

Obama Gains in Voter Polls



Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., waves after speaking at a campaign stop Monday in Milwaukee, Wisc. (AP photo)

A new USA Today/Gallup poll in the race for President shows Barack Obama with a 50 percent to 43 percent lead among registered voters.

Obama eliminated John McCain's advantage as a strong and decisive leader. By 46 percent to 44 percent, those surveyed says that characteristic applies more to Obama than McCain. Before last week's Democratic National Convention, McCain held an 8-point advantage.

Obama also has a 13-point

advantage as someone who "shares your values," almost double the edge he held before. He has an 8-point advantage as someone who is "honest and trustworthy." Before the convention, they were rated equally.

Also McCain's favorable-unfavorable rating was 54 percent to 38 percent, a healthy mark but his highest unfavorable this year. Obama's rating was 61 percent favorable to 32 percent unfavorable.

Meanwhile, a new CBS poll has Obama up eight points, 48 percent to 40 percent.



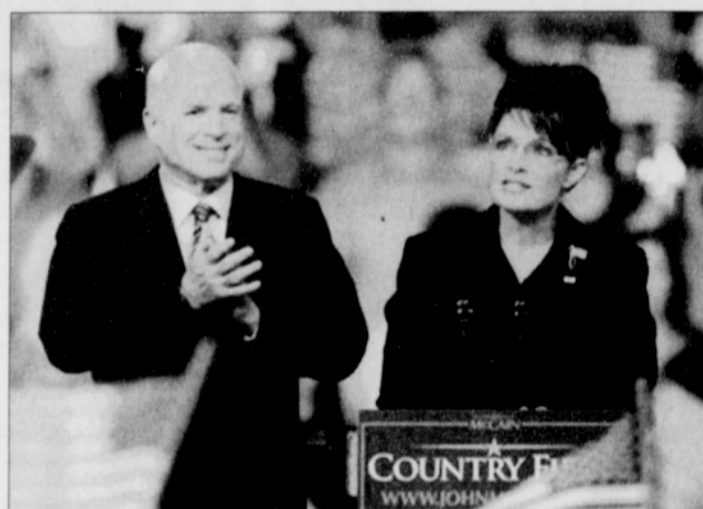
PHOTO BY: MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

School Supply Drive Helps Kids

Portland area kids and members of the Links, Inc., an African-American civic group, gather Saturday for the Links' free school supply distribution event which took place at the offices of the Portland Observer on Northeast Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.

McCain Defends Vice Presidential Pick

Republican John McCain said Tuesday he's satisfied that Sarah Palin's background was properly checked out before the Alaska governor joined the Republican presi-



Presidential candidate Sen. John McCain introduces Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin as his vice presidential pick.

denial ticket. Asked about whether Palin's background was thoroughly checked out before he selected

her, McCain told reporters in Philadelphia: "The vetting process was completely thorough and I'm grateful for the results."

Questions about the review came up after news surfaced that Palin's unmarried teenage daughter, Bristol, is pregnant, and that the Alaska governor has retained a private attorney to represent her in an investigation into the firing of the state public safety commissioner.

The lawyer who conducted the background review said Palin voluntarily told McCain's campaign about Bristol's pregnancy, and about her husband's 2-decade-old DUI arrest during questioning as part of the vice presidential search process.

The Alaska governor also greatly detailed the dismissal of the state's public safety commissioner that has touched off a legislative investigation, Arthur B. Culvahouse Jr. said.

Arrests in Weekend Shooting

Gresham police arrested two men accused of critically injuring a Portland man in a weekend shooting.

Branden S. Cunningham of Gresham is charged with attempted murder and assault. Charged with the same crimes is Michael A. Humphrey Jr. of Gresham. The 25-year-old is suspected of driving the vehicle in-



Cunningham Humphrey

about 2:15 a.m. Saturday when Washington and another man had a confrontation at the store near Southeast 188th Avenue and Burnside Street. The victim was with three friends in the store.

They left the store and walked east on Burnside Street. The shooting happened a few blocks from the store.

A second victim has been identified as Steven L. Gallentine of Gresham. He was treated for non-life threatening injuries.

Police said the incident began



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NW Natural Files Rate Increase

NW Natural has filed requests with the Oregon Public Utility Commission for a 25 percent rate increase.

"A rise in global energy demand and competition for natural gas supplies have made energy costs more volatile," said Randy Friedman, NW Natural director of gas supply.

NW Natural does not profit from commodity cost rate increases, and passes wholesale natural gas costs directly through to its customers with-

out a markup.

Last year, NW Natural reduced rates by 8 percent in Oregon and 10 percent in Washington as a result of lower gas costs.

If prices stay at levels included in this filing through October, an Oregon residential customer using 56 therms per month would see an average monthly bill increase of about \$19. A residential customer in Washington using 62 therms per month would see an average monthly increase of about \$23.

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