

# BELLEVILLE NEWS-DEMOCRAT

www.bellevilnewsdemocrat.com

50 cents

Serving Southwestern Illinois

## Thin win hinged on ESL vote

Kern edged Reeb for chairmanship

By PATRICK J. POWERS  
ppowers@bnd.com

Belleville Mayor Mark Kern outlasted Republican Steve Reeb in the race for St. Clair County Board chairman, although the unofficial vote counts didn't arrive until early Wednesday morning.

Kern, a Democrat securing a wide margin of victory in East St. Louis, accumulated 51.8 percent of the total vote, or 56,708 votes, compared with Reeb's 48.2 percent, or 52,729 votes. The tally involved complete but unofficial results from 225 precincts.

Kern, 41, couldn't be reached Wednesday for comment about his plans.

"East St. Louis, Centreville, Washington Park — all the traditionally Democratic strongholds came through," said Charlie Powell, East St. Louis Democratic Committee chairman. "Everyone expected a large turnout, and a large turnout for us means more votes for our Democratic candidates."

"I'm just happy Democrats stayed the course."

In East St. Louis, Kern cap-

Please see KERN, A2

## Belleville must name new mayor

By SCOTT WUERZ  
swuerz@bnd.com

BELLEVILLE — Residents will likely learn by the end of the month who their next mayor will be.

Ward 5 Alderman Randy Hoercher said Mayor Mark Kern is set to take the reins of St. Clair County government as board chairman the first week of December, and his successor will have to be in place by then.

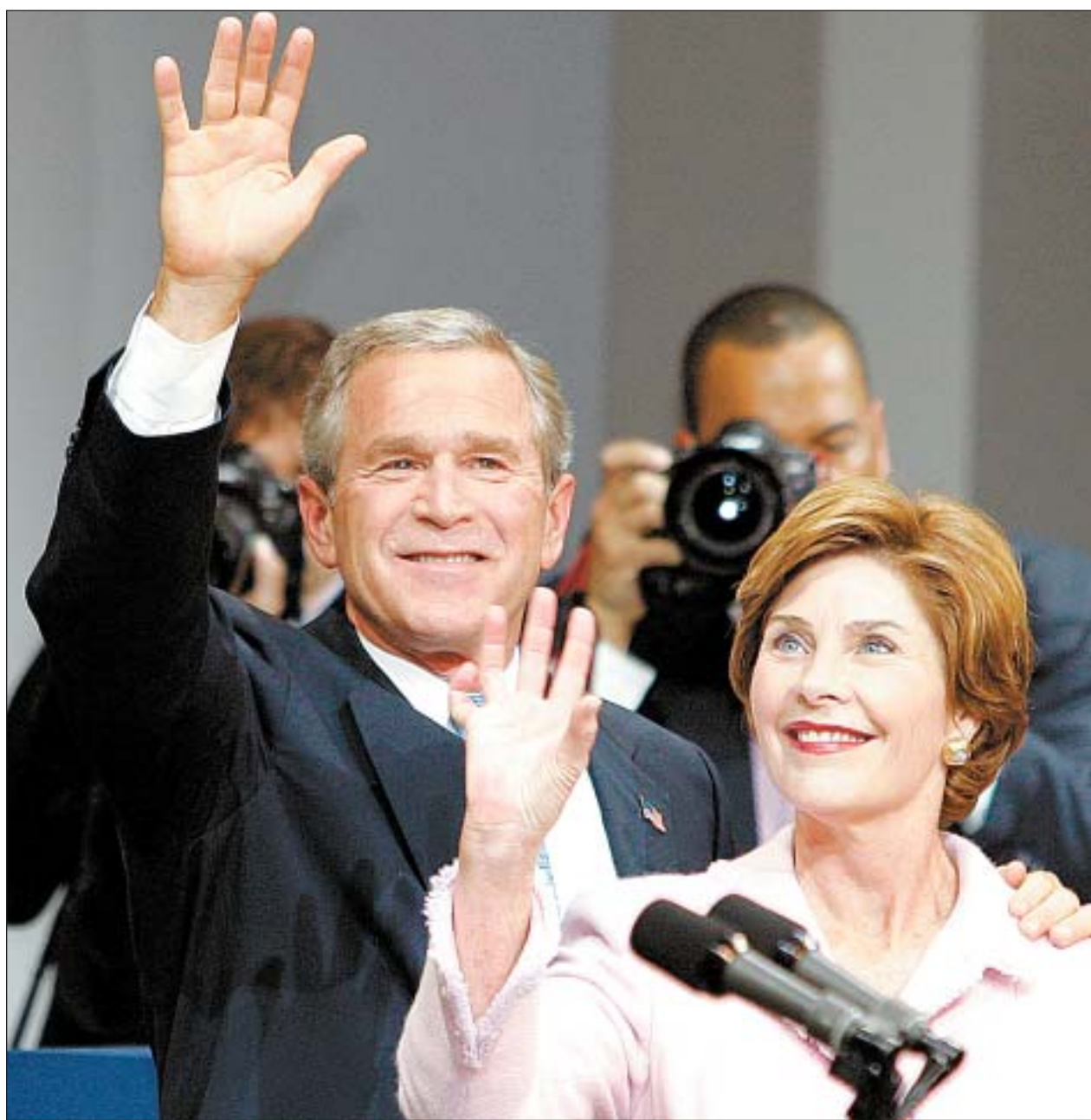
"I assume we'll have to do something by our next meeting (Nov. 15) or else we'll have to call a special meeting before the end of the month," Hoercher said. "But we're going to have some big decisions to make not only on who will be mayor, but who will fill Ken Easterley's spot and who will fill the spot of the alderman who becomes the new mayor."

