

MULTNOMAH COUNTY
VOTER ASSISTANCE TEAM
(VAT)

ABBREVIATED REPORT

ON THE

NOVEMBER 7, 2006

GENERAL ELECTION

VOTING ASSISTANCE PHASE

October 11, 2006 through November 7, 2006

Report submitted by:

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Revised June 1, 2007 (Reflects removal of “No-Sig” phone calls)

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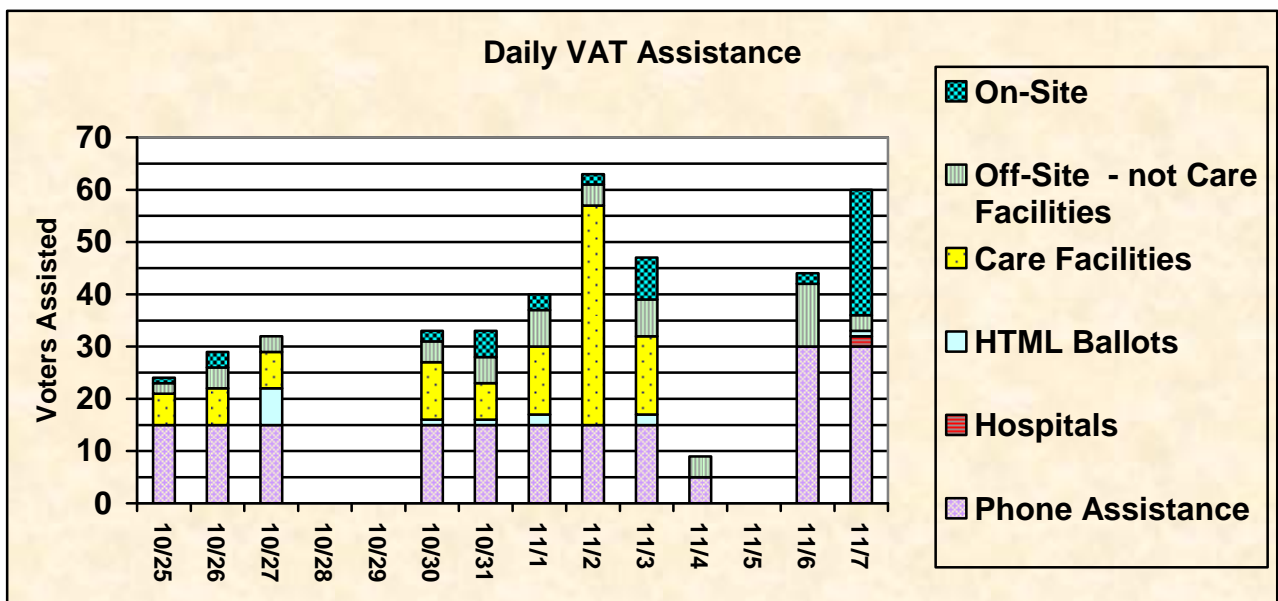
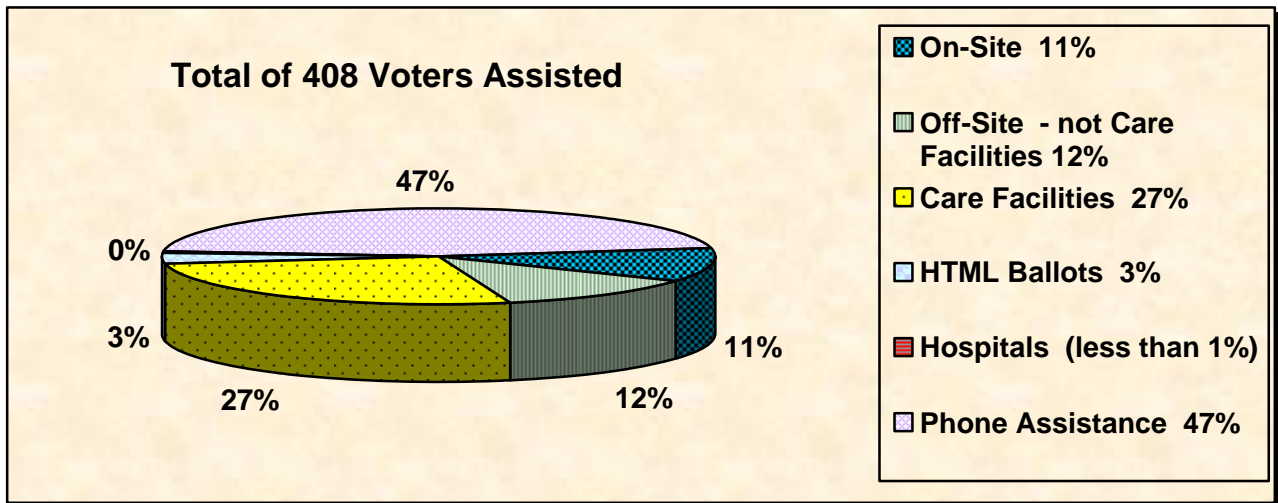
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OPENING STATEMENT

