

## 2008 ANNUAL REPORT

### ORGANIZATION

The Onondaga County Board of Elections is a County Office, responsible for all Federal, State, County, City and Town elections, along with the Villages of Camillus and Manlius. Under present law, all villages (except Camillus and Manlius) and school district elections, as well as fire, water and other special district elections, do not fall under the jurisdiction of the Board of Elections at this time.

The structure, responsibilities and duties of the Board are set forth in the New York State Election Law. Formal Board meetings and documentation of actions, discussion and decisions are being maintained.

The Board of Elections is located on the 15th floor of the Civic Center at 421 Montgomery Street, Syracuse, New York.

### HAVA/NEW YORK STATE ELECTION CONSOLIDATION/IMPROVEMENT ACT

In March of 2006, the Federal Department of Justice initiated a lawsuit to force NYS to create a specific written HAVA implementation and compliance plan. A consent order issued by US District Court Judge Gary L. Sharpe (Albany, NY) provided for an interim (Plan B) disabled voter-accessible ballot marking device (BMD) to be used on a limited basis in each county only in the 2006 elections, as well as specific timelines for full implementation of new voting systems after August 2007.

The state was not able to comply with the 2007 implementation time line. In December of 2007, Judge Sharpe ordered all NYS Counties to use a Ballot Marking Device in every polling place for September 2008 primary and 2008 general election. Since this device was not certified, we were also required to use lever machines in every polling place.

### PERSONNEL AND BUDGET

In keeping with state mandate, two Commissioners, one Republican and one Democrat administer the Board of Elections. The Commissioners are recommended by their respective County committees and appointed by the County Legislature every 2 years. The Board had 20 full time positions.

Both Commissioners' terms ended on December 31, 2008 and were reappointed for another two years.

2008 was a presidential election year. The board conducted three elections – two Primaries and one General Election. In addition to the President/Vice President; a Justice of the Supreme Court, a Congressman, 2 State Senators, 5 Members of Assembly, a Surrogate Court Judge, a County Clerk, and 6 Town Offices – To Fill Vacancy were elected along with 4 town justices. Eighteen (18) different ballot styles were used in the General Election.

The Board of Elections is funded solely by the County of Onondaga. The 2008 adopted appropriations include the following:

#### **Total 2008 Budget**

Total County Budget	\$ 3,161,811
Salaries (full time)	\$ 821,436
Salaries*(temporary)	\$ 565,451

(\*includes temporary clerks, election inspectors, voting machine technicians, training consultants)

## ELECTION COST

Onondaga County is now responsible for paying all election costs that were once partially funded by the City of Syracuse and the 19 townships. The Board is now responsible for the costs of storing, transporting and maintaining both the lever voting machines and the Ballot Marking Devices (BMD), paying machine custodians, political party representatives and election inspectors.

The County Board of Elections reviews all polling places for use and accessibility and tests and certifies all voting machines in Onondaga County. There are **537** lever voting machines and **275** ballot marking devices (BMD) in Onondaga County. In 2009, our office was faced with deploying two separate voting systems at a cost of **\$48.00 per machine** to the 203 polling locations for the November 4<sup>th</sup> General Election.

There were no county election charge backs to municipalities for 2008. HAVA will have some one time reimbursements that will require future annual operating expenditures. HAVA requires the county to maintain a pre-HAVA level of expenditures. There will be a need to follow federal and NYS contract processes especially for the purchase of new voting systems. The CBOE had never been involved in this process.

## VOTER REGISTRATION

HAVA required the creation of a statewide, interactive, real time voter registration data file that is tied into our county registration system as well as state and federal agencies. NYSVOTER was activated in the summer of 2007.

Transparency and Documentation requirements caused by NVRA/HAVA implementation and NYS consolidation significantly and permanently increased the CBOE workload. This, in turn, has stretched our staff beyond the limits.

The qualifications for voting in New York State are as follows: 18 years of age by Election Day, citizen of the United States, and a resident of the State and County for 30 days prior to election. Residents of the County are allowed to register up to 25 days prior to an election during the year. **3189** voter registration forms were delivered to the Office of the Board of Elections in person.

