

## FOCUS ON

### Our Voter Registrations and Elections Division: Making every vote count

– September 2, 2014



*The Voter Registrations and Elections Division staff manage 156 polling locations for almost 400,000 registered voters in Gwinnett County.*

As the basis of our form of government, free and fair elections are essential. No one is more aware of that than our dedicated elections officials in Gwinnett County. Elections Supervisor **Lynn Ledford** and her full-time staff of 13 are responsible for conducting fair and honest elections in Gwinnett County. This year they are managing five elections, with two already under their belt.

Each election cycle is more than registering voters and casting ballots on election day: the work involves issuing voter ID cards and absentee and provisional ballots; establishing precincts based on population and political district lines; finding poll locations; hiring, training, and paying poll officials; buying, maintaining, and delivering an adequate

number of voting machines for each precinct; establishing the official ballot; conducting voting; compiling and reporting the results; and keeping accurate records. Each step involves complying with various state and federal regulations and occurs year-round.

Poll officials are “the backbone of our operations,” Ledford says. “We couldn’t do it without them.” It takes about 3,000 poll officials to staff 156 polling places and complete election night check-in duties for almost 400,000 registered voters.

In addition to regularly scheduled elections, Voter Registrations and Elections also conduct special elections as needed. The division also manages the qualification of certain local candidates. This involves maintaining campaign contribution reports, financial disclosure statements, and lobbyist report forms—making them available for the public to review.

While Ledford manages the day-to-day operations of the Voter Registrations and Elections Division, the Gwinnett County Board of Registrations and Elections collectively acts as superintendent of elections and chief registrar for the county.

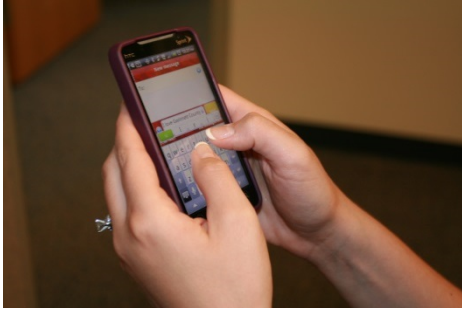
The Gwinnett Republican and Democratic parties each appoint two members and the fifth is appointed by the other four.

Ledford is also one of two election officials statewide to serve on the Secretary of State’s election code review committee, charged with revising the Georgia Election Code.

The November 4 General Election is coming up soon, and Ledford offers some advice for avoiding long lines at the polls: take advantage of advance voting and absentee by mail, know your poll location, and



*Voters can take advantage of several options for casting their ballot before Election Day, including voting absentee by mail, satellite voting, Saturday voting, and advance voting in-person.*



*The Georgia Secretary of State recently launched the GA Votes mobile application, which lets voters check the status of their voter registration and absentee ballots.*

bring required photo ID with you when voting. Also, avoid peak hours before and after work, check the sample ballot in advance, and make candidate decisions before arriving at the poll. Voters should also know how to work the voting machine and be familiar with the content of yes/no resolutions. Finally, avoid student drop-off and pickup times when voting at a school.

New this year is online voter registration, which allows a citizen with a Georgia driver's license or state ID card to either register or update an existing registration electronically. "There's an app for that" as well.

Ledford said that Georgia continues to be in the forefront of voter registrations and elections. It's never been easier to be an informed voter and participate in the voting process.

Check out the upcoming elections schedule, register to vote, or apply to be a poll official at [www.gwinnettelelections.com](http://www.gwinnettelelections.com).

###