

CONNECTING SENIORS



Issues Experienced by Senior Americans
Living Abroad

Barriers to Connectivity



- ❧ Distance from friends or family
- ❧ Support: we may or may not have a local techie
- ❧ Array of devices, apps: often not up to date (ask me!)
- ❧ Language: a local tech person may not speak English
- ❧ Language: interface with host-country health and retirement programs AND with U.S. programs
- ❧ Trustworthy/informed professional support

Weighing against Support



- ❧ Health
- ❧ Wellness
- ❧ Mobility
- ❧ Isolation
- ❧ Loneliness
- ❧ Fear
- ❧ Sense of helplessness

Connecting on Home Turf



We Seniors have time to seek and connect!

- ❧ There is nothing more energizing than other people.
- ❧ Volunteers on the other side of the pond may well also be Seniors.
- ❧ Home turf has stateside info sources, campaigns
- ❧ Not always party orgs: coalesce, share, non-replicate but also critique!
- ❧ They let us introduce our home-turf allies to unique 'abroad' issues.

Issues with Voting from Abroad



Voting is a connectivity issue. Examples:

- ❧ One age 80+ friend could NOT get her printer to print her NY ballot on ONE PAGE. Machine kept splitting it to 2 pages.
- ❧ Another 80+ friend who is more financially secure, invites her techie over to help download the ballot, print and save.
- ❧ Age 90+ had two adult children in town. Once we sorted out the PA voting process using VFA, they got their ballots, sent, returned and tracked.

continued...



☞ Sight impaired cannot read the ballot on screen.

Solutions

A DA Greece volunteer went to her house, read out the on-screen ballot so the voter could mark each item on computer.

This service can also be done by an online volunteer IF the voter can access the group work platform.

CAUTION: Operative advice is, provide support, answer questions, assist as needed, but do NOT mark the ballot! Figure out a way for the voter to mark it.

Conclusions



- ❧ Seniors are a Rich Resource! We have ...
 - ❧ Experience
 - ❧ Knowledge
 - ❧ Time to volunteer
 - ❧ A need for contact.
- ❧ Seniors may need more support.
- ❧ A wide range of devices and platforms.
 - ❧ One size does not fit all,
 - ❧ 15 gazillion apps are de-motivating.
- ❧ Many bonuses for contact with activists on the home turf.

Plan ahead WITH home state party and activist groups to find the few, the proud, the right apps to share, that put us on the same page!

Thanks Questions?