

the POLLcat

A NEWSLETTER FROM WARREN SLOCUM, CHIEF ELECTIONS OFFICER, SAN MATEO COUNTY

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Dear Poll Worker,

You are a breed apart, a special cat, a patriot and a person of great honor. You love our country and you value living in a democracy. Your passion, your willingness to roll up your sleeves and show off your indomitable spirit make me proud to know you and prouder yet to have you work for San Mateo County Elections.

Thank you for serving as a San Mateo County poll worker. Last year, you met the challenge of switching to a new system and introducing the eSlates to our voters. This year will offer many challenges and before you can blink, we'll be preparing for the 2008 Presidential Primary. And it may even be held as early as February!

The POLLcat is our way of staying in touch with you. We'll share information, ideas and insider information on our plans. Each issue will have an educational feature, pollworker spotlight and other information. Sometimes we will even share a recipe or something from the lighter side.

All my best,
Warren

It's as easy as 1, 2, 3.

It was so early on election morning that the neighborhood surrounding the precinct located in the fog on the coast near Half Moon Bay hadn't even begun to turn on their lights or their coffee makers. A worried poll worker with a distinguished service record pulled her cell phone out of the warm jacket pocket and called the Tower Road Help Desk with this question...

What Does "Unavailable eSlate" Mean?

That's what the message on the eSlate screen read. She listened to the phone ring and thought back to the eSlate training class. She was sure she'd done everything right...why was she getting this message?

What Happened?

Mary Jane had done everything right! She simply didn't do the very next step. The Booth Assignment Step. What Mary Jane needed to do was read the next instruction on the JBC screen and follow the simple steps.

The Booth Assignment Step

Mary Jane pulled out her eSlate Desk Reference manual. She read the instructions:

1. Press the "Enter" key on the eSlate to assign number one to the first eSlate voting device. A yellow number one will appear on the screen.
2. Go to the second eSlate and Press enter. The screen will show a yellow number two. And then you just repeat this process until all eSlates in your precinct have been assigned.
3. When all eSlates have been assigned a booth number, walk back to the JBC and follow the directions on the screen. (This procedure is summarized in the Desk Reference Manual you received at training as well as on the DVD).

Why is the Assignment Step Important?

The reason the Booth Assignment Step is important is because it activates the eSlates for voting and serves as a confirmation that every eSlate in the precinct is operational. When all the devices have a booth number, the system then makes sure that everything is ready to go.

Freezing Up!

All of us have "frozen" when using a new computer or program for the first time. Our best advice is to: 1)Take a deep breath, 2)have your buddy read the set-up steps aloud and mark the check-off list (you'll get one at the next election), and 3)pick-up where you left off. It's that simple. No need to freeze!

America's Number One Question

Did you know that the eSlate set-up question most often asked by poll workers not just in San Mateo County but all across the country, was, "What does "eSlate Unavailable" mean?"

Center Stage

Next year, when Mary Landrum turns 80, she will also celebrate her 40th anniversary of working at the polls. It was her father who sparked her interest in politics, “but working at the polls was as far as I wanted to go in politics,” Mary said. 1960 was the most exciting election; JFK ran for President and that year we had over 90% turnout.



Mary Landrum

Mary has served in her neighborhood precinct all these years and she knows everybody. She’s run the lever machines, the optical scan machines and now the eSlates. Mary’s going to continue to serve through upcoming 2008 Presidential election.

Next Elections

March 6

Las Lomas Elementary School District

May 8

Pacifica School District -- All Mail Election

May 8 (tentative)

Millbrae Elementary School District -- All Mail Election

June 5 (tentative)

City of Half Moon Bay

June 5 (tentative)

City of Burlingame

Nov 6

UDEL District & Municipal Elections for San Mateo County

Are you the Marrying Kind?

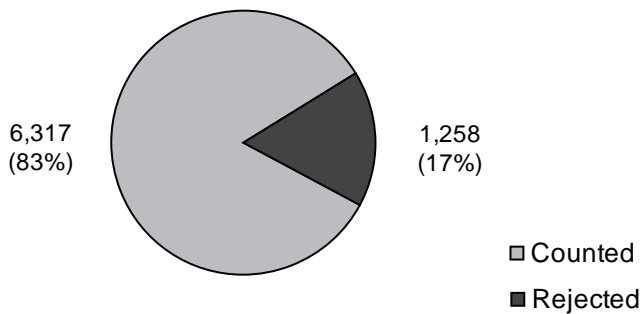
Did you know that we have a chapel in the Clerk’s Office on the first floor at 555 County Center in Redwood City? It’s one of our official functions—to issue marriage licenses and perform marriages. Each year our volunteer Marriage Commissioners marry hundreds of couples.



Helen Cocco talked about how she got involved, “I’ve been Commissioner of Marriages since 1995 when the County put out a call for volunteers. It’s such a rewarding volunteer job because everyone that comes in for the civil ceremony is happy and looking forward to a good future. I’m so fortunate to work with two wonderful ladies, Madeleine and Patricia, who make sure that all the paperwork is correct. When there is an occasion when the bride and groom forget their cameras, I often take pictures and send it to the couple. I hope it’s possible to continue this job forever.”

Would you like to become one of our Marriage Commissioners? Send an email to Theresa Rabe at trabe@smcare.org and tell her that you’re the marrying kind.

Provisional Ballots Cast November 2006



Total number of Provisional Ballots Cast in November 2006 = 7,575

Top 5 Reasons for Rejected PV Ballots

- Duplicate - the voter’s Absentee Ballot was received by Elections already
- Unsigned PV envelope
- Unregistered voter
- No current residential address on the PV envelope
- Blank - no information completed by voter on PV envelope

PV = Provisional Ballot

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