Easterley, who has represented Belleville's Ward 4 as an alderman since 1997, was elected to a County Board seat Tuesday when Kern edged out Republican Steve Reeb to become St.

Please see MAYOR, A2

<b>BUSH</b>	<b>ELECTORAL VOTE</b>	<b>KERRY</b>
286	270 NEEDED TO WIN	252

# Bush win sets pace for big GOP push



President Bush and his wife, Laura, greeted supporters Wednesday after claiming victory.

## Campaigned on social, cultural issues

By STEVEN THOMMA, RON HUTCHESON AND WILLIAM DOUGLAS  
Knight Ridder

WASHINGTON — President Bush's sweeping victory on Tuesday, coupled with GOP gains in the Senate and the House of Representatives, suggests Republicans may be building a sustainable majority that could dominate American politics.

Bush claimed a second term as president with the biggest vote total of any president in American history, though not by the biggest plurality. He amassed 51 percent of the popular vote

after three straight presidential elections in which the winner failed to win a majority. Bush's Electoral College margin was close but clear at 286-252.

Republicans also tightened their grip on the House and the Senate, boosting their majorities and seizing more power over the nation's agenda at home and abroad. Their Senate strength also could help Bush appoint more conservative jurists to the Supreme Court, where Chief Justice William Rehnquist is suffering from

Please see BUSH, A6

### INSIDE

Potential Daschle successor lines up support. **PAGE A3**  
Bush scores huge victory in Ohio. **PAGE A5**  
How Bush and Kerry divided the electoral vote. **PAGE A6**  
Maag loses voice in judicial races. **PAGE B1**  
Other important local contests. **PAGE B3**

### The Gateway Connector

The Illinois Department of Transportation released the preferred corridor for the Gateway Connector Wednesday. After the public views the preferred corridor, IDOT will finalize the location in court. The corridor preserves the right of way for a future road.



JIM MOELLER/News-Democrat

## Public gets look at road plan

Gateway Connector unveiled

By JENNIFER KAPOLANI SAXTON AND NICKLAUS LOVELADY  
Belleville News-Democrat

A crowd of about 250 people on Wednesday received the answer to the question that has been on their minds since spring 2003.

Where will the Gateway Connector go? The crowd attended the Illinois Department of Transportation's meeting in Belleville to view the unveiling of the proposed route for the Gateway Connector.

