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THE RACE FOR THE WHITE HOUSE

Ballot Has Notable Absentees

From Associated Press

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VAN BUREN, Mo. — Officials in one Missouri county are reprinting absentee ballots for the Nov. 2 general election after discovering that President Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney were left off.

The ballots were mailed beginning Sept. 21, and Carter County Clerk Becky Gibbs said several voters noticed the oversight.

"We are rectifying it," she said. "There was no intent to leave them off."

Fewer than 500 of the erroneous ballots were sent out, and some have already been returned.

Replacement ballots will be sent to everyone who requested an absentee ballot along with a letter explaining the error.

Terri Durdaller, spokeswoman for the secretary of state, said that if absentee voters who previously returned a ballot send a new one, it will replace the previous one. If they don't return a new ballot, their first one will be counted.

"The key is just to make sure everybody does get the changed ballot," Durdaller said.

Ballots that other voters will use Nov. 2 have yet to be printed.

Gibbs said the cost to print replacement absentee ballots should be minimal.

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