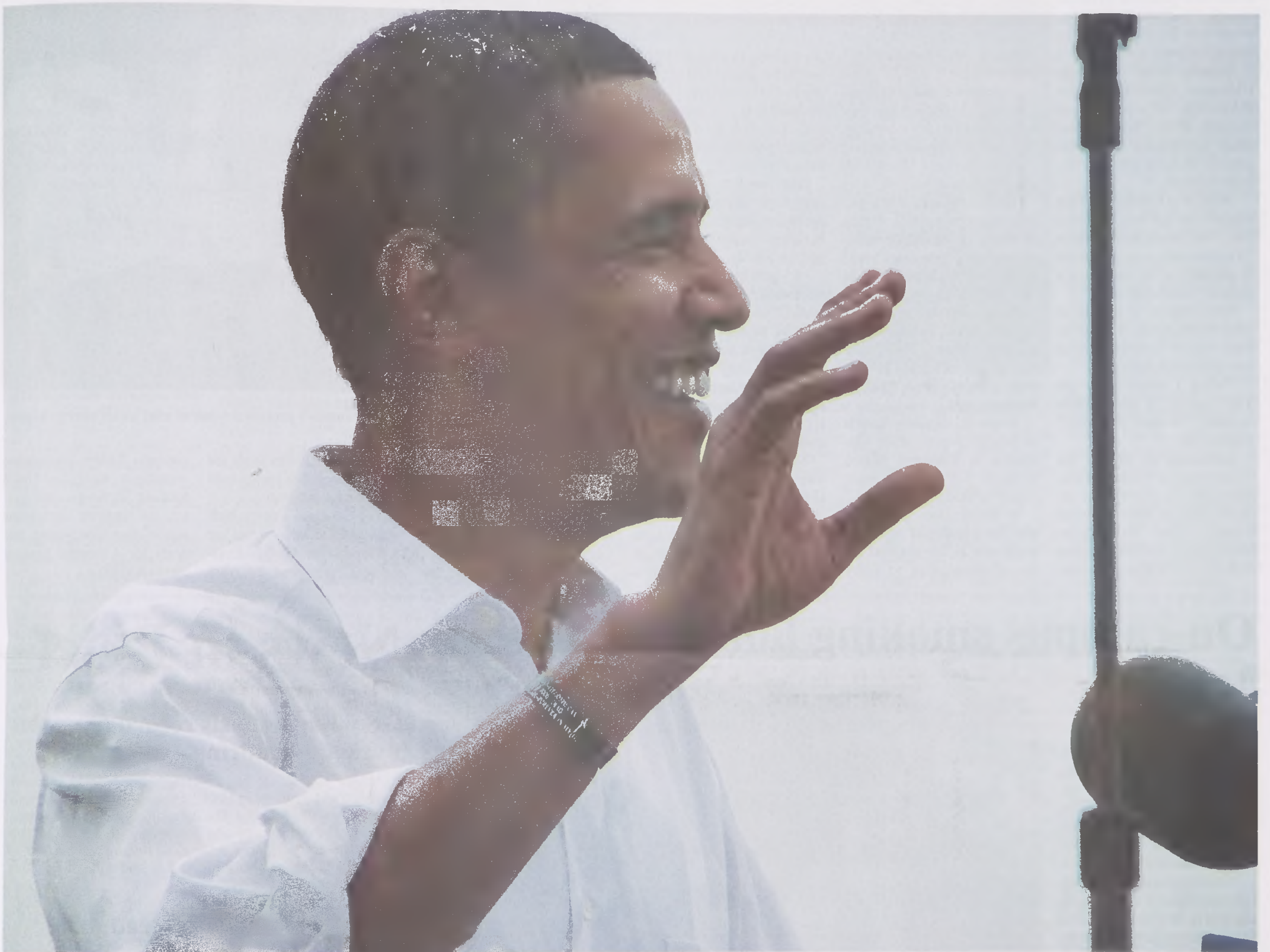




Obama



PHOTOS BY JONATHAN WALCZAK - NEWS EDITOR

Above, President-elect Barack Obama spoke in Greensboro Sept. 27. Both Obama and rival Sen. John McCain fought hard for North Carolina, which Obama won by 11,690 votes out of more than 4 million cast.

