

The Winds of Change...Be Prepared!

By Corinne M. Lengel, Lincoln County Clerk

Residents will see some exciting changes at the Lincoln County Clerk's office over the summer months, and it's safe to say that they may cause some of you a little heartburn. Before you grab the antacid, please let me explain. Our motto throughout the next few weeks is that of the faithful Boy Scout: Be Prepared!

First, ballots will be mailed to **all** active, registered voters the first week of June. Unaffiliated voters have always had the opportunity to vote in the primaries, but the passage of Proposition 108 in 2016 mandated that the clerk's office send ballots to them without their declaring a party. Although they will receive two blank ballots in their envelope, unaffiliated voters may **vote and return** only one; otherwise, neither will count. If you are unaffiliated and just want to be left alone, the best thing for you to do is shred or otherwise destroy both ballots when you get them, and go take a nap—or eat a cookie. If you don't receive a ballot for some reason, contact our office so we can find out why you didn't. Update your registration at www.govotecolorado.gov.

Secondly, there will be a new ballot drop-box at the Limon Town Hall! The plan is to have it in place before the primary election, but there is a lot to do, so please be patient. I owe a debt of gratitude to Dave Stone, Greg Tacha, James Martin, and several town employees, as I have enlisted their help and expertise to make sure the box is secure as well as functional.

Lastly, the Colorado Department of Revenue will implement the statewide motor vehicle system known as DRIVES on August 6. The current CSTAR system has been around since the dinosaur age (okay, not really, but it *has* gotten pretty prehistoric), so it's high time for an upgrade. Unfortunately, this means that county residents will be unable to complete motor vehicle transactions during the first three days of August. If that doesn't scare you enough, **ALL** driver's license services statewide will be closed August 2nd and 3rd to integrate the systems before everything "goes live." There are always a few hiccups and obstacles in the road with a computer conversion, but we hope that crossed fingers and the power of positive thinking will help make it go more smoothly. And we know we can count on your support.

What this means for county residents is actually pretty simple:

- Be prepared to receive two ballots if you are registered as unaffiliated
- Be prepared to return only one voted ballot, not two
- Be prepared to renew your license plates early (don't let them expire)
- Be prepared to title and license your new (or new to you) vehicle or trailer before the end of July—or wait until after August 6
- Be prepared to renew your driver's license (or set an appointment to take Junior in for his/her permit, license, drive test, etc.) prior to August 2
- Be prepared to cut staff a little slack once we get our new system (we want to make sure everything is right, and it might take us a little longer to finish your transactions)
- Be prepared for more updates in the newspaper and on our website, Twitter, and Facebook pages

We will do our best to keep you informed, to make you feel less frustrated, and to do all we can to make the transition effortless, but in turn, I ask for your understanding and cooperation as well. As long as we are prepared and know what's coming, we can conquer the winds of change together. Most of the time those winds blow in something far more positive, and accepting that is often half the battle! 😊