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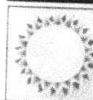
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More Antelope Valley People Read the Valley

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TODAY'S OUTLOOK



Mostly clear. Highs in lower 60s. Lows in upper 30s. West winds 15 to 25 mph.

WEATHER: C8

LOTTO: B1

Obama elected, one for history books

First Dems controlled White House, Congress since '94

Election 2008

Valley Press staff and wire services

WASHINGTON — Barack Obama swept to victory as the nation's first black president Tuesday night in an electoral college landslide that overcame racial barriers as old as America itself.

"Change has come," he told a jubilant hometown Chicago crowd estimated at nearly a quarter-million people.

The son of a black father from Kenya and a white mother from Kansas, the Democratic senator from Illinois sealed his historic triumph by defeating Republican Sen. John McCain in a string of wins in hard-fought battleground states — Ohio, Florida, Iowa and more.

He captured Virginia, too, the first candidate of his party in 44 years to do so.

On a night for Democrats to savor, they not only elected Obama the nation's 44th president but padded their majorities in the House and Senate, and in January will control both the White House and Congress for the first time since 1994.

A survey of voters leaving polling places showed the economy was by far the top Election Day issue. Six in 10 voters said so, and none of the other top issues — energy, Iraq, terrorism and health care — was picked by more than one in 10.

Obama's election capped a meteoric rise — from mere state senator to president-elect in four years.

Spontaneous celebrations erupt

ed from Atlanta to New York and Philadelphia as word of Obama's victory spread. A big crowd filled Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House.

In the traditionally conservative Antelope Valley, more than 100 Democrats celebrated Obama's victory at the Hilton Garden Inn in Palmdale.

"It's better than landing on the moon," said Andy Geist, a member of the Antelope Valley Human Relations Task Force.

His husband, Bob Forshay, called Obama's election a "historic moment" and said he wouldn't have believed it to be possible a few years ago.

See OBAMA on A4



HARD FOUGHT VICTORY

President-elect Barack Obama, left, his wife Michelle Obama, right, and two daughters, Malia, 7, and Sasha, 6, on the campaign trail in Chicago. Associated Press

Both parties find something to cheer in AV Early votes

Local leaders spin national, state results

By JULIE DRAKE and JAMES RUFUS KOREN
Valley Press Staff Writers

PALMDALE — Members of the Antelope Valley Republican and Democratic parties had something to cheer about Tuesday night as Democrat Barack Obama rolled to a decisive victory over Republican John McCain, while Palmdale Mayor Pro Tem Steve Knight appeared headed toward victory in the 36th Assembly District race based on early election results.

Republicans gathered at Steer 'n' Stein Restaurant & Catering while Democrats held their Election Night party at the Hilton Garden Inn.

The television screens at the Steer 'n' Stein brought gloomy news for Republicans as the cable news channel reported Obama's victory. Guests included Knight's friends, family and supporters who not only worked on Knight's behalf but also in support of Republican John McCain.

Any excitement or joy over early results that leaned heavily in Knight's favor for the Assembly race were tempered by the reality that their presidential candidate lost in his bid to become the nation's 44th president.

Among the approximately 125 people gathered at the restaurant included Palmdale City Councilmen Mike Dispenza and Tom Lackey, Larry Grooms, an aide to Assemblywoman Sharon Runner, B-Lancaster, Lancaster Vice Mayor Ron Smith, and Isaac Barcelona, president of



ELECTION KNIGHT — Thirty-sixth District Assembly candidate Steve Knight, left, chats Tuesday with a childhood friend while supporter David Orsco looks up results on his Blackberry at Knight's election party at the Steer 'n' Stein.

the Antelope Valley Republican Assembly. Many of the women in the side room wore bright red sweaters or jackets reminiscent of McCain's running mate, Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin.

The guests sat at long tables covered with white table cloths and red and blue runners down the middle. The banquet-style dinners included

buffalo-wing chicken kebabs, spanakopita and salads, as well as some beer.

"I'm a little disappointed with what's going on in the presidential race, but we've got to keep an eye on some of the Senate races and Congressional races. ... As long as Al Franken doesn't get in," Knight said.

With regard to the presidential

race, Knight said he did not think it was proper for the networks to call races in states where at least 1% of precincts were reporting.

"I'm not real happy with that part but there's a lot of local issues, there's a lot of propositions that we're excited about," he said.

Knight was pleased with the early results from his own contest for state

assembly and for state ballot measures such as Propositions 4 and 8.

Early results showed Knight ahead with 7,908 votes or 63.27% compared to 4,591 votes or 36.73% for Democrat Linda K. Jones, with 17 of 138 precincts reporting.

"So far I'm very happy with that."

See PARTIES on A4

see Knight in the lead

By JAMES RUFUS KOREN
Valley Press Staff Writer

PALMDALE — The race between Steve Knight and Linda Jones for the 36th District State Assembly seat saw Knight holding a lead in early vote tallies and Jones gaining ground as more precincts were counted.

With absentee ballots counted

See KNIGHT on A5



KNIGHT

JONES

Up-to-the-minute results from elections might slow delivery

Because of efforts to provide readers the most up-to-date results from Tuesday's presidential, state and local elections, some Antelope Valley Press subscribers may receive their papers later than usual this morning. Updated election results will be posted this morning on the Valley Press Web site at www.avpress.com and will be published in Thursday's edition.

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Water boards poised to see change

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