



Career Center students make their selections.

Photos by Layla Farmer

Students make their Super Tuesday picks

BY LAYLA FARMER
THE CHRONICLE

As voters in half of the states around the nation headed to the polls on Feb. 5, the day dubbed "Super Tuesday," local students were also weighing in on the '08 presidential race.

Students throughout the school system took part in Kids Voting, a mock election designed to show them how the governmental process works.

"We really jumped on this ... because as teachers and as a faculty, we want students to get a kind of experience of voting and through that experience they can learn what they really want in terms of political candidates," explained Maureen Stanford, a teacher at the Career Center,



McAlister

joined forces with the Forsyth County Board of Elections and Kids Voting NC, a non-partisan, nonprofit organization aimed at increasing political awareness in young people. Students in grades K-12 countywide took part, casting their votes for one of the four Republicans (John McCain, Mitt Romney, Mike Huckabee or Ron Paul) or Democrats Barack Obama or Hillary Clinton.

Career Center students came out in record numbers, with more than 400 people "voting" before lunchtime on Tuesday.

Andrew Beckman, a senior at Mt. Tabor, was among the throngs of students who flocked to the media center, where the voting took place via computers.

"I've always wanted to vote and I've been avid about politics probably since I was about 13," he stated. "There's just always been politics in my house - my dad is very conservative and my mom is very liberal, so whenever there's something political going on, there's always a discussion."

Beckman, a Huckabee supporter, also registered to vote on Tuesday in preparation for the upcoming election.

"We're going to lead the country at some point, at least someone our age will be eventually, and it's better that we start taking an interest now so we don't have apathy later," he remarked.

Ashley Myers, a Career Center student and Kids Voting volunteer, helped her peers fill out voter registration cards.

Myers, a senior at Parkland Magnet and Obama supporter, said excitement



Ashley Myers was among the young voters.

built up among students as voting day approached. The election has inspired her to explore her own views as well.

"(Voting is) fun; I mean it's more of an individual thing, it's basically telling you that you're your own person, you're not following somebody else's steps," she commented.

Akwete McAlister, who teaches the advanced placement government politics class at the Career Center, says the momentum of young people's interest in this year's election is unlike any she's seen before.

"This year has been absolutely amazing and I think part of it is that we don't have an incumbent going back into office; I think the war has brought a lot of attention to politics, and I also think that the approval rating of (President George) Bush is just so low that kids really are ready for something different; even if it's in the same party," she commented.

Nearly 30,000 kids across the state participated in the 2008 Super Tuesday. Obama won Democratic nomination with an astounding 70 percent of the vote, while McCain won the Republican youths' support, with 46 percent of their vote, followed by Huckabee with 31 percent, Romney with 14 and Paul with nine.

For more information, visit www.kidsvotingnc.org.

News Clips

More "Click It or Ticket" violations last year

There were 559,588 traffic and criminal citations issued by state and local law enforcement officers across North Carolina during "Click It or Ticket" and "Booze It & Lose It" campaigns last year.

That is a 35 percent increase from the 414,351 citations issued in 2006. Officers conducted more than 46,000 checkpoints and patrols during the 2007 campaigns, a boost of more than 64 percent from 2006.

"Law enforcement agencies ramped up their checkpoints and patrols and it paid off," said Gov. Mike Easley. "I want to thank each agency for its participation in these lifesaving campaigns and urge citizens to buckle up, slow down and not drive after drinking."

Last year's total includes 15,303 driving while impaired arrests and 64,481 occupant protection citations for safety belt and child passenger safety violations.

Officers also issued 184,969 speeding violations and located 3,701 fugitives from justice.

Additionally, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports that North Carolina's 2007 safety belt usage rate increased 2 percent to 88.8 percent, its highest rate ever.

For the first time last year the Governor's Highway Safety Program joined forces with the N.C. Highway Patrol to address speeding. In conjunction with the Patrol's "Operation Slowdown," local law enforcement agencies participated in "No Need 2 Speed," a high visibility enforcement campaign aimed at encouraging drivers to slow down and follow the speed limit.

WFU makes Peace Corp rankings

Wake Forest University

has made the Peace Corps' top 25 list of small colleges and universities with the most Peace Corps volunteers.

With 17 Wake Forest graduates currently serving as Peace Corps volunteers, Wake Forest is ranked 16th on the current list. Since the Peace Corps was founded, 182 Wake Forest alumni have served as volunteers.

Schools are ranked according to the size of the student body. Small schools are those with fewer than 5,000 undergraduates; medium-size schools are those with 5,001 to 15,000 undergraduates; and large schools are those with more than 15,000 undergraduates.

Stitts new Habitat board president

The board of directors of Habitat for Humanity of Forsyth County has elected its 2008 officers and appointed several new members, including Winston-Salem State University professor Kathy Stitts, who will serve as president.



Stitts

The other officers are: Bill Green, vice president; Lou Baldwin, secretary, and David St. Clair, treasurer. Jeff Clark, outgoing president, was named ex-officio.

New members appointed to the board are: Nigel Alston, director of employee/community relations, GMAC Insurance; Jack Curlett, retired executive of the Encore Group; Rose Fitzgerald, a Habitat volunteer; Sister Larretta Rivera-Williams of St. Benedict the Moor Catholic Church; Sandy Perkins Stinson, president of the Neal Place Neighborhood Association; Trent Wall, senior financial analyst with Southern Community Bank and Trust and Jane Williams, a psychologist at the Wake Forest University School of Medicine.

Forsyth AARP chapter will host discussion

The Forsyth AARP Chapter Number 1797 will meet on Tuesday, Feb. 12 at 3:15 p.m. at The Shepherd's Center of Greater Winston-Salem, 1700 Ebert St.

February is American Heart Month, and the program will be presented by Dr. William McCann. He will discuss, "Hard on the Heart: Are Some Emotions Unhealthy?"

Membership is open to all persons 50 years of age and older. National and local AARP members are encouraged to attend. For further details, contact Nancy Hall at 336-765-2215 or nancap@msn.com.

Magazine says NC has great business climate

North Carolina has been named the state with the third-best business climate by Chief Executive magazine, a trade publication for top corporate executives.

The Chief Executive ranking is the latest in a string of accolades for the state. North Carolina has also been cited by Site Selection magazine as the state with the top business climate six of the last seven years and first in the Southeast in attracting new industrial plants; by the accounting firm Ernst & Young for having the lowest business tax burden in the nation; by Forbes Magazine as the third best state for business; and by Development Counsellors International as having the second-most favorable business climate among the 50 states.

"These rankings confirm that North Carolina is the place to be," said Gov. Mike Easley. "Corporate executives know our state is listening to them and we know what they need to succeed."

Chief Executive's "Best & Worst States" survey was conducted earlier this month. It asked 605 top executives to evaluate their states on a broad range of issues including proximity to resources, regulation, tax policies, education, quality of living and infrastructure. North Carolina received an "A-" for its superior living environment and a "B+" both for its taxation and regulation policies and workforce quality.

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