

O'Brien, Sapp match strides in District 2 regent race

By Tabitha Hiner and Anita Parker
Staff Reporters

Guests at Nancy O'Brien's election party Tuesday night shook her hand and wished her luck before leaving, but they didn't know if she had won a seat on the NU Board of Regents.

O'Brien started out the evening trailing her opponent Lee Sapp in the District 2 regent race by 1,308 votes.

But with about 90 percent of the votes counted, O'Brien led Sapp in the tight race by 401 votes. O'Brien had 33,076 to Sapp's 32,675.

While O'Brien had appeared nervous at the beginning of the night, she was optimistic after announcing her narrow lead.

"I think I'm going to win," she said. But "it's not all over until it's over and I don't think we'll know until Thursday."

O'Brien said she thought absentee ballots and the final 10 percent of the uncounted votes would mean victory for her if the upward trend continued.

Sapp said that he did not expect the numbers to be so close.

"I guess since this was my first time running I was overconfident," Sapp said.

O'Brien attributed her lead to "hard work." She said that meeting people and getting her position on issues known was beneficial.

She said she had known that the race was going to be close because even though Sapp was inexperienced, he had spent five times as much money on the campaign as she had. O'Brien said that she spent about \$10,000 while Sapp spent about \$50,000.

"I think money is the big issue," she said. "To do TV ads in a regents race is unusual."

O'Brien said she did not think Sapp was prepared to be a regent. "He wants to run the university like a business," she said. "If you try to set it up like a business, it's not going to work."

Sapp said he felt positive about the race so far, although his opponent was qualified.

Opposing stands on the Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education could have contributed to the closeness of the race, Sapp said. O'Brien supported the coordinating commission, while Sapp opposed it.

"We pretty much agreed on everything except for the central committee issue," Sapp said. "With a situation like that it's just up to the voters."



O'Brien



Sapp

Powell upset by Wilson in Lincoln regent race

By James P. Webb and Alan Phelps
Staff Reporters

A Lincoln cardiologist won Tuesday's race between two political unknowns for the District 1 seat on the NU Board of Regents.

Chuck Wilson upset Dick Powell 56 percent to 44 percent, 12,093 to 15,235 votes.

In between fistfuls of popcorn and premature congratulations from about 70 supporters at Brittany's Restaurant, 227 N. 9th St., Wilson kept close tabs on the race between himself and Powell.

Wilson and his wife Linda talked with campaign workers and supporters at the reception celebrating more than a year's work.

Each time the local news announced election returns without giving figures for the regent race, the crowd booed.

Then, at 8:50 p.m., the barroom conversation was stilled as the next announcement came. A round of applause greeted news of Wilson's 3,000-vote lead.

After his victory speech at about 10 p.m., a supporter asked Wilson if the signs for his campaign should be saved for his next race. Wilson responded, "I don't want to even think about another race right now."

News of Powell's defeat was heard by a group of about 45 supporters gathered in the lower level of Lincoln's Clayton House, 10th and O streets.

"Well, we sure made an effort to take our message to the people," Powell said. "We're not going to finish first as we would like to, but my opponent is a good adversary and he'll serve the university well," he said.

Powell said Wilson won because he outspent him two-to-one and also had more newspaper endorsements.

"A lot of people don't know what the regents are," Powell said. In such a situation, he said, people look to other sources, such as newspapers, to tell them who to vote for.

Despite the loss, Powell said, he and his family were holding their heads high.

"I feel good and my family feels good about what we've done... we've run a clean

See DISTRICT 1 on 8



Powell



Wilson

Early results show defeat of slot-machine proposal

OMAHA (AP) — Unofficial tallies Tuesday showed a sound rejection of a proposal allowing bars and non-profit groups to operate video slot machines.

And, a proposal to create an appellate court designed to ease the caseload for the state Supreme Court appeared headed for victory Tuesday.

With 65 percent of the precincts reporting, votes against Initiative 404, the video slot proposal, totaled 205,693, or 66 percent and votes in favor of the measure stood at 107,851, or 34 percent.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars and lobbyist John DeCamp led the petition drive to put the issue on the ballot.

To be passed, the ballot measure needed a majority of the vote plus at least 35 percent of the total votes cast in the election. Total votes cast includes absentee ballots that may not be counted for several days.

A state senator who opposed Amendment 2, the measure to allow the Legislature to create an intermediate appellate court, said it might result in "a battle royal" in the Nebraska Legislature.

State Sen. Ernie Chambers of Omaha has opposed the move, saying he doesn't trust the Legislature to retain the right to a Supreme Court appeal for people convicted of felonies.

According to incomplete results, 172,477 people, 68 percent, voted for the measure, while 80,423 people, 32 percent, voted against the proposal.

The ballot measure needed a majority of the vote plus at least 35 percent of the total votes cast in the election. Total votes cast includes absentee ballots that may not be

counted for days.