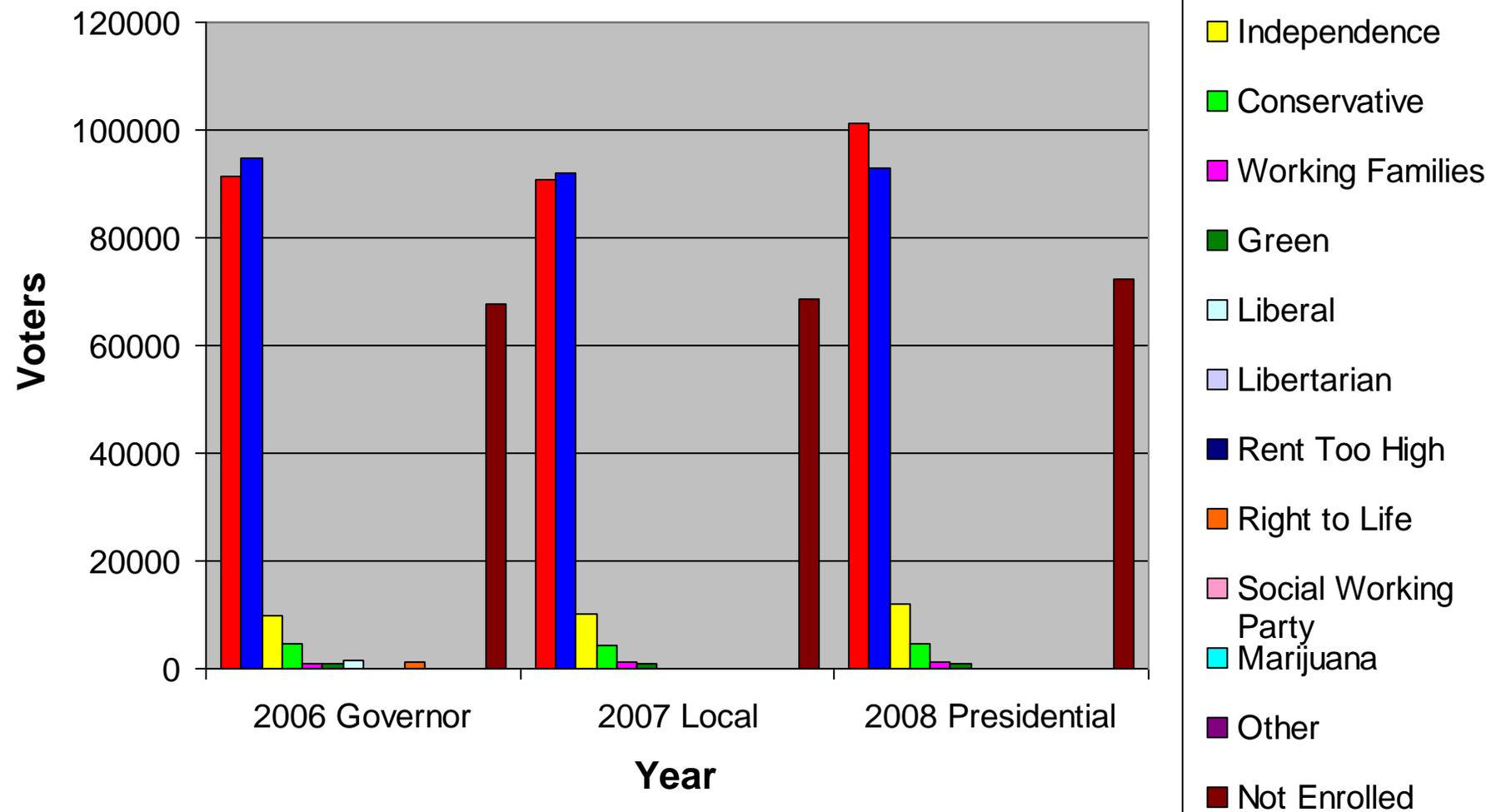
Eight (8) temporary staff were hired to help our staff process all the voter registration applications received in our office for the Primary and General Elections. With this being a Presidential Year, our regular staff had a hard time keeping up with the incoming mail received daily. The temporary staff helped with address changes on returned mail check cards, scanning/indexing and cropping of all documents received, registering voter registration forms and answering phone calls from voters. Even with this help, our regular staff along with the temporary help was required to work extra hours to accomplish this task so that our office could conduct a fair election.

