

Kinnaird wins handily; uncontested Orange County representatives look ahead

KINNAIRD BEATS BASS

Democratic incumbent Ellie Kinnaird won a seventh term representing the 23rd District in the N.C. Senate with more than 70 percent of the votes, according to early projections.

Jon "Greg" Bass, a first-time candidate for office, was Kinnaird's Republican challenger.

Kinnaird's goals for this term include funding energy alternatives and conservation, as well as helping the mentally disabled people secure fair competency tests during capital trials.

"My immediate priority is to close the \$2 billion budget deficit and prevent good programs from getting cut," Kinnaird said Tuesday night.

"We want to keep all the programs that help people around. I also plan to launch a juvenile justice bill to help juveniles at risk before they enter the penal system."

In the past, Kinnaird has fought for issues such as one-stop and early voting, environmental regulation and social justice.

She has said she will bring weight and influence to affect policymaking in a way that newcomer Bass could not.

"I like Ellie Kinnaird," said sup-

porter Sunny Marlow, who came out to Spice Street to celebrate Election Night with fellow Orange County Democrats.

"I believe she will do good things for Orange County and continue the spirit of community we have here."

Bass had hoped to steer state lottery funds toward education, provide better salaries for teachers and educators via a beer and cigar tax, and lower corporate and state property taxes.

He was also committed to getting rid of personal and party agendas by ignoring interest groups and lobbyists and listening to the majority opinion of citizens.

SPEAKER JOE HACKNEY

N.C. House Speaker Joe Hackney, D-Orange, was unopposed in the race for the N.C. House of Representatives seat in District 54.

In his fifteenth term, he will seek to move North Carolina toward the increased use of renewable energy.

Hackney's Orange County constituents said they've been impressed with his work.

"Joe Hackney is our hero," said supporter Don Artis.

"Orange County was making up the rules as they went along. We had a land issue, and based on Joe Hackney, it worked out in our favor."

Hackney said state legislators will need to focus on economic issues during the course of their next term.

"We'll be getting together to try to manage the reduction to revenues that we're facing as a result of the recession," he said.

"I'm sure we'll have an agenda to set forth at a later time, but that will be a priority."

REP. VERLA INSKO

Rep. Verla Insko, D-Orange, also ran unopposed, winning a seventh term in District 56 of the N.C. House of Representatives.

Her goals include reforming health care by expanding state coverage for children under the State Children's Health Insurance Plan. She also supports higher salaries for teachers.

During the campaign, Insko stressed the effectiveness of senior House members.

"We have enough seniority that we can actually accomplish things and get bills passed."

She also said that the three unopposed candidates for the N.C. House have been effective representatives for their constituents.

"We reflect the values of our districts," Insko said in reference to fellow legislators Hackney and Faison.

REP. BILL FAISON

Rep. Bill Faison, D-Orange, another unopposed candidate, won a third term in District 50 of the N.C. House of Representatives.

Next session, Faison said he'll focus on supporting legislation that provides incentives for entrepreneurs who create new jobs in the state. He has also pushed for improved high-speed Internet access in rural areas.

"We certainly do have problems with the economy to deal. We certainly have to deal with the funding of school issues," Faison said on Election Night.

"Some schools are underfunded. We have desperate needs for economic development, and we have a continuing health care problem," he said.

-COMPILED BY ASHLEE EDWARDS AND NICOLE FRANCESCHINI

ORANGE COUNTY COMMISSIONER
PELISSIER (D) - 70 %
WOLFF (R) - 30 %

DISTRICT COURT JUDGE — 15B
COLEMAN - 65 %
WOLFENDEN - 35 %

Locals win by large margins

BY MCKAY GLASGOW AND EVAN ROSE
STAFF WRITERS

A new Orange County Commissioner embraced friends and family at the Town Hall Grill in Chapel Hill as results filtered in.

Bernadette Pelissier, a Democrat, beat Republican Kevin Wolff by more than 38 percentage points.

She said she is already looking forward to being a commissioner.

"It's not like, OK now we can party," she said. "I have to say lately I've been anticipating the work."

Pelissier won the race for the at-large seat currently filled by Moses Carey Jr., who lost in a Democratic primary for the N.C. Senate.