The November 7, 2006 General Election cost a total of \$790,840.78. With 262,628 citizens voting, the cost per voter was \$2.08. **Voter turnout was 69.06%.**

The Voter Assistance Team served **408** voters with disabilities or special needs in the November 7, 2006 General Election between October 11, 2006 and November 7, 2006. The average cost was **\$92.46** per voter assisted.

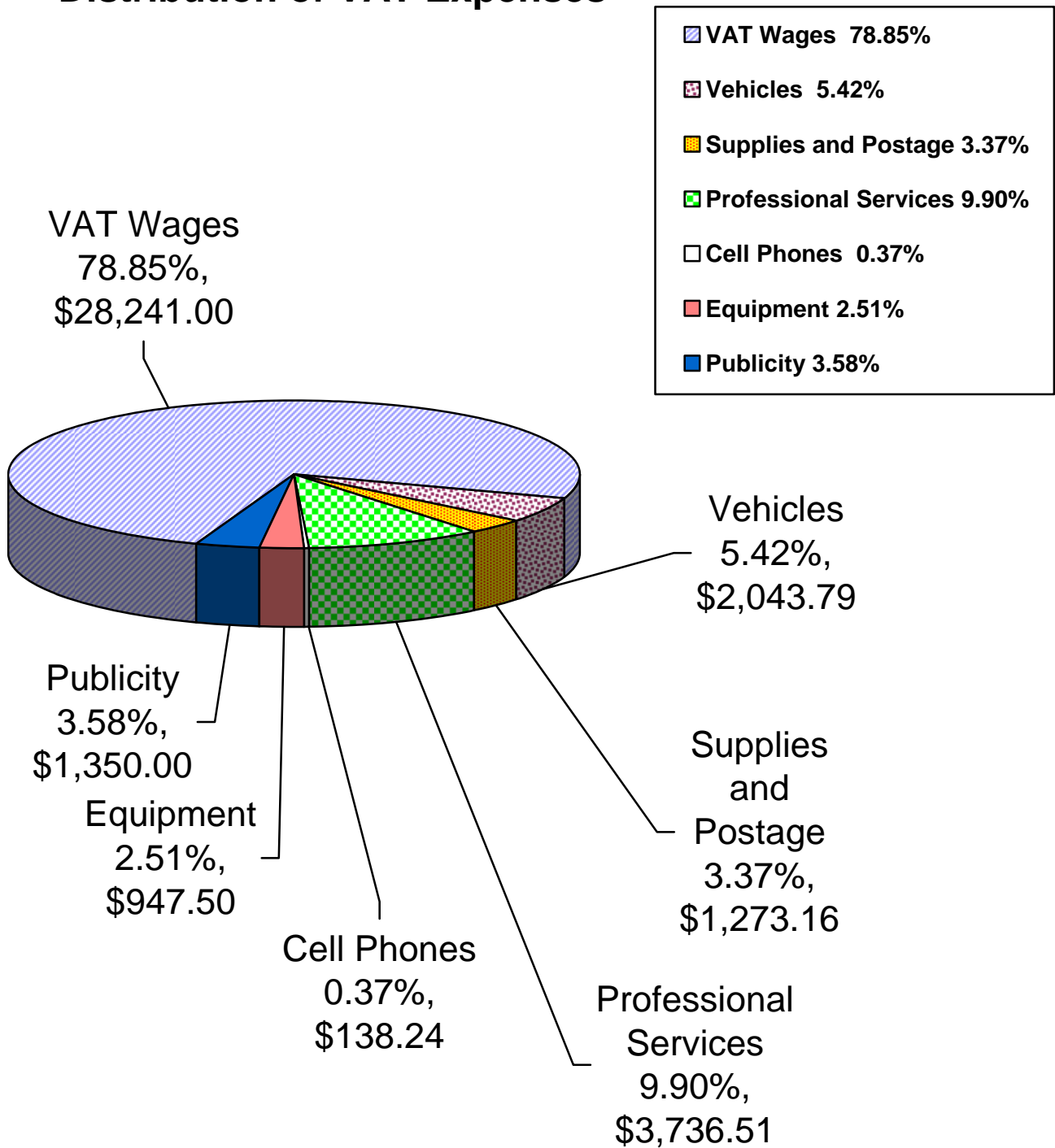
- 108 voters in 22 care facilities
- 50 off-site voters not in care facilities
- 46 on-site voters (including 4 ABMS voters)
- 17 HTML Ballots (14 in-county, 3 out-of-county) – 16 were verified as voted
- 2 Hospital patients (1 HTML and 1 standard ballot)
- **185** voters were assisted by phone



