

Election Connection

From Your Supervisor:

Happy 2011 to All!

Yes, we have entered a new year which brings new challenges, opportunities and changes. Your elections office is already on the move.

The 2010 United States Census, as required by the U.S. Constitution, reported 308,745,538 people living in our country. From that census data, congressional re-apportionment and state and local redistricting must take place. The purpose is to divide all voting districts up to be as close to one person, one vote as possible.

This year we will be working with the legislature, county commission, school board, hospital board, municipalities and voters to establish our voting districts and, ultimately, the correct precinct for every registered voter. This brings budget and voter education challenges along with a very compressed timeline to make it all happen in time to qualify candidates for the 2012 election cycle.

This once every 10 year event also provides Sarasota County with some opportunities to improve our process. With the increase in the number of people voting early and absentee, we will be able to save money by consolidating precincts. We will be able to use best polling locations available and will have an outstanding pool of poll workers to draw from.

Other changes anticipated are using separate pools of poll workers for early voting and Election Day. We have discovered that it is just not fair to have one group of people work the full two weeks of early voting and then a fourteen hour day on Election Day, too.

Finally, we expect that by the middle of this summer we will be notified by the U.S. Department of Justice whether Sarasota County meets the threshold under Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act to be required to print ballots and election materials in Spanish.

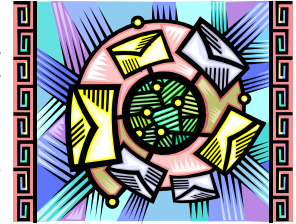
Then, before we know it, 2011 will be gone and a new election cycle will be upon us. My staff and I thank all of you for all you do to help make Sarasota County elections as good as they can be and wish you a happy, healthy, and prosperous year.

2011 Elections

Election	Election Day	Last day to register
<u>City of Sarasota 1st Election</u>	Tuesday, March 8, 2011	February 7, 2011
<u>Longboat Key General Election</u>	Tuesday, March 15, 2011	February 14, 2011
<u>City of Sarasota 2nd Election</u>	Tuesday May 10, 2011	April 11, 2011
<u>City of Venice General Election</u>	Tuesday, November 8, 2011	October 10, 2011

HOW DO OUR MILITARY AND OVERSEAS FAMILIES VOTE?

The Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) was enacted by Congress in 1986. UOCAVA requires that the states and territories allow certain groups of citizens to register and vote absentee in elections for federal offices. United States citizens covered by UOCAVA include members of the Uniformed Services and Merchant Marine, their family members and US citizens residing outside of the United States.



In 2009, UOCAVA was amended by the Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment Act ("MOVE Act") to establish new voter registration and absentee procedures which states must follow in all federal elections. Voters now have the option to request and receive voter registration, absentee ballot applications and absentee ballots by electronic transmission (email). Ballots must be transmitted to voters no later than 45 days before an election for federal office when the request has been received by that date unless an undue hardship waiver is approved by the Department of Defense for that election. States are required to take steps to ensure that procedures protect the security of the balloting process and privacy of the identity and personal data of the UOCAVA voter. The MOVE Act also requires that states have a procedure to track the receipt of ballots through a free access system.

What does this all mean to the voters who are registered to vote in Sarasota County?

In Sarasota County, we have a process that provides UOCAVA voters the ability to register to vote and request an absentee ballot that may be delivered via email or through the mail. The voter will then return the voted ballot and voter certificate by mail or, if overseas, mail or fax. The ballot must be received by the supervisor of elections office no later than 7:00 pm on election day. However, if an overseas voter mails an absentee ballot for a federal election which is signed and dated or postmarked no later than the date of the federal election, the ballot will be counted if received no later than 10 days from the date of the federal election. We are committed to ensuring that all eligible voters maintain the right to vote, here and abroad. There are currently approximately 1,130 civilian overseas and 1,395 military domestic and overseas voters registered in Sarasota County.

Any voter in Sarasota who has requested an absentee ballot can track the delivery and receipt of his/her absentee ballot through our Web site, www.SarasotaVotes.com.



