

CITY OF OAKLAND



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February 3, 2011

Council President Reid and Members of
The Rules and Legislation Committee
Rules Committee
Oakland, Ca 94612

Honorable Members of the Rules Committee:

Attached please find the report from the Alameda County Registrar of Voters office on the County's implementation of Ranked Choice Voting within the three cities of Oakland, Berkeley and San Leandro for your review and comment.

The Clerk's Office has not yet confirmed the availability of County staff for presentation of this report.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "LaTonda Simmons". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "L" and "S".

LaTonda Simmons
City Clerk and Clerk of the Council

Attachment: Raising Public Awareness of Ranked-Choice Voting
A Summary of Voter Outreach of November 2, 2010 General
Election in Berkeley, Oakland, and San Leandro

Ranked-Choice Voting

Voting made easy.

Raising Public Awareness of Ranked-Choice Voting:

A Summary of Voter Outreach for November 2, 2010 General Election in Berkeley, Oakland and San Leandro

**A Report prepared by the Alameda County Registrar of Voters
November 2010**



Outreach Efforts Conducted by Registrar of Voters to Familiarize Voters with Ranked-Choice Voting for November 2010 General Election



REGISTRAR OF VOTERS

ALAMEDA COUNTY • CALIFORNIA

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DAVE MACDONALD
REGISTRAR OF VOTERS

January 25, 2011

The Registrar of Voters is pleased to submit the enclosed copy "Raising Public Awareness of Ranked-Choice Voting". This report is a summary of the voter outreach for the November 2, 2010 General Election within the Alameda County cities of Berkeley, Oakland and San Leandro.

It will demonstrate the overall outreach and education efforts conducted by the Alameda County Registrar of Voters Department in conjunction with the cities of Berkeley, Oakland and San Leandro to inform and familiarize voters with the Ranked-Choice Voting method.

This report illustrates how the extensive voter education and outreach approach taken by the Registrar of Voters played a significant role in the overall success of the first Ranked-Choice Voting election within Alameda County.

Upon further analysis, the Registrar of Voters Office found that in the City of Oakland **Mayoral** race, 99.7 percent of the voters cast valid ballots. In the City of San Leandro, the percentage of valid ballots cast by voters was 99.8 percent; therefore concluding that only 55 out of 23,494 voters cast an invalid ballot.

If you have any questions and/or comments concerning this report please feel free to contact the Registrar of Voters Office at the address or phone number listed above.

Dave Macdonald
Registrar of Voters
Alameda County

The Alameda County Registrar of Voters Office worked in concert with the Cities of Berkeley, Oakland and San Leandro to execute a comprehensive array of Voter Outreach efforts to inform and educate voters on the Ranked-Choice Voting method in time for the November 2, 2010 General Election. The Voter Outreach effort was designed to reach all voters and specific communities (minority language voters, seniors, first-time voters and voters with disabilities, low-literacy groups and other interested community members) and focused on how to correctly mark Ranked-Choice Voting ballots.

The following is a description of the outreach efforts led by the Alameda County Registrar of Voters office.

