

MARICOPA COUNTY ELECTIONS VOTE-BY-MAIL IN SMITHSONIAN



Phoenix, AZ, April 5, 2000 - On Monday, April 3, 2000, The Year 2000 Computerworld Smithsonian Collection was formally presented to the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History. And the Maricopa County Elections Department's Vote-By-Mail officially became a part of that Permanent Research Collection on Information Technology.

"The 444 Laureates listed here are leading one of the most remarkable revolutions in history. They have been nominated by the members of The Chairman's Committee for inclusion in the 2000 Computerworld Smithsonian Collection as examples of how information technology is being used to improve society," according to the event's front page program.

"The Laureates in this year's Collection are utilizing new information age tools to extend the benefits of technology to society," said Dan Morrow, Executive Director of the Computerworld Smithsonian Awards Program.

The Maricopa County Elections Department's Vote-By-Mail was placed in nomination by Michael Dell, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Dell Computer Corporation, for the Government & Non-Profit Organizations category. Dell Computer Corporation nominated twenty-two organizations and institutions to be considered for induction. The Maricopa County Elections Department was one of the four finalists. In addition to Maricopa County the other three nominated by Dell were Exxon Mobil Corporation for Strategy to Reduce TCO, Cornell Theory Center/Cornell University for AC3, and Penn State University for Lion-X Cluster. Thirty-eight states and twenty-one countries were represented.

In Maricopa County, the 5th largest county in the United States, voters have been encouraged to request mail-in ballots by phone, mail, internet, or walk-in, increasing overall voter participation as mail-in ballots grow to account for a third of the total of ballots cast.

Maricopa County created and maintains a state of the art system for conducting the Vote-By-Mail process. Built into this vote-technology is the ability to access the voter registration database established by the county, to research a voter requesting an early ballot, whether it be a request made by phone, internet, mail, or walk-in, ascertain their qualification status, determine the ballot type necessary and set a code on that voter's record that signals a mailer packet to be generated: all in one

step. All of this, coupled with other technology features such as bar-coding, enables the department to efficiently and accurately track, process, and return the voter's ballot - thus keeping in line with the department's mission and vision to serve the ever-growing voter population base.

"The primary source material submitted by the Maricopa County Recorder, Helen Purcell, and the Elections Department will enrich the National Museum of American History's growing collection on the history of information technology, and contribute significantly to the museum's on-going efforts to chronicle the Information Age," said Spencer R. Crew, Director of the National Museum of American History. The museum is part of the Smithsonian Institution, founded in 1846, which is a complex of 16 museums, 7 research facilities and the National Zoo.

Karen Osborne, Elections Director; Reynaldo Valenzuela, Early Voting Supervisor, and John Stewart, Information Systems Consultant, of the staff from the Maricopa County Elections Department attended the Presentation Ceremony.

The presentation included 10 categories: Business and Related Services, Education and Academia, Environment, Energy and Agriculture, Finance, Insurance and Real Estate, Government and Non Profit Organizations, Manufacturing, Media, Arts and Entertainment, Medicine, Science, and Transportation.

Osborne, Valenzuela, and Stewart have returned to Phoenix and will present the Medal to Maricopa County Recorder Helen Purcell in a special ceremony at the Recorder's Office, 111 South Third Avenue, Phoenix, on Thursday, April 6, 2000, at 10:00 am.

Case Studies from the 2000 Computerworld Smithsonian Collection should be available at http://www.cwhonors.org/Search/his_4a_detail.asp?id=3839, the official Internet Site of the Computerworld Smithsonian Program, where the entire collection is available to scholars, researchers and the general public worldwide.