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# Mr. President

President Obama, with raised hand, takes the oath of office.



Carolyn Cole, The Los Angeles Times / LATWP News Service

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INAUGURATION

EDITION



**“We celebrate a hinge point in history.”**  
— Rev. Rick Warren







President Obama holds the hand of first lady Michelle Obama, left, as they walk former President George W. Bush and wife, Laura.

Brian Vander Brug, The Los Angeles Times, LATWP News Service

# A new era of responsibility

By Robert Barnes  
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Barack Hussein Obama became the nation's 44th president Tuesday, telling a crowd that stretched from the steps of the Capitol to the Lincoln Memorial, and a watching nation, that “we must pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off and begin again the work of remaking America.”

The ascent of the country's first African American president, and the peaceful transfer of power in tumultuous times both at home and abroad, drew an enormous mass of well-wishers and witnesses to history. An early estimate from a senior security official put the number of people on the Mall at 2 million.

Obama outlined the challenges facing the country: a collapsing economy, wars on two fronts, a lack of confidence in government and enemies who hate the very way of American life.

They can be addressed, he said, with “a new era of responsibility — a recognition, on the part of every American, that we have duties to ourselves, our nation, and the world, duties that we do not grudgingly accept but rather seize gladly, firm in the knowledge that there is nothing so satisfying to the spirit, so defining of our character, than giving our all to a difficult task.

“This is the source of our confidence — the knowledge that God calls on us to shape an uncertain destiny.”

The birth of a new administration always marks a burst of American excitement and anticipation, and in Obama's case, a surge of optimism in a country beset by troubles. But perhaps no inauguration in recent times has matched the anticipation attending the senator from Illinois, who made “hope” and “change” the bywords of his campaign.

Obama was accompanied to the West Front of the Capitol by President George W. Bush and sworn in by Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. Obama took the oath by stating his full name, the one he said opponents once used to try to make him seem apart from mainstream America.

It was the first time the chief justice administered the oath — indeed, the first time any chief justice had sworn in a man who voted against his confirmation — and both men stumbled over the words. But the sight of the two youthful leaders — Roberts, 53, the second-youngest chief justice, and Obama, 47, the fourth-youngest man elected president — underscored the theme of generational change.

So did the presence of the youthful Michelle Obama and the couple's two grade-school daughters, Malia and Sasha, dressed in candy tones of blue and pink.

Continuity was marked by the swearing-in of former Delaware senator Joseph R. Biden Jr. as vice president, the oath administered by 88-year-old Justice John Paul Stevens, a Re-

publican appointee who is now the leader of the court's liberal contingent and the second-oldest man to serve on the court.

Obama laid his hand on the burgundy-velvet-covered Bible that was used by Abraham Lincoln in 1861, and history again trembled. The chief justice that day was Marylander Roger Brooke Taney, the author of the Dred Scott decision that said blacks could never be citizens. The Constitution, Taney said, recognized blacks as “beings of an inferior order, and altogether unfit to associate with the white race, either in social or political relations.”

Obama called it the “meaning of our liberty and our creed” that those days are no more: “Why men and women and children of every race and every faith can join in celebration across this magnificent Mall, and why a man whose father less than 60 years ago might not have been served at a local restaurant can now stand before you to take a most sacred oath.”

It was his most overt reference to the historical significance of his achievement.

History, history: the word was on the lips of nearly everyone who rode buses through the night or crowded Metro platforms in pre-dawn darkness or walked through crowded streets just to get to a point where, with luck, the new president would be a speck on the horizon.

Ellamae Simmons, 90, was hoisted out of her wheelchair by two young family members, who carried her down the escalator at the Farragut North Metro station at 6:30 a.m. The first train to arrive was too crowded for the wheelchair, but Simmons, a retired doctor who flew in from San Francisco on Saturday, did not complain about waiting for a later train.

“I would have gone across the water to see Mr. Obama,” Simmons said as she boarded.

The day marked the end of an extraordinary journey to the White House. Obama becomes perhaps the country's most improbable president, the son of a Kenyan scholar and a white Kansas mother, raised in the exotic climes of Hawaii and Indonesia and bearing what he describes as a “funny name.”

Just five years ago, he was a middle-of-the-pack Illinois state senator in Springfield, and now fills the nation's highest office even before finishing his first term in the United States Senate.

But his candidacy inspired young voters and an unprecedented outpouring of African American voters, and his motivational message drew independents and disaffected voters of both parties.

Bishop T.D. Jakes drew from the campaign for his sermon at the morning church service at St. John's Episcopal Church, where the Obamas joined Biden and his wife, Jill Biden.

“The problems are mighty and the solutions are not simple and everywhere you turn there will be a critic waiting to attack

every decision that you make,” Jakes said. Then came a message borne of inspiration and campaign rhetoric: “But you are all fired up, sir, and you are ready to go. And this nation goes with you. God goes with you.”

The Obamas arrived at the White House at 9:52 a.m., and were greeted three minutes later by the Bushes. Michele Obama gave Laura Bush a white package tied with red ribbon, and the two couples embraced and posed for photographers. Meeting for coffee is a tradition for the outgoing and incoming presidents before making the trip to Capitol Hill.

