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## The Carroll News- Special Edition

John Carroll University

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# Campaign 2012: Decided

# THE CARROLL NEWS

Thursday, November 8, 2012

The Student Voice of John Carroll University Since 1925

Special Edition

## Election Watch Party engages students



Photo by Taylor Horen

**Juniors Steve Palmieri and Brian Becker rejoiced when it was announced that President Barack Obama had been re-elected.**

**Dan Cooney**  
Editor in Chief

A group of students sat at a row of tables to the side of the Jardine Room on Tuesday night. Their faces were more lit up than the computer screens they stared at throughout the evening, waiting for the latest election returns.

Their professor, Colin Swearingen, from the political science department, was staring at his own laptop computer and talking to the students in his special topics course on the 2012 election down the row of tables.

"I expect Virginia to go down to the wire," Swearingen said. But he thought the fact that Florida was still too close to call – at this point, nearing 11 p.m. – did not bode well for former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney, the Republican presidential nominee.

The student election analysis was one aspect of the Election Watch Party, sponsored by Student Union and the Streak the Vote campaign. Students watched the numbers roll in on ABC News throughout the night, while partaking in free food and opportunities to socialize.

Sophomore Brianna Lazarchik said she cast her ballot Tuesday with social issues on her mind.

"It's fun to take part in something like this," she said of the watch party. "It's like a holiday."

Every so often, students in Swearingen's class took to the podium and presented information about battleground states they covered this semester. Each student picked a state and analyzed its voting information and history.

"They are now so familiar with the states they're working on [...], all they have to do is look at county x, y and z, and that'll give you a good indication at how the state is going," Swearingen said.

Senior John Jackson, a student in the special topics

class, chose Ohio as his state to watch. He said that before taking the class, he didn't realize that certain areas dictated how the whole state and nation would vote.

"It's crazy to think that how Stark County votes is how the nation will vote," he said.

The results started coming in via major news networks when the first polls fully closed in some states at 7 p.m. Over four hours later, at 11:13 p.m., NBC News tweeted that they were calling a win in Ohio for Obama. A minute later, the network declared him a re-elected president. The row of tables kept buzzing as the results kept pouring in.

Many viewers at the watch party roared at 11:24 p.m., when ABC News anchors Diane Sawyer and George Stephanopoulos came on the air declaring Obama the winner of both Ohio and the presidency.

Some at the party expressed disappointment with the results. Senior Bill Cook, who is originally from Illinois but voted in Ohio, does not envision a more cohesive government resulting from this election.

"The country's going to get more and more divided," he said. "At least for the next two years, we're going to continue to be divided. Hope and change is going to have to wait."

Other party attendees were exchange students from other countries, but they are no strangers to U.S. elections.

"We hear about it a lot in France," said sophomore Caroline Lemarchand. "A lot of people our age know who they would vote for if they were American."

In the end, Dale Armbruster, a junior in the special topics class, said the beauty of U.S. elections is that everyone accepts the results. No violence takes place. No tanks need to be brought in to enforce the outcome.

"We'll just argue about the issues," he said.

## In close race, Obama keeps presidency

Associated Press

In the end, President Barack Obama won re-election exactly the way his campaign had predicted: running up big margins with women and minorities, mobilizing a sophisticated registration and get-out-the-vote operation and focusing narrowly on the battleground states that would determine the election.

It wasn't always exciting, and it was hardly transformational. But it worked.

"The Obama campaign laid out its plan, told everyone what they were doing and executed," said Anita Dunn, a former Obama White House official who advised the campaign through the fall. "No one should be surprised," she said.

Still, there were detours along the way, most notably Obama's dismal performance in the first debate, which breathed new life into Republican challenger Mitt Romney's campaign. The deadly attack on a U.S. Consulate in Benghazi, Libya, thrust foreign policy into the spotlight and exposed Obama to a flurry of GOP criticism of his leadership. And Superstorm Sandy upended the campaign in its closing days, though the political impact appears to have been positive for Obama, who got a high-profile opportunity to show voters his presidential leadership.

Even as national polls suggested an exceedingly close race, Obama's advisers insisted they had the edge in the nine competitive states. By Wednesday, Obama had won seven of them, with Florida still too close to call. Exit polls also backed up the Democratic team's assertions that the coalition of young people and minorities who supported Obama in 2008 would still vote in big numbers this time around.