A total staff of 32 VAT members, including three volunteers, provided off-site assistance to 108 voters at 22 care facilities with a fairly even distribution throughout Multnomah County. Additional off-site assistance was provided to 50 voters plus two hospital patients. VAT members drove 1,155 miles or an average of 7.2 miles per off-site voter assisted.

Total cost of the VAT voting assistance phase in this election was **\$37,730.20**

Distribution of VAT Expenses



I. PERSONNEL

Thirty-two VAT members (including three volunteers) worked a total of 2227 hours during this election. Each team member received an average of 15 hours training. Additionally, most team members were trained to work in election areas other than VAT services.

A. Lead Coordinator — Rebecca Halverson

B. Support Coordinators — Lorene Lamp and Donna Knutson

C. VAT Members

Karissa Boyd	Samantha Luangsisongkham
Kelly Burton	Mae Marquand
Terry Chapman	Barbra McClendon
Meaghan Corwin	Doug Menely (volunteer)
Rosie DeGuzman	Cathy Pickles
Birhanu (Ben) Gessese	Linda Preisendorf
Dave Gomez	Judith Remington
Jim Gorter	Karen Richards
Rebecca Halverson	Bill Scheb
Tom Hoeft	Todd Sloan (volunteer)
Samuel Jackson	Annie Sorenson
Ernest Jones	Nick Tchijikov
John Jones	Harvey Thorstad (volunteer)
Donna Knutson	Norman Watanabe
Duane Knutson	Jayne Wong
Lorene Lamp	Jodell Wright

D. Language Assistants

1. After English, the most common languages in Multnomah County are Spanish, Russian, Cantonese, Mandarin, and Vietnamese. On Election Tuesday, interpreters for these languages were available in the Elections Office from 8:00 AM until 9:00 PM.
2. By prior arrangement Certified Sign Language translation services were used in care facility visits before Election Tuesday.
3. In addition, several VAT members were fluent enough in a second or third language to provide language related voter assistance.

II. TRAINING

Each VAT member received an average of fifteen hours training beginning Tuesday, October 24 from 9:00 AM until 4:30 PM and continuing in broken segments thereafter.

