

FROM YOUR SUPERVISOR — KATHY DENT



From Your Supervisor –

First of all, I want to congratulate each and every one of you for the commendation you received from the 2012 Florida Senate regarding your dedication and outstanding service as election officials on elections day! (See page 2). Without you all, elections as we know them would not be possible.

Speaking of the Legislature, we were handed very few statutory changes this session. Two bills passed regarding freeholder elections which are a rarity in Sarasota County. There were two others which will add additional constitutional amendment proposals in November for statewide voters to weigh in on, bringing the total to nine.

Finally, the Governor signed into law the legislative plan drawing the lines for our 27 Congressional districts. A lawsuit contesting these lines has already been filed. The Supreme Court then ruled that the legislative plans for state house were constitutional but the Senate plan was unconstitutional in 8 out of the 40 seats. Therefore, a special session for re-doing the Senate plan will begin on March 14 and can last as long as two weeks. The final step is for all three plans to go to the Department of Justice for approval.

This schedule leaves a limited amount of time for us here at the elections office to redraw, consolidate and re-number our precincts. We are already working on reviewing voting locations, updating our street indexes, and geo-coding each voter so that, when the time comes, we will be ready to place each voter in the correct districts and to mail a new voter information card in time for the August 14 Primary Election. Only five times in every century does the task of redistricting fall in a Presidential election year. This year happens to be one of those years. It always thrills me to be a part of history.

SARASOTA COUNTY SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS

Election Connection

2011— 2012 Elections

Election	Election day	Last day to register
<u>Primary Election</u>	Tuesday, Aug. 14, 2012	July 16, 2012
<u>General Election</u>	Tuesday, Nov. 6, 2012	Oct. 9, 2012

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**THE FLORIDA SENATE PASSED A RESOLUTION ON FEBRUARY 23
COMMENDING ELECTION DAY OFFICIALS FOR THEIR WORK AT THE POLLS**

Senate Resolution

A resolution commending those who serve as election day officials at polling places throughout Florida for their outstanding service and dedication.

WHEREAS, freedom is best maintained and nurtured through the democratic process, which requires fair and open elections that accurately reflect the intent of the electorate, and WHEREAS, the supervisors of elections have long relied upon election day officials to assist them in administering elections, and

WHEREAS, those seeking to become election officials are extraordinarily committed in attending training sessions to learn policies, procedures, and responsibilities to ensure that voting is administered in a fair, nondiscriminatory, and transparent manner, and

WHEREAS, election day officials enthusiastically assist fellow citizens during the election process with early voting and at polling places, ensuring accurate and trouble-free elections along with timely results, and

WHEREAS, election day officials are responsible for administering all activities at polling places in Florida, and have remained willing, positive, and innovative throughout the many changes in election procedures, policies, and voting equipment, and

WHEREAS, election day officials have served as ambassadors of the supervisors of elections and have contributed to the high level of integrity in the election process in Florida, NOW,

THEREFORE,

Be It Resolved by the Senate of the State of Florida:

That the Senate commends those who serve as election day officials at polling places throughout Florida for their outstanding service and dedication.

SARASOTA COUNTY PREPARES TO REDRAW PRECINCT LINES

The elections office will be redrawing Sarasota County's precinct boundaries and renumbering precincts in the coming months. The new precincts will reflect changes made by the legislature to Florida's congressional and state senate and house district lines. The legislative redistricting was the result of the 2010 federal census which showed Florida with a population increase of nearly three million since 2000 and a gain of two U.S. Congressional seats to 27.

Reprecincting presents opportunities for Sarasota County to streamline the electoral process and provide efficiencies and benefits to the voters and to the county. For example, with the increase in the number of people who vote early and by mail in the county, we will be able to consolidate existing precincts and polling places into a more manageable number. This will reduce the amount of equipment, training and personnel required to conduct a county-wide election and save taxpayer dollars. Did you know that a county-wide election costs the taxpayers about \$450,000? The new precincts will be in effect in time for the fall 2012 elections.

In the meantime, the elections office will be conducting an extensive voter education program to make voters aware of their new voting districts, precinct numbers and polling locations. Please help us to spread the news about reprecincting by telling your friends and families.

We'd also like to know what you think about reprecincting. We welcome your suggestions, comments, or questions. Just email us at feedback@SarasotaVotes.com.

Thank you for your help and for all you do for the voters of Sarasota County.

Share the fun!

If you are already a poll worker, share your experience with a friend or family member and send them to one of our orientations to find out how important and FUN it is to be a poll worker!