Black voters made up 13 percent of the electorate, just as they did in 2008, and Hispanics increased from 9 percent to 10 percent. Obama won more than 70 percent of Hispanics and more than 90 percent of blacks, according to exit polls. He also maintained his advantage with women, defeating Romney by 11 points among female voters.

While the demographics looked the same, Obama aides knew from that start that this would have to be a different kind of campaign than his insurgent, optimistic race four years ago. The public's frustration with the sluggish economy and high unemployment made Obama vulnerable. And the deeply partisan bickering that consumed much of his presidency made it impossible to run again on a promise to change Washington — or to claim that those efforts had succeeded in his first term.

The Chicago-based campaign quickly coalesced around a strategy

**Please see RESULTS, p. 2**



AP

**President Barack Obama, first lady Michelle Obama, Vice President Joe Biden and Jill Biden wave at their election night party Wednesday, Nov. 7, 2012, in Chicago. President Obama defeated Republican challenger former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney.**

**Background image: For the 2012 presidential election, NBC redecorated Rockefeller Plaza in New York City as Democracy Plaza.**

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# JCU students cast their ballots, let their voices be heard



**Matt Tarchick, senior**  
Voted for Obama

"I felt like although Mitt might have had some good ideas, he wasn't really in touch with the younger people. When I heard him talk it felt really out of touch, whereas I felt that Obama brought real enthusiasm."



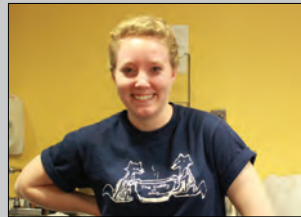
**Sarah Rupert, sophomore**  
Voted for Romney

"I sent an absentee ballot to Maryland, which is super liberal, so I feel like my vote didn't mean anything. I knew Obama was going to win. I hope he is able to improve in the next four years."



**Michael Hurley, freshman**  
Voted for Obama

"If Romney would have won, I wouldn't have been too enraged because they both obviously wanted to win really bad, and that's why the campaign was so nasty. At least they wanted to serve our country."



**Rachel Friend, junior**  
Did not vote

"I'm glad it's over. It is what it is. We're just going to see how the next four years go. [Obama] now has eight years of time to make a difference, so let's see what he can do."



**Markus Creachbaum, sophomore**  
Voted for Romney

"I wasn't surprised. I feel like Obama had a lot of popularity, even if people didn't agree with what he did."



**Alyse Viggiano, senior**  
Voted for Obama

"I think we need to come together and focus on compromising, regardless of who won. People need to understand that we're not going to get anything done or change anything if we keep fighting over it. I'm happy with the results of the election, but I'm discouraged by the overall population's divide in parties."

— Photos by Clara Richter, compiled by Ryllie Danylko and Spencer German

## From RESULTS, p. 1

to transform the race from a referendum on Obama's economic record into a choice between the president and Romney, the man aides always expected to win the Republican nomination.

Even before Romney officially became the nominee, Obama's team was savaging him on the airwaves. The campaign spent millions of dollars on television advertisements that sought to cut down Romney's business record, the central tenet of his campaign, and his character, casting the multimillionaire as a secretive protector of the rich.

Interviews with voters leaving polling places on Tuesday showed the president with a 10-point lead over Romney on the question of which candidate is more in touch with people like them. Of those holding that view, 91 percent voted for Obama.

The president, whose cool exterior belies a deeply competitive core, backed his team's decision to go negative early.

As the race pressed on, the economy's trajectory also started to help Obama.

Unemployment, which peaked at 10.1 percent during his term, had dropped to 7.9 percent by Election Day. By October, consumer confidence had reached its highest level since February 2008.

While Obama and Romney squabbled through the summer and into the fall, the Democratic team was mobilizing a field operation in competitive states that proved to be just as robust as its highly praised operation from 2008.

Obama's campaign never fully left places like Ohio and Iowa after the 2008 election. And while Romney battled through the GOP primary, the Democratic campaign was opening dozens, and in some cases hundreds, of field offices across the states.

The staffers and volunteers in those offices helped register 1.8 million new voters in the

key battlegrounds, nearly double the number the campaign said it registered in 2008. Officials said volunteers made more than 125 million personal phone calls or door knocks with voters.