A. Housekeeping

1. Administer the “*Oath of Office for Vote-By-Mail Temporary Employees*”
2. Payroll documents, including W2 forms
3. Distribute “*Employee Handbook*”
4. Complete “*Personal Information Sheet*”
5. Time card explanation
6. Signing in and out of the office
7. Read “*Lunch & Breaks for Temps*”
8. Tour of the office

B. Videos

1. “*The Ten Commandments of Communicating with People with Disabilities*”
2. “*Multnomah County Employees’ Field Safety Guide*”
3. “*Vote by Mail*”

C. Written Materials

1. Accompanying documents with “*The Ten Commandments of Communicating with People with Disabilities*” video
2. “*How to Assist Voters with Disabilities*”

D. Forms

1. “VAT Log” (blue, pink for hospital voter)
2. “*Affidavit of Elector Requesting/Receiving Assistance*”
3. “*Intake form for voter requesting assistance for Voter Requesting Assistance*” (white)
4. “Voter Registration” card
5. “*Signature Stamp Attestation Form*” (white)
6. “VAT Visit Checklist”(gold)
7. “*HELP ME FORM*”

E. Off-Site Materials Package (*Black Folder Contents*)

1. Ballot Explanation Binder (gray) (League of Women Voters “*Easy to Read Voting Guide*”, three different versions)
2. Voter’s General Information Binder (green)
3. Emergency Procedures Binder (maroon)
4. Forms Binder (blue)
5. Sheet magnifier
6. Set of supplies (pen, pencils, tape, etc)
7. “*QUIET PLEASE – Voting in Progress*” sign
8. Set of official “*Voters’ Pamphlets*”
9. Set of League of Women “*Voters’ Guides*”

F. Auxiliary Aids and Services

1. Ask the voter “*How may I assist you?*” and offer options appropriate to the situation:
 - a. Reading the ballot
 - b. Marking the ballot as directed by the voter
 - c. Reading the provided official explanatory materials to the voter when requested (official “*Voters’ Pamphlet*” or League of Women Voters “*Voters’ Guide*”)
 - d. Language assistance
 - e. Signing for voters with hearing disabilities (only available by prior arrangement)
 - f. Use of magnifying tools for voters with visual impairments
 - g. Accessible Ballot Marking System (ABMS)
 - h. Hyper Text Markup Language (HTML) Ballot
 - i. Telesensory Machine
 - j. Signature template
2. Emphasize the need for tact, neutrality, privacy and confidentiality when assisting the voter
 - a. All assistance is to be provided by a “pair” of VAT members of differing party affiliation to guard against VAT member bias.
 - b. Stress that the VAT member is not to lead the voter – the VAT member’s role is “to be a pencil”.
 - c. It is not necessary to vote on every measure/candidate.
 - d. Do not rush the voter. There are no time limits.
 - e. Stress the need to keep confidential all information received about the voter and how his/her vote was cast.
 - f. Protect any documents containing the voter’s signature.
 - g. Provide a private and quiet place for the voter to work as best the environment allows.

- h. Caution about wearing clothing or accessories which may be construed as favoring a particular party, measure, or candidate.
- i. The voter may place the completed, sealed ballot envelope into the locked ballot box or hand it to a VAT member and observe as it is dropped into the ballot box.
- j. Alternatively, the voter may choose to keep the completed ballot and mail it directly to Multnomah County Elections.

G. Security and Safety

- 1. Obtaining employee photo ID card
- 2. How to use the card for entering the building, interior secured areas, and elevators.
- 3. Emphasize security and not allowing members of the general public to pass through doors when an ID card holder enters.
- 4. Accompanying documents with “*Multnomah County Employees’ Field Safety Guide*”

H. Driver Training

- 1. The driver drives the vehicle and is responsible for keeping track of fuel needs.
- 2. The accompanying team member is responsible for tracking mileage for each trip.
- 3. The accompanying team member is also responsible for carrying the cell phone, turning it on at the start of the trip, turning it off at the end of the trip, and returning it to the phone station for recharging.
- 4. Obtain copies of valid driver’s license for each VAT member who will be driving and have them sign the accompanying documentation. Verify that each license is current.
- 5. Provide instruction in parking and refueling the vehicles.
- 6. Each vehicle contains materials to be used in case of an accident, including a camera to help document the incident.