1. Public Presentations

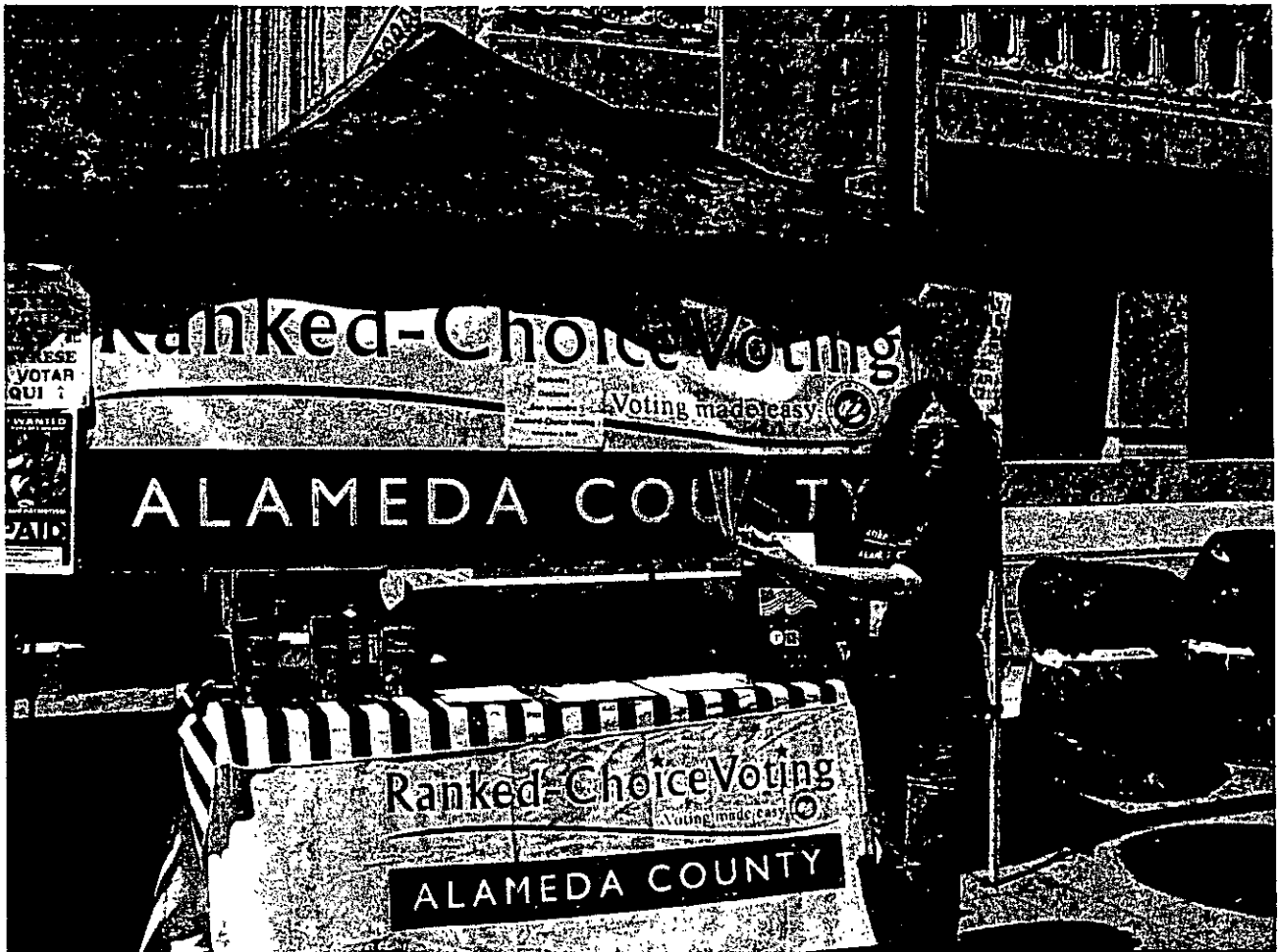
In the months prior to the November 2010 General Election, the Alameda County Registrar of Voters conducted more than 150 presentations educating the public on Ranked-Choice Voting within the cities of Berkeley, Oakland and San Leandro. The presentations were held at meetings with community groups, at senior centers, centers for the disabled and at gatherings of Spanish-language, Chinese-language and other non-English-speaking voters.

The Registrar of Voters Dave Macdonald and key staff members gave presentations to audiences in English, Spanish and Chinese languages.

The presentations featured educational materials, handouts and visuals including PowerPoint and Flash Media to aid in communicating the key concepts of Ranked-Choice Voting. Staff from the Registrar of Voters Office, in conjunction with an outreach committee comprised of elected City Officials, City Clerks in the three RCV cities, officers from the three League of Women Voters chapters and members of the community developed these educational materials to successfully implement Ranked-Choice Voting in Alameda County. Election officials from San Francisco and other communities where Ranked-Choice Voting has been used in the past were also consulted during the development of the educational materials.

Among the items featured at the public presentations was a tri-fold brochure that was distributed to participants. The brochure provided a basic, step-by-step introduction to Ranked-Choice Voting that focuses on helping voters to mark their ballots properly.

Staff from the Registrar of Voters along with staff from the Alameda County Information Technology Department collaborated to create visually compelling PowerPoint and Flash Media presentations to communicate key concepts to the public.



