

Barack Wins Portland Straw Poll

Illinois U.S. Sen. Barack Obama won a straw poll at the Tiffany Center in downtown Portland during a Feb. 5 election night party.

More than 400 Democrats attended the Super Tuesday event.

"There is so much enthusiasm for a change in direction in the White House," said Meredith Wood Smith, chair of the Oregon Democratic Party. "We will capitalize on the record interest in our early primaries. We will ride this wave all the way to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue."

Obama Victories Begin to Mount

Erodes Clinton delegate lead

Sen. Barack Obama won the Virginia primary Tuesday and reached out for victories in nearby Maryland and the District of Columbia.

Obama's triumph made it six straight over Clinton, the former first lady, now struggling to keep up a race she once commanded.

Last Saturday, Obama won every county in Washington state's Democratic presidential caucuses.

Obama got 68 percent of the total vote, compared to 31 percent for Clinton. On the Republican side in Washington, Sen. John McCain got 25.6 percent, compared to 23.3 percent for Gov. Mike Huckabee and 21 percent for Rep. Ron Paul.

All of the state's national convention delegates were at stake for Democrats, while Republicans awarded half their delegates with



Presidential hopeful Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., visits a Metro transit station in Washington, D.C. Tuesday where voters were participating in a Democratic Party primary. (AP photo)

the remaining to be determined during Tuesday's Nov. 19 Washington Primary Election.

In Vancouver, Clark County Democrats reported that 8,299 people participated in their caucuses, a record that far exceeded the previous high of 3,200 who participated in 2004. County Republicans reported that 1,395 people showed up for their caucuses.

In the count needed to win the Democratic nomination, Clinton had 1,147 delegates versus 1,124 for Obama before Tuesday's primaries and caucuses in Washington, D.C., Maryland and Virginia.

Aides to Clinton said she was in the midst of a difficult period in which she could lose 10 straight contests. She is hoping to rebound on March 4, in primaries in the bigger states Ohio and Texas, where both candidates have already begun television advertising.



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Gang Violence Confronted

After teenager gets shot

BY RAYMOND RENDLEMAN THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Gang experts are worried about spiraling youth violence after a 15-year-old was shot and injured near Northeast Killingworth Street and Cully Boulevard on Sunday.

Russ Corno of the Portland Police Bureau told KATU that he's seen more gang members in the metropolitan area than at any time in the last 10 years that he's worked gang enforcement.

According to Rob Ingram, youth-gang-prevention coordinator for the mayor's office, the numbers of gang related incidents have increased, but said the exact amount may have been exaggerated at the encouragement of the media.

Nonetheless, he argues that gang enforcement has been hurt by recent disinvestment in prevention programs.

"Portland had made some great strides, and then all of a sudden we took a huge step backwards,"

Ingram told the Portland Observer. "This office wasn't established until 2006, and in 2005 all the outreach workers were taken off the street, so that put us back a little bit into prehistoric times."

While some money has returned for fighting gangs, he said the problem had been compounded by the spread of violence out of its traditional north and northeast Portland area.

"There's still a lot of work to do," he said. "We've got five outreach workers total that are trying to cover the entire city."

Ingram said people need to recognize the exact scope of the problem in order for appropriate solutions.

"The gang members continue to strategize, collaborate, grow and develop, and so we have to make sure that we do too," he said.



Rob Ingram

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