**313,383 (Active/Inactive)** residents of Onondaga County were registered to vote for the 2008 General Election. This number includes **28,503** inactive voters. Under the National Voter Registration Act [NVRA] a voter must be made inactive if mail sent to them is returned as undeliverable. If they remain inactive for 2 successive Federal elections, their registration will be canceled. Voters can activate themselves by voting, signing a petition or notifying the Board that they still reside at the address indicated in the Board's files.

The Board processed **51,768** registration application forms during the year. This number includes **33,879** mail registration applications and **14,700** applications received over the counter through registration drives or other types of resources. Not all of these registrations were new voters. Many of them moved from one part of Onondaga County to another. Registered voters who move within Onondaga County remain registered and can vote at their new polling place on election day by affidavit ballot. We processed **1,192** affidavit ballots during the February 5<sup>th</sup> Presidential Primary of which **380** were valid, 3 affidavit ballots during the September 9<sup>th</sup> primary, of which **2** were valid and **3,346** for the general elections on November 4<sup>th</sup>, of which **2,271** were valid in 2008.

The restraining order placed on New York State in 2002 by the Court to maintain the voter files on the Green, Liberal, Right to Life, Marijuana Reform and Libertarian Parties was lifted. Pursuant to the federal court decision in the Green Party case of 2005, local election boards are mandated to keep enrollment numbers for the following groups/independent bodies until 2010: Green, Libertarian, Socialist Workers, Rent Too High Party. These are independent bodies which had gubernatorial candidates on the November ballot in 2006. These independent bodies are treated as though they are recognized parties for enrollment purposes only. In 2008, there were a total of **833** Green, **85** Libertarian, **0** Socialist Workers, **0** Rent Too High and **148** other parties. (See chart #1)

## Enrollment Numbers - Onondaga County



## **VOTER REGISTRATION AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

Our Commissioners reviewed the election process with several groups during the year. They included the Russian Leadership Programs sponsored by the Open World Leadership Center, students in the Fabius-Pompey High School Government Classes, Syracuse University Newhouse School, Dewitt Rotary and did a program on WCNY called "Food for Thought". The Board of Elections is often asked to speak at high schools and community meetings on such topics as the importance of voting; registering to vote; organizing a registration drive; and voting procedures.

New York State Election Law 3-212.4(b)(1) requires each Board of Elections to designate a registration activity coordinator. It is the responsibility of this coordinator to develop a written voter education and registration plan, to contact every school district, college, and university in our county, and to implement this plan, in conjunction with the educational institutions' plans and programs.

In 2008, **21,450** registration forms were distributed to the high schools, town and village offices, various libraries and post office branches. An additional **19,338** voter registration forms were distributed to various other groups along with **1,975** forms mailed out to individuals upon request.

The following is a partial listing of the many diverse groups that organized registration drives:

### **Colleges and most area High Schools**

Onondaga Community College, Syracuse University, OCM Boces, NJT Management, Syracuse Educational Opportunity Center, Johnston Vocational Center, Phillips Hair Institute, Tully High School, ESM High School, F-M High School, Syracuse City School District to include Corcoran, Henninger and Fowler High Schools,

### **Professional Associations & Labor Unions**

C.S.E.A. Local 834, Painters Local #31, Teamsters Local #317, United Steelworkers of America Local #1277 and Syracuse Teachers Association.

### **Human Services, Community, & Neighborhood Organizations**

NAACP, NYCLU, The League of Women Voters, Syracuse Fire Dept, Syracuse Voter Registration Project, Citizens Action Group, A.C.T.S. (Alliance of Communities Transforming Syracuse), Lafayette Alliance, Southwest Community Center, Catholic Charities, Vera House, P.E.A.C.E., National Action Network

As registration deadlines approached, press releases were faxed to all area media in August, September and October. General information faxes were also sent to local media as Election Days grew nearer informing the general public of polling hours, polling places, and phone numbers to call for questions. Public access television stations and a number of radio stations agreed to regularly broadcast registration deadlines and phone numbers at the Board of Elections to call for more information. Registration deadlines and mail registration forms were posted on our website for voters to access.

