Brittiny Long

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Election Day Story

The day American citizens have been anticipating for, Election Day. On November 6, 2012 all over the country voters turned out to the polls to cast their vote and make their choice on who would be the next President of the United States.

Always ready President Barack Obama prepared two speeches for Tuesday nights speech, in the end he only need one, the winning speech. All the hard work, volunteer hours, money and campaigning Americans put into this election ended with a big win for President Obama.

When it came to the actual voting, Virginia played a large part in this election. It came close and as always it came down to the voters and what they believed in. To be able to cast a vote there are a couple rules that voters need to know about.

Recently there has been a lot of buzzing about the new voter id laws. The acceptable forms of id to vote include: a Virginia voter registration card, a valid Virginia driver’s license, a military id, any federal VA state or local government issued id, a employer issued photo id card, a concealed handgun permit, a valid student id issued by any institution of high education in the Commonwealth of Virginia, current utility bill, bank statement, government check or paycheck indicating the name and address of the voter and a social security card.

One local place to vote in Radford was the Recreational Center. It was reported that students who were showing their student ids to vote were being turned away. Tracey Howard, who works for the Radford City Registrars Office, stated that the mistake had been corrected early that day.

According to Howard, one of the precinct poll workers was misinformed. Certain students that registered on campus are treated as a HAVA voter; HAVA stands for to Help America Vote Act. Those voters are required to have a certain form of id at the polling. Because of this there was duel list so the poll worker was not correctly informed about the situation.

“We have done what we can do to fix that,” said Howard.

If a voter showed up to the polls without the proper voting id then they would have to vote with a provisional ballot. Once a voter fills out a provisional ballot they then have until Friday, November 9 at noon to get it to their local election official. One issue that is large in the Montgomery County is college students and voting. If the student is not registered in the county then they have to vote with an absentee ballot.

Any person who has to vote absentee would have to apply for a ballot by 5 p.m. of the Tuesday before the election. Once a voter has their ballot filled out they would then have until 7 p.m. on Election Day for the Electoral Board to receive it. Howard had a very busy day on Tuesday with the office flooded with phone calls.

All the local polling places have to call and check in with Howard at 10 a.m., 3 p.m. and 7p.m. They call and report the voter turnouts and any issues they may be having. Howard was expecting a very high turnout rate but was shocked at how fast the polls were filling up.

“We try to get them to call every two hours but that has gone out the window,” said Howard. By noon he estimated that they probably had about a 36% turnout rate. Howard was expecting an overall turnout rate around 75% for the day.

One local voter, Katie McCoy was not just at the polls to vote. McCoy had been at the polls since 6 a.m. she said to inform people about voting. She works with the non-partisan, nonprofit organization Common Cause. The goal of the organization is to empower members, supporters and just the general public to step up and take action on critical issues to strengthen our democracy.

It was McCoy’s first time voting and she was not too happy she did not know who to vote for. “I mean I do know who I am going to vote for but I would rather it be two different people,” said McCoy. She believes that it is important to vote because it is important to get our voices heard; making a strong point that women especially should vote because of what they had to go through to get the right to vote. McCoy did state that she was tired of hearing the entire negatives in the election.

Another local voter who would agree with McCoy was Mike Dunn. Proud voter since 1976, Dunn stated that he votes because it is his “democratic responsibility.” He was glad that he voted and the election was coming to an end; all of the political ads and calls had become a burden for him. Jokingly he stated he would have been glad to vote two months ago.

“I think that is part of the election process, you support whoever wins and hopefully both parties work together for the common good,” said Dunn when asked how he felt if his candidate did not win.

In the end, President Obama pulled out with the win. According to the State Board of Election website the race was close, but Virginia went Democrat with 50.57% for President Obama. Giving the President over 1.8 million votes in Virginia. Republican Mitt Romney had over 1.7 million votes in Virginia giving him only 47.85% of votes.

When it came down to the local result for the President candidates, only a small percentage stood between President Obama and Romney. Republican Romney had around 20,006 votes and President Obama had around 19,903 votes. While President Obama barely missed the win in Montgomery County, he still pulled the win for Virginia.

Not only was the Presidential Election on the ballots. Candidates for the U.S. Senate included Republican George F. Allen and Democrat Timothy M. Kaine. The Democrats came with another win as Kain had over 1.9 million votes where as Allen received over 1.7 million votes.

Also on the ballot was the voting for members of the House of Representatives. The local district, District 09 was not so much a close race. Republican H. Morgan Griffith stepped out with the win with about 183,023 votes. Democrat candidate Anthony J. Flaccavento only received around 115,718 votes.

Some win and some lose. This election was a close one and with that comes social media outrage.