



BENTON COUNTY ELECTION OFFICIALS NEWSLETTER



Volume 1, Issue 1

December 2009

WELCOME

Welcome to the first edition of the quarterly Benton County Election Commission News Letter! The purpose of this news letter is to keep you all informed on what is coming up here and any new changes. We are looking forward to a busy year in 2010 and seeing you all! Thank You for all your hard work and service! As always please feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns you may have. Have a wonderful Holiday Season!

Inside This Issue

- 1 Welcome
- 1 Upcoming Elections
- 1 Election News
- 2 Coordinator's Corner
- 3 Commissioner's Blog

Upcoming Elections - 2010

May 18	Primary and Nonpartisan General Election
June 8	Primary Election Runoff
September 21	Annual School Election
November 2	General Election and Nonpartisan Runoff
November 23	General Election Runoff (County and Municipal races)



Election Updates

- ⊛ Please enter serial number from blue ballot box seal (this is a new color seal) on the tally sheet where indicated (line D) for seal number. There will be a note on the tally sheet to direct you to the right location the first few times.
- ⊛ In your blue bag there will be two copies of the newspaper announcement for the election and two copy of the election ordinance (if applicable). You will need to hang these copies up in the polling location.
- ⊛ Also in the blue bag there will be a new zip lock baggie with q-tips that can be used as a stylus if needed for the IVO, and alcohol wipes to clean the screen. The screen can only be cleaned with alcohol or water! Please clean the screen off periodically during the election.
- ⊛ A new law this year concerns Poll watchers: 1) candidates can only observe vote counting (no longer allowed at polls) and 2) poll watchers can no longer be close enough to see voter's signature (can only be close enough to hear voter's name)



Coordinator's Corner



As I write this, Benton County is expecting snow for Christmas. There are still some flower pots with hardy summer flowers left at our house – one of many signs we are not yet ready for the season to change!



There are also several changes being planned by the election Commission. You may have read about plans to add more voting machines. We have requested 200 additional iVotronic voting machines in next year's budget, and that budget has been approved by the Quorum Court. Many of you have asked for additional machines for your precinct, letting us know that this would greatly aid voters during busy elections. We'll be working on plans to incorporate the new machines. Voters will continue to have the option to vote on a paper ballot, if that is their preference.



Another change here at the Election Commission will help us to better plan for paper ballot usage. We have purchased a "Ballot on Demand" printer, and will be able to print ballots at the Election Commission office. It will still be a challenge to predict paper ballot requirements, but this new printer will allow us to respond quickly to greater-than-estimated usage.

One other change being planned is improvement of Election Official training. You'll hear more about this next quarter, but I want you to know we'll be working hard to provide training that is effective, easier to understand, and delivered in groups much smaller than the 200+ participants you've seen in years past!

I'd like to close by letting you know how much I value all the Benton County Election Officials. This group is dedicated, hard-working...and a lot of fun! It is my privilege to work with you, and I look forward to seeing all of you in 2010.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Helen Peltier

Election Commission – Chairman’s Blog

Janus, the Roman god of gates and doorways is usually depicted with two heads, one looking inwardly and one looking out. His name is given to January as the gateway to the New Year. Here at the Elections Commission, we can look back on 2009 as a year when we experienced fundamental change in both staff and direction and we can look forward to exciting work for 2010.



Looking at 2009, we need to first say and energetic “Thanks” to our core staff workers, Helen Peltier, Kathy Mahmens and Amy Huston, then to all of you in the field who worked hard to make all of our elections successful. This has become the kind of team effort that allows us all to grow and learn while providing the most critical kind of public service.

2010 holds great promise: we will be hiring our first full time staff member, we will be doubling the number of electronic voting machines and we will be concentrating on improvements at every level of what we do.

So what can our poll workers do as members of this team? In a word, participate. We need your enthusiasm, your suggestions and your skills. Without those things we cannot achieve the kind of success our voters deserve. Working as a team, the Commission, the staff, the County Clerk and her staff can do a lot, and you, working in the polls, working on Election Day and giving us the benefit of your skills and experience will complete a team that will be the best of its kind anywhere.

So take pride in looking over your shoulder at what the team has done in 2009, and then join us in making reality of that vision for 2010.

Thanks for what you do.

Bill Williams