

Photo ID now required for Voting in Texas

Texas Secretary of State John Steen announced that photo identification will now be required when voting in Texas elections. His announcement follows a decision by the U.S. Supreme Court that cleared the way for photo ID requirements in Texas, originally passed by the Texas Legislature in 2011, to take effect.

A voter will be required to show one of the following forms of photo identification at the polling location before the voter will be permitted to cast a vote:

- Texas driver license issued by the Texas Dept. of Public Safety (DPS)
- Texas Election Identification Certificate issued by DPS
- Texas personal identification card issued by DPS
- Texas concealed handgun license issued by DPS
- United States military identification card containing the person's photograph
- United States citizenship certificate containing the person's photograph
- United States passport

With the exception of the U.S. citizenship certificate, the identification must be current or have expired no more than 60 days before being presented at the polling place.

Election identification certificates are now available only for voters who do not already have a required form of photo identification. There is no fee for the certificate. Information on how to obtain an election identification certificate can be found at www.dps.texas.gov.

You may also contact DPS by telephone at (512) 424-2600.

To review frequently asked questions and answers, visit www.votetexas.gov.

Texas Secretary of State John Steen said his office is working to educate the public before the November election to make the transition to the photo ID requirement as smooth as possible. The state office will air television commercials, YouTube videos and include a new website that should be able to answer many questions.

Keith Ingram, director of the elections division for the state, said if a name is "substantially similar" to the name on the registered voters list, then poll workers can note the name and allow the person to vote.

Voters who do not show proof of identity will be

allowed to vote by provisional ballot. Refusing to show ID is not valid ground for casting a provisional ballot, however "and it is likely that the voter's ballot will be rejected by the ballot board."

To have the provisional ballot count, the voter will have to visit their voter registrar's office within six calendar days of the election to either present a photo ID or submit a temporary affidavit attesting that he or she does not have any of the required photo IDs.

A permanent exemption is available for voters with documented disabilities.

Affidavits are available to voters who have a religious objection to being photographed and for voters who do not have any photo identification as a result of certain natural disasters.

In general, it is easier and cheaper to change a name on the voter registration records to match a driver's license or other identification.

The photo identification requirement does not have an address matching requirement, nor does it change the process for voting by mail. And while voter certificates (the cards sent to voters in the mail) will no longer be necessary to vote, they do contain precinct information, so officials recommend voters hang onto them and bring them to the polls.

October 7 is the last day to register or make changes for the November election. Early voting begins October 21. The November ballot for local voters will be the Texas Constitution amendments.

If there are any questions, please feel free to call County Clerk Mary Grim at 453-2631 or Tax A/C Josie Dean at 453-2614.

Texans to vote on water funding vehicle

As the drought continues and water resources dwindle in Coke County and across the state, Texans will have the chance to vote in November on a constitutional amendment to provide funding to priority water projects.

Proposition 6, which was established by Senate Joint Resolution 1 (SJR 1) during the 83rd Texas Legislature, is up for a statewide vote on Nov. 5.

"Water is critical for our growing state. We need it to grow our food and maintain our cities and households. But as those resources grow scarce, Texas needs a way to prioritize our water infrastructure projects," said John Ross Copeland, president of Coke-Sterling County Farm Bureau.

The amendment would create the State Water Implementation Fund for Texas and State Water Implementation Revenue Fund for Texas. Proposition 6 would allow state money to be allocated to priority water projects outlined in the state water plan.

"No matter where you live, water is an important resource, and we need a way to be sure the areas that need it most can get enough," John Ross Copeland said. "Passing Proposition 6 will ensure our state's water security through whatever the future brings."

Coke County Retired Teachers Association update

The Coke County Retired Teachers Association convened at noon, September 16, 2013, for a luncheon, fellowship and a business session. The meeting was held at the Fellowship Hall of the First Baptist Church in Bronte.

Bill Hood gave the invocation preceding the meal.

Gary Smith, president, presided at the business session. He called on superintendent Alan



State Representative Visits Coke County! *State Representative Drew Darby visits with approximately 25 constituents in the Coke County Commissioners Courtroom in Robert Lee last week during a town hall meeting.*

Richey of the Bronte ISD. He told of the beginning of school events and reported on good ratings on student test scores.

Judy Gibbs, Information/Protective Services Chairman, alerted members to check out medical and hospital charges for insurance purposes.

In other business, the members voted to fund the book project. They also voted to send a memorial for Kenneth Rasco to the Coke County Food Bank.

Several members, including Gary Smith, Brenda Smith, and Janet Wommack, plan to attend the District XV Fall

Conference on September 26, 2013 in Brownwood.

The next meeting of Coke County RTA will be October 26, 2013. Members attending were: Christie Bagwell, Wanda Barbee, Jane Battle, Gayle Bolding, Jamie Boren, Wanda Brewer, Judy Gibbs, Ann Hamilton, Brenda Hines, Bill Hood, Rhonda Hood, Charlotte Jackson, Sug Lawhon, Melba Mauldin, Kathy McCown, Judy McGlothlin, Sheri Millican, Beth Prather, Leva Self, Gerald Sandusky, Brenda Smith, Gary Smith, Janet Wommack, Lee Wommack. Guests were: Marilyn Burns and Alan Richey.

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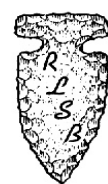
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