Orientation Calendar 2012

Fruitville Library _____ Monday, June 11, 1 pm
Jacaranda Library _____ Tuesday, June 12, 11 am
North Sarasota Library _____ Wednesday, June 13, 11 am

THE VOTE BY MAIL (ABSENTEE BALLOT) PROCESS

Voter requests an absentee ballot by any method below:

- * Complete a request form online at www.SarasotaVotes.com.
- * Send an email request to Absentee@SarasotaVotes.com.
- * Call our absentee ballot department at 941-861-8618.

Absentee ballot department rolls voter registration files over:

- * Absentee Ballot requests are keyed into the SOE database.
- * The voter certificate envelopes are printed and prepared for mailing.

Mailing & tracking the ballot:

- * Absentee ballots are delivered to our county mailroom where they are sealed and postage is applied.
- * Ballots are delivered to the USPS to be mailed to the voter.
- * Voters may track the status of their absentee ballots at www.SarasotaVotes.com.

Voter receives absentee ballot package including:

- * Instructions for marking and returning the absentee ballot.
- * Voter certificate which will require a signature beside the red X.

Voter returns absentee ballot:

- * Voter may mail or drop off ballot at any of the supervisor of elections offices.

SOE office receives absentee ballot:

- * When dropped at the SOE, ballots are date/time stamped and placed in a secured ballot box.

Ballots are then processed by:

Matching signature in database.

Verifying eligibility of voter.

Securing ballot in a locked area.

- ◆ Absentee ballots are mailed 45 days prior to each election for military and overseas voters. Ballots for all other absentee voters will be mailed between 35 & 28 days prior to an election. Absentee ballots cannot be forwarded or held but may be mailed to any location the voter chooses.
- ◆ If the signature is questionable, the signature certificate is referred to the canvassing board for determination. The canvassing board consists of the supervisor of elections, a Sarasota County judge, and a county commissioner.

Per FL Statute 101.655, supervised voting is offered to residents of nursing homes and assisted living facilities. An SOE team comprised of representatives of different political parties prepares and delivers absentee ballots upon request.

REGISTRATION STATISTICS

(As of March 6, 2012)

Republican	118,764
Democrat	84,858
Other	62,992
Total	266,614



SARASOTA VOTES!

ATTENTION VOTERS

Florida is a closed primary state.

If you wish to vote in a partisan primary election, you must be a registered voter in the party for which the primary is being held.

(Section 101.021, Florida Statutes)

However, if all candidates for an office have the same party affiliation and the winner will have no opposition in the general election, all qualified electors, regardless of party affiliation, may vote in the primary elections for that office. Also, all registered voters, regardless of party affiliation can vote on issues and non-partisan candidates.

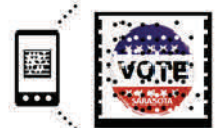
What this means for you...

Voters who are registered members of political parties may vote for their respective party's candidates in a primary election. Voters without party affiliation are not eligible to vote for party candidates in a primary election. This is why it is important to indicate your preferred party affiliation at the time you register. If you leave the field blank on the registration form, you will be registered without party affiliation.

If you're not sure whether we have your current information, call our office at 861-8600. Bookmark www.SarasotaVotes.com for easy reference. Check out all the updates on our website. Now you can follow us on...

facebook

twitter



Get the free mobile app for your phone
<http://gettag.mobi>

76th Annual Sarasota County Fair

March 16-25

The Sarasota County supervisor of elections office will be participating at the county fair. Located at the Sarasota Fairgrounds, the agricultural fair is a 10 day event each March that features rides, entertainment, crafts, horticulture, science fair, livestock and auction.

We will be sharing information about the coming elections, reprecincting and more from our booth in the Roberts Arena. Stop by and say "hi!" and see what's new with elections.



A message to our poll workers...

We know how lucky we are to have such a great contingent of poll workers in Sarasota County. We are reminded every election.

We also now know that, even in the face of unfortunate circumstances beyond your and our control, you are remarkably patient and understanding, and capable of maintaining your senses of humor. For this, we thank you. You are awesome, and you make our job a little easier.