Obama's team also focused heavily on running up a lead in early voting and using the extended polling time to get supporters without a consistent voting record to the ballot box. Before Election Day, campaign officials said their early voting advantages meant Romney would have needed to exceed 50 percent or more of the remaining votes in Iowa, Colorado, Nevada and Ohio to pull off victories there. He lost all four states.

Throughout the campaign, Obama advisers prided themselves on not getting diverted by polls or the latest Twitter trend. After a damaging video surfaced of Romney decrying 47 percent of Americans who believe they are victims, Obama advisers warned the race could still tighten. And when it did after Obama's woeful debate performance, they calmly insisted they had always planned for a close contest.

Obama was helped in the final stretch by two factors that Romney simply couldn't blunt.

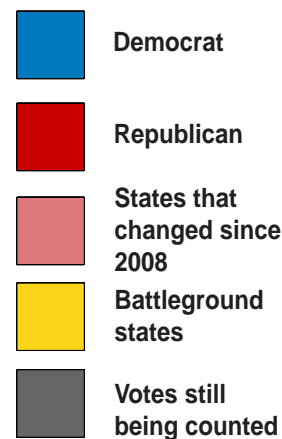
One was Bill Clinton, the popular former Democratic president who became an exceptional surrogate, holding dozens of campaign appearances for Obama and vouching for his economic record.

The second was Sandy, the storm that struck the East Coast during the final full week of the campaign. Obama scrapped three days of campaigning and returned to Washington to manage the government's response.

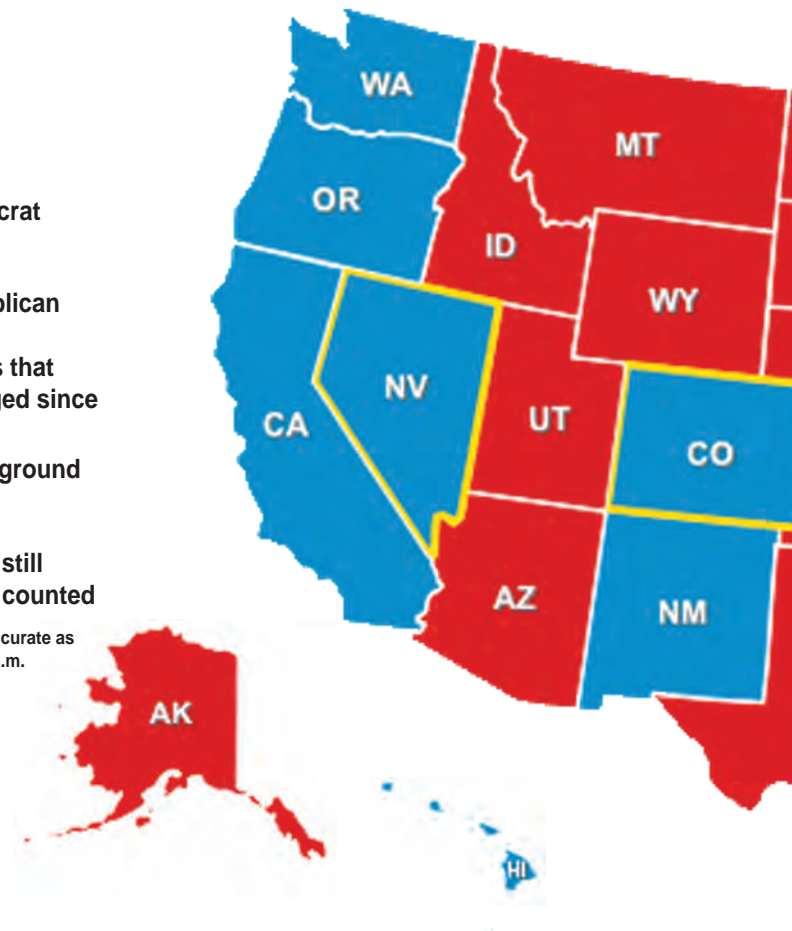
It was an opportunity for Obama to project command and comfort in a crisis. His response won bipartisan praise, most notably from New Jersey's Republican Gov. Chris Christie, a vocal Romney supporter.

Forty-two percent of voters said Obama's response to Sandy was important in their vote for president. Most of those voters supported his re-election.

## 2012 Elec



\*These results are accurate as of Thursday at 3:05 a.m.



**303** Electoral Votes

**50%** 60,399,599 votes

## Ads, ads ... and more ads

Both Barack Obama and Mitt Romney spent millions of dollars on television advertising during the election season. Ohio, considered by many to be the biggest prize among the battleground states, saw much of that advertising money.