The Rev. Rick Warren, who delivered the invocation at the inaugural ceremony, said, “We celebrate a hinge point in history,” and he prayed for God to give Obama “the wisdom to lead us with humility, the courage to lead us with integrity, the compassion to lead us with generosity.”

Obama had begun the process for his much-anticipated inaugural speech shortly before Thanksgiving, laying out the broad outlines of what he hoped to say, senior transition officials said. In particular, Obama told his speechwriters he wanted to do what some of the best inaugural speeches in history have done: Explain to the American people “the moment that we find ourselves in right now,” one official said.

At least two drafts and many weeks later, the speechwriting team turned over the work to the president-elect himself. Last weekend, Obama retreated to a suite at the Hay-Adams Hotel and wrote through the draft, producing a version that advisers said reflects mostly his own thinking and writing.

The speech, which ran slightly less than 20 minutes, contained a theme of inclusion and conciliation, both at home and abroad.

“Our patchwork heritage is a strength, not a weakness,” Obama said. “We are a nation of Christians and Muslims, Jews and Hindus — and non-believers. We are shaped by every language and culture, drawn from every end of this Earth; and because we have tasted the bitter swill of civil war and segregation, and emerged from that dark chapter stronger and more united, we cannot help but believe that the old hatreds shall someday pass; that the lines of tribe shall soon dissolve; that as the world grows smaller, our common humanity shall reveal itself; and that America must play its role in ushering in a new era of peace.”

And the new president issued a tough warning to America's enemies: “We will not apologize for our way of life, nor will we waver in its defense, and for those who seek to advance their aims by inducing terror and slaughtering innocents, we say to you now that our spirit is stronger and cannot be broken; you cannot outlast us, and we will defeat you.”

Obama takes office with enormous popularity and impressive expressions of goodwill from the American people — as well as high expectations.

—LATWP News Service





Leah Reidenbach / Valencia Voice (both photos in story)

Students across West Campus crowd around television sets to witness the induction of the 44th president of the United States

## Historic inauguration gives students hope

### Gatherings across campus watch as America enters new era

By: Reese Wallace  
Valencia Voice

There are only four chairs in the hallway. All of them have been shifted, turned, carried, and shared so those who occupy them can see

comfortably one of the two televisions on either side.

In Valencia's Student Services building, 24 people stood watching as Barack Obama was sworn in as the 44th president.

Valencia student Antonio

Goggins stood in the middle of the hall, eyes turned upward toward the television.

"I'm just speechless, he says, and for a moment he is. Pausing to gather his thoughts before continuing, I wish I was there, it's once in a lifetime,

something to tell your kids about.

Some members of the gathered crowd have already turned their minds from the moment to the future. "I think he became president at a bad time," says Susan Cisneros, of Broward County, "...but I know he'll turn it around."

Goggins believes the challenges that face the new President are daunting, "...his biggest challenge is rebuilding, rebuilding from the bottom to the top."

For the moment, he is content to revel in the transformative nature that he believes brings the people around him to a standstill.

He gives you hope, makes you believe you can do anything, he says, that whatever you put your mind to, you can do it.



## Induction speech inspires downtown crowd

By: Ebony Chance  
Valencia Voice

A public viewing of President Obama's inauguration brought a small crowd of about 50 to Wall Street Tuesday morning, despite temperatures in the mid 50's and nearly constant wind gusts. Although a larger crowd was expected to appear, factors such as the weather and the day of the week may have contributed to the diminutive crowd.

People of many different demographics attended the viewing and most seemed to relate to what he was saying.

Cheers rang out on Wall Street as the 44th President was announced. Even Lea Woldag, a student visiting from Germany, felt compelled by Obama's address, saying, "I think his speech was very encouraging. I liked that he mentioned all of the challenges the country will face rather than just giving an altogether optimistic speech. We do not have such speeches in Germany, so I found it really inspiring."

President Obama indeed spoke of such challenges in his address, saying that "Our economy is badly weakened, a con-



Ebony Chance / Valencia Voice

Crowds celebrate the induction of Barack Obama in downtown Orlando on Wall St.

sequence of greed and irresponsibility on the part of some but also our collective failure to make hard choices and prepare the nation for a new age."

Mike Brennen, a resident of Palm Beach, Fl said, "I thought it challenged us all to create a new level of unity. I think it is going to bring us one step closer to a more perfect union."

Most of the people who attended seemed to share the same supportive attitude towards our country's newest leader.

"I think it's a monumental occasion for America. He called the people of our nation to rebuild America, and the citizens have the power to do that. It's now in our hands to rebuild our country," said Carrie Williams, an Orlando resident.

## UCF inauguration party optimistic toward Obama's challenges

By Theresa Carli  
Valencia Voice

Never before has the University of Central Florida seen such enthusiasm from college students over politics as it did today for President Barack Obama's inauguration.

At the UCF Student Union, students began to huddle around a giant projector screen at 10:30 a.m. on the morning of the inauguration, over an hour before Obama would give his speech.

