

The Virgin Islands Consortium

New Poll With History Of Accuracy Predicts Runoff With Mapp Leading, Bryan And Donastorg Tied In Second

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A new poll released on Saturday by John Boyd, whose history of polling in the U.S. Virgin Islands dates back to 1982, shows Governor Kenneth Mapp leading the November 6 General Election, while Albert Bryan and Adlah Donastorg are tied for second place.

"Every election cycle, there are about 6 polls being run in the Virgin Islands. I have run polls over the past 35 years with good accuracy. My pinnacle was probably 2002 when I picked all 8 candidates in proper order and projected that Governor Turnbull would win without a run off. The chance of picking eight in order by a random guess is about

one in forty thousand," Mr. Boyd wrote in notes accompanying the polling results.

Most of the polling was conducted from September through October. Before Labor Day, Mr. Mapp on St. Croix carried 32 percent of the votes, followed by Mr. Bryan with 22 percent, and Mr. Donastorg with 10 percent. Twenty-two percent of respondents were undecided, according to the poll.

On St. Croix in September, Mr. Mapp's lead grew to 39, Mr. Bryan held steady at 22 percent, while Mr. Donastorg collected 3 points for a total of 13 percent. Sixteen percent of the respondents were undecided.

Up to October 15 on St. Croix, Mr. Mapp remained in the lead with 39 percent of respondents supporting the governor. However, there was a big shift in support between the two candidates who were in second and third place in September. Mr. Donastorg's support on St. Croix jumped from 13 percent in September to 21 percent up to October 15, according to the Boyd poll. Mr. Bryan dropped by two points up to October 15 on St. Croix, bringing his standing to 20 percent -- a statistical dead heat for the second spot. During that time, 12 percent of respondents were undecided.

Part of the Bryan-Roach campaign's strategy to victory is to overwhelm Mr. Mapp in St. Thomas by carrying the island heavily. But according to the Boyd poll, even in the St. Thomas-St. John District the governor is leading, albeit by a few points. According to the poll, Mr. Mapp, between September 15 through October 15, held 29 percent of the votes in the St. Thomas-St. John District, followed by Mr. Bryan with 22 percent, and Donastorg with 21 percent. Fifteen percent of respondents were undecided.

"I accept the results as being consistent with my personal experiences, interview comments, and prior election history," Mr. Boyd noted. "After the Democratic Primary, there was a surge for Mapp, as Bryan and Roach were selected by less than 10% of all registered voters and neither had ever been elected to a territorial position in a General Election as a Democrat. It appears that about 20 percent of registered Democrats embraced the two and remained constant and loyal in a very disorganized Democratic Party."

The poll predicts a runoff, with Mr. Mapp going into the general election with 34 percent of the votes, followed by Mr. Donastorg with 21, Mr. Bryan with 21 percent, Warren Mosler with 6 percent, Soraya Diase-Coffelt with 2 percent, Janette Millin Young with 2 percent, and Moleto Smith with 1 percent.

The poll predicts 13 percent of voters going to the ballot on November 6 undecided.

Mr. Donastorg's surge in late September is attributed to a late push by the Donastorg-Hansen team, and a group of loyal fans whose support has held strong over the years.

"Foncie (Adlah Donastorg) and Chucky (Alicia Hansen) are both very well loved by their loyal fans on their respective islands and as a Democrat, Donastorg did quite well in two previous governor's races on both islands coming in second to Dejongh and Christensen," Mr. Boyd noted. "The team got a very slow start and did not break out until late September but signs and bumper stickers are popping up all over St. Croix."

On methodology for the gubernatorial poll, Mr. Boyd said two other individuals helped in conducted the poll. In the past, as many as ten individuals have worked with him.

While he conducted interviews with individuals for the gubernatorial poll, Mr. Boyd utilized a new methodology. "The mathematical model I am developing is more closely related to the algorithms used in data mining to choose the ads you will see on Google, eBay and Amazon," he said. "These ad choices are based on a large amount of constantly changing information and the desire of these companies is to develop a list without regard to margin of error or absolute percentages, but just select the right order among a short list where number one is really the only important answer. In addition to using special programming languages such as R for data science, I also embrace parametric and non-parametric statistics," Mr. Boyd noted.

Mr. Boyd, now retired, has worked in a number of capacities in the territory. He was once an accounting and finance professor at the University of the Virgin Islands. In 2002, though many doubted his polling results, Mr. Boyd's poll predicted that Charles W. Turnbull would beat Roy Lester Schneider without a runoff election. The poll was questioned by some and derided by others, but once the election was over, it proved to be solid.

Mr. Boyd called into question [the UVI poll](#) that had Mr. Mapp and Mr. Bryan tied. "How in the world can you stand there with a straight face and say we combined humans talking on the phone with humans talking to computers on the phone, with people throwing out stuff online? How do you verify the percentage of males and females?" he questioned.

Mr. Boyd also polled St. Croix Senate candidates using what he labeled a "sidewalk" methodology, which included interviewing 306 people between September 15 and October 15.

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