

County parties, officials GOP takes hold of Senate

gather for Election Day

BY EREN TATARAGASI
STAFF WRITER

As results from Tuesday's elections trickled in, Orange County politicians and party officials mingled at local hot spots, counting red states and blue states along with the rest of the country.

The Orange County Republican Party hosted a party at its headquarters in Hillsborough, welcoming any and all supporters as they gathered around a television to watch the results pour in.

Election officials from county precincts came in as soon as they had finished tallying the results.

Wendy Browning, a volunteer at the Eno precinct in Hillsborough, came with good news.

"Everything went really well. This was my first year involved in the election process, and it just goes to show every vote really does count," she said.

Republican Party Chairman Doug Bidy said the party was a way to release tension after months of hard work.

"Voters in America are putting their personal safety and their children's safety in the hands of an experienced president," he said, referring to President Bush.

Jamie Daniel, Republican candidate for the Orange County Board of Commissioners, was at the party.

"This night's been fun. It's fun to get together with your friends and family and see the work we've been doing for the last six months come together," he said.

The Orange County Democrats made their presence known in downtown Carrboro at several local bars. The Orange County Social Club was the site of a huge crowd surrounding a big screen, which flashed election results from CNN.



DTH/MIKE RAABE

A large group gathers at the Orange County Social Club in Carrboro on Tuesday night to watch a big screen TV as poll results are updated.

Carrboro Alderman Alex Zaffron said the atmosphere was stressful. "There is tension in the air," he said.

Appearances were made by Carrboro Mayor Mike Nelson and Chapel Hill Town Council member Mark Kleinschmidt at the social club, Tyler's Restaurant & Taproom, Spotted Dog Restaurant & Bar and Acme Food & Beverage Co., all in Carrboro.

Nelson said this year's election was particularly important.

"Mr. Bush has proven himself to be an incompetent leader, and we can't afford to have him running our domestic and foreign policy," Nelson said.

Kleinschmidt said he was out doing his civic duty. "I have been working very hard to educate my friends and family on how important this election is."

Alderman John Herrera was con-

cerned with the county commissioners election because of his interest in the county's education.

With the big issue being a merger of the county's two school systems, he said he supported Democratic candidates Moses Carey and Valerie Foushee.

"I am excited about today. We need a change, and I believe Kerry is that opportunity," Herrera said.

At one point, the Tyler's crowd made its way to Spice Street at University Mall.

The restaurant was packed with Democratic Party volunteers, aldermen, Town Council members and their friends and family.

Everybody seemed pleased with the turnout at the polls, with some reporting an 80 percent to 90 percent turnout at each county precinct.

Democratic Party Chairman Barry Katz said the county Democratic Party will stay open for the next two weeks to analyze what it's done to set the course for Democrats in the county.

"We will have an active Democratic Party every month of every year shaping and organizing for the 2006 and 2008 elections," Katz said.

Contact the City Editor at citydesk@unc.edu.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON, D.C., — Republicans tightened their grip on the Senate early Wednesday, capturing a string of Democratic seats across the South. Democratic leader Tom Daschle struggled for political survival in South Dakota.

Illinois State Sen. Barack Obama, a Democratic political star in the making, easily won a seat formerly in Republican hands in Illinois, and will be the only black among 100 senators when the new Congress convenes in January.

The GOP did most of the celebrating by far, capturing Democratic open seats in Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Louisiana — where Rep. David Vitter became the first Republican since Reconstruction to win a term in the Senate.

"We ran as a team," said Sen. George Allen of Virginia, chairman of the GOP senatorial committee. He referred to Republicans who ran for open seats across the South and West, campaigning as allies of President Bush in states where Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry had little or no campaign presence.

"It looks like we're going to have a much strengthened Republican majority," Allen predicted.

Exactly how much depended on the outcome of races still unsettled in Florida, Colorado, Alaska and South Dakota.

Shortly after midnight in the East, Republicans were assured of 52 seats, one more than they control in the current Congress.

The Republican march through Dixie began in Georgia, and spread in several directions at once.

Rep. Johnny Isakson claimed Georgia for the Republicans, and Rep. Jim DeMint took South Carolina.

Rep. Richard Burr soon followed suit in North Carolina by defeating investment banker Erskine Bowles' second try at a Senate seat in two election cycles.

Vitter made it four for four when he captured a seat in Louisiana.

In each case, Democratic retirements induced ambitious lawmakers to give up safe House seats to risk a run for the Senate.

In Florida, former HUD Secretary Mel Martinez held a narrow lead over Betty Castor, a former state legislator and University

of South Florida president, with votes counted in more than 90 percent of the precincts.

