



MAEO Newsletter



Maryland Association of Election Officials

Communicate

Participate

Collaborate

Volume 1 Issue 1

January 20, 2017

Letter From the President

Hello,

It is my honor and pleasure to kick-off the first issue of the Maryland Association of Election Officials (MAEO) newsletter. My goal is to make MAEO a vibrant and active organization which provides our members opportunities to grow professionally, and to improve the election process for the citizens of Maryland. As MAEO's mission statement says, "The purpose of the organization is to improve the election and registration procedures in the State; to improve the operation of the offices of the Boards of Elections throughout the State; to recommend desirable new legislation affecting voting and registration to the State Board of Elections; and to encourage fellowship and exchange ideas." I am very excited about this newsletter and the potential it has to help us reach these goals. I hope each of you is able to take advantage of this bimonthly opportunity to stay connected with each other, with other local boards, and with the latest MAEO news.

Sincerely,

David Garreis, President

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Newsletter Editors:

Ben Frey -
Somerset County

Anthony Gutierrez -
Wicomico County

Shawn Larson -
Baltimore City

What We Want...

It's an obvious line but it's true – this is ***your newsletter, our newsletter***. We are all part of the Maryland election community. We all have a place in this hub of communication. We want you to contribute, to write, to think, to encourage, to collaborate with others around the state, to participate.

Don't be shy!

Here's what we want...

Neighbors and Partners – Each issue, 1 or 2 LBEs will submit a short piece about your office, your county or city, and what makes your work and workplace interesting or unique.

Around the State – a brief notice from any and all LBE's regarding staff comings and goings,

events, office moves, gossip, recipes, jokes...

Best Practices – Open topic regarding technology, MDVoters, office administration, training, staffing or any other item of interest. The opportunity to share what works, what works better, and even what doesn't work.

Ask the President/Ask the Board – Submission of questions regarding the work, agenda, and priorities of MAEO.

MORE IDEAS! – What else would you like to see here?

To submit an article or an idea for an article, ask a question, or make a comment, please contact Ben Frey – ben.frey@maryland.gov.

Thank you, all.



***Happy Birthday,
MAEO!***

It's the 53rd anniversary of the first MAEO organizational meeting, where it was resolved on January 20th, 1964, that "...there exists in the State of Maryland the need for closer cooperation between the several Boards of Election Supervisors and their staffs..."

Name the Newsletter Contest

We are looking for contributors to help us in naming this newsletter. If you have an idea, submit it to Shawn Larson via email at: shawn.larson@maryland.gov, and title the email "**Newsletter Name.**"

Once all the suggestions are submitted, the MAEO Board

will select the new newsletter name.

The winner of the contest will receive a \$15 gift card.

The deadline to submit will be close of business on February 28.

Thank you for your participation



2016 Election Wrap-up

"Just when I thought I was out, they pull me back in!" – Michael Corleone, The Godfather Part III.

This quote seems to exemplify exactly what many of us had to endure as we struggled to quench this never ending story of Election drama. We expected turmoil, we expected equipment issues, we expected disgruntled customers, and we even expected the unexpected.

We got all of that and more...

For those LBEs who used the DS850 scanner, having to re-scan parts, or in some cases all, of the canvass ballots I'm sure was the last thing on your minds, especially when many of us felt we were on the verge of certifying. It turned out to be an exercise in futility. Like every Election prior, however, we reorganized, re-laced our boots, and

went back to work. Any thoughts of mentally preparing for our upcoming Christmas vacation had to be put on hold for the greater good.

For every county, whether small, medium, or large, we appreciate and acknowledge everyone's commitment. New voting machines meant a new management system. New equipment meant having to adjust in warehouse operations and structures, and in some cases having to move to a new building! We had to become experts fast, and then train the judges to learn this new system;

It was no easy task.

Whether it was the long lines or equipment issues, this is what we spent over a year preparing for. If only the public knew the work that goes into preparing for an Election! Well, we as Election Officials certainly

ly know what goes into it. For that we deserve praise, for that we deserve a sobriquet. Let me be the first to offer some suggestions: **Undercover Bosses; The Election Facility; The 24/7 crew** (meaning 24 jurisdictions working 7 days a week).

To all 24 Local Board of Elections, we say, "Another job well done." This was certainly an Election for the books.

Sure there were a few eye rolls and hanging heads, but in the end the legislative measure of "Every Vote Counts" that we hold so true withstood all obstacles and reigned supreme.

Now on to 2018...

Shawn Larson

Getting to Know: The Early Voting Committee

The Early Voting Committee is recruiting members to serve. This year our focus will be on standards for identifying and selecting new early voting facilities, since most counties will be required to have additional facilities beginning in 2018. We will also look at the costs associated with early voting centers, and identify best practices from counties that have been able to obtain the

sites for free or for a minimal fee. The committee will also hold a *lessons learned* to discuss the 2016 General Election Early Voting period. Anyone interested in becoming a part of the committee, please contact Daneen Banks at (301) 341-7314 or via e-mail: dmbanks@co.pg.md.us.

