

Thank you for inviting me to be here before you. I am a behind-the-scene person and this is very new to me. I really just happened to be in the wrong office at the right time when Allan called.

My name is Annie Connole.

In the election of November 1975, when I was invited to be an election officer, I became a member of the election family,. The following year, I received a call from the General Registrar, Peggy Wilkerson, and began working as a part-time assistant registrar and also worked in the Registrar's office during the months prior to the elections. Election-day I would be back at the Precinct. I became Chief Election Officer in 1978 and enjoyed my many, many elections until 1991, when our then current General Registrar, Charlotte Cleary, approached me and asked if I would be the custodian for our newly purchased Shouptronic 1242 DRE voting machines. It was a match made in heaven. I had enjoyed my job before but this was where I belonged.

Looking back over the years, I believe I was out in the field for over 32 elections. My new career has logged approximately 30 elections. I tried to do a manual count as to how many elections and after doing it at least twice, am glad that we are not doing paper ballot counting. Please don't add 32 plus 30 to get 62 years just elections. This was a conservative count. There were multiple elections in the years between 1975 and the present. We already have had two elections in 2004.

I am always surprised to learn some other States do not have elections every year. Virginia has a General or a General and Special Election every year. We also have primaries and a few special elections in between the general elections which translate into 2 or 3 elections per year. The machines served us well. We never had a recall. I heard yesterday about the redundancy failing and a discussion of which of the figures are taken as the true figure. When the redundancy detects that the figures just don't add up, the equipment shuts down. The vote is not lost as it is not cast. The voter is put at another machine to vote. We were always able to retrieve the results from either the machine or the cartridge by doing a technician service code to do a "dump". There was so very few of these, that I always prayed that I was correctly retrieving the results. No problem.

The 1242s could be lowered to accommodate those who were in a wheelchair or not tall enough to reach the top of the full faced ballot or the write-in slot. But it was time to move on to newer equipment. We wanted equipment that would enable those with other types of disabilities to vote unassisted. HAVA came onto the scene and has given a little nudge. The touch screen appears to be the answer. They are light-weight and easy to transport to enable curbside voting. They are user friendly. Older persons (which I am proud to admit that I fall in that category) do not have a hard time voting on them. They are excited after voting exclaiming "is that all there is to it?"

If Brit is on the phone, I would like to say "hi". I became one of his groupies. I am pleased and honored to have been able to go to Richmond almost every time a new machine was being tested to be certified in the State of Virginia. Brit was there running

the vendors through their paces. It was great to be able to see so many ideas and models of voting equipment. Some were very good, some good and some not worth mentioning. I was fortunate to see them and able to recommend the machine we are now using to our Electoral Board.

Arlington's Electoral Board and the current Registrar, Linda Lindberg, are among the best. They try to educate the public about the voting process and the equipment being used. We run open, honest elections and welcome groups to come observe a demonstration of the election process. Fred Berghoefer, Secretary of the EB, has gone the extra mile and invited the press. It was an opportunity for them to be able to see the equipment and better understand how it works. I guess it was not newsworthy so we were stood up.

There is a group wanting to attend the L & A testing of the equipment. An invitation has been sent to that group, the candidates, and anyone else who may be interested, to attend a demonstration of the process. It is scheduled for Wednesday, September 29th. It will be an opportunity to answer any questions. They will still be able to attend an actual certification of the machines being used in the election.

The SBE of Virginia does require proofs of the ballot be sent to them for approval. They also put out guidelines for training the election officers. Once our ballot is approved, it is installed in the voting machines to be used in the election. Each and every machine is tested during certification. The protective count number and number of the seal used are then recorded on the Statement of Results (SOR) and initialed by two of the custodians present. This SOR becomes part of the documentation that the election officers must complete the day of the election. The machines are then stored and locked in carts used to transport them to the precincts.

There should be documentation as described above. Although there should be guidelines, it must be taken into consideration that all equipment is not the same and cannot be under a blanket one. It would be beneficial to have the users of the different voting systems submit what their procedures are and from those reports create the guidelines. They should include (specific to each type of similar machine) the programming of the ballot; installation of the ballot, testing, documenting and securing the machines. It is also important to have the machines properly delivered and possibly securing in those polling places that may potentially have problems.

We do not modem in our results at the end of the election. They are called in; the results posted on the door of the polling location; the supplies are then brought back to headquarters. The members of the Electoral Board, together with staff, canvass the results the following day. In all the years I have been involved with this part of the process, we have had three observers and they did not stay for the whole thing.

My own feelings about paper verification are "if it isn't broken, don't repair it". As a voting machine technician, I have gotten rid of the word "fix". The voter has the opportunity of verifying what selections are made prior to touching the VOTE button on

the screen. I feel my vote is counted and hope they will realize that their vote is counted also.

It is very important to emphasize training of the election officers. They are the ones who will run the precinct election. Machines cannot do it alone, they need their human counterpart. Prior demonstration of equipment at libraries, civic meetings, retirement homes, schools will help to make the public more comfortable. Properly setting up polling rooms to ensure privacy and training officers how to conduct the election will help..

We train, we test, we document, we demonstrate equipment, and we have well run elections in Arlington.

Thank you.