Over three-hundred students, many wearing Obama T-shirts, watched and cheered as the 44th President of the United States gave a speech aimed to inspire and renew hope in the hearts of Americans amidst this time of economic turmoil and international threat.

The student union was not the only place that students were huddled together to watch their new leader enter office.

The library was packed with students glued to the television for over an hour to watch the festivities of the inauguration, and the attitude amongst viewers was upbeat and optimistic. A few cried, and many cheered.

The biggest uproar came after President Obama stated his ability to succeed despite his father facing discrimination a mere half decade ago.

"This is the meaning of our liberty and our creed — why men and women and children of every race and every faith can join in celebration across this magnificent mall, and why a man whose father less than sixty years ago might have not been served at a local restaurant can now stand before you and take a most sacred oath."

While optimism was in the air among students, at least one professor at the university feels that the expectations may be too high.

Dr. Aubrey Jewett, a 14-year political science professor at UCF, expressed a few concerns. He drew parallels between a few of the past presidents that faced many of the same obstacles facing President Obama at this hour.

Such as with Jimmy Carter, president from 1977 to 1981 and his successor, Ronald Reagan who both faced similar issues that many Americans are encountering today. Both endured a stifling economy and profound international threat.

During Carter's administration, the economy suffered double-digit inflation, extremely high interest rates, oil shortages, high unemployment, and sluggish economic growth. While Carter's administration was able to bring inflation down, the rising unemployment rate and high interest rates led to a sharp recession.

After taking over the Oval Office in 1981, Reagan was faced with the worst economic recession since the Great Depression.

Interest rates stood at 11.8% and unemployment rose to an astounding 10.8% in late 1982, before dropping during the rest of Reagan's presidency.

Today, Americans and President Obama are now faced with a 7.2% unemployment rate and the national debt is an eye-popping \$10 trillion.

Both Carter and Reagan also withstood severe international conflicts throughout their respective presidencies.

During Carter's last year in office, Iranian militants seized the American embassy in Tehran and took 52 Americans hostage. To combat this, Carter froze \$8 billion of the Iranian government's assets in US banks, and the hostages were released one day before the end of Carter's presidency.

Reagan faced the threat of Russian missiles during the Cold War but managed to get America through it by building up the United States military and implementing new policies toward the Soviet Union. There was no actual attack on U.S. soil during his term, but the threat was most certainly prevalent.

Americans face the same threats today from terrorist groups abroad leaving Obama now with the responsibility of battling such threats.

President Obama enters office and faces many tough challenges. However, students, teachers, workers, and all other citizens of this great country must remember this: while these challenges are most certainly immense, they are not new, and they most certainly are not unconquerable.

With these issues present within our society, the outlook was anything but grim today at UCF as President Barack Obama instilled much needed hope in the hearts of young Americans and the future leaders of this country.



# Desperate for peace, India seeks ‘miracles’

By Emily Wax  
The Washington Post

ANJUNA, India — Esprito D’Souza, 27, hates television. But on Tuesday afternoon, he was trying to rig up a set to watch Barack Obama’s inauguration at his family’s Whole Bean Cafe “because I like his face. He’s warm. He’s peace-loving. Maybe now we can stop feeling like the whole world is so war-torn,” he said.

His family’s vegetarian restaurant in Anjuna, a beach enclave in the southern state of Goa, not far from the city of Mumbai, caters to Indian honeymooners, foreign hippies and newly rich Russians searching for sun. But since the terrorist attacks in Mumbai late last year, fewer tourists are coming.

Many families here abandoned rice and cashew farming in favor of buying a moped to rent to tourists, or managing a wheat grass or tofu burger cafe for visitors also eager for yoga, oil massages and cheap rooms. But many Goans are now deeply in debt, he said.

He hopes that President Obama will end the war Iraq and that terrorism will decrease as a result, especially in places such as India.

“We’re desperate for peace, hungry for it, I would say. We believe Obama can make miracles. That’s what we are praying for in India: that Obama can clean up Bush’s mess,” D’Souza said as he prepared a soy cappuccino for a visiting American, Emiko Fergusson, 27, a vegan with dreadlocks who was taking a coffee break during her afternoon volunteering at an animal shelter.

Fergusson, who is from Rochester, N.Y., has been traveling around India for nearly a year and has no immediate plans to return to the United States.

She worries that the expectations for Obama are too high and that there is too much pressure on him “to solve everything right away.”

“But I also feel proud to be an American again,” she said. “All of my adult life Bush has been president. It hasn’t been easy traveling around the world as an American.

“But today, I feel like something truly new is starting.”

— LATWP News Service

## Marginalized Afro-Colombians see opportunity

By Juan Forero  
The Washington Post

BOGOTA, Colombia — In Colombia, which has the largest black community in Spanish-speaking America, Afro-Colombians gathered in offices and restaurants Tuesday to watch the inauguration of Barack Obama. Cesar Garcia, an Afro-Colombian who served two years in Congress, said Obama’s rise to power served as a signal to Colombia’s poor and marginalized black community that it, too, could achieve.