Daneen Banks - Chairman



Neighbors & Partners: Somerset County

The first thing to know about Somerset County is the motto on the County Seal – “Semper Eadem” – Always The Same. Somerset is a pretty calm, stable little county. Things may change here, but it’s not in any hurry to do so. Nevertheless, we always receive a chuckle from those who are first made aware of our guiding principle.

The Somerset LBE has a crew of 4 – Joanna, our Director, Diane, our Election Supervisor, Julia, our Administrative Assistant, and Ben, our Election Tech and IT guy. However, the titles really convey so much less than what we actually do, day to day. With no additional support staff, we simply support ourselves and get it done.

The office is clean and compact, and it resides in the County Office

Complex. The worst that can be said is that the building’s electrical system is a bit below par – our space just can’t handle an office heater *and* a microwave running concurrently. Add a coffeemaker into the mix and we may be done for the day.

Our storage space is affectionately known as the Warehouse of Horror. It’s not actually *horrible*, but if we needed to add an additional cart, it would have to be hung from the ceiling.

Somerset County’s unique election feature is Smith Island, two islands actually, which are settled into the Chesapeake Bay about 10 miles from Crisfield, and are about a 45-60 minute ferry ride away. A special, partial Bulk Update is prepared and loaded on the pollbooks while

Early Voting is still going on so that they can be sent over before the final update is completed. Because of the cumbersome logistics of sending election equipment to the islands, equipment is sent without carts (a la carte, if you will), carried to and from Ewell (registration-129) and Tylerton (38) on the ‘mail boat’. However, these two precincts probably have the distinction of being the first in the state to report results on election night. As the memory sticks don’t come back until the next morning, a judge from each polling place calls into the office and reads off of the totals tape, usually by 8:15 in the evening. The results are then manually entered, and Smith Island is done for the night.

Those of us across the bridge, on the Shore, bayside, oceanside or somewhere in the middle, are mighty happy to be living and working out this way.



Neighbors & Partners: Wicomico County

Wicomico County News

The staff is looking forward to a happy, restful holiday season after putting the November 2016 Presidential election behind us!

We also look forward to consolidating our offices into our new location as soon as an addition is built and made ready for us to move in. This will be a great time to clean our file cabinets and throw out

those PowerProfile, Kardveyor, Optech Eagle, and OptiScan notes and manuals from elections-gone-by!

Wayne Burton, our IT Specialist, is recuperating over the next several weeks after shoulder surgery, and he is expected to be on the DL come spring training.

I can’t wait to invite everyone to our 2017 Open House in a new location – hopefully in



time for the 2018 Primary election candidate filings!



Kind Words from Gail Hatfield

It is with great honor to say a few things about one of our MAEO members who is very close and dear to my heart, someone who is well-thought of and respected in our election community.

As most of you know, Shawn Larson was our conference planner for 6 years. During his tenure, Shawn contributed countless hours to ensure the success of our conferences. He never complained and was always on top of everything, thinking ahead for the good of our organization.

I had the privilege of working side-by-side with Shawn during my presidency, and he became my right hand man in all aspects of conference planning. He always ensured the contracts were done correctly and signed on a timely basis. In fact,

oftentimes, before I could even ask him about something, he would message me that it was taken care of. We learned from each other so well that, when meeting with hotels, we were totally in sync of what was needed to be done to get the best we could for the conferences. We built a wonderful rapport with the managers of the many hotels we visited, and they always looked forward to working with MAEO. I attribute this to his outgoing and upbeat personality.

At the conferences, you could always find Shawn standing in the background, watching over everything. Anytime that anyone needed anything, he was right on it. From being too cold or too hot, needing more water, if the food

was getting low, if members had a problem with their room, to the sound system not working, Shawn was always there to get in touch with whoever needed to fix the problem. He consistently went above and beyond to assist all of the members.

It was my sincere pleasure working together with Shawn; we became a team of one. MAEO members were well-served under his expertise, and I wish him the best.

Gail R. Hatfield

Gail Hatfield
Calvert County

MAEO Voter Registration Committee

The Voter Registration Committee has been tasked with coordinating Voter Registration and MDVOTERS best practices among the Local Boards of Elections. Any MAEO member interested in joining the Voter Registration Committee or contributing to the committee's work can send an email to jessica.white@montgomerycountymd.gov.

Jessica White - Chairman

NEW LOOK!!



Take a look at MAEO's new-look website at www.maeo.net. It's still a work in progress. For issues or suggestions, contact the MAEO webmaster Hassan Aslam - hassan.aslam@maryland.gov.

