

GeoElections News

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The 12th Annual GeoElections User's Conference – December 2013

The challenges of 2012 redistricting, reprecincting, and a Presidential election no longer in the rear view mirror but for lessons learned, the topics discussed at the 12th Annual GeoElections Conference focused upon continued improvements in the use and interoperability of GeoElections and Voter Focus. An enthusiastic group of attendees fired off questions and shared suggestions on methods for expanding the uses of their GeoElections data bases to increase benefits for the voting public.

Tamara Holmes, Customer Support Team Member and Trainer with VR Systems, Inc. and Rose Winterton, Manager of Product Management, CDLI with Pitney Bowes Software, Inc. (PBSI) were the two guest speakers on the agenda this year.



Tamara Holmes and Ken Tozier conducted a workshop addressing issues pertaining to importing dictionaries and business points. Business Points are addresses managed in the GeoElections database as GeoPoints and can be generated from the County Property Appraiser's parcel data using parcel use codes to distinguish residential addresses from non-residential addresses. Once imported to the voter registration database, those addresses identified as non-residential can be used to flag registrations to those addresses for further research before acceptance.

Rose Winterton spoke of the ongoing commitment PBSI has focused upon regards feature enhancements to MapInfo Professional meeting the demands of both worldwide and US clients. Rose provided our attendees with an excellent road map of future enhancements with a time table for their expected delivery. One of the slides illustrated an experimental ribbon for MI Pro consistent with the other popular desktop applications. Rose addressed numerous questions in response to her presentation.

Three of the most detailed issues discussed presented by the ICW staff centered on the use of business points based upon the contents of the Property Appraiser's Parcel data, the construction of GeoPackager using ProViewer 9.5 or any subsequent version going forward, currently version 12.00, and a new module to GeoElections designed to provide a comprehensive source of information about polling places for elections planners.

As to business points, both statute and the Florida Division of Elections' document, "Voter Residency Guidelines For Florida" were reviewed to provide a perspective on the utility of using the data from a respective counties Property Appraiser.

Regards GeoPackager, workspaces, text layers, Enlayers, MapMaker, etc. were sub-topics in the larger GeoPackager discussion

On the topic of a polling place information module, all agreed to the value added with this feature and suggested this undertaking should include dialog with their voter registration vendor.

A great conference thanks to the attendees.

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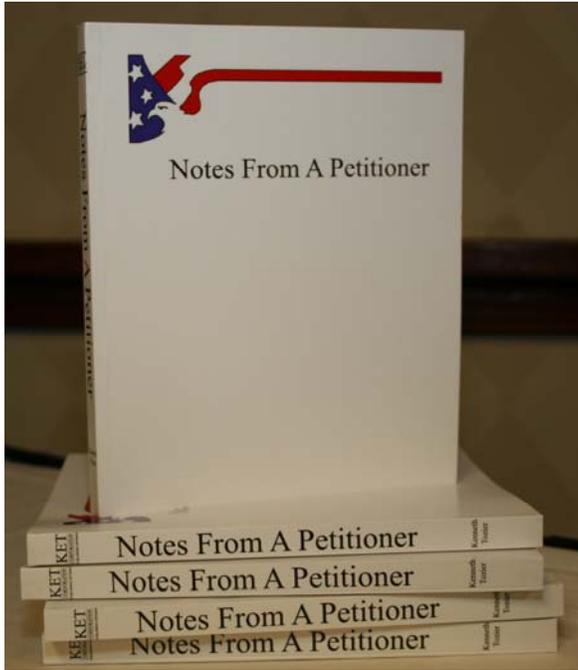
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NOTES FROM A PETITIONER – 1st Edition Released at the 12th Annual GeoElections Conference

The 1st Edition of the long awaited release of this chronicle authored by Ken Tozier and published by the Publishing Division of KET, Corp., Notes From A Petitioner was distributed to attendees at the Conference. Ken worked on this manuscript over a period of nine years. While the majority of the manuscript was assembled during 2004 and 2005, frequent reviews by the author to adjust and polish the work have occurred over the intervening years.



The First Amendment to the United States Constitution is part of the Bill of Rights. The amendment states, “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to *petition the Government for a redress of grievances*” (emphasis added). Thus begins the Foreword written by Gregg Darrow Thomas, Esq.

This is a story based upon fact chronicled by newspaper, television, and radio accounts of the events that started with the simple announcement of a City Council member’s intent to resign his office to run for Mayor, leaving a two year vacancy. The City Charter adopted in 1978 gave the Council authority to appoint someone to fill the vacancy for the balance of the term.

“Two years is too long. The emergency power of

interim appointments makes tremendous sense, but two years? Despite the disagreement...council set a determined course to appoint and then did everything in their power to halt the voice of the electors,” wrote the author. It is remarkable to read the steps which this group of small town politicians would go to thwart the Petitioner and in so doing deny the very people who had elected them the right to elect a replacement. The state of New Hampshire replaces 424 legislatures every 2 years.

Had these politicians succeeded they likely would have reached into their circle of cronies to appoint a rubber stamp for their agenda, serving the few and the expense of the many. So a citizen is transformed by historic events to become the Petitioner and follow his beliefs to success and failure but always with the best interests of the citizenry at heart.

The enthusiasm of the recipients was marked by the line they formed to have their respective copies signed by the author. If you are so fortunate as to obtain a copy, enjoy the read.



Notes From A Petitioner owes a special thanks to the dedicated hard working elections officials who for a brief measure are the keepers of democracy while tending the ballot box.

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