

## Administrator's Note



It's the end of 2017, here at the Election Commission, and we are

already getting ready for the May 2018 County Primary Election. On November 17<sup>th</sup>, people began picking up petitions to run in that election.

As of the end of November, 50 people had picked up petitions to run for office in the May County Primary Election. The name of someone who picked up a petition may not necessarily appear on the ballot. Picking up the petition is only the first step. It's kind of like a statement of intent that the individual plans to en-

ter the election.

Each election has a set date when petitions are issued, and when they must be returned. We call the return date the qualifying deadline. Petitions must be returned to our office by noon on the qualifying deadline. All the petitions must be signed by 25 voters who are registered in the district that would be represented by the person seeking office. A name is not entered on the ballot simply because the petition has been received before the qualifying deadline.

Each signature on a petition is checked against our records to verify that the people who signed it actu-

ally reside in the petitioner's district. Past prospective candidates have made the mistake of submitting a petition with exactly 25 signatures, only to discover later that not everyone who signed was registered in the district they want to represent. That's why we encourage everyone who picks up a petition to get more than 25 signatures before they turn it in to our office.

Once the signatures on a petition have been verified, it has qualified, but it's still not official. The ballot is not completed until the petitions have been certified by the Shelby County Board of Election Commissioners.

*Linda Phillips*

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## Election News

**Upcoming Class—How to Run for Office**—January 20, 2018 10:00 a.m. at the Operations Center, 980 Nixon Drive. RSVP preferred but not required. Call Carol at 901-222-1203.

**The County Primary Election will be held on Tuesday, May 1, 2018 with 23 positions on the ballot.** Qualifying deadline is Noon February 15, 2018. Withdrawal deadline is Noon on February 22, 2018.

**The County General and State Primary Election will be held on Thursday, August 2, 2018.** The first day to pick up petitions for independent and non-partisan candidates for the County General Election is Friday, January 5, 2018. This is also the first day for candidates to pick up petitions for the State Primary election.

## New Voter Registration System is Coming!



A screen shot from the eLect Voter Registration System.

The Shelby County Election Commission recently purchased a new voter registration processing system. It is called eLect Voter Registration and is from Everyone Counts, a San Diego company. Everyone Counts has partnered with Small Planet Works, a local Memphis company to tailor the product to our exact needs.

The system allows employees to process voter registration applications more quickly, efficiently, and at a much higher level of security.

The eLect system uses GIS technology to assign voters to the correct precinct. This is vastly more accurate than our current block range method of assigning voters to precincts. Use of GIS will also allow for error-free redistricting in 2021.

Other features of the system include automatic import of registrations from the state online voter registration system; currently we re-key all those applications. The system will be available for us to test soon and will “go live” in March, 2018.

## Students Tour SCEC!

Students from the Collier-ville Home Schooling Association, and their parents, visited the Election Commission Operations Center. After Linda Phillips, administrator of elections, talked to them about the process of voting, the group took a tour.

The group, comprised of middle and high school age students, voted on various topics of interest to them. Those included their favorite season of the year, favorite ice cream, favorite movie, and favorite pet.

During the tour of the

Operations Center, they learned about running an election. After a discussion about the importance of voting, older students were given the opportunity to register to vote.

And the election results? The students' favorite time of the year is winter. They favor chocolate ice cream, and the movie Transformers ranked tops. And as for the pet question, the group agreed that man's best friend is in fact a dog.

If your group is interested in a tour, call Carol at 901-222-1203.



Davis George, 17, completes a voter registration application.

# Delegates Visit SCEC by Joe Young, II

Every two years, I am asked by the Friendship Force to host a delegation of international visitors to hold discussions regarding elections, and give a tour of the Election Commission Operations Center. This year, the delegation was comprised of distinguished Fellows from The Rumsfeld Foundation (established by former Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld). The seven Fellows in the group were from the Central Asian countries of Afghanistan, Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan.



Following their tour at the Election Commission, delegates experienced some local color at a popular restaurant.

On October 24th, the delegates spent the day at the Election Commission's Operation Center, and participated in a roundtable discussion with some staff members and two of our Election Commissioners, Norma Lester and Dee Nollner. Election Commission staff included Carla Lytle, Operations Manager, Genine Taylor, Voter and Candidate Services Manager, Stacey Scott, GIS Specialist, and Sissy Davis, Voting Machine Technician.

The focus of the visit and discussion was "Accountable Governance," and the emphasis was on our local government. We discussed political parties, both Democratic and Republican, voter participation levels, and the impact of foreign interference in the 2016 election.

Delegation members and the commissioners were equally concerned about foreign interference in elections, voter apathy, and voter participation. Voter apathy has been a common concern for many groups throughout the years, and proved to be equally so with the Rumsfeld Foundation delegates. Threats related to security, election delivery systems, and foreign interference also have become common concerns we share. While we could not reveal our own security measures with the delegation, we emphasized our continuous efforts to identify and reduce risks.

As part of the facility tour, Sissy Davis, the voting machine technician, conducted a demonstration of our voting machines, using a ballot created specifically for the delegation members. Diane George, from the Election Officials Department, helped to provide a touch of Southern hospitality, by decorating our facility, which the delegates noticed and appreciated.

Cooperative exchanges like this, with experts from different counties, prove to be a learning experience on both sides of the table, as well as showcasing all the effective practices used by our government.

*Joe Wm . Young, II has been Chief Deputy Administrator of the Shelby County Election Commission since 2008.*

## Rock the Vote!

The Rock the Vote! social media campaign is a hit. We've received pictures of rocks people have found throughout the county. Some future voters sent their pictures with rocks. We'd like your photo, too!

Rocks are still hidden around Shelby County. If you find one, take a picture of yourself, prominently displaying the rock, tell us where you found it, and email it to us, along with your name and address. We'll put your picture on our Facebook page and send you a Vote 901! tote bag. Email your photo to [carol.collinsworth@shelbycountyttn.gov](mailto:carol.collinsworth@shelbycountyttn.gov).



Mia Terry found this rock at Kroger!



# Shelby County Election Commission

Visit either office:

## **Downtown**

157 Poplar, Suite 137

## **Elections Operations Center**

980 Nixon Drive

Phone: 901-222-1200

Fax: 901-222-6811

E-mail: [voteinfo@shelbycountyttn.gov](mailto:voteinfo@shelbycountyttn.gov)

[www.shelbyvote.com](http://www.shelbyvote.com)

## **Follow us on Social Media!**



**@Vote901**



**#Vote901**



**Shelby County TN Election Commission**

**#Vote901 #GoVoteTN**

## Downtown Office Relocates!

The Election Commission's downtown office has a new look in a new space at 157 Poplar Ave., Suite 137.

Shelby County Government has guidelines about the square footage of office space, per employee, allocated to each office. Because there was more space than allowed for the number of employees at the Downtown location, the decision was made to move the office.

The office was closed for a few days in December, when business was conducted solely from the Operations Center. After a brief

closure to move the furniture and connect the computers, the office re-opened on December 11<sup>th</sup>.

The employees are excited

about the look of their new office. Stop by anytime during business hours, which are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and see for yourself.