Chambers said, "this vote is only the preliminary, the main event comes during the legislative session."

Referendum 406, the question of repeal of LB1059, the school-finance law, received the support of 53 percent of the voters in early returns.

In Nebraska's 1st Congressional District, Republican U.S. Rep. Doug Bereuter won his seventh House term on Tuesday, defeating Democratic farm activist Larry Hall.

Bereuter had 45,723 votes, or 64 percent, to Larry Hall's 25,464 votes, or 36 percent, according to incomplete returns.

"I think it's reasonable to assume it is a victory," Bereuter said.

Incumbent Democrat U.S. Rep. Peter Hoagland defeated challenger Ally Milder for the 2nd Congressional District seat.

Early returns showed Hoagland leading Milder, 57 percent to 43 percent.

In Nebraska's 3rd Congressional District, two state senators were locked in a tight race to replace a political legend.

Republican Bill Barrett of Lexington had 59,470 votes, or 51 percent, to Democrat Sandy Scofield of Chadron's 57,739 votes, or 49 percent, according to incomplete returns.

Barrett said his primary strength lies in the eastern and central parts of the sprawling, heavily-Republican district. Scofield said she felt her campaign could make up the difference in early returns.

Barrett relied largely on the endorsement of Rep. Virginia Smith, R-Neb., who is retiring after 16 years in the House.

State treasurer, auditor challengers win Incumbents beat by 2-1 margins

The Associated Press
Two Democratic candidates for statewide constitutional office made history Tuesday night.

In a move unprecedented in 30 years, state treasurer candidate Dawn Rockey and auditor candidate John Breslow turned out the incumbents by nearly two-to-one margins.

With 62 percent of the state's 1,892 precincts reporting, Rockey had 66 percent of the unofficial vote tally — 182,267 votes — to 34 percent, or 93,412 votes for incumbent Frank Marsh, who is facing a felony theft charge.

Breslow had 68 percent of the vote — 155,738 — to incumbent Ray A.C. Johnson's 32 percent — 72,412, with 54 percent of the precincts unofficially counted.

If she's certified the winner, Rockey, who turns 29 Monday, would tie the record for the youngest elected con-

stitutional officer in the state. Ironically, that record was set by Marsh, who was 29 when he succeeded his father as secretary of state in 1952.

"I plan to hit the ground running. I

— 66 —

I plan to hit the ground running.

Rockey
state treasurer-elect

— 99 —

want to sit down next week with all the groups that do business with the treasurer's office and find out what needs to be changed," Rockey said.

Rockey is an administrative assistant to state Sen. Ron Withem of Papillion. She also served as a legis-

lative aide to state Sen. Jerry Miller of Davenport and as a researcher in the governor's Policy Research Office in 1983 and 1984.

Breslow said he thinks it's great "that Nebraska has finally returned to a two-party system. But it's very important that we retain an independent stance in office and audit Republicans and Democrats alike."

Breslow, who heads a Lincoln-based welding supply business, said the auditor's office needs to be run like a business.

In another state office Secretary of State Allen Beermann won his sixth term with a 55 percent to 45 percent victory over challenger Nancy Sue Hansen with 54 percent of the votes counted.

Beermann, 50, is a Dakota County native, he holds degrees from Midland College and the Creighton University College of Law.

Gosch said he will begin exploring avenues to student representation: creation of a student advisory board, putting a student on the board through at-large appointment or having the Legislature add a non-voting student member when it approves implementing legislation.

The amendment provides for a commission of 11 members to be appointed by the governor.

Commission

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Lee Rupp, vice president for University of Nebraska relations, said the vote was only the first step toward coordination.

"This just shows the voters are buying the concept," he said.

The Association of Students of the

2 Percent

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City called the initiative "worrisome" and said she was glad it appeared headed for defeat.

Hoch said she thought the measure lost support once voters examined how the initiative would affect them instead of viewing it as a slap at government.

Rupp said he thought the initia-

University of Nebraska senate and its president, Phil Gosch, had opposed the amendment, partly because it doesn't provide for a student representative on the commission.

But Gosch said passage of the measure wasn't a complete defeat.

"My comments... were that there are positive aspects," he said. "We will work with the system that the voters say that they want."

tive's defeat was a signal that although Nebraskans may not be happy with the performance of all government officials, they aren't ready to depart from a representative form of government.

If the initiative had passed, he said, voters would have been forced to go to the polls even on small issues. The measure would have required local governments to call special elections to override the 2 percent lid.

"We have representatives to do

that," he said. Telephone calls to the residence of Ed Jaksha, Omaha tax activist and chief supporter of the lid proposal, were not answered.

However, in an Associated Press story, Jaksha said he would continue his effort to get a limit on government spending.

He blamed what he called a campaign of distortion and disinformation by lid opponents for the apparent defeat of the measure.