



ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS NEWSLETTER

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OCTOBER 2012

FROM THE DESK OF RUPERT BORGS MILLER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



We are rapidly approaching the November 6th General Election. We have all prepared for the election and you are now conducting Early Voting. It has been a long year of preparation for this big event and we are now ready to complete the process. I feel strongly that all steps have been taken to ensure the integrity of the process and that we will all have a successful election. I would like to personally thank all the jurisdictions for their cooperation and I am confident that we have met all of the requirements contained in the Federal Consent Decree as related to UCOCAVA voters, so there will be no need for the DOJ to extend it beyond the December 31, 2012 expiration date. Also, I am looking forward to the implementation of the Electronic Canvass Project for the entire state for this election. The E-Canvass will once again only improve the entire election process for the state. As some people may say, break a leg on Election Day. Good Luck and thanks again for all of your cooperation.



True Dedication to the Voting Process

Submitted by Jamye Sims, Election Specialist, State Board of Elections

A Coles County election judge has served her precinct for 62 years. I recently had the pleasure of meeting Alice Nelson from Mattoon, Illinois. She was raised on the farm that her grandfather purchased in 1870. After her husband got out of the service, they raised their family on that same farm. In fact she has been registered to vote from that farm since 1948. *"I have only lived in three houses in my lifetime, two of them on the same farm. There are a lot of memories there. In 1935, my dad took us to New Mexico to run a store for his brother for one year. That was when I was in 2nd grade. Then I did live in a dorm while going to Eastern Illinois University. I haven't gotten around that far, but I have been to all states but five."* Alice has not only served in the same precinct all these years, but has only been registered to vote from two different houses on that same farm her entire life. *"I have voted all my life, and I am still trying to instill that in my kids and grandkids...and most of them do."*

Alice was asked if her parents were active in the voting process, and how she became an election judge. *"Yes, they (my parents) were very active in voting...and my mother especially. She was more interested in tracing their family's genealogy. We were members of the Daughters of the American Revolution, and Daughters of the American Colonists, and felt we had to register and vote."* In 1950, a precinct committeeman asked Alice's mother to serve as an election judge. Alice's mother was too busy, but volunteered Alice to serve. During the last

62 years, she has missed serving in only two elections. *"I missed one election in 1957 or 1958 when my husband was running as a write-in for the school board. Then the other day was when I got sick at the polls, and had to go home."*

When asked what the biggest changes in voting were, Alice had many remembrances about the long days, the changing equipment, the amount that she was paid, and how some of the procedures have changed. *"I would say my longest day was at the Eisenhower election when I was gone from home for 24 hours. Back then is when we tallied the votes by hand. Three judges were charged to read, and then three judges would tally the votes. Now there are five election judges assigned to serve in each precinct. That is so much different than it is today. It has been a big improvement there."* Over the years, Alice has seen the voting change from paper ballots, to voting equipment called "video voter" (which was a form of touch screen voting), to vote recorders with the punch card ballots, to the current electronic tabulators and touch screen machines used today. *"We had to put the ballot in the ballot box, now the voter does that. When I started serving as an election judge, the pay was \$7.50...not an hour, but per day. Now the pay is \$120 per day, if we attend the training."* Also, all absentee ballots used to be counted in the precincts after the polls closed. Now all absentee, early and grace period ballots are tabulated at a central location. Alice stated that they have had students occasionally help at the polls on Election Day. *"High school and college students can now serve as judges."* When asked if she could remember what the shortest Election Day was, Alice had an immediate answer. *"I would say my shortest day was the last election at the Primary Election*