Sen. Barack Obama wins the presidency, marking an end to a historic campaign that began 21 months ago

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Americans made history Tuesday, electing Sen. Barack Obama the country's first black president less than forty years after the end of the Civil Rights movement.

"I have cried and am filled with glee that this day has happened in my lifetime," said Vernice Francis, 57, a black office worker from Marion.

Francis attended Mountain View School in Marion until her sophomore year of high school in 1966, when officials integrated local schools.

"I can recall our teachers always telling us 'You can be what you want to be,' but at that time my thoughts didn't include a black person becoming President of the United States," Francis said.

Obama became the first Democrat to carry North Carolina in 32 years, winning by 11,690 votes out of more than

4 million cast.

In addition to winning the presidency, Democrats increased their majorities in both the Senate and House of Representatives.

Tuesday's election capped off the longest presidential campaign in modern American history. Obama announced his candidacy on Feb. 10, 2007.

Obama fought Sen. Hillary Clinton, among others, for the Democratic nomination, and did not become the nominee until June.

"I think Barack Obama winning this election is one of the monumental points in the history of our nation," said George Dobson, a UNC Asheville junior on leave. "He's going to reform Washington not only as the first black president, but he'll also go down as one of the best presidents we've had in a long time, I think."

Obama led rival Sen. John McCain in most polls this year. McCain jumped ahead

of Obama for about two weeks in early September, following the selection of Gov. Sarah Palin as his running mate.

In mid-September, the stock market began shedding thousands of points, and Obama soon had a double-digit lead over McCain, with voters focusing on the economy.

Obama won in a landslide, capturing 364 electoral votes, capturing perennial battleground states such as Ohio and Florida as well as several traditional Republican states.

North Carolina's emergence as a battleground state this year surprised experts. The last time the state went 'blue' was in 1976 when voters chose Jimmy Carter.

Obama and McCain fought hard for the states' 15 electoral votes. Obama paid particular attention to the state, last campaigning Monday in Charlotte on the eve of the election.

While the crowd waited Monday in a cold rain, news



PHOTOS BY JONATHAN WALCZAK - NEWS EDITOR

Obama spoke Monday in Charlotte 12 hours before polls opened in North Carolina. He began crying at one point while talking about his grandmother who died that morning.

spread that Obama's 86-year-old grandmother died that morning.

Obama's will be inaugurated Jan. 20, 2009. McCain now returns to the Senate to finish his current term, which ends in 2010.

"If there is anyone out there

who still doubts that America is a place where all things are possible; who still wonders if the dream of our founders is alive in our time; who still questions the power of our democracy, tonight is your answer," Obama said in his victory speech Tuesday night.

Obama in N.C.

Nov. 3- Obama holds his second to last campaign rally in Charlotte, following news that morning of his grandmother's death.

Oct. 29- Obama speaks in Raleigh.

Oct. 19- Obama holds a rally in Fayetteville.

Oct. 5- Obama holds a rally at Asheville High School, speaking to an estimated crowd of 28,000 supporters.

Sept. 27- Obama speaks in Greensboro hours after the first presidential debate.

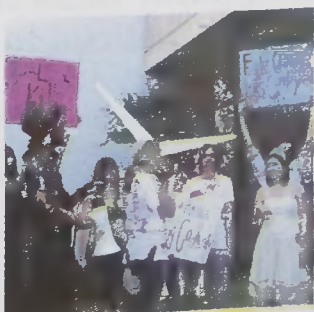
Sept. 21- Obama holds a rally in Charlotte.

June 9- Obama gives his first general election speech in Raleigh, focusing primarily on the economy.

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