

Black voters turn out, few snafus

By Frank Armand Albano
Sentinel-Voice

Congressional District 1, which takes in most of the Historic Westside of Las Vegas, African-American voters turned out in above average numbers, while minimal voting machine glitches were reported.

Fears that voters had about touch-screen machines glitches didn't materialize, according to voters and poll workers interviewed.

Three District 1 polling places were monitored on Tuesday.

The West Las Vegas Library, polling place for precincts 4028, 4467 and 4461, where voter turnout was reported to be 110 by 11 a.m. on Election Day.

At this site, all 10 touch-screen voting machines were working.

All machines had printers attached.



Jerry Tarkanian, former UNLV basketball coach, greets voters at the West Las Vegas Library site as he stomps for son, Danny Tarkanian, candidate for Secretary of State.

A paper trail was printed out and shown to voters upon request before the voter activated the on-screen "cast ballot" button. Most voters were satisfied with the voting process,

however, not all voters were.

Joan complained that her "new address should've been updated" in the records, and she refused to go to her cor-

Sentinel-Voice photo by Ramon Savoy

rect voting place of record. Instead, she was given a provisional ballot, while her signature was checked.

Provisional ballots, only allow for voting in national races.

Another voter, Lem Hayes said, "I vote every year. I want to make changes for the better."

Coming in to vote at the library was Ward 5 Las Vegas Councilman Larry Weekly.

He said, "In spite of ev-

erything, it's the most exciting process ever."

Republican candidate for constable, Beatrice Turner, came to the library voting site and said, "No problems, looking good."

Another polling place monitored in District 1 was Jo Mackey Elementary School.

At Mackey, voting site for precincts 4310 and 4017, "no problems were reported," said polling place worker, Gertrude.

By 12 noon, 125 voters had cast ballots, according to Mackey site team leader, Troy Johnson.

Also, at Mackey, a blind voter was helped by an audio version of the ballot.

One Democratic campaign worker voiced a complaint about the change of sites. Fitzgerald Elementary School was the polling place before it was changed to Mackey without notifying voters in advance, the worker said.

"People don't have time; they have to go to work. How many votes were lost?"

The third polling place monitored in the district is Gilbert Elementary School

for precincts 4319, 4312 and 4311, where 120 voters had cast their ballots by 1:30 p.m.

Jack, Gilbert team leader, said, "It's been very busy and above average."

He also said, "A voting machine was shut down." Despite this, there were enough machines operating, so voters didn't have to wait.

There were no lines or any major voting problems at any of the three polling places.

The Nevada State Democratic Party hired attorney and poll watcher Vuese Spangler.

She compared a Democratic voters master list to the all registered District 1 voters listed.

"The majority who voted were Democrats," said Spangler.

According to figures provided by Clark County Elections Department official Steve Pak, there are 60,000 registered voters in Congressional District 1.

Pak also said early voting numbers were 165,000 out of 697,000 countywide registered voters. As of 9 a.m., 38,000 voters had cast ballots countywide, according to Pak.

Conference to explore plight of Black males

By Frank Armand Albano
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When Black church leaders and the public gather for two events, the focus will be the challenge for churches to address disparities in the community, while defining the remedies to overcome those innate disparities.

Two conferences, "Life Development Church Conference," on Thursday, November 30 at 7 p.m., and "Learn Basic Principles of Bold Church Growth, Both Numerically and Spiritually," on Friday, December 1 at 9 a.m., will be held at Victory Baptist Church located at 500 West Monroe Ave.

Both events are free, but registration is required.

The two-day conference's theme, "Challenge and Manage the Future," expresses the coordinators' goals.

The pastor of Victory Baptist Church, Reverend Robert Fowler, enumerated some of the disparities facing young African-Americans. "The disparities among the urban young Black community are in education, law enforcement, [biased, unjust] sentencing, higher drop rates, after school detention, emotional and economic disparities, single parents, [and these conditions] are challenging Black churches, to remedy the situation," he continued.

"We want to challenge Black churches to network with local and state, agencies, the community and Black businesses for managing the future," said Fowler.

"There are lots of good Black plumbers and carpenters, and there are lots of good Black businesses. And the Black business community must get involved."

Fowler emphasized, "We need a Black bank."

He added, "There are housing issues. There are mortgage issues. We need Black investment."

Fowler believes it is a matter of the Black community getting up to speed in terms of what the White community already has in place.

He spoke about other disparities.

Recent reports have shown a high disparity between Nevada and the rest of country in terms of high school drop out rates.

In Nevada, the high school dropout rate is over 50 percent, while the state ranks 49th in national dropout rate statistics.

Considering the fact that African-American high school students make up only 11 percent of Nevada's population, but with a greater than 50 percent high school dropout rate, the disparity is quite evident, Fowler pointed out.

He named another prob-

lem: "Nevada prisons hold 30,000 inmates... There are 6,500 Black inmates, and that's 22 percent."

"In 2005," he said, "among 10- to 17-year-old African-Americans, 18,000 were in the juvenile justice system."

Fowler said the remedy for the disparities rests on Black churches participation and has four components:

- Preaching
- Partnership
- Programming
- Perspective

"These four points must be addressed by African-American churches," he said.

Fowler assessed the opportunity in military service and enlistment rates for young Blacks who are not working or need to pay for education. He said, "It's good and bad."

"The military offers the discipline that young people need, but then a disproportionate number are sent to fight in unjust wars," he said.

The role of Black churches, along with the community, Black business, and local and state agencies, must be an integral part of the solutions to disparities. That will ensure African-Americans fare better in the future than in the past, according to Fowler.

For registration and information, call (702) 648-2631.

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