



Poll Worker News

*From the desk of
Lori Edwards . . .*

There are many words I could use to describe our election on January 29th. Voter turnout was unprecedented, and our polling places were so busy that I and several staff members visited some locations just to pitch in during the busiest times. Back at Headquarters, every person in the building had a phone to their ear, and breaks were completely out the question. Ultimately, I was thrilled that so many voters decided to participate in the electoral process, and amazed by the dedication of our workers who, undaunted by the lines, sacrificed breaks and meals to ensure every voter was served. Many voters also complimented your dedication, and I have invited any who felt otherwise to join our team and experience just what it takes to be a poll worker—a hard working, dedicated individual, and a very special person. I truly believe that Polk County's poll workers are among the country's very best. Thank you for your continued service!



Polk's voter rolls growing

Polk County reached a voter registration milestone in February. There are now more than 300,000 voters in our county. That number will probably swell to 310,000 by November's election. This compares to 295,357 voters during the 2004 Presidential Election, and 247,807 for the 2000 Presidential Election.

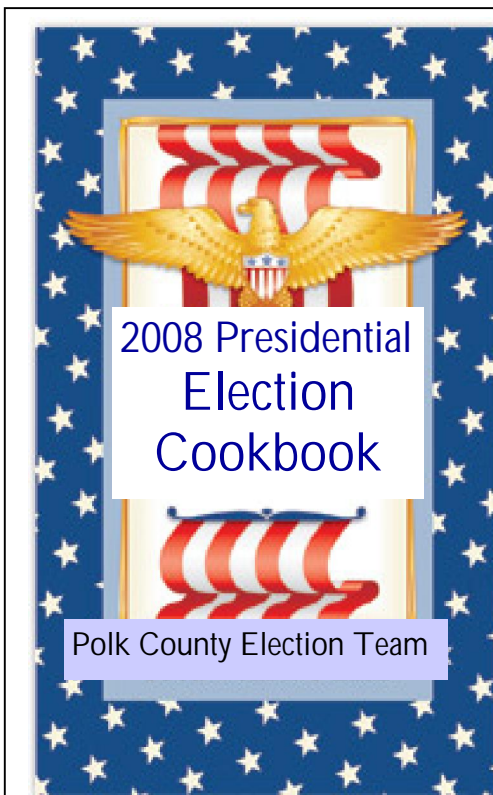
An analysis of the new voters shows that many of them are young people. One third of our new registrants are 25 years old or younger, and 15% fall into the 26-35 year old category.

It probably comes as no surprise that most of the new voters live in the northeast portion of our county, with

Davenport and Poinciana leading the growth.

When it comes to Political Party affiliation, about one-third of our new voters are not affiliated with a major party, about one-third are registering as Democrats, and about one-third are registering as Republican.

Of course, this means that we will have many "first time" voters at the polls in August and November. It will be especially important for poll workers to be sensitive to the fact that a voter may not know our processes and procedures. To provide excellent customer service, we'll want to guide our new voters without drawing attention to their lack of experience.



Polk County's Election Workers enjoy eating, and many members of our team can bake a tasty batch of cookies, toss together a healthy, hearty salad, or offer up a favorite family casserole.

To commemorate the 2008 Presidential Election, the Supervisor of Elections Office, in cooperation with American Legion Auxillary Post #3, will be publishing a keepsake cookbook.

Even if you've never participated in a cookbook effort before, we encourage you to share your favorite recipe. It can be sweet or savory, quick and easy, or more elaborate.

Please submit your favorite recipe before the April 15, 2008 deadline:

E-mail: pollworker@polkelections.com

Fax: 863-534-5882

Mail: Polk County SOE
Attn: Recipes
PO Box 1460
Bartow, FL 33831

LORI EDWARDS
Polk County Supervisor of Elections
P.O. Box 1460
Bartow, Florida 33831-1460

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Polling Locations: We couldn't do it without them

Have you ever wondered how a polling location is established? Many of our polling locations have hosted elections for nearly 20 years. Polling locations are only changed when there is no other alternative. When we lose a location, we begin searching within the boundaries of the precinct for a building with a room or hall large enough to accommodate the voters and equipment needed to operate the polls. The facility must also have sufficient parking, good visibility, and be in a location as close as possible to the voting population in that precinct. Most importantly, the facility must be willing to host a polling location. We must also consider whether the facility is accessible to all voters, and if not, whether any solutions could be put in place to overcome those issues on election day. The facility must agree to accept delivery of election supplies on the Thursday or Friday before election day, and be available for the moving company to pick up the equipment the day after the election.

Once an agreement is made, a contract is signed, and voters are notified of the polling location change by a variety of methods—notice are mailed to their homes, and the information is

published in the newspaper and on our website. Signs are also placed at the old location on election day directing voters to the new location.

As you can see, there's a lot involved in obtaining a new polling location, for both our staff and the facility. So many of our facilities truly go out of their way make our poll workers and our voters feel welcome. We appreciate each of our polling locations and look forward to a lasting relationship. We truly couldn't do it without them.

Worker information meetings planned

Do you have neighbors, friends, or family interested in serving at the polls? Invite them to attend a new poll worker orientation:

March 25	Lake Wales
April 22	Davenport
May 6	Polk City
May 31	Auburndale
June 24	Ft. Meade

Call 534-5858 or visit www.polkelections.com for times and locations.