COCHISE COUNTY CELEBRATES IT'S RICH HERITAGE TO LEAVE A LASTING LEGACY FOR THE FUTURE!!!

LEGACY PROJECT

STAFF VOLUME

SEPTEMBER 2015

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OPEN HOUSE!
10 A.M.-2 P.M.
Monday & Tuesday
Sept. 21st & 22nd
Please Join Us!

Elections & Special Districts' Staffing

In 1984 the Board of Supervisors established the first Elections Department and appointed Sherry Marcell as the first Elections Officer/Director with a staff of two. The new department was located on the third floor of the Old Bisbee High School, where it remained until moving to the Melody Lane complex, Bldg A (its current location), in 2012.

In 1998, Tom Schelling was appointed Director and guided the department handily through the implementation of the punch card system (think "hanging chad"!) and later through the transition to optical scan voting equipment. Tom served the County in this capacity for 14 years until his retirement in 2011.

Following Tom's retirement, Juanita Murray was hired as Director and held this position until 2014.

Upon Juanita's departure after the 2014 Primary Election, Jim Vlahovich (then Deputy County Administrator) took the helm as Interim Elections Director through the completion of the 2014 General Election.

The current Director, Katie Howard was appointed on November 23, 2014.

Since inception in 1984, there have always been just three full-time staff members in the Department. However, it is important to note that Elections hires between 250-400 temporary poll workers, couriers, troubleshooters, drivers, Early Board workers, etc. to assist with every major election.

The hiring, training, scheduling and deployment of such a large workforce is a monumental task accomplished primarily by Martha Rodriquez, Elections Program Coordinator.

Above: Martha is shown rolling out the old voting equipment to make room for the new!

Technology in Elections —

An Extension of Staff's Capabilities

Elections Program Coordinator Martha Rodriquez & Stacey Wooley, Network Administrator, work with the new voting system.

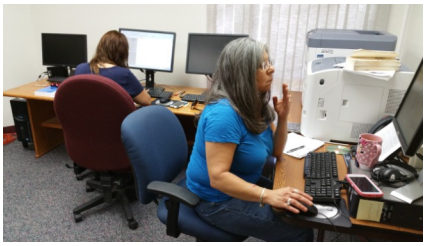
Training is a critical ongoing function for staff involved in preparing for a successful election.

There is no disputing that elections are a complex logistical challenge. Also, increasingly, elections rely on technology.

Here in Cochise County, we will now use a software program to do the design/layout and programming of our ballots in-house. We will then provide a pdf file of the ballots to a Vote By Mail service provider. The County Recorder will also send a voter registration file of the Early voters to the Vote By Mail provider who will print all Early ballots, insert the instruction sheet and the ballot, and mail the Early ballots to those on the Permanent Early Voter List or those voters who requested an Early ballot just for that election.

Voters who vote at the Vote Centers will be checked in via use of an electronic poll book and vote on a touch-screen ballot marking device. Then, they will print their ballot and feed it into an electronic tabulating machine.

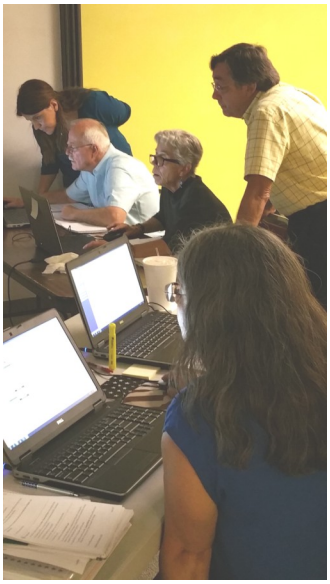
When Early ballots are received by the Recorder and signatures have been verified, the ballots are batched and sent to Elections for counting on a high-speed digital scanner.



Results of the Early votes are then combined with the votes counted by the electronic tabulating machines from the Vote Centers.

At that point, another software module is used to aggregate all of the results and to produce reports. Once reports have been verified, results are copied onto an external drive and taken to a system with internet access, then uploaded to the Secretary of State's office to be included with other results statewide for federal or state offices or statewide Propositions.

Given the volume of votes which must be counted, these technologies are crucial to the success of an election. One of the most important aspects of working in Elections is the ability to be proficient in the use of these systems.



Staff participate in a training session on the use of the new system.

