

Day 163 | Saturday, 29 August 2020

COVID – 19 Update – as of 8-27-2020 at 3PM there were 352 cases in the county with 127 in battalion 3 and now 158 cases in battalion 1 (north east portion).

The Mouse is sharing an article that was in the Post Journal about the upcoming election because she believes it is good information for all of us.

“Commissioners Are Predicting Strong Election Turnout” by Natasha Matteliano

“The Chautauqua County Board of Elections is expecting a good portion of votes to be cast this election year via absentee ballots.

“The county currently has received 3,264 absentee ballot applications. This is compared to nearly 5,000 absentee ballots that were cast in the last presidential election, and with nearly two and a half months until the general election.

“The county currently has 77,127 active voter registrants.

‘We expect the turn out this year to be about 70% of the total voters, which is normal for the presidential cycle’, said Brian Abram, county Republican election commissioner. ‘Absentee voters this year will no doubt make up about 10 to 12% of the total vote, or higher.’

“Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, use of Mail in voting is expected to increase. To obtain an absentee ballot in New York, voters are required to provide an excuse, with COVID-19 concerns now considered a valid excuse for the 2020 general election.

“The voter may return the ballot in person or by mail.

“The Board of Elections will begin mailing ballots Friday, September 18th. The board recommends absentee ballot applications be sent in as soon as possible but postmarked or delivered to the Board of Elections no later than October 27, seven days before any election.

“When it comes to returning the ballots the County Board of Elections said: *‘The last possible day to return a ballot by mail, while not recommended, is postmarked the day before the election postmark and the ballot must be*

received at the elections office no later than November 10, seven days following the election.'

"Added Norman P. Greene County Democratic election commissioner. 'Due to concerns over Coronavirus pandemic, voters are encouraged to vote by mail this year or vote early at our early voting sites ahead of Election Day on November 3rd.'

"Voters who are concerned about voting in person due to COVID-19 should mark off temporary illness on their absentee ballot application, even if they are not sick.

"Voters who have any permanent or temporary illness, are a caregiver for a person with an illness or anyone who will be out of the County on Election Day are eligible to vote by Mail.

"There is no current plan to have absentee ballot drop boxes for Chautauqua County.

"This is due to two reasons given by the board: Commissioners Green and Abram state that they do trust the U.S. Mail Service in spite of the hyperbole on the news programs as of late relating to the ability of the post office to return absentee ballots. The purchase of drop boxes would be prohibitively expensive both in the cost of the drop box and relating to the collection service for the drop boxes.

"The Board of Elections will have an absentee ballot status look up program online at votechatauqua.com starting on Monday, September 21, to inform voters the status of their absentee application ballot. Voters will also be informed by mail of any discrepancies relating to the casting of their absentee ballot.

"Early voting in Chautauqua County will take place at the Board of Elections at 7 N. Erie street in Mayville, the Chautauqua Mall main entrance at 318 E. Fairmount Ave. in Lakewood, and the Chautauqua County fairgrounds in the 4H building and AG and Expo center, 1089 Central Ave. in Dunkirk. **The dates to vote early are the two weekends before Election Day, which are October 24 , 25, 31, and Nov. 1 from 12:00 PM to 5:00 PM and the week days before the election on October 26 - 27 from 12:00 PM to 8:00 PM in October 28 - 30 from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM**

“If planning on voting by Mail, the Board of Elections is recommending voters to download an absentee ballot application now from their website so that the election staff can mail requested absentees on Friday Sept. 18. That will allow for almost two months for preparation. Absentee ballots may also be dropped off at any poll site on Election Day or during early voting the two weeks ahead of the election by a voter’s family member or agent. Ballots can be dropped off at the Board of Elections from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM.”