



Dear *POLLcats*,

The other day I was out shopping for a present and the woman helping me turned out to be a poll worker! She told me how proud she was to work on Election Day at the polls, how much she appreciated the training, and how well the June Primary went at their precinct, and then she started asking me questions. Like...what kind of turnout did I think we'd have in November, what would be different this election, and were we going to have students serving at the polls this November.

I so enjoyed chatting with her. And then it dawned on me, she's not an atypical *POLLcat*. She is proud, dedicated, hard-working, curious, and so passionate about democracy and this country. That's why I value and enjoy the association I have with each and every one of you.

As we gear up for one of the most historic presidential elections ever, I'm predicting some of the highest voter turnouts we've ever experienced. It will be exciting and I know that our voters will be in the best of hands when they go to the polls to vote.

I am counting on all of you to serve this November. I'm also asking that each of you enlist a friend to join the ranks to be a part of an Election Day that promises to be like no other. Start asking your friends now. We will be sending out Availability Letters in the first part August. Look for your training calendars in the mail and sign up early since class sizes are limited.

November will be here in no time!

All the best,

Warren Slocum

Survey Says...

Remember those evaluation forms you filled out after your last Procedures Class? Well, we got an earful! Here's a list of the most common recommendations and our solutions.

Recommendation #1: Different types of training based on experience

Many of you said that veteran poll workers just don't need to review the basics — you know much of the material by heart. Those of you who were brand new to election officer service wanted more training. It suggests the need for different training levels and class lengths.

Solution: We're in the process of creating a three-tiered training program — The Masters Class for poll workers with five or more elections under the belt, the Journeyman Class for those that need more of a refresher course, and the Apprentice Class for our rookie election officers.

Recommendation #2: "Too much talking...passive learning"

One person wrote, "more hands on – role play – pretend voters, JBC operators, etc." In fact, many of you said this in a variety of ways. We agree.

Solution: The Masters Class won't have any lecture whatsoever. And, it won't have any eSlate training, either. For eSlate practice, Master Election Officers will need to sign up for a lab session. The Journeyman Class will be lecture with some practical exercises, and the Apprentice Class will be a combination of lecture and eSlate practice.

Recommendation #3: Reduce the Noise Levels for Training at Tower Road

Many of you complained that noise interfered with training.

Solution: We'll try to be less noisy, but it is a warehouse! Take advantage of early class sign-up and try another location if the noise is really bothersome.

Recommendation #4: Do Something about the Hard Chairs

This one is repeated by many of you.



Solution: We are buying new chairs for our training room at Tower Road. If the place you normally attend class has uncomfortable chairs, BYOC (bring your own cushion)! Just don't forget to take it home after class!

Recommendation #5: Provide Street Indexes for Surrounding Precincts

Solution: It's going to be a busy election, and directing voters to surrounding locations may take time and attention away from the voters who are supposed to be at your precinct. To

provide additional support, we will increase the phone bank capacity to handle more calls.

Recommendation #6: Improvements to Handouts, Checklists and Materials

You gave us very specific changes to the slides, the handouts, the guides.

Solution: We are reviewing these comments and reworking the materials.



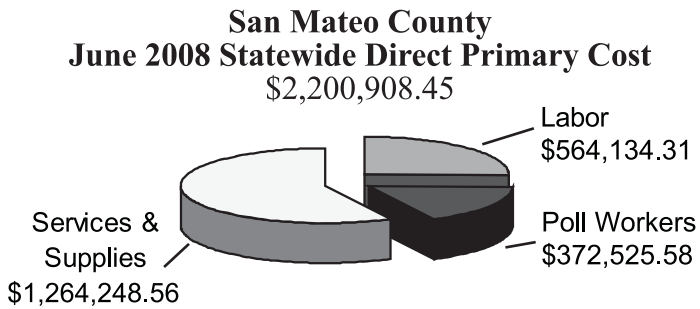
Poll Worker Spotlight

Miriam Suslow has worked nearly every election for the past 13 years and she isn't going to miss the November Presidential General Election. Actually, she started doing this in 1967 but had to stop when her "real" job with the state stopped giving time off to work at the polls.

"I'll do it as long as I can. I like the people I work with on the precinct board and this is my home precinct. My precinct is in a church at Shell and Catamaran in Foster City. It's a wonderful spot — the light is good, the chairs are comfortable, they turn up the heat on cold days, and the people are so nice. It's also a chance to see friends and neighbors on an exciting day," said Miriam. "The February Presidential Primary was one of the biggest ones I've worked and I expect November will be even bigger. It should be exciting."



Anatomy of an Election



Odds and Ends

Grand Jury Reviews Mail-Only Precincts and How They Affect Voters in San Mateo County –

The Grand Jury reviewed the law, the letters and notices, and the steps that the Elections Office took to advise voters in mail-only precincts of their voting options. They concluded, "The San Mateo County Elections Office goes beyond legal requirements to ensure that all voters are properly informed of their voting place. The Grand Jury commends the San Mateo County Elections Office for the extra steps it is taking to ensure that voters in the 93 mail-only precincts in the county understand the mail-only voting process."

They made one recommendation: "Continue to alert voters in mail-only precincts, if these alerts are shown to be effective in increasing voter turnout."

Election Workers Needed at Tower Road –

We are currently recruiting (full-time) extra help office assistants and Spanish proofreaders to help us conduct the November Presidential Election. A number of positions need to be filled! To learn more about this opportunity or tell a friend, go to www.shapethefuture.org and read all about it! Help us recruit dedicated, qualified people to work with us over the next three months as we prepare for November!

Send Us Your Email –

We'd like to be able to communicate with all of you by email—or most of you, if we can. That way we can send you updates, reminders, tips, and news, and reach you quickly! We have very few email addresses on hand. So, shoot an email to Hillary O'Connor at hoconnor@smcare.org. Be sure to include your name and city!

What Contributes to Voter Confidence? You Do!

A scientific study conducted by American Politics Research and released this July had some interesting findings about how voters feel about their voting experience. We wanted to share it with you as a reminder of just how important you are to voters and the voting process in America. The study results are excerpted below.

Using exit polls from the 2006 general election in two Ohio counties, voter reactions to poll workers and the effects on their voting experience are examined. While there is much research on customer service in the private sector, little research has been done about service in the world of elections. The authors find that the evaluation of poll workers is affected by a number of factors including wait times,

feelings of privacy while voting, poll worker training, and poll worker recruiting efforts. When interactions with poll workers are positive, voters have more confidence in elections and feel better about their overall voting experience.



"At Your Service": Voter Evaluations of Poll Worker Performance – by Ryan L. Claassen, David B. Magleby, J. Quin Monson and Kelly D. Patterson, American Politics Research, July 2008

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