“The fact that a black man rose in the United States shows that, as Obama has said, yes we can,” Garcia said as he prepared to watch the inauguration in Bogota. “People here see it as an opportunity.”

Sen. Cristobal Rufino, also an Afro-Colombian, called the inauguration “a message of inclusion” that would also serve as a message to Colombia’s highly stratified society. “For us here in Colombia, this is a message of hope,” he said. “It is a hope here in Colombia that may inspire the government, and even the same Afro community.”

— LATWP News Service



Jahi Chikwendiu, The Washington Post / LATWP News Service

In Kogelo, Kenya, home village of President Barack Obama’s father, residents gathered to watch the inauguration. Kenya is eight hours ahead of Wash-

## ‘He’s for the whole world’ Kenyans hope Obama will provide example for leaders

By Stephanie McCrummen  
The Washington Post

NAIROBI, Kenya — Crowds of students — future doctors, politicians, engineers and others — gathered hours early on the sprawling green lawn of Nairobi University, where three big screens were set up to broadcast the inauguration of Barack Obama, whose father was Kenyan.

The mood was celebratory. Homeboyz Entertainment, a group of deejays, would be on later. Red, white and blue ribbons were tied to big white canopies. Vendors sold postcards of Obama and the words, “I do solemnly swear.” A young man walked around hoisting a homemade sign that read: “From Black Power to Barack Power.”

Engineering students Ntabo Maranga

and Wycliffe Ogega said they felt a sense of relief that the day had finally come. Like many young Kenyans, they said they identify more with Obama than with their own aging political class, which they hoped Obama would shake up by example.

“His election has already offered a great challenge to leaders here, through his values,” said Maranga, 27.

In particular, students said they hoped Obama would shame politicians into rising above tribalism.

“When people speak of Obama, we don’t say he’s Luo Obama,” said Ogega, 27, referring to Obama’s Kenyan ethnic group. “We say he’s Kenyan. We hope he will help us see each other as Kenyans instead of certain tribes.”

A group of young women studying for an exam in diplomacy echoed that idea.

“We hope he’ll be able to straighten out

some politicians of this country — give them a straight deal on issues like graft,” said Judith Ngandoki, 27, who is studying for a master’s degree in international relations.

Not far away, Kadiro Ganemo, an Ethiopian immigrant, suggested that such hope stretches beyond Kenya.

“He’s not just for Kenya — he’s for the whole world,” said Ganemo, 28, who is not a student but joined the celebration because he didn’t want to watch alone at home.

He confessed that he had not believed Obama could be elected, given the racism that exists in the United States. When the results came in, he said, he cried, as he expected he would again later Tuesday. “Maybe Africans can unite like people in the U.S.,” he said.

— LATWP News Service

## In Beijing, Americans belly up to the bar as Chinese appreciate the ‘small gesture’

By Maureen Fan and Zhang Jie  
The Washington Post

BEIJING — Barack Obama would not be speaking until well past midnight here, but a boisterous crowd had already begun to gather at 7 p.m. Tuesday at a Mexican restaurant called the Saddle Cantina in a Beijing neighborhood thick with bars popular with expats and Chinese. The Americans were noisy; the Chinese customers, fewer in number, were quieter.

“Obama promised Americans he would protect American trade and U.S. workers, so maybe we will have arguments with the U.S. on trade issues,” said Bono Cheng, 35, a private equity manager, sipping a beer and telling his friends that the U.S. economy was in such bad shape that Obama would have little control over it. He marveled at the nearly 2 million Americans that CNN said began lining up for the event about 5 or 6 a.m. in Washington.

About 11:50 p.m. Beijing time (10:50 a.m. in Washington), television cameras showed Bush and Obama coming out of the White House and climbing into black limousines. Customers in the packed restaurant stood watching a large flat-panel screen on the wall.

University student Zhou Yongfu, 21, who was eating a taco, said he had come to practice his English and to “feel the atmosphere” of the inauguration.

**“Obama pays attention to detail. When he goes to the car, he opens the door for his wife first. In the U.S., it’s always ladies first.”**

— Student Zhou Yongfu, 21

“I’m surprised that so many people stand in the street and that they do so voluntarily,” Zhou said. “Obama pays attention to detail. When he goes to the car, he opens the door for his wife first. In the U.S., it’s always ladies first. I guess it shows that you should start with a small gesture.”

John Holden, managing director of Hill & Knowlton and a member of the American Chamber of Commerce’s Board of Governors, cheered.

“It’s no longer pro-trade Republicans and anti-business Democrats. It was (President Bill) Clinton who signed the WTO (World Trade Organization) deal. Now it’s about how to seal a deal with China that’s short-term, long-term and medium-term.

“It takes some imagination to imagine a China that doesn’t look like it does today,” Holden said. “And we’re seeing this incredible man who gets it.”

As the motorcade arrived at the U.S. Capitol, the Americans at the Saddle Cantina began taking photos and speaking Chinese to their friends. The noise was deafening. Barely noticed, an old man stepped into the restaurant in a dark blue Mao suit and cap, his lined forehead lighted by the television. He stared at the screen, seemingly mesmerized.