But the candidates were not the only ones spending big money on ads. The Supreme Court's 2010 decision in Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission gave way to the rise of super PACs, which legally cannot be connected to individual candidates, but can spend without limit in support of one.

Information for this story comes from The Washington Post and The Oyez Project at IIT Chicago-Kent College.

— Compiled by Dan Cooney

## Total spending on ads supporting ...

**Romney: \$472 million**  
**Obama: \$396 million**

**A total of \$148 million was spent in Ohio, \$71 million by Dems and \$77 million by the GOP.**

**Ohio was third only to Florida (\$170 million) and Virginia (\$149 million) in terms of spending per state across the country.**

## \$54 million was spent in the Cleveland TV market on 49,214 ads

**Top spenders in Ohio among interest groups/super PACs included:**  
**American Crossroads/ Crossroads GPS (supporting Romney) – \$19.4 million**  
**Restore Our Future (supporting Romney) – \$16.8 million**  
**Priorities USA (supporting Obama) – \$9.8 million.**

**In Ohio, Obama spent \$57.6 million, while Romney spent \$26.9 million.**

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# Dems keep Senate majority

Associated Press

Democrats won a narrow majority in the Senate on Tuesday, snatching Republican-held seats in Massachusetts and Indiana and turning back fierce, expensive challenges in Virginia, Ohio and Connecticut to maintain the control they've held since 2007.

With a third of the Senate up for election, Republicans were undone by candidate stumbles, with GOP hopefuls in Missouri and Indiana uttering clumsy statements about rape and abortion that did severe damage to their chances and the party's hopes of taking over. The losses of Senate seats in Massachusetts and Indiana, combined with independent Angus

King's victory in the Republican-held Maine seat, put the GOP too far down in their already uphill climb.

Democrats held open seats in Virginia and were leading in New Mexico, North Dakota and Wisconsin shortly before midnight. Republicans took the Nebraska seat as GOP candidate Deb Fischer denied former Sen. Bob Kerrey's bid to return to the Capitol.

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., spoke of conciliation.

"Now that the election is over, it's time to put politics aside and work together to find solutions," Reid said in a statement. "The strategy of obstruction, gridlock and delay was soundly rejected by the American people. Now they are

looking to us for solutions."

Democratic Rep. Joe Donnelly edged out tea party-backed Indiana state treasurer Richard Mourdock in a race rocked by the Republican candidate's awkward remark that pregnancy resulting from rape is "something God intended."

Murdock also upset some Indiana voters for his decision to sue to stop the federal auto bailout of Chrysler, which means jobs building transmissions to thousands in Kokomo. And he alienated some in his own party with his divisive win over six-term Sen. Richard Lugar in the May GOP primary. Lugar refused to campaign for him.

In Massachusetts, Democrat Elizabeth Warren knocked out Republican Sen. Scott Brown, who had stunned the political world in January 2010, when he won the late Sen. Edward M. Kennedy's seat. The strong Democratic tilt in the state and President Barack Obama's easy win over former Gov. Mitt Romney in Massachusetts helped the consumer advocate in her bid.

The race was one of the most expensive in the country — \$68 million — even though both candidates agreed to bar outside spending.

In Missouri, Democratic Sen. Claire McCaskill was considered the most vulnerable incumbent, but Republican Rep. Todd Akin severely damaged his candidacy in August, when he said women's bodies have ways of avoiding pregnancy in instances of "legitimate rape." GOP leaders, including Romney, called on him to abandon the race. Akin stayed in.

In Virginia, Democrat Tim Kaine edged out Republican George Allen in a battle of former governors. The contest attracted millions of dollars in outside spending.

Democrats currently hold a 53-47 edge in the Senate, including the two independents who caucus with them. Republicans needed a net gain of four seats to grab the majority. Shortly, after 11 p.m., Democrats gained a lock on 50 seats, enough to keep control once President Barack Obama won re-election.

The caustic campaign for control of the Senate in a divided Congress was marked by endless negative ads and more than \$1 billion in spending by outside groups on races from Virginia to Montana, Florida to New Mexico. The outcome in Ohio and Virginia was closely linked to the presidential race. Republicans and Democrats in Massachusetts, North Dakota and Montana hoped that energetic campaigns and personality would lead to ticket-splitting by voters.