In the May primary, Pelissier defeated Mary Wolf, Kevin Wolff's wife, and Rogers Road activist Nelo Jones.



Bernadette Pelissier celebrated winning the commissioner race at Town Hall Grill.



District Court Judge Alonzo Coleman Jr. was re-elected to District 15B and will serve for six months.

This year's race was Kevin Wolff's third attempt at public office. He ran for Chapel Hill mayor in 2005 and 2007, losing both times to current Mayor Kevin Foy.

Wolff could not be reached for further comment.

Pelissier will join two other newcomers to the board, Pam Hemminger and Steve Yuhasz.

Hemminger, who will step down as chairwoman of the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools Board of Education, was unchallenged in the district which includes Chapel Hill and Carrboro.

Yuhasz beat out three other Democrats in May for his seat in the district that encompasses the rest of the county.

No Republican candidate ran against Hemminger or Yuhasz in the general election.

Incumbent Valerie Foushee kept her seat in an unopposed race.

This is the first commissioner election since a 2006 referendum divided Orange County into two voting districts and expanded the board from five to seven members.

The three other commissioners will end their terms in 2010.

Coleman wins, room to spare

Incumbent District Court Judge Alonzo Coleman Jr. was re-elected Tuesday and will continue as District

15B judge for another six months.

"It's nice to have the affirmations of people you've served for almost 13 years," he said. "I hope I can continue to earn their trust."

Coleman defeated challenger and local attorney Betsy Wolfenden by a landslide margin of more than 37 percentage points.

Coleman will hold the seat until he turns 72 in June 2009, when N.C. law will require him to retire and the new governor to appoint a replacement.

Coleman has served as a District 15B judge, hearing cases from Orange and Chatham counties, since former Gov. Jim Hunt appointed him in 1995.

Page Vernon will also join the District 15B bench, filling District Court Judge Patricia DeVine's seat.

"It feels great," she said. "Part of it is excitement and part of it is relief."

Vernon, with more than 25 years of local law experience, won by a wide margin after defense attorney Glenn Gerding conceded in October.

Beverly Scarlett and Chuck Anderson were not challenged in their incumbent bids for district court seats.

Wolfenden, a divorce lawyer for eight years in Orange County, said she is disappointed by the loss but will continue to fight for changes as an attorney.

"We need changes in the court house," she said. "I hope the young lawyers will carry the torch."

Contact the City Editor at citydesk@unc.edu.

Watch parties anticipate results

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Students on campus waited Tuesday night for election results that have kept UNC in a flurry for months.

In the Student Union lounge

Sophomore Doug Olivier said he was confident in the outcome of the election early Tuesday night.

"I think the election is pretty much set in stone — Obama is going to win," Olivier said around 9 p.m.

"I've been following the exit polls, and it looks like Obama will definitely win," Olivier said. "Of course they are not always accurate, but the polls tend to be a good predictor."

Other students said they felt as though student opinions on who would win had been skewed by the environment at UNC.

"We sort of live in an Obama-bubble," said first-year graduate student Ross Twele said.

He said he felt that the displays of support for Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Barack Obama around campus might lead students to believe that he has a secure handle on the state.

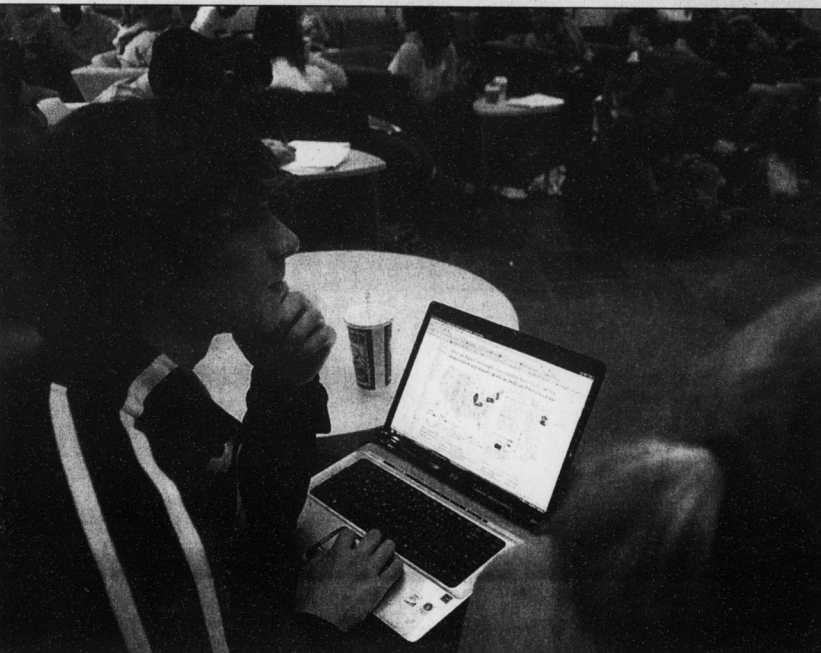
While Obama's supporters have been active on campus, the rest of the state wasn't as clear.