Getting to Know: The MAEO Standards Committee

The main purpose of the MAEO Standards Committee shall be to create procedures to ensure that all local Boards are able to pass the monthly critical data audit, and to create a statewide MDVOTERS Procedure Manual. Some of our objectives for the coming year will be to: 1.) Review the Critical Audit Guidelines and improve training for current and new LBE employees; 2.) Create a timely audit reporting method; 3.) Create a Statewide MDVOTERS Procedure Manual and a method to keep it current. Currently our committee consists of the following MAEO members:

Dale E. Livingston, Chair; Members: Amy Sullivan, Harford County; Brittani Thomas, Queen Anne's County; Cindy Woodward and Shanika Harding, Anne Arundel County; and Lenice Austin of Baltimore County.

As Chair of this committee I am looking for a few more committee members who have expertise in one or more of the following areas: Knowledge and overall concept of the Processes and Procedures in MDVOTERS modules; Training experience; and some familiarity in using PowerPoint and/or Smartsheets. If you are interested, please con-

tact me via email at delivingston@harfordcountymd.gov,

or call any of the numbers below. We are planning a preliminary meeting on January 17, 2016. I welcome your interest and your input.

Thank you,

Dale E. Livingston - Chairman

2017 MAEO Conference

Conference Planner: Brittani Thomas

Book rooms NOW for the best options!!

Dates: June 6-9, 2017 Hotel: Clarion Resort

Address: 10100 Coastal Hwy
Ocean City, MD 21842 Phone: **800-638-2100**

Make sure to book in the MAEO block. If reservations are made and a credit card is given, it will NOT be charged the standard one night, but as a guarantee hold only. The room rates for our group apply 2 days before until 2 days after. Check in is at 4pm, and checkout at 11am. ALL reservations must be made before May 9, 2017.

Conference Theme: MAEO Driven to Succeed



Get the latest information on the MAEO conference here: maeo.net/annual-conference/

ETC Meeting Minutes from 9/16/16

Post-Election Maintenance Practice

No issues with PEM.

Dealing with failures:

Jeff – ES&S – Repeated repairs of DS200 – wasn't reading USB sticks. Replaced USB board. Read one ballot and failed again

BMD – error message

Charging Practices

Pollbook batteries failing – don't make the batteries anymore

Charged all pollbook at the PEM, but some are down to 20% or have 80% but the time is off

Turning on pollbook – do not use pigtail to get to 100% - then charging CMOS battery 3 times a year

CMOS battery will only charge when pollbook is turned on and case open

Documentation

L&A check list – liked better than the CTE guide

Jeff suggested two versions – one dummy proof and one without pictures (just how to)

Electionware Issues & Recommendations

Anne Arundel – slowness – ES&S installed software to make uploading faster

After General – wipe servers and reset

Do another mock to test connection, speed, and real-time uploading on servers

September 22, 2016 – Electionware Refresher

Reset Admin Password on the BMD

Quality control with L&A testers

We do it

Two people (one typing/one verifying)

Election Day Unit Replacement Procedure

Baltimore County – Replace scanner lid (grey cam shell) (bring replacement seals)

L&A unit before take to precinct

Shawn Seibel – typing up their best practices for prepping spares

Formatting USBs – can use the USB adapters for same day

Many practices on formatting CF cards

SBE best practice – format as it is instructed in CTE – it will remove any underlying issues

Ballot Tracking on ED

Allocate ballot styles for Early Voting sites based off district – if one EV site is District 1 they will have majority BS1

Ballot Activation Cards

Check-in judges asking about BMD – depending on size of precinct 50-200 per precinct

Managing a two-page ballot

Public count up to 500, manage the fullness of the ballot

No instructions for canvassing

ABS – what if one page comes back?

Public counter only goes up when page 1 is scanned

What if only page 2 is sent – the canvassing numbers will not match

Can SBE set procedures & guidelines and form revisions for ED & EV chief judges' forms

Managing polling locations – how judges will manage

Judges telling all voters there is a two-page ballot and both need to be scanned

Privacy sleeve boxes for precincts – add to polling place layouts table for scanner judges

Next MAEO meeting SBE to discuss managing two-page ballots

Continued on Next Page

Provisional Ballots

- Do not scan provisional ballot in scanner sign in provisional booth as well as scanner
- Orange balloons/table cloth
- Provisional judge right next to check-in scanner
- Large provisional (orange sign)
- Chief judge escorting provisional voters
- Check-in judge issuing provisional VAC – highlight in orange and give orange privacy sleeve at check-in
- Provisional paperwork printed in orange
- Scanner judge to check and ensure that they are not provisional

Early Voting

- Managing ballots with multiple EV sites – adjust daily and reallocate as necessary
- Google sheet for each location and shuffle at end of night if needed
- Communicate between EV sites – iPads/Cellphones – opening/closing forms/ballot counts
 - Track everything with screen shots & google sheets