In Maine, independent Angus King prevailed over Republican Charlie Summers and Democrat Cynthia Dill in the race to replace Republican Sen. Olympia Snowe, who blamed partisan gridlock in Washington for her unex-

pected decision to retire after 18 years in the Senate. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., wasted no time reaching out to King, according to a Senate aide.

In Ohio, Democratic Sen. Sherrod Brown survived an onslaught of outside spending, some \$30 million, to defeat state treasurer Josh Mandel. In Pennsylvania, Democratic Sen. Bob Casey survived a late scare from businessman Tom Smith, who invested more than \$17 million of his own money in the race.

Democratic Rep. Chris Murphy won the Connecticut Senate seat held by Sen. Joe Lieberman, the independent who was the Democratic Party's vice presidential nominee in 2000. Murphy's win marked the second straight defeat for former wrestling executive Linda McMahon, who spent \$50 million of her own wealth in a failed effort against Sen. Richard Blumenthal in 2010 and more than \$42 million this election cycle.

Texas sent tea party-backed Ted Cruz to the Senate, as the Republican won the seat held by retiring GOP Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison. Cruz will become the third Hispanic in the Senate, joining Sen. Bob Menendez, D-N.J., and Marco Rubio, R-Fla.

In Florida, Democratic Sen. Bill Nelson triumphed in his bid for a third term, holding off a challenge from Republican Rep. Connie Mack. Republican groups had spent heavily against Nelson early in the race, but the moderate Democrat was a prolific fundraiser with wide appeal among Democrats and some Republicans in the Panhandle.

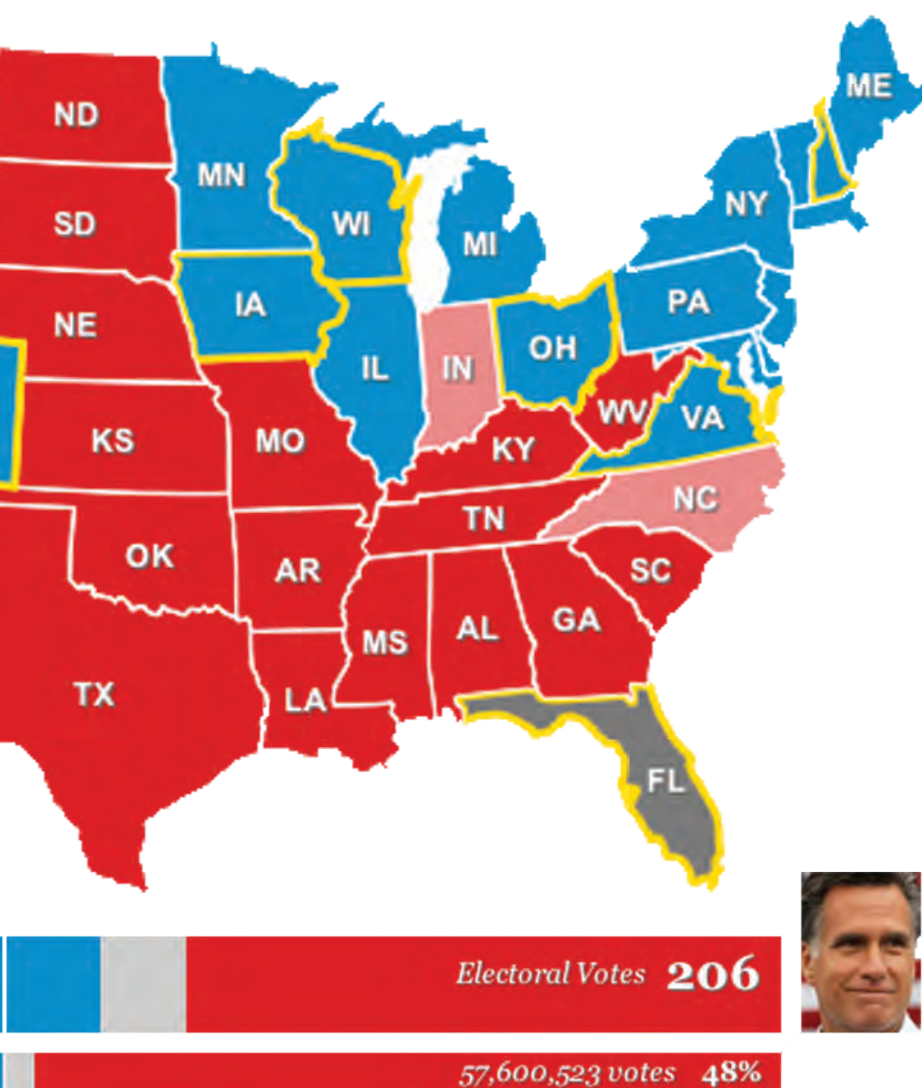
Independent Sen. Bernie Sanders won a second term in Vermont. Democratic Sens. Sheldon Whitehouse in Rhode Island, Ben Cardin in Maryland and Tom Carper in Delaware were all re-elected. Cruising to another term were Democratic Sens. Debbie Stabenow in Michigan, Kirsten Gillibrand in New York, Amy Klobuchar in Minnesota and Menendez in New Jersey.