FROM THE VOTING EQUIPMENT FACILITY CREW...

When you breathe that sigh of relief at the end of your busy election day, do you ever wonder what happens after the ballots and tabulators are returned to the supervisor of elections office on election night? The story of the election process continues long after the last precinct results are modemed to the SOE and most of us have our feet up on the sofa.

The Voting Equipment Facility (VEF) staff separates all the ballot bags by color and uses large trucks to transport the ballot bags and tabulators from the four designated drop off sites throughout the county back to the VEF. Election day for the VEF staff starts at 5am and ends well after midnight on election day!

The two days following election day are also extremely long. The elections office hires four moving vans to collect the blue supply carts, voting booths, AutoMARKs and other specialty issued items from the 156 precincts. These items are returned to the VEF where the cleanup work begins. In the blue supply carts, election specific items are removed, missing items replaced, miscellaneous paperwork forwarded to appropriate departments and the aprons sent to the cleaners. These tasks take approximately three weeks.

Once the election is certified by the Canvassing Board and after the contest period ends (which is ten business days after certification), the tabulators and AutoMARKs are unsealed and removed from their cases. An audit tape is run from the tabulators for every precinct and early voting site. The memory cards are removed from the AutoMARKs. The green 'Voted Ballot' bags are unsealed and the voted ballots are placed in boxes marked with the precinct number and election date. These boxes are stored in an alarmed ballot room for 22 months. The flashcards and memory cards are returned to the Data Center at the Terrace Building where they will eventually be programmed for the next election. The tabulators and AutoMARKs are then cleaned and stored on pallets. This process takes approximately one month. So, long after election day, the staff at the VEF finally take their sigh of relief!



The VEF facility

Help Wanted

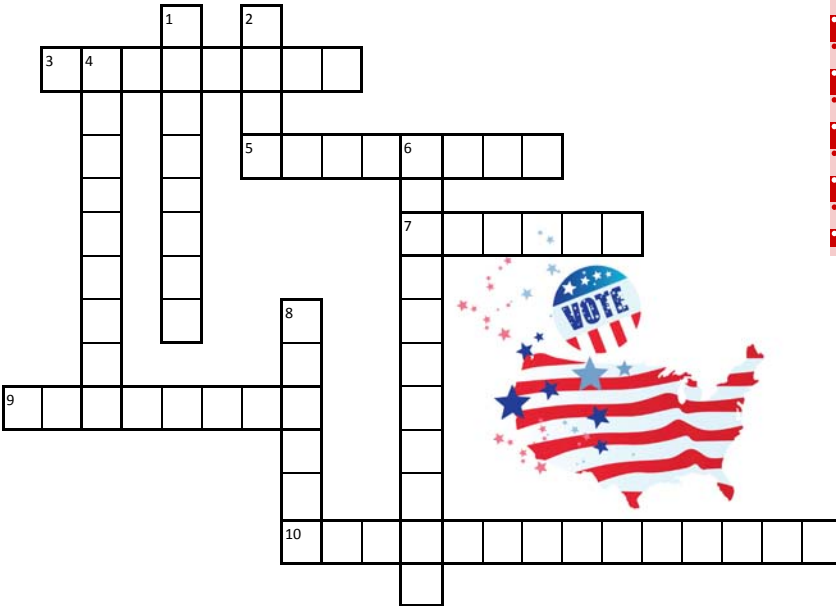
The Supervisor of Elections is always on the lookout for new poll workers! Share your experiences with your family and friends and have them attend one of our upcoming orientations....

Orientation Calendar 2011

Fruitville Library _____ Tuesday, February 8, 11 am
 Jacaranda Library _____ Thursday, February 10, 11 am

Have training will travel...

We are currently searching throughout the county for locations to hold our training classes. We need at least 2,000 sf and enough tables and chairs to accommodate 100 people. The room must be in a secure location. We need to access the room Monday through Saturday for the entire week prior to each election in 2012. If you know of a church or social hall that you think may be interested in renting out space for training, please contact our office at 861-8642.



