

NAME: Leigh Wynne, graduate student in public health
VOTE: Kerry
REASON: Pro-choice candidate vote

NAME: Jessica Cooper, first-year biology student
VOTE: Kerry
REASON: "Kerry seemed to have good points, and Bush has no idea what to do."

NAME: Ricky Chowdhury, second-year electrical engineering student
VOTE: Bush
REASON: "Kerry is too impulsive and doesn't think things through."

NAME: Maurice Jett, second-year business management student
VOTE: Kerry
REASON: "I want to see if John Kerry will make a change."

NAME: Jessica Mallett, second-year political science student
VOTE: Kerry
REASON: "It's time for a change, and Bush has misrepresented the United States."

NAME: Cam Byrd, first-year international studies student
VOTE: Bush
REASON: "I support Bush's platform on the major issues."

Parties throw parties, await results in Capitol

■ *Students interning in Washington take break for festivities*

By ALLYSON BIRD
THE GAMECOCK

WASHINGTON — The party started at 8 p.m. — the same time the polls closed. President Bush was scheduled to make an appearance at the Republican National Committee's watch party held at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center. People in business attire and evening wear made their way to the heavily policed building with no guarantee when the party would end.

"We're not staying all night, because we have a new addition," said Bill Smith, looking to his wife, Michelle, and kissing his 6-month-old baby, Conor, who was decked out in a Bush-Cheney T-shirt.

Several blocks away, the Democratic National Committee was watching the returns come in at the Capital Hilton — watching between seven open bars and under 28 chandeliers. Democratic nominee John Kerry was in Boston for the evening.

"He's been my favorite senator for 19 years," said 19-year-old Kira Schmiel, an American University student and Boston native. Schmiel had attended grassroots events before the watch party, but "nothing where you had to wear more than jeans."

Third-year USC political science student Ashley McDowell, who is interning for Rep. Jim Clyburn, D-S.C., through the Washington Semester, arrived to a packed party at 11 p.m. at the Democratic National Committee's Election Night Watch Party and Victory Celebration.

"I've been to a couple congressional receptions, but this is a lot more exclusive," she said, excited about the atmosphere. "Whenever they hear news, they're watching the TVs intently. It's really up in the air."

The AFL-CIO — the American union movement — had a watch party of its own at its national headquarters. A three-story sign reading, "America needs good jobs" draped the building.

Inside, AFL-CIO volunteers were still calling union members on the West Coast, asking them how they voted or encouraging them to vote if they hadn't yet. A pile of "Working Families for Kerry-Edwards" buttons and a food spread and bar greeted partygoers. Sitting beside black phones, watching the televisions from the back of the reception area were American Federation of Government Employees President John Gage and AFGE Vice President Joe Flynn. Both had just come home from national activism trips.

"I'm going to kill myself tonight," Gage said. "If we win, I'll have a stroke. If we lose, I'll have a heart attack." He hoped his efforts would help "remove a sitting president."



CHARLES DHARAPAK/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The six-story atrium of the Ronald Reagan Building in Washington is undergoing a transformation for Election Day as Poncho Nicholson uses a drill to assemble a section of the stage area. President Bush was scheduled to appear at the site when the polls closed Tuesday.

Flynn talked about his daughters, two of whom are unemployed, because their jobs went to overseas workers.

"That's what he is," he said of Bush. "A sitting president. He's been sitting for four years now. Sitting on jobs, health care, education."

Before the watch parties, Washington voters went to the polls on a warm, 70-degree day that didn't fit the orange, leaf-covered ground.

Campaign signs lined the sidewalk in front of the MedLink Hospital and Nursing Center within feet of the "electioneering beyond this point prohibited" signs. They greeted Capitol

Hill voters making their way to the polls with dogs and babies, in suits and sweats.

The polls opened in Washington at 7 a.m., but precinct captain Rosevelt Twigg said about 40 people had formed a line by 6:30. By noon, 1,000 had voted at his precinct.

Twigg said the spirit wasn't partisan, but instead patient.

"They were patient about waiting. Four years ago, they were saying, 'What's wrong with this mess?' if they had to wait," he said.

Comments on this story? E-mail gamecocknews@gwm.sc.edu

Great GAMECOCK Tailgate parties

*Substance-free event, free refreshments and Entertainment. Must have valid USC Student ID.

Alcohol & Drug PROGRAMS

11/06


VS.

ARKANSAS

DJ "Jeff Hunter"

-starting time TBA

*Tailgate Parties begin 2.5 hours before each home game at Seawell's 1125 Rosewood Dr.



cobalt

Clothes so hot they had to come from...

cobalt

1633 Main Street
Downtown Columbia