Currently, about **81%** of approximately **350,000** eligible voters (citizens' 18 years and over) are registered to vote in Onondaga County.

## **POLLING PLACES**

There were **203** regular polling sites in Onondaga County in 2008.

In 2007, we eliminated polling places that clearly were not accessible per Federal ADA standards. Starting in 2006, our office mandated that all polling sites in Onondaga County sign a five (5) year lease.

As a result of using lever machines and BMD's for the 2008 General Election, we at the Onondaga County Board of Elections were forced to change 25 polling sites due to lack of space, voter complaints, and HAVA requirements. The voting area in some of the locations had to be mapped out differently to accommodate the integration of the lever machines and the BMD Voting System. We worked with several Town Clerks, who were familiar with the locations at hand, to achieve the necessary layout for an unimpeded traffic flow on Election Day.

The County HAVA Funds Program for Polling Place Access Improvement allowed the Board of Elections to permanently fix the parking area at the Camillus Elk's Lodge. The parking area was paved and restriped for handicap accessibility. Along with the polling site changes, a re-evaluation of approximately 30 other sites resulted in the need for more temporary fixes. Seventy-seven polling sites throughout the county needed temporary fixes in order to be ADA compliant.

The delivery and pick up of lever machines and BMD's to and from polling sites resulted in the need for better contact information on the polling site and better communication between the delivery personnel and the BOE. 2008 was the first year that lever machines and BMD's were picked up and delivered to all 203 polling sites. This was a trial and error period for the BOE, delivery drivers, and polling sites. Two delivery companies were hired to perform this task. In 2009, we will be sending out letters and contact information sheets to be filled out by all the polling places in Onondaga County. Having the correct information such as contact names, phone numbers and address should result in a much smoother transition of the voting machines from place to place.

## **ELECTION DISTRICTS**

In 2008, there were **464** Election Districts in Onondaga County. Five (**5**) of these were non-working districts. There is an average registration of **621** voters in each district. In 2008, the smallest district contained **2** voters (City 5-8) and the largest had an enrollment of **1,786** voters (City 16-1). Normally, a district would be split if it contained more than 1000 voters.

## **MAIL CHECK CARDS**

Each year the Board is required to send a notice to each voter to determine if they still reside at the same address as in our files. The card also contains information that can be useful to the voter, including polling place location, dates and times for primary and general elections and information about registration and absentee voting. In 2008, **265,299** mail check cards were mailed out in late July. Of those cards, **15,929** were returned to the Board as moves within the county, moves outside of the county/state, undeliverable, post office boxes, left no forwarding address, etc. A number of these voters use post office boxes and have not moved. The Board again used NTS Data Services to process our mail check cards.

Two (2) temporary clerks were hired to complete the returned mail check cards that indicated the voter had moved with the county. Having the voter's registration updated before the general election decreased affidavit voting by 33%.

## VOTING MACHINES TECHNICIANS/CUSTODIANS

Two (2) full time Onondaga County Voting Machine Custodians are responsible for maintaining, testing, and preparing the new Imagecast (BMD) voting machines for each election site within Onondaga County with the assistance of centralized voting machine technicians.

In 2008, there were 24 additional voting machine technicians in Onondaga County for the general election, 22 additional voting machine technicians for the Presidential primary election and 2 additional voting machine technicians for the September primary. Voting Machine technicians are appointed by the Board of Elections each year. In 2008 voting machine technician rate of pay was \$17.50 an hour.

We trained three new voting machine technicians on the setup and testing of the lever voting machines, and all 24 technicians were trained on the operations and troubleshooting for the Imagecast (BMD) voting machines.

Temporary fixes were again used to bring Onondaga County polling places into compliance with the Federal Help Americans Vote Act. The technicians were successful at setting up and taking down the temporary fixes in a 48 hour time frame around each election day.