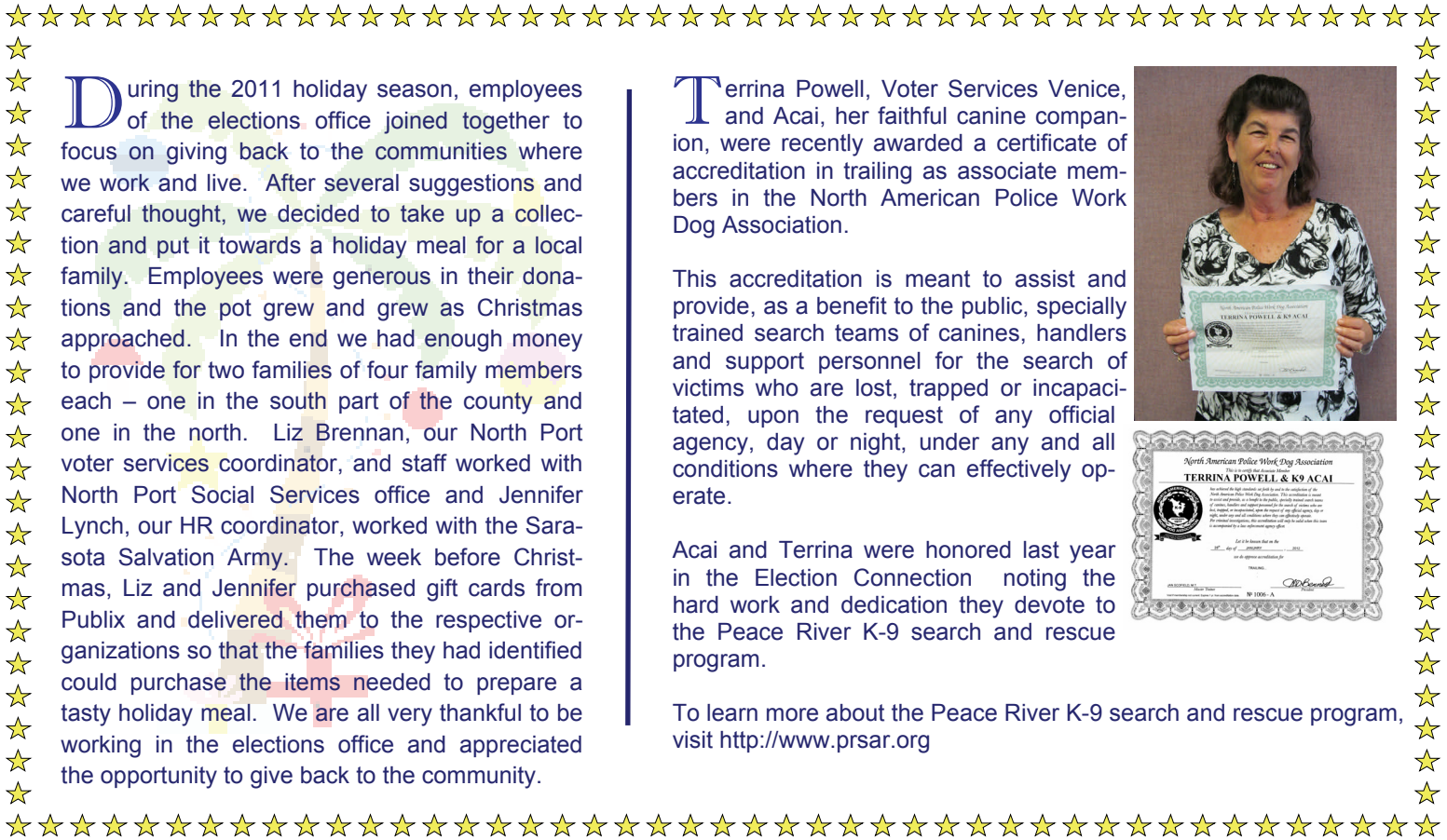
SARASOTA COUNTY
SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS

WE'RE ON THE WEB!!
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Venice, FL 34293
(941) 861-3760

13640 Tamiami Trail
North Port, FL 34287
(941) 423-9540



During the 2011 holiday season, employees of the elections office joined together to focus on giving back to the communities where we work and live. After several suggestions and careful thought, we decided to take up a collection and put it towards a holiday meal for a local family. Employees were generous in their donations and the pot grew and grew as Christmas approached. In the end we had enough money to provide for two families of four family members each – one in the south part of the county and one in the north. Liz Brennan, our North Port voter services coordinator, and staff worked with North Port Social Services office and Jennifer Lynch, our HR coordinator, worked with the Sarasota Salvation Army. The week before Christmas, Liz and Jennifer purchased gift cards from Publix and delivered them to the respective organizations so that the families they had identified could purchase the items needed to prepare a tasty holiday meal. We are all very thankful to be working in the elections office and appreciated the opportunity to give back to the community.

Terrina Powell, Voter Services Venice, and Acai, her faithful canine companion, were recently awarded a certificate of accreditation in trailing as associate members in the North American Police Work Dog Association.

This accreditation is meant to assist and provide, as a benefit to the public, specially trained search teams of canines, handlers and support personnel for the search of victims who are lost, trapped or incapacitated, upon the request of any official agency, day or night, under any and all conditions where they can effectively operate.

Acai and Terrina were honored last year in the Election Connection noting the hard work and dedication they devote to the Peace River K-9 search and rescue program.

To learn more about the Peace River K-9 search and rescue program, visit <http://www.prsar.org>