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IMPORTANT DATES

2012 GENERAL ELECTION REGISTRATION DEADLINES

General Election - November 6, 2012

Last day to register to vote Tuesday, October 9

Grace Period Registration and Voting

First Day Wednesday, October 10
Last Day Saturday, November 3

Early Voting

First Day Monday, October 22
Last Day Saturday, November 3

2013 CONSOLIDATED PRIMARY ELECTION REGISTRATION DEADLINES

Consolidated Primary Election - February 26, 2013

Last day to register to vote Tuesday, January 29

Grace Period Registration and Voting

First Day Wednesday, January 30
Last Day Saturday, February 23

Early Voting

First Day Monday, February 11
Last Day Saturday, February 23

2013 CONSOLIDATED ELECTION REGISTRATION DEADLINES

Consolidated Election - April 9, 2013

Last day to register to vote Tuesday, March 12

Grace Period Registration and Voting

First Day Wednesday, March 13
Last Day Saturday, April 6

Early Voting

First Day Monday, March 25
Last Day Saturday, April 6

BOARD MEETING DATES

- **Tuesday, October 16** - Board meeting 10:30 a.m. Chicago
- **Monday, November 19** - Board meeting 10:30 a.m. Springfield -
- **Sunday, December 2** - Special Board meeting 5 p.m. -- Proclamation of November general election results (Springfield & Chicago)
- **Tuesday, December 18** - Board meeting 10:30 a.m. Chicago

2013

- **Tuesday, January 22** - Advisory Committee meeting 9:00 a.m. - Board meeting 10:30 a.m. Springfield
- **Wednesday, February 20** Board meeting 10:30 a.m. Chicago
- **Monday, March 18** - Board meeting 10:30 a.m. Springfield
- **Tuesday, April 16** - Board meeting 10:30 a.m. Chicago
- **Monday, May 20** - Board meeting 10:30 a.m. Springfield
- **Tuesday, June 18** - Board meeting 10:30 a.m. Chicago
- **Monday, July 1** - Board meeting - Statutory meeting for election of Chairman and Vice Chairman 10:30 a.m. Springfield

Board meetings between the Springfield and Chicago offices will be connected via video conference if the necessary equipment is available. Dates, times and locations of Board meeting dates are subject to change.

For additional dates pertaining to the 2013 Consolidated Primary Election and Consolidated Election please refer to the 2013 Election and Campaign Finance Calendar.



MILITARY AND OVERSEAS VOTERS

The first day all military ballots were to be sent (45 days prior to the primary election) was Saturday, September 22. We just want to say thank you to all election jurisdictions for getting everything out to the military voters!

As always, if you have any UOCAVA questions, please don't hesitate to contact Cris Cray at 217.782.1577.

ELECTION ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

Visit the Election Assistance Commission's website to find useful election related publications.

The EAC Website features a variety of information for voters, including registration deadlines for each state, how to register using the National Mail Voter Registration Form, and how to become a poll worker. New on the website is a Voting Tips card that can be downloaded and used by citizens as a checklist to become familiar with the voting process.

The EAC's Glossaries of Election Terminology (PDFs and an online tool), Voters Guides to Federal Elections, and National Mail Voter Registration Form are available in numerous languages and free of charge at www.eac.gov.

Sign up for weekly newsletters from the EAC. These provide news and updates on many different topics involving elections.

For additional information on these EAC resources, contact Marcy Reedy at mreedy@eac.gov.

People often say that, in a democracy, decisions are made by a majority of the people. Of course, that is not true. Decisions are made by a majority of those who make themselves heard and who vote - a very different thing.

~ Walter Judd ~

RETIREMENTS

The State Board of Elections wishes the best to retiring election officials: Bill Downey, Clark County; Jim Ingram, Douglas County; Kathy Lantz, Shelby County; Andrea Mahoney-Platt, Marshall County; and James Lewis, East St. Louis Board of Election Commissioners. Enjoy your retirement!

HAVA FUNDING UPDATE

Current grants available to all jurisdictions

VAID IV -- available until **November 2012** - all paperwork must be submitted by December 17, 2012 - Can be used for polling place accessibility only, including accessible voting equipment.

Phase III -- extended to **November 2014**. Paperwork and guidelines have been distributed via e-mail to all election jurisdictions.

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Inventory -- Reminder.....inventory sheets will be due every August 1. Please update them as you dispose of equipment or purchase new equipment with HAVA funding.