In North Carolina, Burr gained the votes of nearly nine in 10 of Bush's supporters. Vitter's level of support was nearly as high in Louisiana, as was DeMint's in South Carolina.

Republicans defeated four veteran Texas Democrats and snatched an open Democratic seat in Kentucky on Tuesday as they marched to the brink of extending their decade-long control of the House.

Democrats answered back in House races, knocking off the longest-serving Republican in the chamber, Rep. Phil Crane, an Illinois conservative from Chicago's wealthy suburbs.

But their longshot chance of gaining 12 seats to end Republican command seemed dead with less than three dozen of the 435 House races still to be decided.

"Despite Democratic claims to the contrary, we are going to be the majority party in the 109th Congress," declared Rep. Thomas Reynolds, R-N.Y., who heads the GOP's House campaign operation.

Groups rush for final votes

BY GEORGIA CHERRY
AND CAROLINE KORNEGAY
STAFF WRITER

As the candidates entered the home stretch of this year's campaign season, Democrat and Republican volunteers at UNC threw themselves into efforts aimed at party victory.

More than 100 College Republicans volunteered for countless hours as they campaigned for the Republican Party last weekend, fighting against the ticking clock of a waning election season.

Tom Jensen, party affairs director of the Young Democrats, said Tuesday that he and the almost 100 other volunteers for the UNC Young Democrats will finally be able to sleep today.

A process that started months ago peaked Tuesday as the group made its final push for votes, Jensen said.

Jensen woke up early Tuesday morning to oversee the Young Democrats' multifaceted approach

to facilitate voting.

One focus centered on canvassing Durham County voting precincts. Jensen said the group decided to solicit voters from Durham residents because Orange County's population already was well-informed and prepared.

"We had 22 people at 6:30 a.m. going to Durham to volunteer. ... It was amazing," he said.

But Durham County was already well staffed, so Young Democrats decided to send their extra volunteers to Wake County.

Armed with a list of students registered as Democrats, the volunteers made efforts to find the 316 students who had not voted as of Tuesday.

The Young Democrats visited each student's room to make sure he had cast a ballot.

"We will physically drag folks to the shuttles, making sure they really are going to vote," Jensen said.

Along with the list of registered Democrats, Young Democrats also had the list of unaffiliated voters,

and aimed to get them to vote for Democratic candidates as well.

"We're going to every Democratic student's room, and we're calling every unaffiliated," Jensen said. "I think the unaffiliated will support our candidates, too."

Politicos on the other end of the spectrum also worked to increase voter turnout.

Andrew Hogan, a College Republican for the past two years, spent his weekend canvassing parts of Wake County in search of "lazy Republicans" — registered but inactive members of the party.

"It was good to work for the Bush campaign but also just to meet people," Hogan said.

College Republicans were handed maps of neighborhoods and told to leave fliers on doors if no one answered.

"You don't know what to expect when the door opens," he said.

Hogan said everyone he spoke to had a positive attitude. "That gave me encouragement."

College Republican member Richard Bean spent eight hours a day on Friday, Saturday and Sunday with other members of the group, knocking on doors in Wake and Durham counties.

"In 2000 the Democrats had a really great ground game," Bean said of the grassroots efforts to attract Democratic voters. "It's so close — we really need to get all the Republicans to vote."

Bean said that UNC had the most volunteers of any school that participated in the get-out-the-vote effort for the Republican party.

Sarah Wiles, another College Republican, has worked in other general elections and said she enjoyed campaigning during a presidential election year. "It made me get really in the democratic spirit, so to speak."

Young Democrats stationed a table in the Pit from 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. to distribute voting information. Members said the group's biggest task of the day was their "Get Out the Vote" campaign.

The group also collaborated with VoteCarolina, student government's nonpartisan voter drive, to provide transportation for students who needed to get to the polls.

Contact the University Editor at udesk@unc.edu.

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CORRECTIONS

■ Due to a reporting error, the Nov. 2 article "Group swaps funds, votes" stated that the Citizens for Higher Education political action committee has raised about \$184,000 during this campaign cycle.

It should have stated that the PAC has raised about \$414,000 during this cycle.

The \$184,000 figure was from the third-quarter filing period.

■ Due to a reporting error, the Nov. 2 article "Humor unites improv troupe" spelled incorrectly the name of CHiPs member David Siegel.

To report corrections, contact Managing Editor Chris Coletta at cocoletta@email.unc.edu.

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Advertising & Business, 962-1163
News, Features, Sports, 962-0245

One copy per person; additional copies may be purchased at The Daily Tar Heel for \$25 each.

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