Registrar of Voters Chinese Language Coordinator Jackie Lam displaying voter outreach materials at the Oakland Chinatown Festival.

2. Outreach to Minority/Non-English Speaking Communities

From the onset, the Registrar of Voters office made a special effort to reach non-English speaking communities. Outreach coordinators conducted presentations on Ranked-Choice Voting to Spanish- and Chinese-speaking communities in Berkeley, Oakland and San Leandro. They also performed outreach targeting non-English speakers at public events including the Dia de Los Muertos Festival in Oakland, the Oakland Chinatown Festival and at several US Citizen and Immigration Services citizenship ceremonies. In all, more than 40 presentations specifically targeting non-English speaking voters were conducted between July and Election Day, November 2nd. In addition, the Registrar of Voters produced video and audio Public Service Announcements in Chinese and Spanish to broaden the reach of its message about Ranked-Choice Voting. The announcements aired on television stations such as KTSF Chinese-language television, KDTV Univision 14, a Spanish-language television station and Chinese Radio 1400 AM. Jacqueline Lam, the Registrar's Chinese-language outreach coordinator, hosted an hour-long interview and question-and-answer session on Chinese Radio 1400 AM on October 14.

3. Public Service Announcements

The Alameda County Registrar of Voters produced a 30-second public service announcement in English, Spanish and Chinese that was presented to media outlets for airing, both in video and audio-only formats.

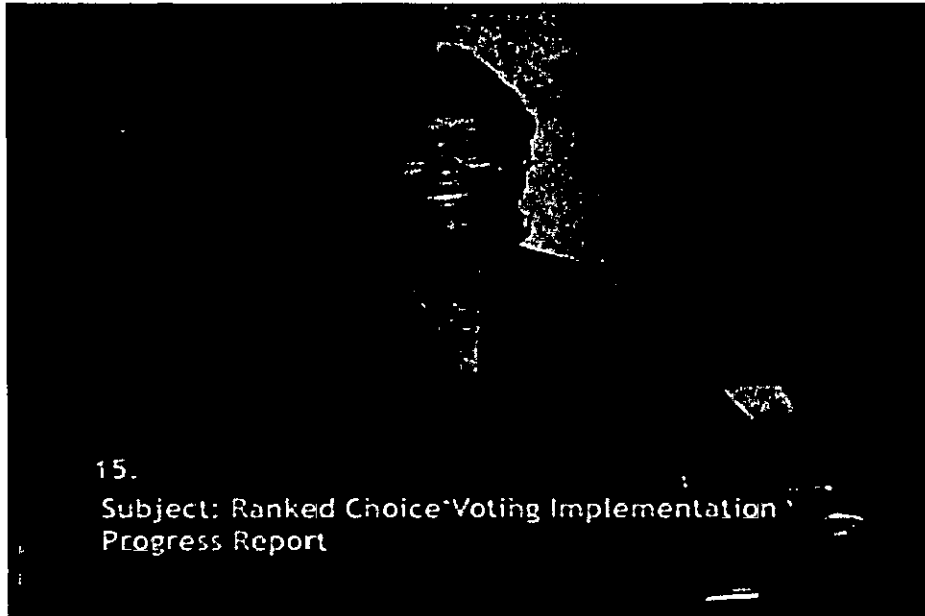
The Alameda County Registrar of Voters Office contracted with Berkeley Community Media to create the public service announcements. Video and audio portions were produced in the BCM studios in downtown Berkeley over the course of two days and featured Registrar of Voters Dave Macdonald and several members of his staff. Professional voice-over work was provided in English by BCM, while fluent Chinese and Spanish-language speakers from the Registrar of Voters office provided voice-over for PSAs in those languages.

The video public service announcements were aired frequently on KDTV Univision 14, the Bay Area's largest Spanish-language television station, and on KTSF, a Chinese-language television station based in San Francisco. The videos also aired several times daily on local English-language stations, primarily on KTOP in Oakland and Berkeley Community Media in Berkeley and were offered to several other English language stations. Footage from the public service announcements aided in television news coverage of the Alameda County launch of Ranked-Choice Voting by providing news crews with compelling "B-roll," images of the Ranked-Choice Ballot being voted and other images that worked well with news reports.