Site Visits -- Staff will continue to conduct site visits each month (not including the month prior to an election or the month of an election). Voting equipment and other equipment purchased with HAVA funding will be located and serial numbers will be compared with the county's inventory listing.

IVRS STATE GRANT

Paperwork for the 2012-2013 Illinois Voter Registration State Grant will be forthcoming in early April 2013. Funding for this program was cut in the State Board of Elections budget and will be reflected in the total amount a jurisdiction will receive. Please keep all of your invoices, copies of checks and any other documentation in a file so you will have it at hand when the grant is distributed!

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of this year. I think we were up to city hall by 8:00 p.m. We were one of the first precincts in, and had our memory cards, ballots and paperwork right. One time, about two years ago, we had to go back to the precinct and pull the memory card out of the machine.”

Although there have been many changes to the voting process over the years, Alice explained that a few things have stayed the same. “Voters had to sign the application...but we had a big black book that had a copy of their original voter’s registration card to compare to. Voters still have to sign an application, but their signature is now compared to a scanned copy of their signature. We have always had to make sure we gave each voter the right ballot, and initialed it. In our precinct we have a good turnout.”

Alice was asked if bad weather ever caused a problem on Election Day. “Sara Gass is an election judge of the opposite party that lives around the corner from me. She started serving as an election judge about 5 years behind me. We always work together, and I usually pick her up. About 5 years ago we had some bad weather. Sara’s son picked both of us up at 4:30 a.m. so we could get to the polls by 5:00 a.m. We followed the snow plow to the polling place. There was another case where a snow storm came up while we were there. And that is when they came and told us during the day not to take the ballots to Charleston, but to take them to the Mattoon City Hall. Since that time, we have continued to return the ballots to Mattoon.”

At the March 2012 Primary Election, Alice remembers having problems with extra wide ballots. “At the last election, the ballots would not feed into the machine. We had to trim the ballots to have the machine read them.” This problem was not a local one, and actually affected twenty-seven different jurisdictions around the State. A printing company in northern Illinois does the printing for many different jurisdictions.

Alice explained why she had served as an election judge for so many years. “I feel that serving as an election judge is a civic duty, and think that everyone

should try it once...just like being a juror. They need to know what this process is and to know what living in this country is all about. I enjoy visiting with friends and neighbors, and if we are not real busy, we play a card game that can easily be dropped and picked back up. The precinct committeemen use to bring us lunch. They use to get together and plan what they were going to bring us to eat. That stopped quite a while ago. Now in the winter time, someone will fix a pot of vegetable soup or chili, and everyone else will bring food and snacks. Everybody brings food and shares it.”

On a personal level, I met Alice Nelson while training election judges in Coles County and was amazed at her story. She is absolutely a people person. She is active in her church, has been involved in HCEA, has been a 4-H leader, and has done alterations for years. At 85 she is still working full time setting up breakfast at a local hotel. Through this process, Alice has made me realize that Illinois has been blessed to have the excellent election judges we have had over the years. It requires a huge commitment, not only of the time spent on Election Day, but the time spent in training. Election judges must stay current with the constantly changing laws, procedures and election equipment. The problem is that many of them are getting older, and it is hard to get the younger voters to serve. Alice has convinced me that serving as an election judge is not only a civic duty, but can be an enjoyable experience. A huge “thank you” goes out to Alice and the many other dedicated election judges we are privileged to have here in Illinois!

MISCELLANEOUS

The Division of Election Training and Resource Development has been taking requests for Election Judge Schools for the General Election of 2012. Approximately 134 schools have been scheduled/ conducted to date. The Division will be taking requests to conduct election judges schools for the 2013 elections. Contact Eric Donnewald at edonnewald@elections.il.gov for further information.

WE’VE MOVED



We’re doing our part to help the environment. To receive notification of future newsletters, contact Becky Glazier at bglazier@elections.il.gov. All newsletters are available at <http://www.elections.il.gov/BoardInformation.aspx>