In West Virginia, Democratic Sen. Joe Manchin won a full term, even though his state went heavily for Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney.

Tennesseans gave Republican Sen. Bob Corker a second term. Wyoming voters did the same for Sen. John Barrasso, and Republican Roger Wicker captured another term in Mississippi.

King has resolutely refused to say which party he'd side with if elected. But members of both parties have indicated that they expect the former Democratic governor and Obama supporter to align with Democrats. One factor could be the million-plus dollars that Republican-leaning groups such as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and Karl Rove's organization spent on ads criticizing King.

## Electoral Map



Map from CNN.com

## Ohio voters choose incumbent Sherrod Brown

Sam Lane  
World News Editor

Ohio Republicans will not remember the night of Nov. 6, 2012 very fondly. Not only did the party fail to deliver the crucial swing state to presidential candidate Mitt Romney, but they suffered a great loss in the Senate, with Josh Mandel losing to incumbent Democrat Sherrod Brown.

The Senate election was quite a desired seat for the Republican Party. After the 2010 midterm elections produced Gov. John Kasich and sent Rob Portman to the Senate, the party felt it could strike victory once again. But it was not to be. When the polls closed, projections indicated that Brown would receive 50 percent, with Mandel taking 45 percent.

A number of factors added up to these results. One was simply a matter of timing. Indeed, a Republican victory appeared to be an uphill battle from the start. Comparing Mandel's situation to that of fellow Republican Portman, 2012 just was not 2010 for the party. Two years ago, support for President Barack Obama and the Democratic Congress was relatively low, thus opening a pathway to a Republican victory. Fast-forward to two years later, Obama's support was at a moderate level, and it was the Republican Congress that was at the center of blame from many American voters.

On the other hand, the candidates themselves also influenced their political fate. Mandel, 35, had an impressive résumé, considering his youth. The Cuyahoga County native served in the Iraq War and was elected state treasurer in 2010. However, he was often caught throughout the campaign for failing to make accurate political statements, as indicated by The Wall Street Journal.

Brown benefited from the fact that he was linked to Obama's increasing popularity in the state as a result of the auto bailout. Likewise, Brown also came across as a candidate who was more concerned with helping ordinary Ohioans, as opposed to the attacks that Republicans were only looking out for millionaires. It is also feasible to say that Brown benefited from the reality that voter turnout was higher compared to two years ago due to the fact that it was a presidential election year. Often, voters only familiar with the national race simply vote on the party line, which could at least partially explain the result.

Overall, the election could not be considered a mandate. Indeed, Brown performed worse than he did in 2006. During his tenure, he has gained a reputation for being very liberal, a factor that is risky among ideologically bipolar Ohio voters. But in the end, concerns over education and economic equality were the concerns of the day, and Brown proved to yield to these issues better than Mandel.



Photo from ocj.com

**Ohio Democratic Sen. Sherrod Brown was re-elected to the U.S. Senate on Tuesday.**



# CN staff and alumni offer perspectives on Campaign 2012

## Emily Gaffney '12

*Gaffney is a former CN editor in chief and is currently the NBC/JCU "Meet the Press" fellow. She worked in both Washington, D.C. and New York City, at their Democracy Plaza in Rockefeller Center.*



Election Day has always been exciting to me. I'm one of those people that gets nervous when filling out my ballot and then loves watching the coverage. Did my candidate get elected? Did my ballot initiative pass? The campaigns build up for months, spend billions of dollars, exhaust hours upon hours trying to reach out to the elusive undecided voter, and it all comes down to one single day – either all of that work pays off or it doesn't.