In 2008, every lever voting machine in Onondaga County was tested by a technician and another staff person prior to each of the elections to insure that the correct ballots were in the voting machines and that the machines were working properly.

The number of machines used for each election in 2008 was as follows:

<u>ELECTION</u>	<u>IMAGECAST (BMD)</u>	<u>LEVER MACHINES</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Presidential Primary February 5 <sup>th</sup>	0 (Avante-1)	406	407
Primary September 9 <sup>th</sup>	24	0	24
General November 4 <sup>th</sup>	203	534	737

Additional spare machines were prepared in case of breakdowns before each election. Also, 172 voting machines were loaned to unions ( 26 ), schools ( 122 ), villages ( 15 ) and libraries ( 9 ) for elections and to schools for demonstration purposes during the year.

## SERVICE CENTER

175 lever machines are housed at the Onondaga County's North Area Facility. The remaining 362 lever machines are stored in numerous sites throughout the county. We worked with the town clerks and town supervisors to store the machines within their towns. They also assist with the delivery and retrieval of the lever machines and the temporary disability fixes. On election nights they return the sensitive voting materials to the Civic Center. Their willingness to remain partners with us has enabled us to conduct difficult primary and general elections.

An additional facility was rented by Onondaga County in July to house the 275 ballot marking devices and the supplies needed to conduct elections. This building is located on Thompson Road. Because of the sensitive nature of the BMD's we were required to install a security system. We have 2 full time voting machine custodians assigned to Thompson Road. We are required to have a democrat and republican on site whenever the building is open. If someone is unable to be there, we either need to send someone of the appropriate party to Thompson Road or require the remaining individual to come to the Civic Center. It would make sense to relocate the Board of Elections to one facility. This would provide more oversight to the new voting system and better access to voters and candidates. Much time is wasted traveling between three (3) locations.

The BMD's were delivered at the end of July. Per state regulations, we were required to perform acceptance testing on each BMD. This was to ensure that the machines functioned properly. This took a bipartisan team approximately one hour per machine.

We decided it would be more cost effective to program the machines ourselves rather than pay a vendor thousands of dollars for each election. We purchased the Election Management Software and the appropriate hardware in July. We also arranged to have 4 of our staff attend training in Canada. The vendor was unable to install the software in a timely manner. We arranged for them to program the BMD's at no charge to the County.

After the memory cards are programmed they need to be installed in each BMD. We are required to perform a process called pre-lat. This process requires the creation of a test deck, requires someone to vote each position on the ballot and requires them to use all disability apparatus. Also 6 seals needed to be attached to each machine and their numbers needed to be recorded. The machines then needed to be packaged for delivery to the polling places. This also had to be done with a bipartisan team and took nearly an hour per machine.

## **ELECTION INSPECTORS**

New York State Election Law requires 4 inspectors (2 Republicans and 2 Democrats) in each election district. The chairs of the (2) major political parties recommends these inspectors. In 2008, **2,523** election inspectors were appointed. Due to the consolidation of election activities regarding election inspectors' pay and annual training, an increased work load has fallen on our election inspector coordinators. Election inspectors are paid **\$150** for working the General Election Day and **\$100** on Primary day. The Board of Elections also recruits inspectors from mail registration forms, signing up on Election Day and mail check cards. More than **282** people responded on the mail registration forms. In addition, inspector-recruiting signup sheets were put in each blue supply bag that were sent to the polling sites throughout Onondaga County for those voters who may be interested in this position. There were approximately **900** such prospective inspectors.

We developed and implement a training program with Onondaga Community College (OCC) for inspectors. The new voting system, a new focus on disability sensitivity and NYS laws created a new requirement to train and test all inspectors annually versus one third of inspectors every three years. In order to accomplish this, we had more hands on classes with fewer inspectors in each class. This created a need for more than our one team to train and test them.

To get young people interested in the election process, we worked with OCC and the Political Science Department to make the election process part of the accreditation of the course assignment. If the student did not complete this assignment, he did not receive the credit.