“I don’t know why tonight there are so many people in the bar, but I had heard that today Obama succeeds Bush,” said Xiao Bao, 71, who has been selling straw decorations for 16 years. “There are a lot of people there. Americans are quite democratic. The president must make sure a lot of people are satisfied. This is quite good.

“But how can they tell is he is a good or bad president? He has barely begun to work.”

— LATWP News Service





Barack Hussein Obama takes the oath as the 44th U.S. President accompanied by the "first family." The Obamas have been linked to five generations of Native Americans through an adoption ceremony.

# Obama's honorary family celebrates

Native Americans adopted president in traditional ritual, as part of outreach

By Michael Laris  
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Back home in Lodge Grass, Montana, they keep talking about Hartford Black Eagle's luck. "People around here, even the white people, say, 'You're the luckiest person in the world. You adopted the president of the United States!'" he said.

"Thank you," is his usual response.

But Black Eagle doesn't see his role in Tuesday's inauguration in terms of good fortune. He sees something sacred. He and Mary, his wife of 57 years, were set to be whisked to the Capitol by inauguration organizers early Tuesday for the swearing-in, where they will be seated near the center of American power. The couple adopted Barack Obama in a traditional Native American ceremony in May, when the candidate made a campaign stop at the vast Crow reservation.

The adoption marked an unusually intimate intertwining of politics, history, and

family — but one that perhaps seems less jarring in the case of a president who reached Tuesday's swearing-in, at least in part, on the power of his personal story and its broader appeal.

Obama's outreach to Native Americans was part of a political strategy during critical primary battles in Western states. Native American leaders, too, want more power to control their lands and lives, seeking policy influence on such issues as coal mining, the environment, and the economic stimulus package.

But an adoption is no slapdash honorary degree or campaign prop. It's a revered compact that has linked the first family with five generations of First Americans. Obama's daughters Sasha and Malia beamed as they met their adoptive grandparents over the summer.

Four of those generations of Black Eagles came to Washington to witness their new relative's elevation. Hartford and Mary will have prime viewing seats for the ceremony. She will wear a traditional elk tooth coat, made of deep-pink wool. (The teeth and sinews have gone plastic.) Hartford will don a buckskin vest he's saving for the occasion, with six elegant rows of blue and red beads.

Monday, they took a moment to see the

sights.

"That's where your son lives," Mary, 74, told her husband Monday as they glimpsed the White House on their first trip to Washington. "There are a lot of ghosts in there," Hartford, 75, responded.

Mary first learned that her family was about to grow as she was on a long drive to Arizona. Her son, Cedric, vice chairman of the tribe, was on the cellphone.

"I was already around Wyoming someplace. He called me and said we're going to have to rush right back," Mary said. "He said, 'You're going to have to adopt Barack Obama.' 'They were tentative about taking on the sudden responsibility. 'I couldn't comprehend it for a while,'" Mary said.

On the day Obama arrived at the reservation, she froze. "When my alarm came on, I didn't want to go through with it. 'I would like to go sleep another eight hours,' I said. 'Not me. I don't want to go,' " she recalled telling Hartford. But, "my husband got after me."

She couldn't eat. Waiting for Obama in the Secret Service's security area, "we were so nervous my mouth dried up," she said. No purses were allowed. "I needed Chap-Stick so bad." Then Obama walked in and greeted the dignitaries, before the room was mostly cleared out.

"He started walking toward me. Oh man, I was kind of tongue-tied, and he said, 'Are you my new mother, Mary?' And I said 'Yes.' He just gave me a hug."

At the private adoption, Hartford waved smoke from burning cedar needles over Obama, twice in the front and twice in the back, with a bald eagle fan. Afterward, Obama told reporters he was deeply moved by the ceremony, and he vowed that if he won, he would have his new parents come to the White House.

Hartford is a spiritual healer and had been given the crucial, sacred responsibility of christening Obama with a Crow name. The act of naming is supposed to reflect the past of the person bestowing the name and the future of the person receiving it, Hartford said. The request for Obama's name came with an added sensitivity: the possibility of a pre-presidential veto. Obama's people were on the lookout for potential embarrassment, said Aubrey Black Eagle, Mary and Hartford's grandson.

As it happened, "Awe Kooda Bilaxpak Kuxshish," was the name Hartford chose. It reflected Hartford's own travels as a healer, and translates as: "One Who Helps People Throughout This Land."

— LATWP News Service

# Media plays role in Obama's celebrity

By Howard Kurtz  
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Filmmaker Ron Howard was chatting in Maureen Dowd's living room, saying he didn't mind spending hours in the cold for the inauguration and that even his conservative brother had come to admire Barack Obama.

Outside on the chilly Sunday night, Tom Hanks decided against venturing into the jam-packed rowhouse, mock-announcing to a small crowd on the Georgetown street that the party was paralyzed: "No more hot dogs! The Chinese food never got here!"