I. Cell Phones

- 1. Operation and hands-on practice
- 2. Phone numbers
- 3. Checking in and out

III. SERVICES PROVIDED

A. Locations

- 1. On-site
 - a. Multnomah County Elections Office (inside)
Includes telephone assistance, front counter, and the Helen Walton Room.
 - b. Multnomah County Elections Office (curb-side)
Members provide services to both the north and the east drive-up sites.
- 2. Off-site
 - a. Private residences
 - b. Care facilities (22)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Calaroga Terrace Care Center East Chestnut Lane Crestview Nursing/Rehab ElderPlace in Cully Gateway Care Glisan Care Center Gresham Manor Harvest Home Hollywood East (large apartment complex) Irvington Village 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marquis @ Centennial Marquis @ Piedmont Powell Valley Prestige Care Robison Jewish Rose Schnitzer Manor Rosemont Court Royal Anne St Anthony Village The Terrace (Laurelhurst) West Hills
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- c. Hospitals
 - i. Providence Hospital
 - ii. Legacy Hospital

B. Auxiliary Aids and Services

1. Language Assistance
 - a. Interpreters
 - i. Signing
 - ii. Languages (Spanish, Russian, Mandarin, Cantonese, Vietnamese)
 - b. Telelanguage
 - c. Speech to Speech Relay Service (STS) assistance
2. Reading Assistance
 - a. Reading of ballot to voter
 - b. The Secretary of State continued providing audio voter guides on cassette and CD. Working with the League of Women Voters of Oregon (LWVOR), Oregon Literacy, Oregon Advocacy Center and Talking Book and Braille Services we were able to provide and distribute audio versions of the LWVOR “*Easy to Read Voting Guide*” and regular “*Voting Guide*”.
 - c. Audio transcript of official “*Voters’ Pamphlet*” (127 tapes produced by Independent Living Resources)
 - d. Reading of official “*Voters’ Pamphlet*” or League of Women Voters “*Voters’ Guide*” to voter
 - e. Telesensory (26X) Vision Assistance Machine
This new equipment was purchased by Multnomah County Elections to aid voters with limited vision to read their ballot and other voting materials directly. This machine electronically magnifies reading materials up to 26 times without the distortion presented by standard magnifiers.
 - f. Voting materials in Braille were supplied by the Secretary of State.
3. Ballot marking assistance
 - a. ABMS was a new technological aid which allowed some voters with disabilities to mark their ballots independently and privately
 - b. Also new this election, HTML ballots were for voters with disabilities who access printed material or complete forms with the aid of technology
4. Replacement ballot assistance
5. “*Signature Stamp Attestation Form*” assistance
6. Voter registration card assistance

C. Scheduling

1. On-site
 - a. Multnomah County Elections Office (inside)
At least one team (minimum) available at all times beginning six weeks prior to the election.
 - b. Multnomah County Elections Office (curb-side)
2. Off-site
 - a. Private residences
 - b. Care facilities
The greatest amount of time was spent on scheduling our visits at care facilities. Prior arrangements were made at all, with telephone calls to the facility the day before to remind them of our visit the next day. Visits were almost always coordinated with visits to other care facilities or private residences within the same geographic area. Visits began October 25 and ended Election Friday. A few individual voters in care facilities

were provided VAT services on Election Monday and Tuesday but our primary focus those two days was to service voters on-site and those in private residences.

c. Hospitals

Visits to the hospital were only by request

d. Other

e. Telephone assistance

Depending on existing circumstances, sometimes the assistance was immediate. Other times, a call back was required.

IV. EXPENSES *

Expenses of \$37,730.20 were incurred between October 11, 2006 and November 7, 2006.

A. Wages - \$28,241.00

* Wages for post election analysis/evaluation included.

Thirty-two VAT members worked a total of 2227 hours during this election for a total expense of \$28,241.00 in wages. Each team member received approximately fifteen hours of training.

