

The Gamecock

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TODAY	Sunny	
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Students cast final SG ballot

ALLISON WILLIAMS
Special Projects Editor

Today's runoff contenders for Student Government President both feel they are candidates with a cause.

After an injury at the end of the fall semester, Jon Robinson came back to campus excited about running for president to implement what he said are new ways to solve old problems. As a USC student since 1990, Patrick Wright said he is motivated to run because of his almost six years of observing the negative and positive aspects of life at USC.

Both Robinson and Wright feel very driven in their race for the office of president.

"I think it's important that students who have the potential to make a difference use that potential. If we don't do it, nobody is. By the fact of being involved I have a lot of potential to get things done. I wouldn't be happy unless I did something," Wright said.

Wright said his current campus involvement as a second year law student as well as his activities during his undergraduate career at USC have provided him with many campus as well as community contacts that would be useful if he were elected. Wright has been involved with the Carolina Programming Union (now Carolina Productions), Association of African American Students and SG.

Involved in SG since his freshman year, Robinson, a junior, said he has also been establishing community and campus contacts while researching his platform.

"I've been involved in SG ever since I was a freshman. It (SG) has not achieved those things that have been its goals. The reason I'm running is because I feel my approach is different and it can actually get things done — things that have been rehashed over and over," Robinson said.

Some of those "rehashed" issues, Robinson said, are the rising costs of higher education, safety, parking, a voting student member on the Board of Trustees and dining services. Robinson's ideas for solving these issues are a bill to cap tuition and fees, \$2 parking permits for all meter spaces, lobbying for a USC district so the

PRESIDENTIAL PLATFORMS

Patrick Wright

- More Police Patrols
- Increased Lighting and Call Boxes
- Student Participation in Parking Issues
- Diversity in Greek Village Issues
- Student Involvement in Dining Decisions
- Increased Classroom Technology
- SG Newsletter and Forum

Jon Robinson

- Legislation to Cap Tuition Fees
- \$2 Parking Meter Permits
- Voting Student Member of the Board of Trustees
- Student Involvement in Food Service Decisions

BEVERLY WILSON The Gamecock

SG president can vote at Board of Trustees meetings and more student involvement in the upcoming decision about a dining service contract.

When asked about how he planned to implement these new approaches, Robinson said he researched all of the points of his platform. Robinson said he has already talked to several state legislators about a bill to cap tuition and fees and said he is confident that he could get a bill in the South Carolina legislature to do this. He would not give the names of the state representatives or senators he talked to. Robinson said several other states already have similar bills before their general assemblies.

Robinson said he also spoke to legislators about creating a judicial district for USC so the Board of Trustees can have a voting student member.

Regarding safety, Robinson said he wants to see a certified police officer returned to the head of residence hall safety. Robinson said the replacement of

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Lamar Alexander played the piano at the S.C. State Museum Tuesday.

ROBERT WALTON The Gamecock



Republican presidential candidate Pat Buchanan held a press conference Wednesday in Columbia. He had just come off of a New Hampshire primary victory.

ROBERT WALTON The Gamecock

Facing off

■ **GOP presidential candidates Pat Buchanan and Lamar Alexander visit Columbia with new expectations after success in New Hampshire.**

ROBERT WALTON Photo Editor

The fight for the Republican presidential nomination is heating up, and South Carolina appears to be the next battlefield.

Both Pat Buchanan and Lamar Alexander were in Columbia yesterday trying to rouse support for the March 2 primary, which will send 37 delegates to the national convention in August.

Buchanan, coming from a surprise one percent victory over Sen. Bob Dole in New Hampshire's primary, expressed confidence for upcoming primaries.

"I think we have a fighting chance to win South Carolina," Buchanan said, pointing to his abortion platform and ideas about trade restrictions with foreign nations.

Alexander, who finished third in the New Hampshire primary, but only four percentage points from Buchanan, put in an appearance at the State Museum.

Before hundreds of supporters, Alexander denounced his opponents, demonstrated his piano-playing skills and kicked off a new slogan to replace the popular "A-B-C" (Alexander Beats Clinton).

His improved motto strikes out at all opponents, Democratic and Republican. "A-B-B-C-B-D: Alexander Beats Buchananism and Clintonism Better than Dole." He struck out at Clinton and Dole for being too close to Washington and at Buchanan for his trade protectionist ideas.

Though each candidate may be predicting an easy victory, and each is introduced as "the next president," USC political scientist Blease Graham says the race is far from decided.

"I think it's an open question at this point. One rule of thumb is to expect a really conservative candidate, with issues like trade restrictions, to do somewhere in the 20 percent range in South Carolina," Graham said.

Buchanan shunned the label of "front-runner," admitting Dole is still considered the leader, but said he expects his conservative message to bring him big votes in South Carolina.

"There is no stronger right-to-life candidate than Pat Buchanan. Indeed, I am the only right-to-life candidate who is committed to keeping the right-to-life plank of the platform and to picking a pro-life running mate," Buchanan said.

"Buchanan combines the Pat Robertson message with the trade issues, so he may do a little better," Graham said. "It all depends on (voter) turnout. He'll do better if he has an

PRIMARY page 3

Racial lines traditionally separate student votes in SG election

JESSICA NASH Staff Writer

Well, the election runoffs are upon us once again.

The past few years have revealed some interesting patterns in candidacies for student body president and vice president, and this year's election promises to continue the potentially controversial trends, as once again, African Americans and Caucasians face off for the top offices in Student Government.

