

EDITOR: Election coverage is core to what we do



By Jim Bebbington

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This past week has shown democracy at its best in our communities.

Local voters turned out in near record numbers Tuesday. We had journalists all over the region - checking with voters and poll workers and elections officials. With few exceptions they saw patient voters, calm lines and poll workers who got voters through the process quickly and efficiently.

Statewide, the counts began on time - right around 7:30 p.m. Tuesday - and as the results came in our teams again got to work. They reached out to school superintendents, city officials and candidates about what the outcome meant for their communities.

The vote counting for president continued across the country all week. In covering that count, we sought to keep our commitment to be a trusted and reliable source of accurate information. Here is what we did - and what we are doing in the days ahead.

- Predictions about the outcome of the presidential race began before the polls closed. On our digital sites we published confirmed results and vote totals from our boards of elections and the secretary of state's office. As national stories took center stage, our editors reviewed them to avoid passing on speculation or misleading information.

- We updated our websites as local results came in. Our coverage consistently said votes would continue to be accepted by local boards of election through Nov. 13 - and that the final tallies would change. That isn't a glitch; that's how it is supposed to work in Ohio so voters who mailed their ballots as late as Nov. 2 could have their voices heard.

- Monday and Wednesday we held two panel discussions live on our Facebook page in which statehouse reporter Laura Bischoff pressed Ohio elections experts such as former Gov. Bob Taft to answer questions from readers so they could better understand the process and what we were all seeing.

- We continue to investigate the local impact of the election. Voters were split on tax levies sought by local schools and communities, and our reporters have followed up on the impact of Tuesday's results. In the years ahead, we're going to stay on the story and keep an eye on government spending so taxpayers who approved those expenses get what they were promised.

- As the presidential winner becomes clear, our commitment will not change. We will look deeply into what the White House is planning to do in the years ahead and how it affects Miami Valley residents, our businesses, Wright-Patt, our communities and the programs that people here use.

We thank our subscribers, who make this work possible. This newspaper and our journalists take very seriously our job of keeping you informed about how our democracy is functioning - not just on Election Night, but year round.

Jim Bebbington is editor of the Dayton Daily News.