

Democracy in ACTION

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IN THE PUBLIC EYE

Department Profile: Becoming A Deputy Registrar

Lisa Wise, Douglas County's Chief Deputy Election Commissioner, has been busy training registered voters in becoming a Deputy Registrar.

What is a Deputy Registrar? Deputy Registrars are registered voters who have been trained by an Election Official to assist people with the voter registration process.

Becoming a Deputy Registrar in Nebraska is simple. The requirements for becoming a Deputy Registrar are as follows:

- Must be a Nebraska registered voter
- Must attend a training session conducted by an election official
- Must receive a certificate verifying completion of training, indicating his/her qualification as a Deputy Registrar

Within the last year, over 60 registered voters were trained to become a Deputy Registrar.

The last day the Election Commission trained Deputy Registrars was Friday, April 11, 2008. The deadline to register with a Deputy Registrar is Friday, April 25, 2008 at 6:00 p.m.

For more information on becoming a Deputy Registrar, please contact the Douglas County Election Commission at (402) 444-VOTE (8683).

PREPARATIONS FOR 2008 STATEWIDE PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY ELECTION CONTINUE

The 2008 Statewide Presidential Primary Election is approaching quickly. For the Douglas County Election Commission, the countdown to Tuesday, May 13, 2008 began as early as last year and will continue until the last ballot is counted.

With nearly 295,000 registered voters within Douglas County and several thousand voters expected to vote in the Primary Election, the Election Commission has its hands full.

According to Dave Phipps, Douglas County Election Commissioner, "Preparing an election, especially a Statewide Presidential Primary Election for thousands of voters, requires a tremendous amount of time and resources. We need to be prepared for these voters to cast their ballots."

Before registered voters can hit the polls and cast their votes, the Douglas County Election Commission will be busy over the next month finalizing the details, including its polling places and poll workers.

Since last year, the Election Commission has contacted hundreds of locations, including schools, churches, social halls, and libraries, as possible polling places. Our office contacted over 2,000 poll workers to serve on Election Day.

"Finalizing the polling places and assigning the poll workers can be challenging," says Phipps.

"...nearly 295,000 registered voters within Douglas County and several thousand voters are expected to vote in the Primary Election..."

As the polling places and the poll workers are determined, the Election Commission continues its preparations. Programming and printing the ballots is next on the list. Unlike other counties in Nebraska, Douglas County

prepares and prints its ballots internally, saving the county tens of thousands of taxpayer dollars.

Making sure the ballots are correct is a monumental task, which is why the offices and the candidates' filings undergo a series of reviews to ensure the offices and candidates are going to be printed correctly and placed in the correct order.

Along with preparing the ballots and finalizing the logistical details, the Election Commission wants to ensure that the voters are also prepared for the upcoming election. Please see the guide to this year's Statewide Presidential Primary Election on the back page.



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ELECTIONS IN THE NEWS

On February, 28, 2008, Westside Community Schools held the Douglas County Election Commission's first election for the season. For years, Westside has held a caucus prior to the Gubernatorial or Presidential Primary Election to nominate its candidates for the district's school board.



Unlike other elections, the candidates submitted a written statement to the current school board expressing his or her interest as a candidate. During the caucus, the candidates were nominated and given an opportunity to speak to the voters before he or she casts his or her ballot. From the caucus, the district will elect three of the six school board members during the county's upcoming Statewide Presidential Primary Election.



As shown below, the voter turnout for the caucus was low. With over 20,000 registered voters within the Westside Community School District, less than one percent participated in the caucus.

The results of the caucus are as follows:

Elmer E. Gray	38
Tom Baker	86
David M. Woodke	87

More information can be found on our website at www.votedouglascounty.com.



Commissioner's Corner...

A Message from Election Commissioner Dave Phipps



Dave Phipps
Election Commissioner

It's definitely that time of year again. It seems like I'm always saying that, but it's always true: It's election season again!

The Presidential Primary Election is just weeks (or moments) away and we are quickly preparing. Polling

places, poll workers, supplies, voter registrations, early voting requests, ballots -- we're doing it all. Oh yeah, we've also got that recall thing happening.

This is the time of year when the staff starts to

realize that they may never see the sun again. It's the time when the day starts early and ends late. In other words, it's the time we all love.

Without elections, life for us would be too boring. For all of you people with "normal" jobs, you probably never get to experience the "excitement" of having someone in your office saying, "Dave, I think you have a misprint on this legal notice", or "Dave, are you sure that's how he spells his name?" It's never-ending excitement around here!

Elections tend to either make you shine, or drive you nuts. (I'm still a little unsure which way I'll swing this election year.) The dead-

lines are crazy, the pressure is intense, the public is demanding...and yet, we do this year in and year out. It's almost like we have to have the stress or we don't know what we'll do with ourselves.

The Presidential Primary Election is just weeks (or moments) away and we are quickly preparing.