The video Public Service Announcement also was featured along with previews that played before full-length feature films at three movie theaters in Berkeley, Oakland and San Leandro. More about this movie theater advertising program is discussed below.

The audio version of the public service announcements aired frequently on local radio stations, including news stations such as KCBS but also on music and sports-oriented stations. Seven music-oriented stations run by Clear Channel San Francisco, including the Bay Area's largest hip-hop station, incorporated the audio public service announcement in its regular programming.

Scripts for the audio and video public service announcements were written by staff from the Registrar of Voters office. Prior to production of the PSAs, the scripts were vetted by staff from Alameda County; staff and elected officials from the cities of Berkeley, Oakland and San Leandro; officers from the League of Women Voters Chapters in Berkeley, Oakland and San Leandro; and community members interested in Ranked-Choice Voting who participated in an advisory committee formed in 2007 that helped to plan the rollout of RCV in Alameda County in 2010. The scripts also were reviewed by election officials in San Francisco, which has used Ranked-Choice Voting for several years and has developed several public outreach campaigns focused on RCV.



Oakland City Clerk LaTonda Simmons provided up-to-date information about planning for Ranked-Choice Voting to the Oakland City Council and the community

4. User-friendly, step-by-step instructions for RCV incorporated in materials sent to Voters

The Alameda County Registrar of Voters produced a written overview with visuals and step-by-step instructions on how to vote using Ranked-Choice Voting, which was included in the sample ballots that were distributed to voters within the three RCV cities prior to the November 2010 election.

These easy-to-follow instructions were also included as an insert in all vote-by-mail ballots distributed to voters for the November 2010 election.

This overview of how to vote using Ranked-Choice Voting was also made available at polling places in November 2010 to assist voters who arrived at the polls with little or no knowledge of this new voting format. The instructions were modified to create visual reminders that were posted inside polling places and in voting booths to remind voters how to vote using Ranked-Choice Voting.

Prior to each election, there are several pieces of literature distributed by mail to Alameda County voters, including Sample Ballots and Vote-By-Mail Ballots. Each of these mailings presented an outreach opportunity for the Registrar of Voters to inform voters of the change to Ranked-Choice Voting in Berkeley, Oakland and San Leandro, and to educate the public in simple terms on how to vote using this new voting format.

Written materials produced by Alameda County about Ranked-Choice Voting, including step-by-step instructions on how to mark the Ranked-Choice Voting ballot, were created after consultation with officials in other communities who had previously used this voting format. The City of San Francisco was particularly helpful as they produced many written pieces to help voters with the launch of Ranked-Choice Voting in their community.

The written overview and step-by-step instructions were produced in consultation with staff and elected officials from the cities of Berkeley, Oakland and San Leandro; officers from the League of Women Voters Chapters in Berkeley, Oakland and San Leandro; and community members interested in Ranked-Choice Voting who participated in an advisory committee that assisted with the preparation of the rollout of RCV in Alameda County in 2010.



Cynthia Cornejo and Janet Peters of the Alameda County Registrar of Voters office with Marian Handa, San Leandro City Clerk, during outreach effort at Oakland Athletics baseball game on August 19, 2010