Voter Outreach Committee

Many County departments are involved in the building of an election. Shown below are some of the members of the 2016 Voter Outreach Committee including (left to right) Christine Rhodes the County Recorder, several IT staff members, Supervisor Pat Call, Election Director Katie Howard, Clerk of the Board Arlethe Rios and Lisa Marra, Communications & Community Relations Administrator. Other members not pictured below include attorneys from the County Attorney's Office.

This group meets frequently to discuss the 2016 Voter Outreach campaign. It's goals are to inform the voters about the change to Vote Centers, to provide voters opportunities to vote on the new election equipment in a Mock Election, to dispel some of the common Election Myths (watch for upcoming "Election Myth busters"!) and ensure that voters have all the information needed to make an informed decision.

"It takes a strong & diversified team. In addition to the Elections Staff, there are many stakeholders in the elections process."

Logistics!

Do we have enough poll workers, balanced by political Party representation, to staff our polling places? Have we obtained signed contracts for our Vote Centers and completed an ADA check? Are the trucks rented to deliver the election equipment and supplies? Do we have enough drivers? Are their routes and delivery schedules ready? Has the voting equipment been tested, and re-tested, and re-tested? Is it packed for delivery? Are all the supplies ready for each Vote Center? Have the poll workers, drivers, couriers and troubleshooters all been trained? Do we have backup plans in place for equipment failure? For power failure? Have we been in contact with the Party Chairs to obtain the names of the observers for the Vote Centers? Is our Call Center staff at Elections Central trained? Is their Call Log prepared? Have the phones been re-routed to go to the Call Center?

These and countless other arrangements go into the building of a successful election. There are many moving parts and last-minute changes that have to be dealt with. It is a tough job!

What Makes Elections' Staff "Tick"? *Proudest Moments...*

Anne Macak shows her "can do" attitude, helping to unload and organize all the new voting equipment!

Anne Macak—Elections Technician: I was hired in February 1998 as an on-call worker for Elections to help prepare for elections. Typically, I worked for 6 months in a year with a national election (i.e., every two years) and worked other years on smaller elections.

For several years I had wanted to be more help in the department. In 2005, I went to Phoenix for the Certification Training for Election Officers and was so proud when I passed and became a Certified Elections Officer.

After completing the training, I became better equipped to answer questions from candidates, voters and poll workers about election laws and procedures.

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Tom Schelling — Former (Retired) Elections Director: On the morning of September 11, 2001, a Work Session was scheduled with the Board of Supervisors to discuss the new optical scan ballot voting system that was going to replace the punch card system. As the Board, County Administrator, Board Staff and I began to gather, none of us wanted to be there, but instead at our computers watching the tragic events of the attack on America unfold. Visibly shaken by what was happening to our Country, the Work Session began and I started to present the workings of the new voting system. As the session progressed I realized that even with the attack on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon, Democracy still prevailed in our Nation, voting would become better, voting would continue to happen and voting would always remain a right for everyone.

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Martha Rodriquez — Elections Program Coordinator: I have to say my proudest moment was when I was hired to work with the Elections Department in 2003. I had been working at the Recorder's Office part time for about six years doing recording of documents and working with voter registration.

I also served as a courier to pick up voted ballots, supply bags and the M100 tabulation machines for six years on Election Day. I was just so amazed at the process of everything that goes on to put an election together and found that I became more and more interested in the voting process from the very beginning to the end.

In the past twelve years, I have grown to enjoy every aspect of the department although my favorite parts are going out to teach classes to Poll Workers, many of whom have become friends over the years, and traveling all around Cochise County to set up polling locations for our voters.

When I am out arranging for facilities or recruiting for poll workers I am always thinking about the voters of Cochise County. I have to make sure I have their interest in mind because I actually work for them. I need to make sure poll workers understand the voting machines and how they work; that the polling locations are convenient that they can hold the work flow of voters that are going to be voting there.

What Makes Elections' Staff "Tick"? *Proudest Moments...*

"It takes a Team. A Team of dedicated, hard-working people, all committed to the same purpose, devoting their energy, creativity and knowledge to accomplishing that certain goal. Confident in their abilities and knowing that it's going to be tough, but it will get done."