1. Coordinator(s)

a. Total time – 188.5 hours; \$2,813.00

b. Regular time – 166 hours

c. Overtime – 22.5 hours

2. VAT Members (\$11.35/hour - \$11.70/hour with benefits)

a. Total time – 2,038.5 hours; \$23,850.45

b. Regular time – 1,928.5 hours

c. Overtime – 110 hours

B. Professional Services - \$3,736.51

1. Language Assistance - \$3,165.01

a. Interpreters –

i. Signing - \$1,040.00

ii. Spanish, Vietnamese, Russian, Cantonese, Mandarin - \$2,112.50

b. Telelanguage service - \$12.51 (one telephone call)

2. Audio tapes (127) of official “Voters’ Pamphlet” produced by Independent Living Resources - \$571.50

C. Vehicles - \$2,043.79

The five vehicles assigned to VAT were used to transport VAT team members to care facilities and individual assistance calls. In addition, the vehicles made some non-VAT trips to pick up ballot boxes from libraries and 24-hour ballot drop box sites. Four of the five vehicles were rented from Enterprise Rent-A-Car. From October 11, 2006 to November 7, 2006, VAT vehicles logged 1,155 miles or an average of 7.2 miles per off-site voter assistance call.

D. Supplies and Postage - \$1,273.16

\$1,264.43 was spent on office expenses and supplies, including pens, pencils, paper (tablets and copy paper), copying materials, binders, folders, clipboards, registration cards, ballot boxes, voter privacy booths and other miscellaneous items.

\$8.73 was spent on postage expenses including stamps and Click N Ship service to transport ballots to other counties.

E. Equipment - \$947.50

1. Telesensory (26X) Vision Assistance Machine

\$1895.00 was spent on this machine which allowed some voters with vision problems to read their ballots and supporting material directly. The cost is allocated evenly

between Election and Registration VAT activities. This equipment will be used in future elections and for voter registration.

2. Accessible Ballot Marking System (ABMS)

The actual cost of this piece of equipment was paid by the Secretary of State using HAVA funds. Its installation, which cost \$997.90, was also paid by the Secretary of State using HAVA funds.

F. Cell Phones - \$138.24

A total of eight cell phones were reserved for VAT use, primarily for teams in the field to communicate with the VAT office and with teams at other sites.

G. Publicity - \$1,350.00

A video demonstrating the Elections Building Accessibility Remodel was produced by Metro East Community Media. Prior to the November 7 General Election, it was played approximately 50 times with the potential of reaching over 200,000 households.

H. IT Services - \$0

We were not charged for IT Services, although we did install three additional work stations.

V. SUMMARY

Data in 2005 found 106,913 (23.5%) Multnomah County residents aged 18 and older described themselves as a person with a disability. (See Addendum) These residents were not institutionalized.

Similar data collected in 2001 found 132,230 (31.7%) Multnomah County residents in the same age range as having a disability. However, in 2001 the following additional question was posed to participants: *“Because of any impairment or health problem, do you have any trouble learning, remembering, or concentrating?”* Since Multnomah County Elections considers cognitive impairment relevant to voting, this 31.7% statistic is important.

Although this data was reported for residents, some of whom probably were not citizens, it remains impressive in light of the fact it did not include those residents who are institutionalized. Obviously, there are many Multnomah County citizens in need of our services.

As Commissioner Maria Rojo de Steffey asked in her *“All About Multnomah County Seniors”* Winter 2006 newsletter, *“As we grow older, will our community be ready for us? The issue is: How do we engage our growing older population to continue active participation in our communities?”*

Hopefully, this VAT Report has presented a clear insight to the efforts taken by Multnomah County Elections to stay abreast of the ever changing landscape of the elections process. In all the decisions we make, the voter’s interest remains our focus. We assisted voters who would otherwise have fallen through the cracks. One voter in a wheel chair living at a care facility said she had not voted since 1945 (when she left Oregon) and had given up hope of ever being able to vote again.

The cost is high but what is the cost to society if the votes of these citizens are not included? At what point would you, the reader, allow someone else to make the decision that your vote does not count?