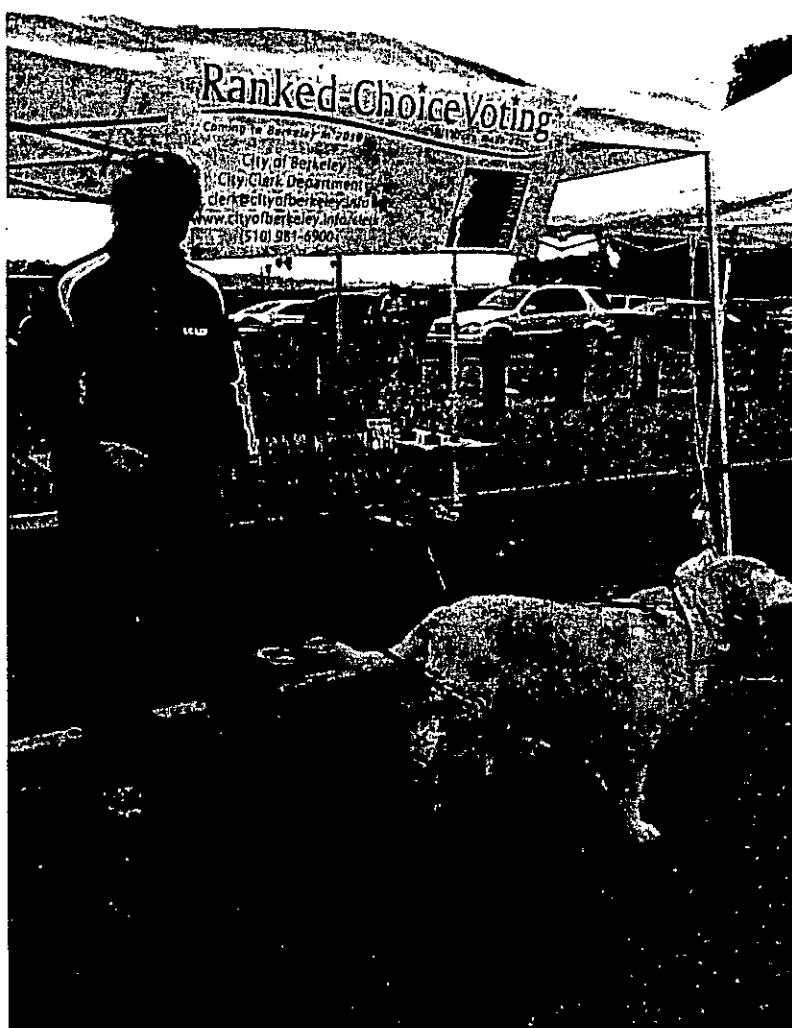
5. Tri-Fold Brochure

The Alameda County Registrar of Voters created a tri-fold brochure featuring instructions on how to vote using Ranked-Choice Voting. Separate versions of the brochure were produced in English, Spanish and Chinese languages. In all, about 750,000 copies of the brochure were printed.

The brochure features a graphic depiction of a Ranked-Choice Voting ballot and step-by-step instructions on how to properly mark the RCV ballot.

The brochure was distributed to voters at more than 150 public presentations led by the Registrar of Voters and at public events – including the Juneteenth Celebration, Solano Stroll, Cal-UCLA football game and weekly Farmer’s Markets in Berkeley; the Art and Soul Festival, Dia de Los Muertos and A’s-Texas Rangers baseball game in Oakland; and the Suds and Sausages and weekly Farmer’s Market in San Leandro.

Many copies of the brochure were distributed to the League of Women Voters and the Cities of Berkeley, Oakland and San Leandro, to help broaden the distribution of these easy to use instructions on how to vote using Ranked-Choice Voting.



Berkeley City Clerk Deanna Despain attended the "Bay to Barkers" event in Berkeley in July 2010 with members of the Alameda County Registrar of Voters office to educate voters about Ranked-Choice Voting

Staff from the Alameda County Registrar of Voters contacted counterparts in San Francisco and Pierce County, Washington (where Ranked-Choice Voting has been used previously) to obtain their recommendations on how to best produce a voter-education brochure that would minimize Election Day problems related to the shift to Ranked-Choice Voting.

The brochure also was made available in printable .pdf form on the Alameda County Registrar of Voters website.



Registrar of Voters' staff with the AC Transit Voter Registration Bus at Fruitvale Station Voter Outreach event in Oakland, September 2010.

6. Postcard Mailer

The Alameda County Registrar of Voters created a 5-inch-by-7-inch postcard-sized mailer containing a brief overview and step-by-step instructions on how to vote using Ranked-Choice Voting. These easy-to-follow instructions were mailed approximately 60 days prior to the November 2010 election to each of the roughly 400,000 voters in Alameda County's three Ranked-Choice Voting cities.

The postcard mailer is similar in many ways to the tri-fold brochure produced by Alameda County to educate voters about Ranked-Choice Voting and how to vote using this new voting format. The condensed size and format of the mailer was an option that appealed to the RCV cities due to the potential savings on postage costs.