Katie Howard—Elections Director: I haven't been with the Elections Department very long, so it is pretty easy for me to identify my proudest moment in this office. Following the difficult 2014 Primary & General elections, the U.S. Congressional District 2 race was too close to call. Less than 200 votes separated the two candidates: Martha McSally and Ron Barber. State law requires that if the difference between two candidates for federal office is less than 200 votes, an automatic recount is required. The race had been hard-fought with both sides spending millions of dollars on their campaigns. Political futures hung in the balance.

Congressional District 2 (CD2) encompasses all of Cochise County and a portion of Pima County, so we were the only two Arizona counties involved in the recount. It also meant that we needed to recount all 37,217 ballots cast in Cochise County. National news followed the story; the Arizona Secretary of State's Office was heavily involved in setting forth required procedures to be followed; both candidates' campaigns were vitally interested in our processes and needed detailed information about how we would implement the requirements set forth in the Arizona Revised Statutes to conduct the recount, and the U.S. House of Representatives sent two attorneys (one from each party) from Washington, D.C. to observe the recount…I had been Elections Director for about two weeks when we began the recount. There were many sets of eyes observing every step— a real pressure cooker! For the team involved in the recount, it was like working in a fish bowl.

Naturally, the press and parties immediately noticed differences in our approach and process, versus Pima County. For example, Pima County has infrared cameras and motion detectors throughout their facility; their ballots were stored at Iron Mountain. We had a locked Voted Ballot room in which we stored the locked bins of numbered batches of ballots awaiting the recount. No cameras, except the live streaming camera in the tabulation room required by the Secretary of State during vote counting. We had a separate deadbolt added to the Voted Ballot Room door and the Treasurer retained the keys.

But what we did have was process and people. We discussed beforehand what each person's role would be, exactly how we would move the ballots from the Voted Ballot room to the tabulation room, who could accompany us to observe, how staff would perform their specified tasks and exactly what we would – and would not – communicate during the recount. We set forth all of these procedures and set expectations for our observers about things they might see and what would happen if anomalies occurred (i.e., duplicating a spoiled ballot, etc.). We met with them for a half-hour before the recount and went through the procedures carefully, answering questions before we even began. This planning and communication effort, together

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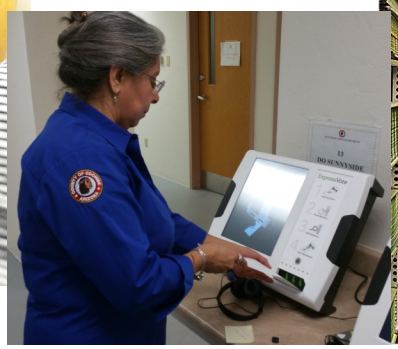
with the professional but friendly demeanor of our team, paid off in terms of restoring credibility that had been tainted during the General Election.

Due to the difficulties experienced during the General Election, it was not possible to run the ballots in the same order for the recount. This meant that we did not know for certain at any point during the four days it took us to recount the ballots whether we were going to arrive at the same count when we finished... Nonetheless, everyone on the team kept their composure, functioned as a team supporting each other and stuck to the plan.

At the end of the recount, the difference between the General Election results and the Recount results was 1 vote. It was a huge relief! **I was tremendously proud of our team.**

The Team celebrates a well-deserved Christmas luncheon after the Recount for the Congressional District 2 race is completed.



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Elections—It's What We Do!

Providing professional election services to Voters, to Candidates, to cities & towns and Special Districts, and to any member of the public wishing to bring an Initiative, Referendum or Recall Petition before the Voters.

Our goals are:

- **To conduct elections in accordance with federal and state laws & regulations**
- **To provide accurate & timely results**
- **To provide reliable information about elections to voters & candidates alike**

COME JOIN US! OPEN HOUSE TO BE HELD ON
MONDAY & TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21-22nd, 2015
TOUR RECORDER'S & ELECTIONS/SPECIAL DISTRICTS' OFFICES & VOTE ON

WHO CAN VOTE AT WHICH ELECTION?

There is a lot of confusion about who can vote at which election. This is because Arizona Revised Statutes have different laws that apply to each election.

Presidential Preference Election	Primary Election August 30, 2016	General Election November 8, 2016
Any Cochise County registered voter of a political party recognized at the State level which has a participating candidate running for the office of President.	Any Cochise County registered voter. Independents or Party Not Designated must respond to the 90-Day Notice sent by the Recorder in order to choose the party ballot they wish to vote.	Any Cochise County registered voter.