Junior Monica Matta said she was excited about North Carolina's battleground status.

"We have more influence as voters than we have before" she said.

At the Connor watch party

Junior Stacy Ramsey, who was



DTH/JESSE DEARING

Sophomore Philip Curley follows the results on The New York Times' Web site, as he watches election coverage on the TV in the Student Union. UNC students gathered Tuesday night to watch election results.

Carmichael-Whitehead party

And although some students weren't as excited about Obama's prospects, they admitted that he was likely to win.

Sophomore and Carmichael-Whitehead Community Governor Christina Fluet, who organized that community's watch party, said she had no doubts about the outcome of the presidential election.

"Obama will win the state and the presidency hands down, but that's something I'm not exactly excited for," the self-identified McCain supporter said.

The Carmichael-Whitehead party included an "Election Night Extravaganza" contest.

Residents predicted the outcome of the presidential election, and whoever guessed correctly would be awarded a \$25 for dinner at any restaurant on Franklin Street.

Some residents at the watch party didn't vote in this year's election.

Mikel Wein is a first-year student and a member of the Democratic Socialists of America.

STACY RAMSEY, JUNIOR

Wein abstained from voting this year, citing a "lack of choice" among candidates, but has followed the election closely.

"North Carolina is going to go for Obama," he said at about 9 p.m. "But I think McCain will win because predictions have been wrong before."

Staff writers Ian Ager, Chris Kennedy, Roxanne Hernandez and Alli Yingling reported this story. Contact the State & National Editor at stntdesk@unc.edu.

A roundup of state and local election results*

- N.C. SUPREME COURT**
 Robert Edmunds Jr. (I): 51 %
 Suzanne Reynolds: 49 %
 - ATTORNEY GENERAL**
 Roy Cooper (D,I): 61 %
 Bob Crumley (R): 39 %
 - SECRETARY OF STATE**
 Elaine Folk Marshall (D,I): 56 %
 Jack Sawyer (R): 44 %
 - TREASURER**
 Janet Cowell (D): 53 %
 Bill Daughtridge (R,I): 47 %
 - LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR**
 Walter Dalton (D): 50 %
 Robert Pittenger (R): 46 %
 Phillip Rhodes (L): 3 %
 - INSURANCE COMMISSIONER**
 Wayne Goodwin (D): 51 %
 John Odom (R): 45 %
 Mark McMains (L): 4 %
 - SUPERINTENDENT**
 June Atkinson (D,I): 53 %
 Richard Morgan (R): 47 %
 - AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER**
 Steve Troxler (R,I): 52 %
 Ronnie Ansley (D): 48 %
 - LABOR COMMISSIONER**
 Cherie Berry (R,I): 51 %
 Mary Fant Donnan (D): 49 %
 - AUDITOR**
 Beth Wood (D): 53 %
 Leslie Merritt (R,I): 47 %
 - COURT OF APPEALS**
 James (Jim) Wynn (I): 68 %
 Jewel Ann Farlow: 32 %
 - Kristin Ruth: 57 %
 Sam Ervin IV: 43 %
 Cheri Beasley: 71 %
 Doug McCullough (I): 29 %
 Linda Stephens (I): 76 %
 Dan Barrett: 24 %
 John Arrowood (I): 67 %
 Robert N. Hunter Jr: 33 %
- D= Democrat, R= Republican, I= Incumbent
 *results as of 10:30 p.m.

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