Our staff and OCC worked together to create extensive training program for the election inspectors. Our office worked with OCC to establish a process for scheduling the election inspections for their Hands On training each year. This wasn't as smooth a transition as one would have liked, so our office will be taking back the scheduling of the training program. A lack of miscommunication leads to money being spent on the training that was not necessary. We will continue to try to enhance our training program in 2009 as we develop a more effective approach to the timing of the training sessions.

In 2008, a total of **2,545** election inspectors were invited to attend a 3 hour Hands On training session and take the inspector test for certification. A total of **2,545** inspectors attended this training. Out of this number a total of **22** inspectors failed the test. The average number of people in each meeting was **25-50**. The training included actually handling all paperwork used at a polling place during an election. Each inspector was also shown, as part of their training, how to open and close a voting machine. **66** Hands-on Training meetings were held between May and July and each class lasted about 2 1/2 - 3 hours. In September and October, 43 BMD training classes were held and each class lasted about 2 1/2 hours.

## **ADDITIONAL INSPECTORS**

Onondaga County has a goal to maintain a list of 50 Emergency Inspectors for Election Day. These inspectors are never assigned to a polling place prior to Election Day. They are called into service if a regular inspector becomes ill or fails to appear at the polling place. These people sign a contract agreeing to work anywhere in the county where they are needed. They must remain by their phone until 4PM on primary and general election days. Attendance at a training meeting is also required. If a vacancy does occur, they are paid the daily rate. If they are not used, Emergency Inspectors are paid \$40 for General Election, \$40 for Primary Election and \$25 for a training meeting. A total of **12** emergency inspectors were used for the general election while **2** were kept on retainer and paid a \$40 fee for that day.

## **BALLOT ACCESS**

Certain towns hold caucuses to select their candidates, but most candidates are required to file petitions to seek public office. All petitions for candidates for public office or party position, entirely within Onondaga County, are filed with this Board. Anyone seeking an office that crosses county lines is required to file in Albany at the New York State Board of Elections.

In 2008, candidates for public office filed **79** party designating petitions and **1163** Party position petitions along with **0** opportunity to ballot petitions. Each petition is logged in by Board staff and each candidate for public office is notified in writing that a petition has been filed on his/her behalf and the candidate is given an opportunity to accept or decline the designation or nomination. Any objections to the designation of a candidate are filed with the Board and ruled upon by the Commissioners. In 2008, there were **12** challenges to petitions filed. The Board did not received specifications on any of the challenges. However, **6** petitions were thrown out for lack of an authorization or acceptance to the designating petition. Also, candidates desiring to run on an independent line are required to file independent nominating petitions. In 2008, **0** independent nominating petitions were filed. Additionally, **5** Certificates of Nomination were filed. There were no challenges with specifications filed on the certificates. Party authorizations are filed for candidates who are not members of a Party for which the candidate wants that Party endorsement/line. There were authorizations filed on behalf of **(9)** Independence Party candidates, **(6)** Conservative Party candidates and **(8)** Working Families Party candidates.

A vacancy occurred in the office of Town Assessor – Town of Lafayette on July 28, 2008, due to the resignation of an elected official. State law allows for a substitute candidate if a vacancy occurs more than 7 days before the election. Only the Republican Party's nominated a replacement candidates.

## ABSENTEE VOTING

Registered voters who will be outside of Onondaga County on Election Day and those who are physically unable to appear at the polls are eligible to receive absentee ballots. There are several types of absentee voters:

- A. *MILITARY*--Members of the Armed Forces and their dependents.
- B. *REGULAR*--Voters who are out of the county, or ill on Election Day or Primary Day.
- C. *PERMANENTLY DISABLED*--These voters are on a permanent list and receive a ballot for each election.
- D. *SPECIAL FEDERAL*--American citizens living abroad whose last address in the states was in Onondaga County. This ballot only contains Federal offices.
- E. *SPECIAL PRESIDENTIAL*--This ballot for the office of President and Vice-President is available only to registered voters in Onondaga County who move to another jurisdiction and do not meet residency requirements to register to vote, or who move within Onondaga County within ten days of the General Election.

