

Official predicts higher-than-usual turnout at the polls

Some heated election campaigns and hotly debated issues have given the local election official reason to believe that the voter turnout today will be higher than usual.

Elaine Usher, Lancaster County election commissioner, said she expects that about 65 percent of the registered voters in Lancaster County, or roughly 65,000 people,



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will go to the polls, which are open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. The predicted turnout is high for a non-presidential voting year, she said, comparing it to the 59 percent turnout in 1978.

The governor's race has been in the spotlight during the campaign, with Gov. Charles Thone being strongly challenged by Democratic candidate Bob Kerrey.

Kerrey, 39, who lists his address as 1955 C St., Lincoln, owns the Grandmother's restaurants in Omaha and Lincoln.

Thone, 58, was elected to his first term as governor in 1978. Before that, he served in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1970 to 1978.

Some opinion polls have shown Kerrey as the leader in the election race, while others have favored Thone.

In the Senate race, Democratic incumbent Edward Zorinsky is challenged by Jim Keck, the Republican candidate, and Virginia Walsh, an independent candidate.

Congressional races

Republican Doug Bereuter is defending his 1st District House of Representatives seat against Curt Donaldson, the Democratic challenger.

Hal Daub is the one-term incumbent in the 2nd District race. Daub, a Republican, is challenged by Democrat Dick Fellman.

Paul Douglas is the heavy favorite in the state attorney general race. Douglas was elected attorney general in 1974 and re-elected in 1978.

Ernie Chambers, who earned a place on the ballot by petition, has been a state senator since 1970.

Three state senator positions are up for election in Lincoln, as three one-term incumbents attempt to hold their office. In District 26, Don Wesely, the incumbent, and Jim Brown are vying for the office.

Chris Beutler is the incumbent against John Butler in the District 28 race, while David Landis is challenged by Stanley Heider in District 46.

Four NU Board of Regents positions are up for election.

Don Dworak of Columbus and Margaret Robinson of Norfolk are running for the 3rd District spot vacated by Kermit Wagner of Schuyler.

Incumbents seek re-election

In the 4th, 5th and 8th District regent races, incumbents who have been in office since 1970 are seeking their third term.

Nancy Hoch of Nebraska City opposes Regent Robert Prokop of Wilber in District 4, while Regent Roger Koeft of Grand Island is challenged by James Norton of David City in District 5. Regent James Moylan of Omaha is the incumbent in District 8 and is challenged by Sharon Donnermeyer Jackson, also of Omaha.

The hottest issue in this year's election probably is Initiative 300. The initiative is a proposed amendment to the state constitution that would prohibit non-family corporations from buying more Nebraska farmland.

Polls have shown the numbers supporting and opposing the amendment are about even.

In both the governor's race and the Initiative 300 amendment, there is a large number of undecided voters.

Because of the controversy surrounding these two votes and the accompanying publicity, the voter turnout probably will be higher than usual, Usher said.

Most UNL students living on campus are in District 18, which has its polling place located at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

Questions about polling places and disabled voting can be referred to the Lancaster County election commissioner's office, 471-7311.



The messages on these campaign signs in southeast Lincoln will have lost their significance after ballots are tallied tonight. Polls close at 8 p.m.

Staff Photo by Craig Anderson

Kerrey wins in student survey

The majority of UNL students contacted in a recent random telephone survey said they will support Democratic gubernatorial candidate Bob Kerrey rather than Republican Gov. Charles Thone in today's elections.

The Daily Nebraskan surveyed 196 UNL students Wednesday and Thursday. The students' names and telephone numbers were released by the UNL administration.

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The respondents were asked who they will vote for in the races for governor, attorney general and U.S. senator. They also were asked why they support Kerrey or Thone for governor.

Only registered voters were surveyed.

Fifty-three percent of those surveyed said they will vote for Kerrey and 30 percent said they will vote for Thone. Fifteen percent said they were undecided, while 1.5 percent said they did not know the candidates well enough to give an answer. Of the remaining 0.5 percent, one person said he will not vote for either candidate and one person said she will write in a third option.