The country's big-name anchors, actors, commentators, news executives, producers, editors and scribes have been celebrating the quadrennial event — and themselves — at one glitzy gathering after another in the run-up to Monday's inauguration.

"It's turning into the royal wedding, isn't it?" asks Tina Brown, who threw a brunch Sunday at the Council on Foreign Relations

with MSNBC's Joe Scarborough.

Every inauguration is a major media moment, with nonstop television coverage, newspapers churning out special editions and correspondents parachuting in from around the globe. But it is hard to envision this level of intensity if John McCain were taking the oath of office. All the hoopla has left the impression that many in journalism are thrilled by Obama's swearing-in.

"We wanted to celebrate the key themes of the Obama era," says Arianna Huffington, who hosted 1,500 guests at the Newseum last night at a bash featuring giant computer screens and entertainment by Will.I.Am, Sheryl Crow and Sting.

These include "the rise of the Internet and new media and the role they had in getting him elected, and the way he's going to use it to govern."

Bill Press, a radio host at WWRC arranged for other liberal hosts, including Stephanie Miller and Randi Rhodes, to join a radio and television broadcast on Sunday

at George Washington University, complete with a live band. "We wanted to celebrate the inauguration of someone we all worked hard to get elected, and the role that progressive talk radio played," he says.

Obama is being covered not just as an incoming president but as a white-hot celebrity. In recent days, the New York tabloids have run front-page stories on his official portrait and new Cadillac limousine, amid such headlines as "VOICE OF HOPE" and "RENEW THE DREAM." The Washington Times gave front-page play Monday to an essay Obama wrote for the paper, while Parade magazine's cover story was a letter that Obama wrote to his daughters. Michelle Obama is being touted as America's next supermodel. And there has been much panting over the family's search for a dog.

The Washington Post Co. has been a player as well: Slate threw a soiree Saturday at the apartment of Christopher Hitchens, while CEO Donald Graham hosted a Sun-

day night ball at the National Museum of American History for the company's black-oriented Web site, The Root. Boldfaced names included Spike Lee, Henry Louis Gates, Samuel L. Jackson, Natalie Portman and — mostly secluded in a VIP lounge — Oprah Winfrey. David Gregory even boogied, showing off his dance moves.

At what point does the recognition of Obama's gifts and this juncture in history spill over into partisan adulation? Some journalists justify the ebullient tone by arguing that Obama is simply more fascinating than most politicians, as well as a trailblazer who is following 43 white presidents. Others say they are merely reflecting a public groundswell. Still others say Obama moves product when he's on TV shows and magazine covers. Perhaps, more than one reporter says privately, Obama deserves the adulation, given the fact that he pulled off a political feat even harder than landing a crippled jet intact on the Hudson River.

— LATWP News Service





Tom Van Dyke/Chicago Tribune/MCT

Hertestine Parr of Richton Park, Illinois, takes a picture at sunrise on one of 10 buses in a convoy arranged by Chicago Congressman Danny Davis en route to the inauguration

## Bus ride from Selma to D.C. concludes 44-year journey

By Robert E. Pierre  
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The charter bus rolled all night, through the cities of Montgomery, Atlanta and Richmond, stopping only for bathroom breaks and an IHOP breakfast. A few riders watched movies and listened to music. Most slept the entire way.

But Monday afternoon, as the weary travelers rolled onto 14th Street, past the Holocaust Museum, the Washington Monument and the Mall, 18-year-old Darianne Allen began to cry.

She stared at all the buses, cars and people in the streets as her classmates pulled out cameras and pressed their faces to the glass.

"The moment just hit me," Allen said, looking at her mother and wiping away tears. "It's really real."

It was the culmination of a 16-hour journey, a grinding two-year campaign and at least four decades of struggle to turn the voting rights earned 44 years ago into something few thought imaginable. Fittingly, the journey for the students, parents and educators began with this simple prayer: "Jesus, we thank you for having the 44th president of the United States as a

black African American."

Theirs was one of thousands of buses that have converged on Washington from across the nation to mark the start of Barack Obama's presidency. They all came for their own reasons, bringing their stories and their hopes to the nation's capital.

Selma, Ala., sent at least three buses. The city's name is seared in the American psyche because of what happened when peaceful marchers were brutally attacked on Bloody Sunday in 1965. The head wounds of John Lewis, now a Democratic congressman from Georgia, are still visible today.

It was Lewis who led more than 600 protesters across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma on March 7, 1965. The marchers were headed to Montgomery, the state capital, in their campaign for voting rights. Footage of Alabama state troopers attacking the peaceful march helped quicken the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Today in Selma, the inauguration of Obama stands as a testament to what's possible when little people stand up.

The 40 students, parents and educators who left Selma High on the bus Sunday night carried with them the soaring hopes from Obama's election and the hard

realities of their lives.

Selma still wrestles with issues of equality, education and jobs. So much unfinished business remains from the civil rights years.

Selma High's bookkeeper, Nadine Sturdivant, understands Roy's frustration. She was 2 years old on Bloody Sunday when mounted police stormed into her parents' back yard chasing protesters.

