

ELECTIONS

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"Elderly people, (some of whom) reminded me of my grandparents, who had never voted before, who were terrified of authority, just standing there patiently."

Another image Gassama recalled "was being approached by one old lady in particular who came towards me, her eyes locked in to mine, holding her card, and telling me she had come to vote for the Famous One. That's how many of them referred to Mandela in their language."

"She was asking my permission, if it was OK. At that point, I started crying. It was the courage that it took her. I saw her approaching me, tentatively wondering, 'Who is this person? This person's got a cap, he's got a badge.' (She) couldn't tell me from a South African."

"She came to me, tentatively offered her I.D. card and said, 'I've come to vote for the Famous One.' It was a question. It was, 'Is it OK?'"

"You know, (she) had taken this step, to come forward to do it. And at that point, I just started crying, because it's been a long time since I was around people to whom the vote meant so much. Especially with the knowledge that most of these people would never see the benefits of it in their lifetime."

It's been almost four months since the elections. In that time, Gassama has continued to be pleased with the news coming out of South Africa.

"All the reports I've heard, including the reports of the increase in the number of labor strikes, and other such manifestations of discord in the country, in spite of that, (one can see) the enormous confidence that the people of the country now feel in their government."

"A year ago, we all thought South Africa would be in the middle of a civil war with thousands of people dying. Right? Now, South Africa is not per-

fect, so South Africa has problems, but it's nothing close to what we thought would happen."

"None of the predictions of violence, of a breakdown in law and order, assassinations, and all those kinds of things that we worried about. As of a week before the election, I was worried about such things. I was concerned that those things would happen. None of that happened."

"I mean, an amazing thing has happened. You've got an entrenched white-led bureaucracy serving under a black government that used to be their sworn enemy. The head of the military that used to hunt down ANC guerrillas is still the head of the South African military."

"The police has not changed. All the judges who were in charge of sentencing ANC people to death or whatever are still there."

"There is a peaceful and orderly transition taking place ... 'Negotiated Revolution.' That's the phrase that people are using now."

Now there isn't much news coming out of South Africa at all. Gassama said, "Mandela just completed his first 100 days, I believe. No news is good news, right? You don't hear anything ... you have to listen to NPR now to get South Africa. If there was violence, you know you'd see it on CNN."

Gassama is still impressed with the magnitude of the events that took place in South Africa. "They ended up with an election that, no matter what people may have thought about it while it was going on, is now widely accepted as having produced the first legitimate, representative government in South Africa's history. And Mandela is the first representative, legitimate, democratically elected president in South African history."

"Leaving the country," Gassama said, "my sense was there was a rise in the level of confidence that the people of South Africa had in the future of their country and I was very happy and confident that South Africa was on the right path."

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Upcoming Events

Monday, August 22 Rooster's Blues Jam Good Times Cafe and Bar, 9:30 p.m. Admission is \$1	7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$9.95, \$6.95, \$4.95 Babes with Axes and Love, Death and Agriculture WOW Hall, 9 p.m. Tickets are \$5, \$6	Thursday, September 1 "City Limits" (exhibition) Photo Zone Gallery Call 484-5045 for more information Those Darn Accordions WOW Hall, 9 p.m. Admission is \$6 at the door
Tuesday, August 23 Storm Chasers Good Times Cafe and Bar, 9:30 p.m. Admission is \$4	Saturday, August 27 Let's Go Bowling and The Five Fingers of Funk WOW Hall, 9 p.m. Admission is \$5 at the door	Friday, September 2 Joan Buez Sokol Blosser Winery (Dundee), 7 p.m. Tickets are \$20
Wednesday, August 24 The Element Good Times Cafe and Bar, 9:30 p.m. Admission is \$3	Sunday, August 28 Emerald Empire Round-up Eugene Rodeo Grounds, 7 a.m. Tickets are \$9.95, \$6.95, \$4.95	Saturday, September 3 The Neville Brothers Sokol Blosser Winery (Dundee), 7 p.m. Tickets are \$23.50
Thursday, August 25 Dopplegang and Higher Ground Good Times Cafe and Bar, 9:30 p.m. Admission is \$5	Tuesday August 30 The Twinkle Brothers Family Reunion Tour with Della Grant WOW Hall, 8 p.m. Tickets are \$8, \$10	Wednesday, September 14 Bela Fleck and The Fletones (21 and over) Roseland Theater (Portland), 8 p.m. Tickets are \$15, \$16
Friday, August 26 Emerald Empire Round-up Eugene Rodeo Grounds,		

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