EPB (VAC)

- Regular VAC – cuts close to the voting judge initial
- Address verification VAC – has extra space so not to rip

Contact List LBE IT

- Gee working on list
 - Duane sending Gee list

County Technicians & Regional Managers

- No hands on training for L&A – they learn more in the LBE
- Through Keith/Regional – can open job application, interview, and choose County Technician
- When Techs begin – orientation/mini training
 - County Technician duties
- Techs should be trained by SBE?
- Preplan over time for County Technicians

Proposed Newsletter

- MAEO newsletter – first addition will be after the election
- Any LBE news – after each MAEO meeting
- What can each LBE add
- Looking for committee members
- What can ETC add

Ballot on Demand Printers

- Current software – resets the settings
- Need to print from PDF, not in software
- Issues with ballot on demand printer
 - Contact Regional

Public Demo

- Public Demo – explain L&A – Do not need to have equipment

Shipments

- Keep & store shelves from transfer carts.
- Failure tags for broken equipment given to Chief Judges

MAEO Meeting Summary From December 14, 2016

The MAEO Board and members met in the conference room of the Anne Arundel LBE. Around 80 folks attended in person and on the phone. After the formalities of approving the minutes from previous meetings and the Treasurer's Report, Linda thanked us once again for conducting another successful election.

Various Committee chairs then gave brief reports and updates.

Dale Livingston of the Standards Committee, Charlotte Davis of the Constitution & Bylaws Committee, Daneen Banks of the Early Voting Committee, and Kevin Keene of the Personnel Committee spoke of specific projects and general intentions. They also reminded all that their committees are always looking for new members and greater participation.

Brittani Thomas, our Conference Planner and chair of the Conference Planning Committee, spoke about her early planning and research for the 2017 MAEO Conference. An extensive PowerPoint was presented. Details for the Conference are elsewhere in this Newsletter.

Nikki Charlson also spoke on a few topics, including the eventual use of Same Day Registration on Election Day, the possibility of a mandated Manual Audit of all ballots, the various methods and timing of achieving such audits, and other legislative issues which may present themselves during the present General Assembly sessions.

It was also mentioned that the Legislative Committee will research and make recommendations regarding potential legislative actions. Their work and the progress of the General Assembly will be regularly reported on by the Committee to all MAEO members by email.

Ben Frey then updated all attending and listening on the progress of the Newsletter's first issue (what you're reading now).

Alysoun McLaughlin introduced the topic of pre-staging Absentee ballots. This could possibly reduce the time necessary at canvasses to open and organize them, as well as have the ballots 'pre-flattened' in order to reduce jammed or unreadable ballots due to folds.

Also discussed was the possibility of new pollbooks for the 2018 elections. A pilot program in "to-be-determined jurisdictions" was mentioned.

After the meeting was adjourned, the MAEO holiday party ensued, with gifts and games for the attendees.

Official minutes of this meeting will be released and posted on the MAEO website once approved by the MAEO Board.

Welcoming Letter

So much of what MAEO does, what it accomplishes, goes unnoticed amongst the Maryland election community. It happens in meetings, in discussions, it happens with people willing to work beyond their own election office. We all see MAEO's most public event, the conference. Some of us are lucky enough to attend, to meet up with our peers. But the conference is three days out of the year. MAEO is a full-time, overtime, all-the-time organization.

MAEO plays a critical role in Maryland elections. It is made up of the ground troops, the electionistas on the front lines, the ones in the local offices. We share, we support, we ask questions, and we try to provide solutions. We are always moving forward, improving, tweaking. Every decade or so, we practically start from scratch. We partner with the folks at SBE and we work independently.

This newsletter seeks to communicate with all MAEO members – ones who participate, ones who don't but would like to, ones who don't participate because they just don't know where they would fit in, and even ones who claim not to care. This newsletter's intention is to connect us all on an occasional basis, to give us a forum to discover what our colleagues are up to. We may gain a better idea of the different scale of each office. We may find we have the same great idea as another office so let's collaborate.

Welcome to this experiment, let's see where it leads. Each issue will require volunteers to step up, to contribute something that is not part of your job description, *but will be welcomed and read and appreciated by your colleagues*. Don't go month-to-month, issue-to-issue, waiting to see who else took up the challenge, without considering what value you as well could add to our Newsletter. MAEO supports this project – you support it too.

Welcome to the MAEO Newsletter

Ben Frey

Shawn Larson

Anthony Gutierrez

Contributors

David Garreis - Anne Arundel County Daneen Banks - Prince George's County

Gail Hatfield - Calvert County Jessica White - Montgomery County

Dale Livingston - Harford County Brittani Thomas - Queen Anne's County

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