

Presidential candidate John Kerry visits Greensboro

Andy Freedman

Staff Writer

Before I say anything else, let me just start off with this: I met John Kerry, and that's my picture with him you see right there. Yes, I am cool. Anyway ...

On the rainy, miserable morning of Sept. 7th, I woke up in a huge bed in a hotel room, slightly startled by the fact that I wasn't waking up near a heap of my own smelly laundry in Binford Hall. After those first few seconds of post-wake-up confusion, I remembered that I was staying with my sister in a Sheraton Hotel, and that I was going to a town hall meeting sponsored by John Kerry's campaign at the old train depot in downtown Greensboro. I also realized that three floors above me, at that very moment, John Kerry was probably waking up, too.

My sister is a senior producer for reporter Candy Crowley of CNN and has been covering the Kerry campaign since the spring. She got me a press credential that granted me "background access" to this event.

After hopping on the press bus and being introduced to dozens of reporters for network news companies, I realized that I would be riding in the actual Kerry motorcade to the event.

Once the motorcade got underway, I had the opportunity to look out my window and see traffic stopped for miles, all because of us. Needless to say, I felt unusually important. At every single street the motorcade crossed, there were at least two police cars waiting around, making sure the area was safe. Soon, we arrived at the train depot to a chorus of chants and yells from both Kerry and Bush supporters who were standing across the street as we entered the station.

I entered the room while Kerry was being introduced by Kay Spangle, a woman from High Point who said she had recently been forced to close her small, family-owned furniture business after 25 years. "I am very unhappy about the situation we are forced to live in. I am 70 years old, and I'm not ready to throw in the towel," said Spangle as she introduced Kerry.

After wading through a sea of applause, Kerry calmed the audience, only to rile it back up with his self-introduction, "I'm John Edwards' running mate," in acknowledgement of his presence in Senator Edwards's home state.

Kerry wasted no time in laying out his plans for a potential presidency while highlighting the faults of his opponent, President George W. Bush. First, he addressed the loss of 2.7

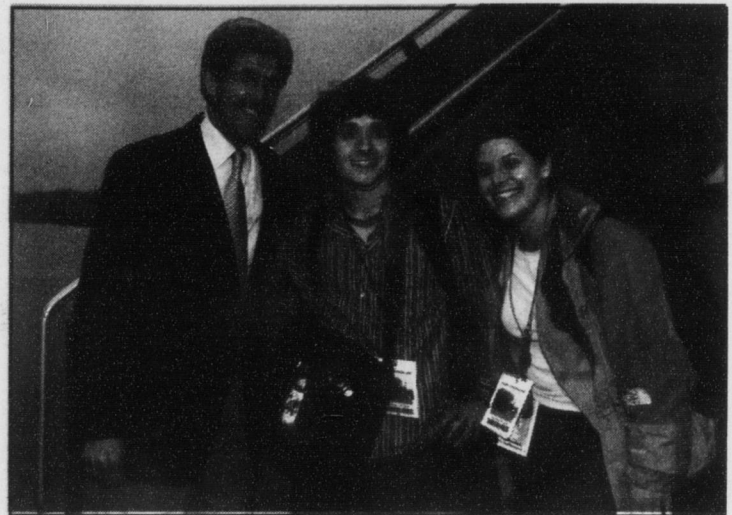
million jobs, many to overseas markets, during the Bush presidency. Kerry hit home by saying that approximately 150,000 of those 2.7 million lost jobs were lost in North Carolina.

"Every president has created jobs except for George W. Bush," Kerry said, as he

vowed to generate more jobs in the United States if elected.

"W stands for wrong-wrong choices, wrong direction, we need to make it right," said Kerry throughout the speech, as the crowd chanted along with the tagline.

Kerry discussed what may be the most controversial issue in this election: the war in Iraq. Over the past few months, many accused him of being unclear on his proposed solution for Iraq, and suggested that the senator has no plan whatsoever. "The most catastrophic choice George W. Bush has made is the mess he has



KERRY-EDWARDS CAMPAIGN 2004/SPECIAL TO GUILFORDIAN

Freedman and sister pose with John Kerry

out of Iraq in four years.

During the Q and A, he touched on several items he usually doesn't speak publicly about, like his plans for the environment and an education policy he believes is better than No Child Left Behind, one of Bush's prominent bills.

Kerry left the depot having generated a large amount of excitement, support and applause, and having laid out his plans for a potential presidency. After hopping in the motorcade, we all went to the airport where I said goodbye to my sister and saw the Kerry/Edwards plane off on the runway. Just before Kerry got on the plane, one of his campaign assistants pulled him aside to have his picture taken with me. I simply told him that I was a student in the Greensboro area, too frozen to think of anything else to say. I don't remember if he replied to that.

As the manager tried to take the picture of Kerry and me with my sister's digital camera, he accidentally turned off the camera, making for an awkward situation, considering Kerry's busy schedule. Kerry was going to Cincinnati, OH, to give the same sort of speech later that night. I stopped cringing when a photographer for the campaign came up and took the picture, and later gave it to my sister. Phew! Kerry gave me a hard pat on the back with a smile and got on the plane. That was cool.☺

This article is part of a weekly series about the upcoming presidential election.

Glendor; living 'Starry Night'

characters in red robes, is revisited. However, this time it is completely tinted in a deep and rich blue, carrying unmistakable significance, regardless of the viewer's comprehension of it.

In the dramatic conclusion to our search for truth, truth itself is complicated. The desired ending cannot be, and the person who understands the Emperor most is the one who knows him the least. Only he, the enlightened one, was able to see the proper course and understand the sacrifices that must be made

for it.

If you can appreciate the distinction between seeing a movie and experiencing a

movie, if ever you looked at "Starry Night" and it came alive in your mind, you should see this film.☺



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