She and her daughter, the homecoming queen, got on the bus to be a part of this historical moment.

A friend of hers, Lesia James, a Selma High administrator, planned the Washington trip. Last summer, the two were on different sides in the city's mayoral race -- itself a symbol of progress: Both candidates were black. Sturdivant's pick came out on top, defeating James Perkins Jr., who became the city's first black mayor in 2000.

"I beat her," Sturdivant said, playfully. "She got me this time," James said, brushing off the loss.

It's good to be able to fight about electoral politics and not have to worry -- as their parents did -- about just having the right to vote, the women acknowledged.

Selma High has until recently struggled to meet statewide academic standards, and the school is nearly as segregated now as it

was 50 years ago.

"I don't really have white friends," said 11th-grader Roneika Deloach. "I do have one white friend at Selma High. I think she is the only white student."

"It's two at the school," a classmate chimed in.

Deloach is a member of the National Honor Society and student government. She's looking for a way out of Selma.

"Selma is a good place to live if you are retired, but for the children, it's not a lot to do," said Deloach, who plans to move to Huntsville.

Maya Rudolph, 16, agreed.

"It's not a good city for youth. It's a good city for the old people."

The chaperons, most in their 40s, cringed at being thought of as old but did not protest her basic point.

The sour economy is shuttering Selma's businesses and forcing furloughs, and African Americans make up the majority of those who live in entrenched poverty.

Obama's populist message, however, trumped Selma's problems for mothers such as Donna Allen, 39, who trekked to Washington with her daughter, Darianne.

"He gave us something different to look forward to," she said of Obama. "I want my daughter to have a sense of feeling that

## Why are inaugurations always held on Jan. 20?

By Reese Wallace  
Valencia Voice

In light of Tuesday's inaugural event, some questions naturally arise and beg to be answered. What will President Obama's first 100 days be like? What will happen to the American economy? When will the War in Iraq end?

Most pressing of all though is, of course, why is the inauguration on January 20?

The simple answer for this question is the 20th Amendment says so, but doesn't explain why.

George Washington's first inauguration took place on April 30, 1789. Besides that, every elected president was inaugurated on March 4, exempting Sundays. This date left a sizable time between the election of the president and the moment of his inauguration.

In the early days of America, this time pe-

riod was necessary for the president to build his cabinet, and to travel to Washington D.C. As technology advanced, that period became less and less a matter of necessity.

In November 1932, Franklin Roosevelt was elected president in the midst of the Great Depression. The country had to wait nearly five months before he was sworn in and able to begin enacting the ideas they'd elected him for.

The dire state of the American economy when FDR was elected led congress to the realization that a change was needed.

The bill was passed in 1932 and ratified by the states on Jan. 23, 1933. Unfortunately, the amendment would not apply to Roosevelt's first inauguration.

From that day forth, every subsequent inauguration would take place on Jan. 20...providing that that date did not happen to fall on a Sunday.

## MLK Day parades kick off inauguration celebration

By Cassie Weimz  
Valencia Voice

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Day parade held Saturday, Jan. 17, in Downtown Orlando was truly a day worth celebrating.

Orange Avenue was flooded with cheers as high school marching bands ignited enthusiasm in the crowd and floats drove by tossing handfuls of candy to eager hands.

There was an unmistakable sense of pride in the air as businesses, organizations, and communities gathered together to remember Dr. King's legacy.

From boy scouts to sororities, dance teams and church groups everyone present was adorn with smiles and laughter. But it was not only a day of celebration for the accomplishments of the past but for the victory of the future as well.

Citizens were also gathered together to celebrate the inauguration of President-elect, Barack

Obama.

Floats were dressed with Dr. King's famous quote, "The time is right. The time is now," immediately followed by a picture of Obama. Many of the floats were representations of the change that Dr. King fought for and the same change that Obama has endlessly promised to deliver throughout his almost two years of campaigning.

The parade was not only a remembrance of the dream that was fought so diligently for but a march towards the future as that dream has now become a reality.

Festivities also took place in Eatonville. "As I tell my girls all the time, without him and without what Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. stood for, I wouldn't be able to provide for my family and we wouldn't be able to live in this great country of America without some of those basic rights he fought so hard for," Walter Johnson told MSNBC News.



# What issue should Obama focus on?

## Your Voice: Repairing crisis in the Gaza Strip

By Kenny Wagner  
Valencia Voice

The incoming Obama administration has many issues and conflicts to undertake, many which require action within the first six months of coming to power; Foreign policy, health care, and economic concerns are inexorably going to effect this country and the incoming administration for months, if not years.

Perhaps the most pressing issue is the one we have felt the effects of over the past eight years. The one issue in which we have made no headway, U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East, specifically the current situation in the Gaza Strip.

The first issue that Obama needs to oversee in his first six months as President is the situation in the Gaza strip.

A terrorist organization is illegally and aggressively promoting the rights of the Palestinian nation while rebelling against the sovereign nation of Israel and where a militant Israeli government is hell bent on complete control of Palestine, vilifying the people of the Gaza Strip region.