Jon Robinson and Patrick Wright, both members of the Greek system, must rely today on impartial voters who evaluate them on the basis of their platforms — and not their skin color. But some observers of USC student elections are worried that the votes will split along racial lines.

According to Thomas Terrill, former interim director of the African-American studies program, race does make a big difference in SG elections.

Student involvement in campus organizations can also influence an election, though.

"Most people who win offices in these elections are Greek. They can quickly mobilize a large group of people in their favor," Terrill said. "But fraternities and sororities in this state are divided by race, and that makes a difference — especially if you don't know anything else about the candidates."

Terrill cannot conclude that there is a rigid racial division between black and white in this state, "but we are race-conscious," he said. "We may have desegregated, but we are not fully integrated."

Terrill said emotions will run high in any election, and people lose their cool. Even though candidates and voters do not talk about race, it is still an uneasy reality that can and does influence voters' attitudes and actions at the polls.

Elections Commissioner Julye Johns also worries that there will be a voting split along

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Thomas Terrill, former interim director of the African-American studies program

racial lines but said there is no way to analyze the voting distribution afterwards.

"Hopefully, the pattern of the past couple of years will change," Johns said. "Both candidates are extremely qualified, so maybe students will look at their platforms and not skin color."

Johns said membership in a Greek organization is another powerful determinant in student elections.

"People also tend to vote for who they know the best. White Greeks naturally associate with

white Greeks and black Greeks with black. There's not enough mixing, so it's natural that you would know one candidate better," Johns said.

"Voting for someone just because they're Greek is just as wrong as voting on the basis of race," Johns said.

Johns also commented on the absence of a female candidate in any of the campaigns for executive offices.

"That's horrible," she said. "But every now and then, we get a male-dominated race. No women filed for executive office, which is discouraging. A diverse pool is important so the runoffs are diverse," she said.

Yoshiko White, president of the campus chapter of the NAACP, acknowledges the role race plays in SG elections.

"Race sadly plays a part, but it shouldn't," White said. "Past elections have boiled down to race, though. The votes have seemed split along racial lines."

White urges students to go to the polls color-blind, to examine the candidates' platforms and decide whose is strongest. She believes this will be most students' reasons for voting this year. Only then can the elections be completely fair.

Other African-American students agree with White. Members of the Association of African-American Students expressed their convictions that this year's runoff should not split along racial lines.

"Sometimes people think it's racial, but we'll look at what each candidate has to offer," AAAS member Dwayne White said.

Carena Brantley said candidates need to target students outside of organizations so people are aware that a fair evaluation of candidates' platforms is necessary. Voting for other reasons shows a lack of concern.

"Not voting is ignorant at times. Students

CONTROVERSY page 3

Activities help the community

CECE VON KONLITZ News Editor

Book buyers can obtain the objects of their obsession for pocket change at the Office of Community Service Programs book sale next week.

The office will be selling books for a buck on Greene Street from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday-Thursday. The Russell House Book Store provides the books which include everything from text books and foreign language books to literature.

"We never know exactly what's going to be there," Rachelle Lehner, coordinator for community service programs said.

Last year the books for a buck sale raised \$900 which was used for things like transportation for One Shot Community Service events, scholarships for the Community Service Leadership Team and "anything to make community service on campus," Lehner said.

In case of bad weather the sale will be held in the Russell House Lobby.

The office also has two more events coming up in March including Alternative Spring Break and "Into the Streets... Together We Will Serve."

This year's Alternative Spring Break Group is going to Polly's Island to Baskerville Ministries. The group of about 21 people including student, some faculty and some staff will be helping to work on buildings around what is known as Miss Ruby's Schoolhouse.

Miss Ruby's was a school for African-American children during segregation and families still want their kids to go there, Lehner said. 4-year-old to fifth grade students are taught by three teachers at the school. The Alternative Spring Break group will be working on the after-school program and adult day-care buildings which are next to the school.

"They call it a little campus," Lehner said. "This community is awesome. They are just so excited that we are coming."

For the March 23 "Into the Streets... Together We Will Serve" event, students will gather at a central location and then proceed to their assigned project sites. The event will last until 4 p.m.

"We're looking at having 600 volunteers," Lehner said. Registration forms will be available beginning Feb. 28 in the Campus Activities Center, Russell House Information Center and the Student Government Office. For more information, call the office at 777-8402.

Meeting ends SG Senate session

JENNIFER STANLEY Asst. News Editor

The senate adjourned 15 minutes after they began.

The Senate Finance Committee met following the senate meeting. Their business included approval of two budget transfers and a Medical School organization budget.

They unanimously approved both budget transfers. The Whitewater and Mountaineering Club requested \$300 be moved from their equipment fund to funding for CPR classes. The Society of Minority Journalism Students moved \$217 from three individual events, which they have not executed, to fund a "larger forum type event."

Each committee report consisted of appreciation to both the committee members and the SG advisers.

The senate unanimously passed a "bill" that acknowledged and thanked the SG graduate assistants and adviser, Woody Carothers.

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According to John Martin, finance committee chairman, all requests from the Medical School organization

are within the precedence of the committee. Therefore, the budget passed with no objection.

Alpha Phi Omega requested one of the computers SG will be putting into inventory surplus after they get new computers. APO will use the computer to keep records of the escort service.

The committee left several issues for the new finance committee to address. The new committee will deal with WUSC's funds, which are still frozen, and a Debate Team resolution.

The committee agreed to allow Martin to make decisions on new finance committee business that rises before a new committee is appointed