**November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election**

Nothing will stop democracy in America, not raging fires, not even a global COVID-19 pandemic! Every eligible United States citizen will have the opportunity to vote in the November 3, 2020 Presidential General Election.

 First, voters should verify their voter registration at [www.voterstatus.sos.ca.gov](http://www.voterstatus.sos.ca.gov) or [www.sbcvote.us](http://www.sbcvote.us). Voters should be sure their current residential address or mailing address is on file. Voters can update their voter registration at [www.registertovote.ca.gov](http://www.registertovote.ca.gov). Eligible citizens can register to vote at [www.registertovote.ca.gov](http://www.registertovote.ca.gov).

 San Benito County voters’, along with election workers’ safety, is of paramount importance; therefore, additional health precautions will be in effect. California voters will automatically receive a ballot in the mail. If a voter does not receive their ballot by October 12, 2020, they should immediately contact our office at 831-636-4016.

We urge voters to vote the ballot mailed to them and return it through one of the 6 secure drop boxes located throughout the county. Drop boxes will be open beginning October 5, 2020 and up to 8:00 pm on Election Day. While election officials cannot control the postal service, election officials do control the drop boxes. As the San Benito County Clerk/Registrar of Voters, I recommend that voters utilize a drop box to return their ballot. For the convenience of voters, we have added more drop boxes. A list of all drop box locations will be mailed with the ballots.

Voters can mail their ballot (no postage required) back to the San Benito County Elections office. It is a legal requirement that a mailed voted ballot envelope have a postmark showing no later than Tuesday, November 3, 2020 (election day). The Postal Service advises voters should deposit their ballots in the mail no later than October 27, 2020 to ensure that the envelope timely reaches the elections office.

It is a legal requirement that the signature on every returned voted ballot envelope be compared to the signature on the voter’s registration card. If a voter thinks that their signature has changed over time, they should contact the San Benito County Elections Office at 831-636-4016 or re-register online at [www.registertovote.ca.gov](http://www.registertovote.ca.gov). The DMV signature may be utilized with online voter registration.

 If additional services including language assistance, or a replacement ballot are required, San Benito County will provide approximately 4 locations for in-person voting opportunities. These In-Person Polling Places will be open on Saturday, October 31, 2020; Sunday, November 1, 2020; Monday, November 2, 2020 and Election Day Tuesday, November 3, 2020. If you go to an In-Person Polling Place, you will be asked to wear a mask and you may have to wait in line. A list of all In-Person Polling Places and Drop Boxes will be printed in the County Voter Information Guide which will be mailed in early October and will be available on the County website.

 The Elections’ office, located at 440 Fifth Street, Hollister, is also open for voting beginning Monday, October 5, 2020, through election day. All services are provided here so that voters can vote in person and beat the crowds!

 Voters can track their ballot, by requesting this service at [www.WheresMyBallot.sos.ca.gov](http://www.WheresMyBallot.sos.ca.gov) to receive automatic email, text or voice call notifications about their ballot. For the November election, all voters may request and receive a Remote Accessible Vote by Mail ballot. To request this service, voters should contact our office at 831-636-4016.

 Part time jobs are available. In-Person Polling Place workers are needed for the four day in-person voting period. Those interested in working as a poll worker should call (831) 636-4016 or go to [www.sbcvote.us](http://www.sbcvote.us) to apply on-line.

 All voters should make a safe voting plan. The San Benito County Clerk’s office is here to answer questions or provide assistance. We can be reached at CClerk@cosb.us or call (831) 636-4016.

 Follow us @SBCVOTE on Facebook and Twitter.

This editorial was written by Joe Paul Gonzalez, San Benito County Auditor-Recorder-Clerk/Registrar of Voters. He has 20 years of service in the department and, for the past 14 years has served as County Auditor-Recorder-Clerk/Registrar of Voters.