

Election workers honored

By Bev Woodruff

Staff Writer

Indiana Secretary of State Todd Rokita visited Union County on Monday, Sept. 20 to bestow on four Union County residents Indiana's highest award given to a private citizens, that of Honorary Secretary of State.

Long-time Union County poll workers: Norma Hendrix, Betty Hofmann, Annastasia Warrick and Pat Gentry received the award for their dedicated poll work.

Rokita spoke highly of the four women and the work they do.

"These four women are a wonderful example for young Hoosiers," Rokita said. "I hope their love of politics and desire for fair and honest elections will be contagious and that many other

Hoosiers will follow their lead and volunteer at the polls."

According to a recent press release from Rokita's office, Indiana is dependent on thousands of poll workers who volunteer to work each election. The work day can be up to 16 hours on Election Day. Conducting an election in Indiana would be impossible without its volunteer poll workers.

Union County Clerk Patricia Hensley recommended the four women for the awards.

"I chose them based on the quality and dependability of their service," Hensley said.

Hensley expressed her appreciation to all four women for their service and assistance to the county. She also commented on how

(See "Election," page twelve)



Bev Woodruff photo

Union County election workers received an award from Secretary of State Todd Rokita Monday, Sept. 20 in the Union County Courthouse. From left: Circuit Court Clerk Pat Hensley, Betty Hofmann, Annastasia Warrick and Rokita. Not pictured but also honored, Norma Hendrix.

helpful Norma Hendrix was with the absentee voting process. Hendrix was unable to attend the ceremony due to health problems.

"If I hadn't had Norma Hendrix the first year for absentee voting, I think I would absolutely have lost my mind," Hensley said.

Gentry, who is also president of the Union County Council, began working the polls as a vice precinct committee woman 40 years ago, while Hofmann has worked for the past 14 years and Warrick for 10 years.

According to the U.S. Election Assistance Committee, the average age of a U.S. poll worker is 72 years old. The three ladies attending the ceremony shared their ages, which averaged 74 years old.

Union County is the sixth county Rokita has visited to award Honorary Secretary of State citations to poll workers. The program is in its pilot stages, but the plan is to visit every county in

Indiana to recognize poll workers, Rokita said.

Rokita asked each of the ladies to share a memory of their poll work.

Hofmann said the first year she worked at Kitchel birds were flying overhead and the roof needed work. She also commented in a small community people expect you to know who they are when they come in to vote. She added she did know most of the voters.

Gentry proudly said she once knew everyone in her precinct. She also added she feels it is extremely important to encourage young people to vote.

Warrick said she enjoys working the polls and meeting people. She added older people sometimes need more help and she enjoys helping them.

There are things private citizens can do to safeguard our democracy without carrying a gun and that is what these ladies have done, Rokita said.