

# Ash Gets New Mayor, Squads Get Windfall

**BY MARJORIE MEGIVERN**  
Cecilia Gore, familiarly known as CeCe, lost her bid for re-election as mayor of Ash Saturday to Ellis Gore, whom she defeated last year.

It was a close race, with 514 votes for the winner and 487 for the incumbent. Just 16 votes behind CeCe was Jeannette King, who entered the race only two weeks ago.

The big winner was the Waccamaw fire and rescue squads that netted over \$1,500 from the 25-cent ballots purchased for candidates. Another \$100 from food sales went into their treasury.

Gore was the first female mayor in the seven-year history of the elections, and claimed she would have triumphed again had last-minute telephone pledges been counted.

"There was \$37 phoned in for me, and \$2 for each of the other candidates," she said, "and the officials asked me if we should count them, but since I had the most, I didn't want to make the decision."

Officers of the squads and the ladies auxiliary decided not to count the pledges as votes. "We'd never had them come in before and felt like it wouldn't be right to count them this time," said Junior Dowell, fire and rescue president.

The Waccamaw fire and rescue squad building on Hwy. 130, scene of the election, was a lively as more than 50 community residents gathered to watch the political fireworks.

Amid charges that the incumbent mayor had kept none of her campaign promises, the chief challenger made plenty of his own. Swaggering to the microphone in dark glasses and a feather-trimmed gold cowboy hat, he announced, "There are two things we've got to do: we got to get wet Ash snagged out, and we gotta move I-40 that Mayor Gore gave us last year." He went on to suggest an airport be built in Ash, as well.

King, casually dressed in shorts and knit pullover, was projecting nothing. "You won't find out till this night's over what I can do," she said, clutching her bag of money, which she refused to turn in until the last minute.

She confided later to the Beacon, "I entered this because so many people don't like me, I figured that would make them spend more money for the others."

Mayor Gore, feminine in a pale

blue, lace-trimmed jumpsuit, defended her record defiantly.

"What did I do for you this year?" she asked. "Exactly what I promised...nothing. But I have got a road in the process of being paved, and I've answered letters from school children wanting information about Ash. I've had only one complaint during my term, and I handled that."

Raymond Babson, an argumentative constituent throughout the evening, challenged her. "You said last year that if I'd support you, you'd jump out of a cake, and you didn't do it."

Mayor Gore had no comment. Babson complained in an aside, "We've never had an honest mayor. They all absconded with funds and went to South America."

When the votes were counted, the government of Ash returned to male hands. Ellis Gore was sworn in by Billy Hughes and Gilbert Milligan, and made his final promise: "I'll build a park for the drunks, to get them off the road."

The defeated incumbent said later, "I don't consider myself a loser. I was an honest person among politicians and they couldn't take honesty. But when I've run for office, fire and rescue won more than they ever have."

Milligan, who instigated the mayor's election as a fund-raiser for the two squads, said it all began in

1978 as a Miss Flame contest, with male contestants.

"The first election was held in 1980 in Major White's store, and 35 votes were cast," he said.

Since that time only one mayor, the late Charlie Gore, has won re-election, and one, the late Boyd Lee Smith, failed to show up to be sworn in.

Whatever else is achieved by the election, it provides a celebration for the community, with hot dogs, strawberry short cake, coffee and soft drinks for sale, and lively music for dancing.

Musicians who entertained Saturday were Rick Johnstone, Bunk Hewett, Ray Turner, Frank Brown, and Etheridge Hewett.

A quilt raffled by the ladies auxiliary was won by Major White.



STAFF PHOTOS BY MARJORIE MEGIVERN  
MAYOR ELLIS GORE (left) is pretty happy about his election, which has just been announced by Billy Hughes of the Waccamaw fire and rescue squad.



TWO-YEAR-OLD JASON INMAN grins happily as he does away with a big hot dog at Saturday's election in Ash.

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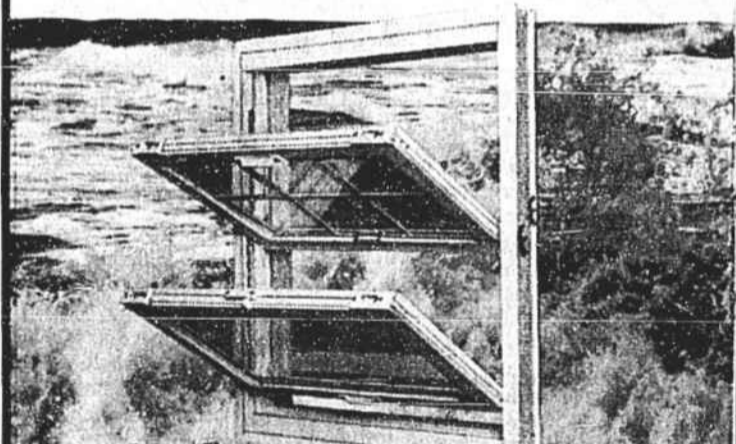
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