In 2008 the numbers of absentees processed are as follows:

TYPE OF ABSENTEE	ELECTION DATE				
	Feb 5th		Sept. 9th		Nov 4th
	DEM	REP	IND	CON	ALL
<b>Military</b>					
<i>Mailed</i>	49	165	5	0	751
<i>Returned</i>	21	74	0	0	487
<b>Regular</b>					
<i>Mailed</i>	1051	641	94	1	11,669
<i>Returned</i>	934	572	26	1	9,946
<b>Permanent Disabled</b>					
<i>Mailed</i>	641	872	53	1	2,433
<i>Returned</i>	481	532	14	1	2,041
Special Federal					
<i>Mailed</i>	129	56			734
<i>Returned</i>	95	34			612
Special Presidential					
<i>Mailed</i>					66
<i>Returned</i>					56
<b>TOTAL</b>					
<i>Mailed</i>	1870	1734	152	2	15,653
<i>Returned</i>	1531	1212	40	2	13,142

The total number of voters that voted in person at their polling place that had returned an absentee ballot to our office in 2008 were **2** at the Presidential Primary, **0** at the September Primary and **4** at the General Election.

In 2008, the Board of Elections hand delivered ballots to nursing homes with more than five residents voting absentee. The ballots are delivered and voted under supervision of a bipartisan team from the Board. During the Presidential Primary, **10** nursing homes were visited with a total of **134** ballots processed; September Primary Election, **0** nursing homes were visited and in the General Election, **10** nursing homes were visited with a total of **405** ballots processed.

## **PAPER BALLOT COUNTING**

The Board counts all paper ballots centrally using a Sequoia Voting System optical scanner and ballot tabulating machines. The electronic absentee counting system greatly enhances and expedites our canvass procedures. This machine counts all paper ballots – absentees, affidavits and emergencies. Candidates receive their official vote tally earlier and this office can certify election results with the State Board of Elections prior to the deadline.

## **COURT ORDERS**

Voters who failed to register in time for the primary or general elections can obtain a court order. Our office had lawyers from the Democratic and Republican parties available at the Board of Elections to assist voters in completing the necessary forms to present to the Supreme Court Judges on Election Day. There were **16** Court Orders processed for the Feb 5<sup>th</sup> Presidential Primary, **0** Court Order processed at the September 9<sup>th</sup> Primary and **190** court orders processed for the November 4<sup>th</sup> General Election. After obtaining a court order, a voter is allowed to vote on the machine in their home election district. A total of **(165)** court orders were voted on the voting machines, **(14)** were voted by an affidavit ballot and **(11)** court orders were voted by absentee ballot.

## **ELECTION RESULTS**

In 2008, a bipartisan team of supervisors, appointed by the Commissioners, operated the Election night reporting system. The Board of Elections staff set up the Election Center. The system provides the public, candidates, and the media with quick and accurate unofficial results. Election Central is located in Room 803 in the County Office Building. For the first time, live results were available on our website.

In 2008, we used a phone bank of **20** phones for the Presidential Primary and **55** phones for the General Election where results are called in by election Inspectors and entered directly into terminals by County Information Technology personnel. Results are available within minutes of the close of polls. An election night phone bank was not needed due to a very small September primary Election.

Election Night Personnel are compensated at a rate of \$15 for working 2-2 ½ hrs. It is becoming more difficult to recruit election night personnel based on the rate of compensation for that night.

The Board requires Inspectors to return their supplies on election night. City inspectors are required to deliver their supplies directly to the Civic Center. The towns, however, with the help of the town clerk, assists the Board in the return of voting materials on election night. This method provides increased security for elections materials and also prevents a last minute scramble if the Board receives a Court Order to secure election materials.

## CANVASS OF RESULTS

All voting machines are recanvassed by paid party representatives--one representing the Republican and one representing the Democratic parties. They are responsible for verifying the machine results reported by the election inspectors. This is usually completed within 48 hours of each special, primary or general election.