This year the election had an added aspect for me. Rather than simply be a passive participant in the election and campaign (aside from the very important duty of voting, of course), I had a role. As a part of the "Meet the Press" staff, I had the opportunity to play a small part in helping to educate voters via the discussions and interviews on the show with the candidates, their campaigns and the journalists watching and covering those campaigns. As producers put materials together in preparation for each Sunday, I got to help pull past interviews, find sound bites candidates had said, etc. It was a small role, but I feel incredibly lucky to be a part of it. The discussions on the show – especially those leading up to the election – tried to disseminate the campaigns' policies and wade through all of the rhetoric spewed in order give voters a better idea of where each candidate actually stood on issues voters cared about and what plans they had.

The many weeks (really months) leading up to the election culminated in our final pre-election show and the election night special.

I was lucky enough to get to travel with the show to New York City, where we did our final Sunday show before the election on location from NBC's Democracy Plaza. It was a whirlwind experience – I saw firsthand all of the work and preparation that people put into that one night of coverage and getting results out to people. Rockefeller Plaza was transformed into Democracy Plaza for the week leading up to the election – the ice rink was made into a visually appealing map people could watch fill in as results were announced, and booths were constructed and suited for broadcasting – and it was all done in limited time because of Hurricane Sandy.

While I was back in D.C. and not at Democracy Plaza for election night itself, getting to be there and see all the effort and time that goes into making it run smoothly made it all the more exciting to watch on election night.

The results of the election will impact how we move forward. The election may be over, but there are a lot of issues that need to be solved in the coming weeks and months. The debt is still a problem, there is the economy and unemployment rate to tackle, a compromise needs to be reached before the fiscal cliff and scores of people are still suffering from Sandy's aftermath.

Decision 2012 is over, and it is time for those in the battleground states to breathe a sigh of relief for their reprieve from political ads; but it's only another four years before we do this all again. In the meantime, I look forward to the policy and governing discussions that are sure to come because being educated on politics doesn't just matter every election cycle, it affects us year-round.



## Alexandra Higl Arts & Life Editor

Hello, my name is Alexandra Higl, and I'm a Republican. Yes, I'm 19 years old. Yes, I'm a female. Yes, I am an advocate for an array of social justice issues. Yet, I defy statistics.

With that said, I have been biting my tongue throughout the entirety of the presidential campaign. My natural instincts tend to be docile: I am the peacemaker, the pleaser, the one who initiates group hugs.

However, my recent actions have strayed away from typical me. My openness of political opinions throughout the presidential campaign period was uncharacteristic of myself. The innocent, appeasing little me went all "Sarah Palin crazy" during the presidential elections. The election got the best of me.

No matter which candidate you have rooted for throughout the whirlwind period of a divided America, step back for a minute. Did the election get the best of you as well?

Do you regret those bitter tweets or angry Facebook statuses composed in the heat of a culmination of rage and fury because you were surrounded by a mob of rambunctious [insert opposite party affiliation here]? Embarrassed by that wild night when you offended some harmless bystander because you verbally attacked them for having a dissenting opinion to your own? (Yes I'm guilty of this one. Harmless bystander, you know who you are). Second-guessing that heated conversation with your roommate upon learning that they voted for the other guy?

First, to all my fellow Romney supporters, I say this: We had a strong campaign. We fought to the bitter end. The Romney campaign handled the election period with grace and class – like true Republicans.

Although we are still mourning our loss (excuse my dramatic nature and all-black funeral garb that I will be wearing the rest of the week), let's keep our heads high, remembering that before we are Republicans, we are first and foremost Americans. Now, more than ever, we must remain steadfast to this notion of harmony as a nation.

For all you Obama fans out there, I extend my sincerest congratulations. I admire your unity throughout these past four years, continuing into the election season. Your candidate has broken barriers, ignited political attentiveness in many, made history and instills hope in the lives of countless Americans. With that said, kudos to you.

And, now, President Obama, I address you: Good luck, God bless and congratulations on a second term in office. Don't disappoint the men and women who have elected you into office. Don't give your supporters a reason to join the ranks of those stuffy Republicans (relax, conservatives – I just insulted myself, too).

My hope for the togetherness of America stands resolute. That we will move beyond the division of the country, enacting unity, progressiveness and an unwavering sense of patriotism. God bless the U.S.A.



