increase appropriation to \$6 billion to fund states, tribes, cities, and counties in pursuing clean energy projects.

Solar roofs on Federal buildings: Authorize \$3.5 billion to install 2,000 MW of solar power on Federal rooftops, and amend Federal electric city contracting to allow for 30-year power purchasing agreements for renewable energy.

New Starts Transit project investments: Fully fund the New Starts Transit budget at the \$6.6 billion authorized in Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users.

Green school construction and renovation: Support state, tribal and local school modernization, renovation, and repair at \$7.25 billion.

Green affordable housing HOME block grants: Supplement block grant funding through the HOME program with \$1 billion for energy-related projects.

HOPE VI program for green community revitalization: Appropriate \$800 million for greening HOPE VI projects to meet Energy Star and green communities standards.

Smart grid federal matching funds: Fund the Smart Grid Title of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 to support \$1.3 billion for infrastructure investment and demonstration projects.

Green jobs restoring the land: Expand existing programs by \$800 million to restore habitat and ecosystems, including parks, wildlife refuges, forests, and wetlands, which will create jobs and return significant economic benefits, especially in rural communities.

Manufacturing Extension Partnership: Expand the capacity of domestic manufacturing modernization efforts by increasing MEP funding to \$200 million, directed to energy-efficiency improvements.

Additional green infrastructure for clean water: Invest in green jobs and effective clean water solutions by

funding \$6.5 - 10 billion in clean water infrastructure, with at least \$1 billion **“Crusher Credit” rebates for retirement of inefficient vehicles:** Initiate a \$2.5 billion annual program to incentivize the retirement and scrapage of inefficient vehicles, in exchange for a voucher to be used to acquire an efficient vehicle or for alternative transportation.

Retrofit and replace diesel vehicles: Increase appropriations for the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) by \$550 million to reduce emissions from diesels while creating jobs at manufacturers and supporting public transportation and local schools.

Rebates and excise-tax waivers to encourage truckers to install fuel-saving equipment. Provide \$235 million to EPA’s SmartWay program to fund a rebate program to help truckers purchase and install fuel-saving equipment, such as idling reduction kits and fuel-efficient tires; waive the federal excise tax on equipment certified by SmartWay to increase fuel efficiency.

We understand that Congress is considering significant aid for domestic automobile manufacturers as part of a stimulus package; the auto sector should also be viewed as a critical “green” investment opportunity. We all have a stake in the health of the American automobile industry. We also need rapid action to reduce our dependence on oil and cut the pollution

that is driving global warming. Help for the American auto companies must be aimed not only at getting them through today’s crisis but at swiftly retooling to produce dramatically cleaner, higher mileage cars, grow jobs and provide safeguards for taxpayer investment. American auto companies cannot be competitive in a future of insecure, volatile oil markets and intensifying global warming if they make cars only marginally better than they are building today. If they significantly improve the cars and trucks they build, then financial assistance from taxpayers could help spark a revitalization of the industry. Therefore, the aid package should be tied to guaranteed improvement in the greenhouse gas emissions and fuel economy of manufacturer’s fleets, accelerating compliance with new standards.

Thank you for considering our views.

Signed by members of the following organizations: *American Rivers, Clean Water Action, Defenders of Wildlife, Earthjustice Environment America, Environmental Defense Fund, League of Conservation, League of Women Voters of the United States, National Audubon Society National, Tribal Environmental Council, National Wildlife Federation Natural Resources Defense Council Physicians for Social Responsibility Sierra Club, The Wilderness Society, Union of Concerned Scientists*

Meet The Members

In this issue and the next, we want to introduce you to the League members, past and present.

ELAINE HASSLER decided to join the Salina League of Women Voters because she wanted accurate information about civic, state and national issues. Elaine has two sons – Randy and Vance, and three daughters – Gayle, Janine and Kim. She has been a farm wife and mother, a school teacher, a county commissioner, a school board member and a state legislator.

Elaine enjoys reading and sewing,

especially making quilts. She also likes music, medicine and church work.

LORI TROW was born in Great Bend, Kansas and attended Kansas Wesleyan University. She decided to join the Salina League of Women Voters to “get more involved in the community and decisions made in the community and the country.”

