

From the Village of Waldo Clerk's office
Reflections on Election Information and gratitude...

For your information:

Donations received for a safe polling place:

- 5 hand sewn cloth face masks- resident Connie Wegner, Strawberry Drive. These were worn over the hazard masks provided by Dennis Reinemann.
- Two Plexiglas barriers for poll table-Dan and Brady Schneider built and installed. They represented our local business DW Schneider Engineering. (Staff kept behind that barrier were a Wal-Mart employee, a NICU nurse, a meals-on-wheels delivery person over 65, a tax accountant with asthma). Priceless protection for people on both sides of that barrier!
DW Schneider Engineering also donated N95 masks that we felt we didn't need to "dip into" due to the other protections available. I did send one of them with the NICU nurse at the end of the night. This was done after I heard her share that she has been wearing the same N95 every night for weeks at the hospital.
- Lab face shields and jug of medical grade disinfection wipes-donated for use by Bruce Neerhof. The shields were mostly worn if not working behind the Plexiglas. Again, priceless protection.
- 2 jugs of medical grade disinfection wipes and a box of "hazard" masks- donated by former Trustee and owner of local business MMW Industrial Supply, Dennis Reinemann. The State sent us some alcohol prep pads which were useless. Tiny pieces used for prepping for blood work or an immunization couldn't be used to wipe surfaces as large as we were dealing with. It is what they had available, but, THANK YOU, Dennis for giving us better options!!!
- Custom-built pen holder donated by Robert Richter of M/R Racing. Voters used a disinfection wipe to choose their own pen and kept that pen through their voting process. They, then, took it home with them or threw it in the trash on their way out. The holder kept the pens hygienically available.

We would not have had a full election staff without these protections!! National Guard were utilized in more than one neighboring community. Our staff were amazing. Both shifts started with significant anxiety, but the provided PPE helped them all be less fearful. There were so many details to remember in the processing of so many absentees, it was good that they weren't also dealing with fear. Waldo has no more than 10 absentees an election. This time they processed over 150! Trustee Chris Madgwick joined for the morning shift and was immensely helpful! He greeted voters outside and explained how the process was to work inside. He was a calming presence on both sides of that door! He directed folks to keep six feet apart where the markers were, etc.

Thank you, Waldo election staff for being FANTASTIC civil servants in your community. You made history on Tuesday. What a thought! Here, as in many communities, most of our staff joined this past year just to have worthwhile retirement activity. A pandemic election wasn't in anyone's wildest imaginings. Thank you, Waldo voters, for being patient with the awkward and unknown process. All but a few were very kind, cooperative, and grateful to the staff. As the Clerk, I am so very thankful for how well the day went. I am thankful for the community support I received in more ways than just those physical donations listed! People helped their neighbors through the absentee ballot application process. As they did so they were naturally checking up on their neighbors' safety. Waldo State Bank is sponsoring some Meals on Wheels to our vulnerable population as a result of this. Peter DeGroff (JD Trucking) commented that The Greatest Generation learned the importance of working together as communities and as a country. May we do the same. Thomas Sowell is an economist and societal theorist I have been reading about lately. This is a quote of his that I think is appropriate today. "The beauty of doing nothing is that you can do it perfectly. Only when you do something is it almost impossible to do it without mistakes. Therefore people who are contributing nothing to society, except their constant criticisms, can feel both intellectually and morally superior." Waldo is a community that is doing many "somethings" that are very good. I am incredibly thankful for this community.

Sincerely,
Michelle Brecht
Village of Waldo
Clerk-Treasurer