## Clara Richter Editorial & Op/Ed Editor

In the United States, a president is elected for four years (maybe eight if they're lucky, or 12 if you're FDR). During their time in office, they are completely vital to this nation. I'm all for screaming, "Anarchy now!" and running through the corridors with my fists in the air; but honestly, how far would non-government get us? Probably not very far.

Yet, if I plucked the average person up off of the street, do you think he or she would be able to tell me what Millard Fillmore did for this country? What about Grover Cleveland? Chester Arthur? Why does everybody forget Rutherford B. Hayes? With a name like that, you'd think people would remember him.

But we don't. Unless a president guides his nation through the tumultuous waters of war, or enacts some great and effective social policy, we forget who he is and what he did. Eventually, their names just become one of many on an ever-growing list.

We have had some pretty great men chosen to serve this country: Lincoln, Washington, Jefferson, Roosevelt (Franklin Delano, although Teddy was pretty darn cool, too). But let's not forget James Madison. He served our country during the War of 1812, and, most importantly, he was smart enough to marry a woman like Dolly.

Calvin Coolidge, president during the Roaring '20s, was quiet and negative, but he was the first president to give a public radio address to Americans. Rumor has it that once, while at a dinner party, a guest bet that she could get him to say more than three words during the course of the night. His response? "You lose." He didn't speak for the rest of the night.

John Tyler was the first president to gain office due to the death of his predecessor William Henry Harrison, who succumbed to pneumonia weeks after being inaugurated. Although he was nominated for the vice presidency by the Whig Party, he was expelled from the party after he failed to pass a bill by Henry Clay that would establish a national bank. Getting kicked out of your own party while you're still in office? Talk about a man who wouldn't be pushed around! (However, at the time of his death, he was a part of the Confederate House of Representatives, so...)

Grover Cleveland was the only president to leave the White House and then return for a second term four years later (Benjamin Harrison filled the gap).

Abraham Lincoln wasn't our only log-cabin president. Millard Fillmore worked on his father's farm until he was 15. He then was apprenticed to a cloth dresser (whatever that is).

My point is that we have had some presidents who are pretty interesting, not only as presidents, but as people, but we don't take the time to learn about them. We forget them. We elect someone new, and the old ones slip into the past. And that's the danger we face. We don't look to the past.

Whether you like him or not, President Barack Obama will be in the White House for four more years, and he faces some big challenges. One such challenge is that we are a terribly and sadly divided nation. You're blue, I'm red. I'm blue, you're red. For some reason we refuse to get along, and we certainly don't make much of an effort to.

In the last few years of his presidency, George Washington sadly watched as the newly formed United States government slowly divided into two dominating parties. In his farewell address to the nation, the president warned against the dangers of parties within the government, saying, "[The party] serves always to distract the public councils and enfeeble the public administration. It agitates the community with ill-found jealousies and false alarms, kindles the animosity of one part against another, foment occasionally riot and insurrection."

The party system that we currently operate under has left us a nation divided. Now, let's all pause and briefly consider what happened the last time we were a nation divided. That's right – the American Civil War. The bloodiest conflict in the history of the United States.

E pluribus unum. Out of many, one. That's what we are. One. One nation. No matter what our political views, we should face the next four years (and the next four years after that, and the next four after that, etc.) as one, not as many. In the next few days of political venting, I urge you to keep the past in mind, even as you look to the future.

And now, go! Kiss a bald eagle. Paint yourself red, white and blue. Even if your candidate didn't win, you still got to vote, and that's something to celebrate in itself. God bless America (am I allowed to say that anymore?), no matter who is president.



The Tim Russert Department of Communication & Theatre Arts and the Department of Political Science present a politics & media forum

### "Covering the 2012 Presidential Election with NBC's Meet the Press"

Wednesday, November 14, 2012

11-11:50 a.m.

Dolan Center for Science and Technology  
Donahue Auditorium

Panel Discussion featuring the following members of the Meet the Press team:

Betsy Fischer Martin, Executive Producer

Andrew Rafferty '09,  
NBC News Campaign Embed Reporter and  
Meet the Press Fellowship Alumnus

Joe Toohey '10,  
Meet the Press Researcher  
Fellowship Alumnus

This event is open to John Carroll students.  
It is also an opportunity to learn more about the  
NBC/John Carroll University  
Meet the Press Fellowship.

RSVP required by November 9:  
kkrakowiak@jcu.edu