Drafts of the brochure and the postcard were produced by the Alameda County Registrar of Voters after consultation with elected officials and staff from the Cities of Berkeley, Oakland and San Leandro. The postcard also was vetted by officers of the League of Women Voters chapters in Berkeley, Oakland and San Leandro, and by citizen members of a Ranked-Choice Voting planning committee that has been meeting regularly since 2007 to plan the 2010 RCV rollout in Alameda County's three Ranked-Choice Voting cities.

Officials in San Francisco and Pierce County, Wash., where Ranked-Choice Voting already has been used, also were consulted during the production of the postcard mailer.

The postcard features a graphic depiction of a Ranked-Choice Voting ballot and step-by-step instructions on how to properly mark the ballot using RCV.

7. Newsletter

The Registrar of Voters office also published six newsletters that were distributed to several hundred local residents who had expressed interest in the overall implementation of Ranked-Choice Voting in Alameda County. The newsletters updated readers on RCV outreach activities and included basic instructions of how to vote using RCV, both as a reminder to those people familiar with the RCV format and as a way to encourage readers to pass the RCV message along to others.

How to Mark the Ranked-Choice Ballot

First Column
Mark your first choice in Column 1.

Second Column
Mark your second choice in Column 2. This choice must be different from your first choice.


Third Column
Mark your third choice in Column 3. This choice must be different from your first and second choices.

Important:
If you select the same candidate in more than one column, your vote for that candidate will count **ONLY ONCE**.

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NONPARTISAN CITY FOR MAYOR	NONPARTISAN CITY FOR MAYOR	NONPARTISAN CITY FOR MAYOR	
1 FIRST CHOICE <small>Vote for One</small>	2 SECOND CHOICE <small>(The must be different from your first choice) Vote for One</small>	3 THIRD CHOICE <small>(The must be different from your first and second choices) Vote for One</small>	 <p>To Vote: Connect the arrow as shown.</p> <p>Write-In Candidates If you wish to vote for a qualified write-in candidate</p> <p>choices, name on led and v pointing</p>
ELEANOR ROOSEVELT	ELEANOR ROOSEVELT	ELEANOR ROOSEVELT	
BOOKER T. WASHINGTON	BOOKER T. WASHINGTON	BOOKER T. WASHINGTON	
DIEGO RIVERA	DIEGO RIVERA	DIEGO RIVERA	
ARTHUR MILLER	ARTHUR MILLER	ARTHUR MILLER	
SHERLEY HORN	SHERLEY HORN		
BRUCE LEE	BRUCE LEE		

Ranked-Choice Voting

Voting made easy.

8. Flash Media Presentation

The Alameda County Registrar of Voters produced a Flash Media presentation to explain the main concepts of Ranked-Choice Voting, particularly how voters can mark their ballots correctly, in conjunction with the many other voter-education materials created to assist with the implementation of RCV in November 2010.

Flash Media is a computer-based program that incorporates graphics and other eye-catching visuals that help explain the concepts of Ranked-Choice Voting to the voting public. The presentation

included text and audio explanations, and was produced in English, Spanish and Chinese-language versions, that were posted on the Registrar of Voters website. The presentation was also regularly featured in public presentations by the Registrar of Voters, as well as other sessions led by League of Women Voters Chapters in Berkeley, Oakland and San Leandro, and other community groups.

A computer was also made available in the lobby of the Registrar of Voters office to encourage visitors to view the Flash Media Presentation to educate themselves on the concepts of Ranked-Choice Voting. Other County agencies, and agencies in the three RCV cities, also agreed to make the Presentation available in a similar way.

Similar Flash Media Presentations have been used in San Francisco to assist with the education of voters about Ranked-Choice Voting. Alameda County elections staff consulted their counterparts in San Francisco to gather their ideas on the components of a Flash Media Presentation that are essential to effectively educating voters.

9. Short Video on Ranked-Choice Voting

The Alameda County Registrar of Voters worked with Berkeley Community Media to produce a 4-minute video to guide voters through the voting process using Ranked-Choice Voting. The video explains the main concepts of Ranked-Choice Voting, particularly how voters can mark their ballots correctly, and compliments the many other voter-education materials produced to assist with the implementation of RCV in November 2010.

The video was placed on the Alameda County Registrar of Voters office website in three different language versions – in English, Spanish and Chinese.