Lori’s husband is Michael Trow, and she has two sons – James and David, and a daughter Jessica Acosta, son-in-law, Martin, and grandson, Alessandro. She enjoys racing, sewing and being with her family.

WATER— LET'S USE THIS PRECIOUS RESOURCE WISELY

By Eleanor Revelle (*LWVIL and LWVUS Climate Change Task Force Member*)

Water is an increasingly scarce resource. Many parts of the United States already face serious water shortages and even drought. Population growth and the changing climate are putting additional stresses on water supplies. Even in areas where water seems to be abundant, careful management of this precious resource is essential if we are to ensure a reliable supply for future generations.

Moreover, using water efficiently also saves energy. For most municipalities, the biggest use of electricity is associated with treating and distributing drinking water and then collecting, treating, and disposing of it after it has been used.

Water conservation is clearly an important component of sustainability. How can we, as individual consumers, help?

Saving Water Indoors

Indoor water usage in a typical single family home in the United States is about 70 gallons per person per day. But fixing leaks, installing water-efficient plumbing fixtures, and changing some everyday habits can reduce water usage significantly to around 45 gallons/person/day.

Fix those Leaks

Leaks account for about 13 percent of the water used in a typical home. A slowly dripping faucet or a toilet that keeps "running" can waste thousands of gallons of water a year.

To check for leaks, read the water meter before and after a two-hour period in which no water is being used. After the test period, if the meter has a

higher reading, there is probably a leak.

Buy Water-Saving Fixtures, Appliances

Toilets are typically the greatest water user in the house, accounting for more than one-quarter of the total used in a home each day. Replacing an older 3.5-gallons-per-flush (gpf) toilet with a 1.6-gpf, low-flush model will save at least 10 gallons of water/per person/day.

New lower-flow dual-flush toilets will cut usage even further. By reducing water bills, newer toilets pay for themselves in just a few years.*

Replacing older showerheads with low-flow fixtures and installing low-flow aerators in existing faucets are both low-cost ways to save water. And by cutting the demand for hot water, this step will result in energy savings as well.

Water-efficient dishwashers and clothes washers also help save water—and energy.

Turn Off the Tap

A few small changes in everyday habits can result in significant water savings. Turn off the tap while brushing teeth and save well over 1000 gallons/person/year. Take a five-minute shower (12.5 gallons of water with a new showerhead) instead of a bath and save 20-30 gallons each time.

Conserving Water Outside

In urbanized areas, roads, rooftops and parking lots cover much of the landscape and prevent rainwater from soaking into the ground and replenishing groundwater. Rainwater runoff flows instead into the storm sewer system, picking up pesticides, fertilizers, oil and other pollutants as it makes its

way to local rivers, lakes and bays.

An additional problem confronts older municipalities with combined sewer systems. In these systems, stormwater and sanitary wastes are collected in the same pipe and then treated together before being discharged. During periods of heavy rainfall or snowmelt, the volume of water can exceed the capacity of the system, and the excess wastewater is discharged directly into nearby waterways.

Green Infrastructure

A new approach to stormwater management uses natural systems to absorb and filter rainwater and make use of it where it falls. It treats rainwater as an asset rather than a waste product.

Using permeable paving for driveways and parking areas allows rain water to seep into the ground, thus recharging groundwater and reducing stormwater runoff.

Rainwater can be "harvested"—collected as it runs off the roof and stored in rain barrels or a cistern for future landscape irrigation. Benefits include lower water bills, less waste of precious drinking water, reduced demand on the municipal water system and increased groundwater recharge.

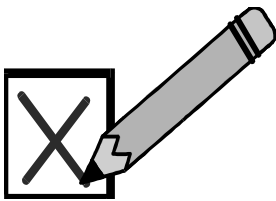
Replacing lawn areas with natural landscaping will save water and energy as well as benefit the natural environment. Lawn maintenance is water intensive—some 30 percent of our water is used to irrigate lawns—and lawnmowers cause five percent of the nation's air pollution. Native plants, on the other hand, help reduce runoff and minimize the need for watering. They do not need fertilizers, herbicides or pesticides. And they provide food and shelter for birds, butterflies and beneficial insects.



League of Women Voters of Salina

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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.**