The Commissioners oversee the counting of absentee, affidavit, emergency and military ballots. They are responsible for ruling on any questionable ballot. According to New York State Election Law, Section 10-114 increased the time for military ballots to be received at a Board of Elections from 7 days to 13 days after a General Election. Absentee ballots are not counted on election night after the polls close. The paper ballots were counted 8 days after the General Election due to the Veteran's Day holiday.

All paper ballots were inspected and scanned with appropriate headers and end sheets. After all paper ballots were scanned, a final summary report was generated. The results were then downloaded and merged with the voting machine totals.

The paper ballot and machine results are merged and entered directly on the computer terminal. Board personnel then verify all entries. The official canvass is certified by the Commissioners and forwarded to the State Board of Elections. Bound copies of this document are printed in February and distributed to candidates and other interested parties upon request.

## VOTER PARTICIPATION--2008

	<b>NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE VOTER'S</b>	<b>NUMBER VOTING</b>	<b>TURNOUT %</b>
<b><i>Feb 5<sup>th</sup> Presidential Primary</i></b>			
DEM:	89,621	38,726	43%
REP	90,089	26,566	29%
<b><i>Sept. 9<sup>th</sup> Primary:</i></b>			
IND (Surrogate Court)	10,693	551	.05%
IND (Town Of Pompey –Justice)	167	42	25%
CON	75	25	33%
<b><i>Nov.4<sup>th</sup> General Election:</i></b>			
All Parties	313,383*	220,168	70%
*includes 28,503 inactives			

## **FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE**

New York State Election Law requires all local candidates and committees to file electronically with the State Board of Elections as well as a hard copy with the county Board of Elections. Candidates for state offices are required to file only with the state. Candidates for Federal offices file with the Federal Election Commission, Washington, D.C.

Candidates running for office in 2008 were required to file reports preceding and following each election or primary in which they were involved. There were 10 active local candidates, 3 party committees and 12 PACs in 2008 who filed.

Additionally, approximately 174 political committees and candidates remain active throughout the calendar year. They file periodic statements each January and July. After petitions are filed, candidates are mailed a kit containing the necessary forms, a financial disclosure filing calendar, and a Guide to Financial Disclosure. The financial files are open to the public and are kept at the Board for seven (7) years.

Financial Disclosure training for treasurers and candidates was presented by the New York State Board of Elections on June 4<sup>th</sup> at the Onondaga County Curtain Auditorium at the Galleries in Syracuse, New York.

## **WEB SITE**

The Board of Election's web site, which was launched in 2000, continues to thrive.

The Board and the County's Web Site Administrator jointly revise the website to improve navigational ease for the end user. We have now added pages of information and instructions for:

- Press Releases
- Election Inspectors
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Clickable button directing voters to the 2008 General Election Results
- Clickable button directing voters to education on voting machines sponsored by the State Board of Elections (VoteNY.Com)

The polling place locator feature can now be updated as frequently as necessary through an updated web table builder from the vendor.

We continue to place an emphasis on educating the public as to those services available through the internet, and the ease in obtaining necessary forms (and instructions). Callers continue to be informed of their options when requesting forms.

## **LONG RANGE GOALS**

If the Sequoia ImageCast voting system is certified by the NYS Board of Elections in time, the Board of Elections plans to replace the lever machines in 2009. The new voting system is an integrated ballot marking device for people with disabilities and an optical scanner for the remaining voting public. Voters in Onondaga County will be voting on paper ballots.

The transition to a new voting will require additional training of inspectors and custodians. Inspectors will be required to account for many more ballots than they currently do. The layout of polling places will change dramatically. Voters will be given a paper ballot, sent to a privacy booth to vote their ballot and then will be required to insert it in a scanner. The board plans on having a large number of demonstrations to allow voters to try the new equipment prior to Election Day.

With the new technology also comes a need to recruit a new type of election inspector. Many of our inspectors have indicated that they would no longer work once the transition is made. We need to find people who are comfortable with electronic equipment.

We will continue to seek a higher pay scale for inspectors. Finding qualified inspectors at our current pay is becoming increasingly difficult.

A paper based system will result in the need to print many more ballots than we currently do. We are checking with local printers to determine if they are able to produce the ballots and other materials that are needed by this office. This might not only save money, but would help the local economy.