Across

- 3. Ballot Tabulator
- 5. The act or process of choosing
- 7. Paper on which one can record a vote
- 9. Location where a specific area is to vote
- 10. Resolution of the number of ballots cast and ballots used.

Down

- 1. Ballot marking device
- 2. Military and Overseas Empowerment
- 4. Nominee for a position
- 6. Counting of Votes
- 8. Elector

1. Auto/MARK 2. MOVE 3. Accuvote 4. Candidate 5. Election 6. Tabulation 7. Ballot 8. Voter 9. Precinct 10. Reconciliation

Sarasota Votes!

Have you explored www.SarasotaVotes.com lately? The SOE Web site is your virtual roadmap to all things "elections." You can stay up-to-date on everything that's going on in our world from absentee ballot mailings to early voting schedules to election results and your newly elected local, state, and federal officials. You can also navigate easily from our site to many other important Web sites with a simple click of the mouse on one of the many links we provide. Just select "Related Links" from the main menu on our home page for a list of links to local, state, and federal government sites and many other election-related pages. Bookmark www.SarasotaVotes.com for easy reference and be sure to let us know if you don't find what you're looking for. Your feedback is important to us.

DO YOU KNOW...

Suzie MacFarlane? Suzie is our new Absentee Ballot Coordinator. Although she is new to the position, she is not a new face in the elections office. Suzie started her elections career in 2004 as a part-time employee at the Voting Equipment Facility. In spring 2007, Suzie came to work at the Terrace Building in the Absentee Ballot department and in October 2010 stepped up to the coordinator position.



A Florida native, Suzie was born in St. Pete and lives in Sarasota with her husband, George, and son, Shawn. Suzie brings a fresh and upbeat approach to the Absentee Ballot department.

Thank you, Poll Workers

*You work long and hard on election days.
 You help us out in many ways.
 As voters make their selections,
 You help us have many successful elections.
 Friendliness and assistance you promote.
 You help everyone be able to vote.
 You greet voters with a smile.
 And you help in other areas, all the while.
 With your help, election day is always ready to begin.
 Thank you for the long day you put in.
 Thank you, Poll workers, for all that you do.
 We couldn't do it without you!!*

By Michelle Tuffland, Voter Services

REGISTRATION STATISTICS (As of January 1, 2011)

Republican	118,044
Democrat	86,410
Other	61,909
Total	266,363



SARASOTA COUNTY
SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS

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North Port, FL 34287
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WE'RE ON THE WEB!!
www.SarasotaVotes.com

Online poll worker training is a success in Sarasota County!

Have you ever done your poll worker training in your pajamas and slippers or while sitting in an airport in Italy? Have you trained before the sun rose or after everyone else has long been asleep? Maybe you ate a large pepperoni pizza during class and didn't have to share with anyone? Many of our poll workers actually did that this year! They participated in the online training program and learned their skills from the comfort of their homes.

Online training is designed to mirror the hands-on class instructional information. It allows a more flexible schedule for our poll workers who have other commitments during the regular training class times. Poll workers are given several weeks to complete the training with the opportunity to log on and off at their convenience. Online training materials may also be printed from your home. Not only can poll workers now complete the training at their convenience, they can also review the information online, allowing it to be fresh in their minds as they near the election date.

Although requirements to train online may change, the general "rules of thumb" are that you must have worked in a recent election, have a current email address listed with the elections office, have a fairly new computer and express an interest to participate in the online training program. Training can be done from any computer, anywhere. Online training in Sarasota County has been a great success. We actually piloted the online training in several municipal elections before implementing it countywide. Beginning with the August Primary, all poll workers who were eligible had the opportunity to train online. For the August Primary, 512 poll workers elected to participate in the online training program, while more than 900 participated for the November election! Online training may never replace the face-to-face training classes but it will allow greater flexibility for poll workers who do their jobs well and it will help us to develop a more effective training regimen for the future.