The video was also copied to DVDs and distributed to the cities of Berkeley, Oakland and San Leandro, to League of Women Voters chapters and to other groups interested in spreading the word about how Ranked-Choice Voting works. It was utilized in the more than 150 public presentations led by the Registrar of Voters before community groups and civic organizations.

The Registrar of Voters office found the video presentation to be an effective and highly transportable method of educating voters about concepts such as Ranked-Choice Voting. The video includes graphics and other eye-catching visuals that direct voters through the voting process. The video was easily distributed to other groups that aided in the education of voters about Ranked-Choice Voting.

10. Webinars on Ranked-Choice Voting

In October, Registrar of Voters Dave Macdonald led two online seminars, or “webinars,” on Ranked-Choice Voting. Voters were invited to log onto the Registrar’s website and to take part in the interactive sessions, which featured audio feeds of Macdonald explaining the principles of RCV and a multitude of visual aids to help communicate key points. Participants were also allowed to ask questions of Macdonald to help enhance their understanding of Ranked-Choice Voting.

11. Other efforts to help voters understand RCV

- o Signage at Polling Places
- o Extra Poll Workers at Polling Places

The Alameda County Registrar of Voters provided additional resources on Election Day in November 2010 to aid those voters who arrived at polling places to vote but still lacked understanding of Ranked-Choice Voting.

The Registrar of Voters also assigned at least one additional poll worker in each polling place whose assignment was to explain RCV (and how to properly mark the RCV ballot) to voters.

Alameda County employs four poll workers per polling place on average. These workers aid voters with various steps in the voting process, and are trained to assist with questions about how to vote properly. By employing an additional poll worker whose focus is on explaining Ranked-Choice Voting, voters were provided ample resources at the polling place to ensure a successful voting experience.

In addition, Alameda County posted ample signage in English, Spanish and Chinese at each RCV polling place that provided voters with visual step-by-step explanations on how to mark their ballots correctly using Ranked-Choice Voting. The signage included larger signs in the areas where voters line up to receive their ballots, and smaller educational signs inside the voting booths themselves.

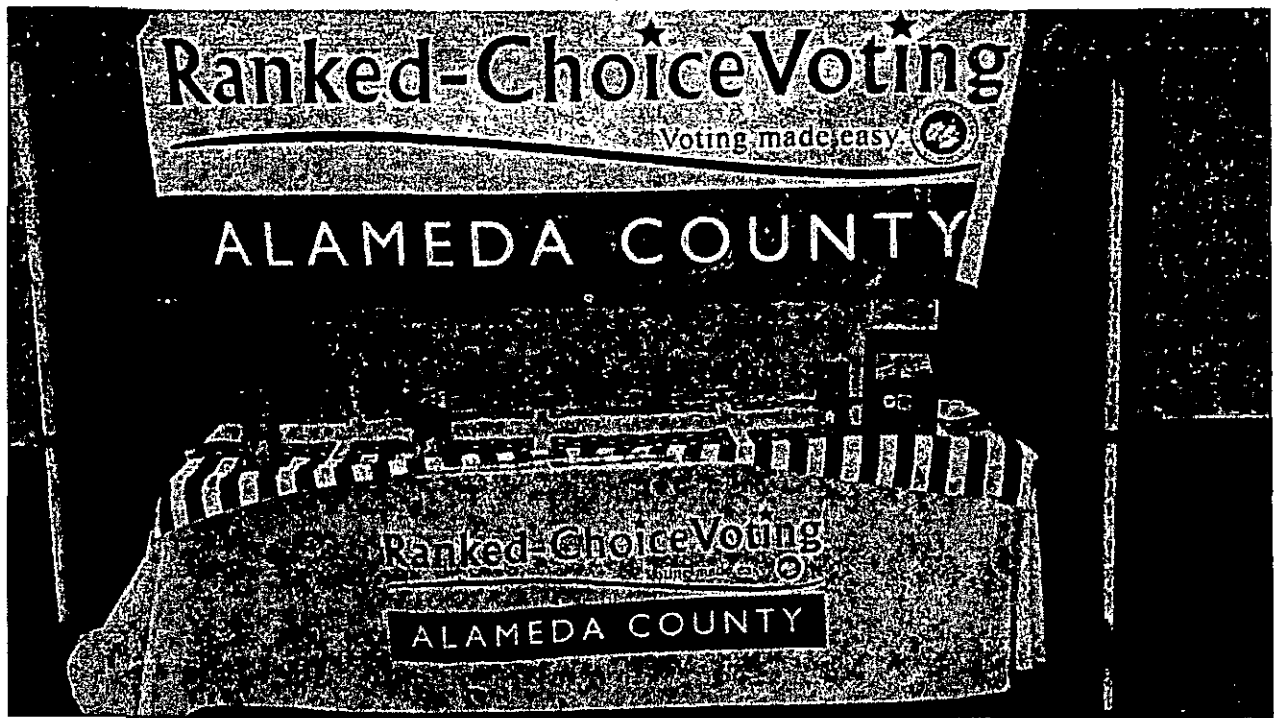
Furthermore, materials such as the tri-fold brochure explained earlier in this outreach plan were made available to voters at the polling places to provide a more in-depth explanation of RCV.

