

Help isn't on the way

America tells Dubya: Keep up the good work!

by Bob Roehr

The political organizations of the gay community, and much of the rank and file, bet heavily on the Democratic Party in this election and lost big time.

It will be days or perhaps weeks before all of the votes are officially tallied and certified, but the outline is clear: U.S. Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., has conceded, and President Bush has won re-election.

Republicans padded their majorities in both the House and Senate.

Bush lost the popular vote in 2000 by about a half-million votes. This year, with turnout at an all-time high, he reversed that and appears to have piled up a popular vote margin of about 3.5 million, more than 51 percent of those cast. That is a higher percentage than Bill Clinton managed in either election.

And Bush padded the electoral vote total as well. Still, the country remains virtually evenly divided in its political choices.

Kerry was able to mount a competitive campaign in states roughly within the triangle stretching from Boston to Minneapolis to Washington, D.C., as well as the West Coast. The rest of the country went strongly for Bush.

"I would not give up if there was a chance that we would prevail," Kerry said in his concession speech Nov. 3. He spoke of his conversation earlier that morning with Bush. "We talked about the division in our nation.... Today I hope that we can begin the

healing.... I plan to do my part to try to bridge the partisan divide."

He asked his supporters to do the same and closed with the prayer "God bless America."

A short time later, at a rally in the Ronald Reagan Building, Vice President Dick Cheney recounted "a record turnout and a broad nationwide victory."

Bush acknowledged, "With that trust comes a responsibility to serve all Americans, and I will do my best to fulfill that duty every day as your president." Speaking directly to those who voted for Kerry, he said: "To make this nation stronger and better, I will need your support, and I will work to earn it.... Working together, there is no limit to the greatness of America."

Ralph Nader was not a factor, collecting less than 1 percent of the national vote total, compared with 3 percent in 2000.

"This is a really tough defeat," said Cheryl Jacques, president of the Human Rights Campaign. She urged

the community to keep things in perspective. "We are reminded that this battle for equality is not a question of if, but of when."

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Housing Secretary Mel Martinez won a highly contested race for a Senate seat in Florida



Archconservative Tom Coburn claimed lesbianism is so rampant at some Oklahoma schools that girls are only permitted to go to the bathroom one at a time

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