Democratic Sen. Edward Zorinsky received the majority of support in the race for U.S. senator with 53 percent of those surveyed saying they will vote for him. Petition candidate Virginia Walsh received support from 12 percent of those polled, while Republican candidate James Keck was backed by 9 percent. Seven percent of the students said they were undecided and 19 percent said they did not know the candidates well enough to decide.

In the attorney general race, incumbent Republican Paul Douglas led with support from 43 percent of the students surveyed. Independent petition candidate Omaha Sen. Ernie Chambers had 18 percent. Twenty-four percent of the students said they were undecided, while 15 percent said they did not know the candidates well enough to decide.

Most of the students surveyed said their choice for

governor hinged on whether they approve or disapprove of Thone's record as governor. When asked why they will vote for Kerrey or Thone, most students cited both positive and negative aspects of the Thone administration.

Steve Showalter, a junior natural resources major, said he will vote to re-elect the governor because "Thone has done a pretty good job so far with agriculture and natural resources."

Jacqueline Shepperd, a senior majoring in fashion merchandising, also praised Thone's stance on agriculture.

Suzanne Nelson, a junior broadcasting major, said she will vote for Kerrey because he is more liberal than Thone.

Brent Buckley, an animal science graduate student, said he will vote for Kerrey because of Thone's treatment of the university budget.

"It doesn't seem as though Thone has done much about funding at the University of Nebraska," he said. "I hope Kerrey will."

Kerrey's support was largely bipartisan, with 45 percent coming from Democrats and 41 percent from Republicans. Thirteen percent of Kerrey's supporters were registered independent and 1 percent claimed another party. Fifty-five percent of Kerrey's supporters were women.

Thone's support came mostly from the Republicans. Survey results showed that 90 percent of the respondents were Republican, 5 percent were Democrats, 3 percent were independents and 2 percent came from other parties. Sixty percent of Thone's support came from men.

The majority of Zorinsky's support came from Republicans with 62 percent. Twenty-six percent of the respondents favoring him were Democrats and 11 percent were independents. Sixty percent of his supporters were men.

Seventy-one percent of Walsh's supporters were Democrats, 17 percent were Republicans and 12 percent were independents. Fifty-eight percent of her support came from women.

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Poll: Kerrey is gubernatorial favorite

A survey of Lincoln residents conducted by UNL professor of political science John Comer's Public Opinion class indicates that 54.7 percent of the 380 people polled would vote for Bob Kerrey for governor, 34.8 percent would vote to re-elect Gov. Charles Thone and 10.5 percent were undecided.

The poll, which has been conducted by the class for the past five years, has a 5 percent margin of error and is conducted in the same manner as a professional poll, Comer said.

A majority of the people surveyed were in the 18- to -45 age group and had a high level of education, so the poll does have a slight bias, he said. In selecting people to be interviewed, the 38 students randomly chose 10 telephone numbers. Each student contributed questions about topics in the news and the elections.

Economics, farm production, state finances and the election were the issues people believed most important. Of those polled, 61.5 percent thought Kerrey would be better able to handle these problems

and 38.5 thought Thone would.

Newspapers and television were the main sources of information for the 52.9 percent that followed the election "scmewhat," the 25.3 percent that followed it "very much" and the 21.8 percent that followed the election "not much at all."

The poll also asked residents about the 1984 presidential elections. President Reagan or a Republican candidate would be supported by 35.3 percent of those polled. However, Republican opposition was registered by 37.2 percent of those polled, and 27.5 percent were undecided.

Comer said the poll is conducted using the same mechanics as many social science research projects. He said it is used only as a learning device in the class, not to determine the outcome of an election.

The project counts as a fourth of a student's grade, Comer said. Professional companies doing the research could be paid from \$60,000 to \$100,000 for the work, he said.