As with other voter education materials, the signs included images of the RCV ballot and graphic explanations of how to mark the ballot properly (voting for first, second and third choices etc.).

The Registrar of Voters consulted the League of Women Voters, City staff and elected officials and other interested parties in developing the signs to be effective educational tools for the voter. Registrar staff worked with San Francisco, where Ranked-Choice Voting has been used in the past, to plan for adequate resources in the polling places to explain Ranked-Choice Voting to voters.

12. Movie Theater Advertising

The Alameda County Registrar of Voters purchased advertising time in three local movie theater complexes – the UA Berkeley 7, the Jack London Stadium 9 in Oakland and the BayFair 16 theaters in San Leandro – to allow for the 30-second video public service announcement to be aired to all viewers along with previews at numerous daily showings of full-length feature films. In all, 32 screens at the three movie complexes featured the public service announcement and aired it numerous times daily from September 24 through October 28.



13. Editorial Outreach

Staff from the Alameda County Registrar of Voters office conducted an extensive media campaign to generate interest in the launch of Ranked-Choice Voting in Alameda County among local media outlets – newspapers, blogs, radio and television stations. This campaign resulted in a large amount of editorial coverage about the implementation of Ranked-Choice Voting in November 2010 – including at least five stories in the largest East Bay newspaper chain – the Bay Area News Group – as well as articles in the San Francisco Chronicle, the East Bay Express, the Berkeley Daily Planet, the San Leandro Times and the Daily Californian (UC Berkeley). In addition, several local news blogs covered the launch of Ranked-Choice Voting with written articles and audio/visual presentations that were placed online. These blogs included Oakland North, Oakland Local, Berkeley side and Oakland Local. Furthermore, three prominent local radio stations – KCBS, KQED and KPFA – produced and aired feature stories about Ranked-Choice Voting in Alameda County. Several television stations, meanwhile, also produced and aired pieces. These stations included KTVU, KRON-4, CBS-5, KGO-7, NBC-11, KDTV 14 (Spanish) and KTSF (Chinese). The above media coverage began several months before Election Day and continued through Election Day and through the post-Election Day vote count.

14. Conclusion

As we approached the first elections in Alameda County to use Ranked-Choice Voting, we knew our primary challenge was to bring our key message - how to vote using RCV - to as many voters as possible, not just those voters who make a habit of closely watching local elections.

This explains the many different approaches we took to pre-election outreach. By producing a video, attending community festivals, distributing RCV materials at farmer's markets and shopping centers, and placing public service announcements in movie theaters and on popular radio stations, we were attempting to bring our primary RCV message to voters in all segments of the community.

A general review of ballots by staff at the Alameda County Registrar of Voters Office suggested our effort was successful, as a vast majority of ballots we reviewed were voted properly.

The Registrar of Voters office conducted further analysis, which found that in the Oakland Mayor's race 99.7 percent of voters cast valid ballots. In San Leandro, that figure was 99.8 percent - meaning that only 55 out of 23,494 voters cast an invalid ballot.

We believe the extensive and multi-faceted approach we took in communicating with the public about RCV played a key role in this success. We are hopeful this success will continue in future elections, as the public becomes more accustomed to the RCV format.