Oh well, maybe we are all a little strange in this office. But, if that's what it takes to deliver the election to the voters, I guess it'll be okay. So off I go to help take care of the next emergency. If

you see me walking around in a daze, please point me back to my office.



ELECTION CALENDAR

April

25th - Deadline for mailed voter registrations to be postmarked.

25th - Last day to register at DMV, agencies, libraries, or with Deputy Registrars.

25th - Deadline for voter registration form to be delivered to election office by someone other than person registering.

May

2nd - Deadline for in-person voter registration at Election Commission, 6:00 p.m.

2nd - Deadline for write-in candidate to file notarized affidavit and filing fee.

7th - Deadline for early voting ballots to be requested and mailed to a specific address, 4:00 p.m.

12th - Deadline for in-person early voting at Election Commission office.

13th - Election Day. Polls are open from 8:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. All early voting ballots must be returned to the Election Commission by 8:00 p.m.



CANDIDATES GET INFORMED

Several candidates attended the Douglas County Election Commission's candidate informational meeting on Wednesday, March 26, 2008 at the Douglas County Election Commission office.

Candidates and candidate representatives from local



and federal offices had the opportunity to ask their questions and gain information

related to voters and Election Day.



"The meeting is a great opportunity to get questions answered. It's also a great time for candidates for different offices to meet and share their stories," says Dave Phipps, Election Commissioner.

Question & Answer

Q. Can nonpartisan voters vote during the Primary?

A. Yes. Nonpartisan registered voters can vote during the Primary.

- Nonpartisan registered voters will vote on the Nonpartisan Ballot which contains amendments, other special issues, and candidates for nonpartisan offices. These nonpartisan races include State Legislature, Metropolitan Utilities District (MUD), Omaha Public Power District (OPPD), Natural Resources District (NRD), and School Board (including Metro Community College and State Board of Regents).
- Nonpartisan registered voters may request to vote the Federal Ballot for the U.S. House of Representative and U.S. Senate from one (1) political party.
- Nonpartisan registered voters cannot vote on the Primary Ballot for President, Governor, or partisan County Offices.

Q. I just moved. What do I do about my voter registration?

A. You need to update your registration by downloading a *Voter Registration Application* form from our website and mailing it to our office, or by registering in-person at a voter registration location.

Q. I will be out of town on Election Day. How do I vote?

A. You can vote an Early Voting Ballot (Absentee). The forms to request an Early Voting Ballot can be found on our website. Requests must include a name, address, date of birth, party affiliation, and signature. Requests must be mailed or faxed to our office at (402) 444-4181. Early Voting Ballot requests cannot be made by telephone or by e-mail.

Q. Can I send in an Early Voting (Absentee) request via e-mail or over the phone?

A. No. Early Voting Ballot requests must include a signature. You may send the request by mail to Douglas County Election Commission, 225 N. 115 St, Omaha, NE, 68154 or by fax to (402) 444-4181.

Q. What are the rules and laws regarding campaign signs?

A. Although the Election Commission is not responsible for the rules and regulations related to campaign signs, there is information about the placement and usage of campaigns signs at www.votedouglascounty.com on the Information for Candidates page.

Q. Where can I see a sample of my ballot?

A. A sample of your ballot can be found at www.votedouglascounty.com, as soon as the ballot is available to be published.

GUIDE TO THE 2008 STATEWIDE PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY ELECTION

The following information is to assist registered voters within Douglas County in preparing for the upcoming 2008 Statewide Presidential Primary Election.

REGISTERING TO VOTE

In order to participate in the upcoming election, you must be registered to vote prior to the appropriate deadline.

1. At the following locations, voter registrations must be completed by the close of business on Friday, April 25, 2008:
 - Omaha Public Libraries
 - County Treasurer's offices
 - Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) - when you receive or renew your driver's license
 - City Clerk's offices (except in Omaha)
2. Voter registration by a Deputy Registrar must be completed before Friday, April 25, 2008 at 6:00 p.m.
3. Voter registration forms are available on our website located at www.votedouglascounty.com. If mailed, these forms must be postmarked by Friday, April 25, 2008.
4. In-person voter registrations at the Douglas County Election Commission must be completed before 6:00 p.m. on Friday, May 2, 2008.

REQUESTING AN EARLY VOTING BALLOT

On April 7, 2008, the Douglas County Election Commission will begin mailing out ballots to those who requested an Early Voting Ballot. Registered voters may request an Early Voting Ballot by one of the following methods:

Completing and mailing an Early Voting Ballot Application (available on our website).

Submitting a written request with the registered voter's name, address, date of birth, party affiliation, and signature.

All requests must be:

Completed and received by our office before Wednesday, May 7, 2008 at 4:00 p.m.

Mailed to the Douglas County Election Commission at 225 N 115th Street, Omaha, NE 68154 or faxed to our office at (402) 444-4181.

Must not be requested over the phone or by e-mail.

For more information on Early Voting Ballots, please visit our website at www.votedouglascounty.com.



Douglas County Election Commission
225 North 115th Street
Omaha, Nebraska 68154

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