On Wednesday, the Illinois Department of Transportation announced the 400-foot-wide preferred corridor will begin at the Interstate 55-70 and U.S. 40 interchange in Troy and end near the Interstate 255 and Illinois 3 interchange in Columbia.

The corridor would preserve a pathway for a possible road to be built in response to large population growth in the future.

Families, with mixed feelings, spent time talking in front of IDOT maps on Wednesday, pointing to the places where the corridor runs through their properties.

Robert and Len Bechtoldt, who have a 119-acre farm in Belleville, bumped into their neighbor who has a 40-acre farm. Both families would lose property to the corridor.

"It makes it even more difficult because everything is up in the air," said Len Bechtoldt. "I know they say it will be five, 10, 20 years before they do something ... either way, it's something we don't want."

Candace Saueremann, engineering studies manager with IDOT, spent most of Wednesday explaining to people how the corridor protection works. She said there has been a lot of positive responses.

"A lot of people understand that this is a long-range planning tool for future transportation needs," Saueremann said.

After the public hearings are completed, IDOT officials plan to file the final corridor with

Please see JUMP, Ax

## County Board has power to redraw large precincts

Huge turnout in big-growth precincts

By PATRICK J. POWERS  
ppowers@bnd.com

St. Clair County voters who waited two hours to cast a ballot Tuesday can expect to see redrawn precincts next summer to reduce the wait in line, St. Clair County Clerk Bob Delaney said Wednesday.

"I'm sure the County Board

would look at it," Delaney said. "By law, I don't think I can force anyone to redraw the lines. But I think we're definitely going to do something."

Normal-sized precincts are supposed to have between 700 and 1,500 registered voters, Delaney said. However, with the large residential growth in eastern parts of the county,

some of precincts ended up with anywhere from 2,000 to 3,000 registered voters.

The County Board approves any changes to precinct boundaries, but can't do so until its June meeting under current state law. No changes were made this year, Delaney said, because no one expected the numbers to be as large as they were.

"Basically, those were some

big growth areas," said Delaney, who assigned five voting booths to each of the precincts. "Nobody anticipated that it would be such a big turnout."

However, it was these precincts — specifically five precincts voting at St. Nicholas Catholic Church in O'Fallon, United Church of Christ in O'Fallon and Whiteside Middle School in Belleville — that caused problems for a number

of St. Clair County voters.

"It was such a mess," said Sandy Bode, an election judge at St. Nicholas Catholic Church. "They were winding around the church in lines for hours. But 99.9 percent of the people were very understanding and patient. That's really a testament to their commitment to the process."

Please see PRECINCTS, A2

### INDEX

**A SECTION**

- A4 Opinion
- A5 Nation/World
- A12 People

**B LOCAL NEWS**

- B2 Obituaries
- B3 Regional
- B4 Local
- Flashes
- B5 Business

**C LIFESTYLE**

- C2 Dear Abby
- C2 News to See
- C3 TV, Movies
- C4 Comics
- C12 Weather

**D SPORTS**

- D2 Local sports
- D3 NFL
- D4 Scoreboard
- D5 Baseball

**LOTTERY FOR ILLINOIS**

Pick 3-Midday: 3-0-2 Little Lotto: 09-19-22-34-36  
Pick 3-Evening: 4-4-3 Lotto: 11-12-16-42-45-49  
Pick 4-Midday: 8-0-3-4 Jackpot: \$7.5 million  
Pick 4-Evening: 3-2-0-5

**FOR MISSOURI**

Pick 3-Midday: 8-0-3 ; Evening: 1-4-0  
Pick 4-Midday: 4-6-8-1 ; Evening: 8-7-7-8  
Show Me 5-Midday: 2-6-8-10-37  
Show Me 5-Evening: 1-5-8-29-31  
Lotto: 13-19-25-35-38-42

**POWERBALL: 11-35-43-45-48** Powerball: 42 Jackpot: \$35.5 million Power Play: 4

