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ST. CLAIR COUNTY BOARD CHAIRMAN | Kern grabs slight advantage over Reeb.

ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT | Karmeier jumps out ahead of Maag in heated contest.

U.S. SENATE Democrat Obama beats Keyes to become 5th black U.S. senator in history.

Election results in key races





STATE SUPREME COURT Lloyd Karmeier (R).....228,283 Gordon Maag (D)......191,492 STORY: PAGE A1





Obama

U.S. SENATE Barack Obama (D)...3,000,491 Alan Keyes (R)......1,103,696 Albert Franzen (I)......64,385 Jerry Kohn (L).....56,413 STORY: PAGE A1



U.S. HOUSE (12TH DISTRICT) Jerry Costello (D)136,232 Erin Zweigart (R)53,646 Walter B. Steele (L)......3,094



U.S. HOUSE (19TH DISTRICT) John Shimkus (R)156,731 Tim Bagwell (D)72,166 STORY: PAGE B1

ST. CLAIR COUNTY **BOARD CHAIRMAN** Mark Kern (D)54,137 Steve Reeb (R)48,484 STORY: PAGE A1

114TH HOUSE DISTRICT Wyvetter Younge (D)6,545 Linda Lehr (R)1,199 STORY: PAGE B1

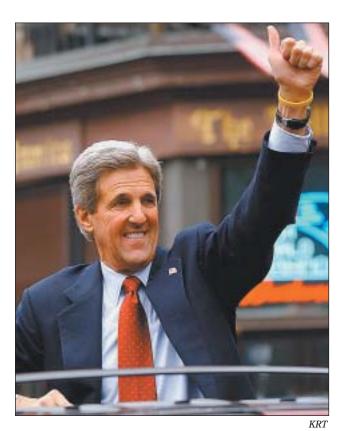
CLINTON COUNTY STATE'S ATTORNEY Henry Bergmann (D)8,379 Stanley Brandmeier (R).8,349 STORY: PAGE B1

PONTIAC-WILLIAM **HOLLIDAY BOND ISSUE** Yes1,814

COMING THURSDAY • FINAL ELECTION RESULTS **FOR ALL METRO-EAST RACES** ELECTION RESULTS: WHAT THEY MEAN FOR THE NATION AND THE METRO-EAST

ELECTORAL VOTE 270 NEEDED TO WIN

Bush, Kerry down to wire



John Kerry salutes the crowd after leaving the Union Oysters House restaurant in Boston.



President Bush waves confidently as he walks

across the South Lawn at the White House

President nears victory; Edwards vows to carry on

From wire reports

WASHINGTON — President Bush stood on the brink of a re-election victory Wednesday morning, but Democratic challenger John Kerry's camp refused to concede while there was a chance for a come-from-behind victory in Ohio.

Echoing the statement by Al Gore that set off a five-week legal battle in the 2000 election, Kerry's running mate, John Edwards, told supporters in Boston, "We've waited four years for this victory. We can wait one more night."

"We are fighting every vote," Ed-

That fight could once again leave the nation waiting for days or weeks to learn who will be president next year.

Ohio Secretary of State Kenneth Blackwell told CNN that the state would count provisional ballots — cast by voters whose eligibility was in doubt - if there were enough of them to decide the election.

Please see PRESIDENT, A6

INSIDE

Analysis of the Bush-Kerry race. PAGE A3 Republicans keep control of Congress. PAGE A5 Other important local races. PAGE B1-3

Democrats keep control of Illinois General Assembly. PAGE B4

Kern holds lead over Reeb for chairman

ESL gives boost to Democrat

By Patrick J. Powers ppowers@bnd.com

Belleville Mayor Mark Kern, with a surge of Democratic votes emerging from East St. Louis, took the lead over Republican Steve Reeb on Tuesday in the race for St. Clair County Board chairman.

Kern, the mayor of Belleville, accumulated 52.8 percent of the vote, or 54,137 votes, com-

pared with Reeb's 47.2 percent, or 48,484 votes. These tallies were taken with 96.5 percent of the precincts reporting at 1:30 a.m. today.

"I feel extremely confident in what we're doing here," the 45-year-old Reeb said from his campaign headquarters in Belleville. "The voter turnout was tremendous. I think it even exceeded what most people expected."

Kern, 41, couldn't be

reached. Kern's slight lead, about 5,653 votes, can be credited to his strong showing in traditionally Democratic East St.

Louis, where Kern led Reeb 76.4 percent to 16 percent. Reeb led Kern 51.3 percent to 48.7 percent elsewhere in St. Clair County.

"I voted all Democrat," said 26-year-old Ousame Kennel-Bey, of Washington Park. "I ain't never seen any Republican putting any-

thing back into the poorer communities. Both candidates appeared to have their

supporters out in force Tuesday. "I talked with Steve (Reeb) and he's got a

good outlook for St. Clair County," said 68year-old Robert Campbell, of East St. Louis. "He's going to be the man to help us out with our problems down here."

Melissa Schneiter, 43, echoed the same. "I think a fresh face in that position would be good," said Schneiter, of O'Fallon. Steve Beskorovany, 28, of Belleville, cast

his ballot for Kern. "I just like the guy," he said. "I vote my con-

Please see CHAIRMAN, A2

Obama: Fifth black U.S. senator

By Christopher Wills Associated Press

CHICAGO — Barack Obama, who shot from obscurity to political stardom with his message of national unity, trounced Republican Alan Keyes at the polls Tuesday to be elected the fifth black U.S. senator in history.

We can look forward to the future. We can build step-by-step to ensure we arrive at the practical commonsense solutions that all of us hope for," Obama said as he claimed victory Tuesday night.

Obama overwhelmed the conservative commentator and former diplomat Keyes in the nation's first U.S. Senate race between two black major-party candidates.

With 37 percent of precincts reporting, Obama had 1,284,951 votes and Keyes had 269,317 votes, in unofficial returns. Two third-

Please see OBAMA, A2



Senator-elect Barack Obama waves during his acceptance speech in Chicago

Karmeier poised for win after aggressive campaign

By Brian Brueggemann bbrueggemann@bnd.com

Lloyd Karmeier appeared headed for a win Tuesday in the heated and expensive race he fought against Gordon Maag for a seat on the Illinois Supreme Court from downstate Illinois. With 79 percent of the

precincts counted, Karmeier had 228,283 votes to Maag's 191,492.

Karmeier, a Republican and circuit judge from Washington County, was backed by business, medical providers and other proponents of tort re-

"The doctors obviously had a great impact on this race," Karmeier said during a victory party at the Nashville American Legion. The Karmeier campaign also

reputation as a lawsuit haven controlled by Democratic judges. Karmeier was carrying

capitalized on the metro-east's

Madison and St. Clair counties, both Democratic strongholds, with most of the votes tallied The race attracted more than

\$8.5 million in campaign mon-

Please see COURT, A2

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LOTTERY FOR ILLINOIS

Pick 3-Midday: **6-9-6** Pick 4-Evening: **9-1-0-1** Pick 3-Evening: **4-0-9** Little Lotto: **01-12-18-29-36** Pick 4-Midday: 5-4-5-3 Jackpot: \$7.5 million

MEGA MILLIONS Game: 24-32-42-49-50 Mega Ball: 3

FOR MISSOURI

Pick 3-Midday: **3-4-4**; Evening: **9-5-1** Pick 4-Midday: **3-3-6-3**; Evening: **4-8-2-6** Show Me 5-Midday: **1-13-17-28-39** Show Me 5-Evening: 1-22-23-36-44

Jackpot: \$66 million



>KNIGHT RIDDER>