Perhaps the greatest threat to the Middle East region is in fact our own ally of Israel, who was poised for a full-scale attack on Iran last June, potentially disrupting U.S. policy in said country and potentially throwing the region in complete disarray.

President Obama needs to take a close look at what is happening in the Gaza Strip region and come up with an effective policy that will include a lasting ceasefire. The President also needs to apply his philosophical mission to this increasingly unstable situation; furthermore, this is where his message of change needs to be installed.

The President cannot turn a blind eye to Israeli policy in the region anymore. It is time to hold the Israeli government accountable for its strategy in Gaza. Hamas who allegedly provoked the current situation has launched 10 missiles into Israel injuring three people and killing one.

In response, Israel did not attempt to engage Hamas in a tactful and diplomatic fashion, rather, choosing to act aggressively and launch a full-scale attack that has left 1,133 dead, 750 of which were civilians, of those civilians, 335 were children between Dec. 27 and Jan. 16.

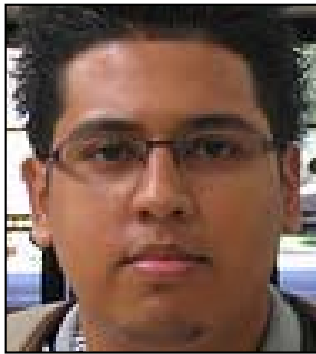
There is no doubt Hamas needs to be removed from power, however trying to eradicate the group will only add fuel to the fire, see Iraq and U.S. foreign policy before 2006. The change within the Palestinian nation needs to come from within, like Iraq and U.S. foreign policy succeeding 2006, where the Israeli government works with different political, religious, and ethnic groups to oust the terrorist group Hamas and insert a new Palestinian government, the United States needs to oversee this sea change to insure a peaceful transition.

It is high time Washington and President Obama hold the Israeli government accountable for their actions, holding soldiers accountable for war crimes and calling for a lasting ceasefire, without destroying Palestinian Nation.

In turn President Obama needs to provide U.S. military intelligence, technology, and possibly a small presence to insure stability at the Gaza border. This way the United States can operate much the way it did in the 1990's where the government and office of the President operated as mediators of the region, rather than aggressors.

During the past eight years, our country has been portrayed as an overbearing, aggressive, militant nation. To our allies in Israel, this type of behavior has been considered acceptable. It is time for the Obama administration to stop this rhetoric and engage warring countries and terrorist groups alike as institutions that demand to be taken seriously.

He must restore our image as a rational mediator in a complex and often times volatile Middle East, if we are successful, we can gain respect in nations that at one time despised us; if we are unsuccessful, we will have more years of unrest, instability and death of innocent people.



"Try to expand employment, help the unemployed and stop wasting money. Spend money on education, the economy is based on students."

— **Jorge Patraca**



"I want the cost of living to come down. Specifically, grocery prices, energy costs such as electricity, and the cost of gas."

— **Dara Ryall**



"Take people out of Iraq, we've been there too long; Iraq can handle itself."

— **Paul Andrew**



"I think it would be great if he could create programs for community service positions such as a police officer or nurse, that would allow participants to receive reduced college costs."

— **Kila Murphey**



"To focus on school tuition; cost of school, cost of books, and lower gas prices."

— **Shannon Baruch**



"To do something about the war. Focus on the war, get out of there. I don't think it was a fair war to begin with. More people are dying everyday."

— **Caiti Lhommedieu**



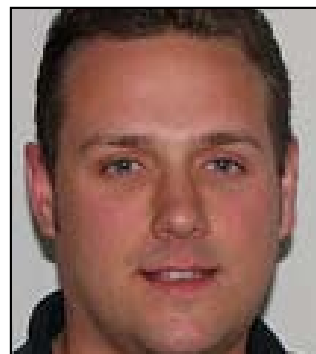
"Seize out troops from Iraq and redirect them to Afghanistan to eliminate the Taliban."

— **Ryan Flaherty**



"To fix everything in the Middle East, make sure country gets back on track and keep track of expenses."

— **Adriana Stange**



"I would like him to lower corporate taxes so that it would encourage corporations from Europe to come to the U.S. and open businesses to boost the economy."

— **Vince Minko**



"To create jobs and lower the cost of tuition."

— **Krista Garca**



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# Our Voice: The task at hand

The irony of Barack Obama’s historic inauguration, one full day after celebrating the life of Martin Luther King, is not lost on anyone.

In fact, this has added to the deep symbolism of an African-American receiving the keys to the White House -which was built partly, with the labor of black slaves.

“Tomorrow, we will come together as one people on the same mall where Dr. King’s dream echoes still. As we do, we recognize that here in America, our destinies are inextricably linked. We resolve that as we walk, we must walk together,” Obama said in his speech on Monday, addressing the large contingent of devoted supporters gathered in Washington D.C. Hundreds of thousands of visitors streamed into Washington for inaugural festivities but, the celebration was tempered by the daunting challenges Obama will face; furthermore, unfinished wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression.

Obama shouldn’t risk setting the bar too high, for fear of initiating massive disappointment; which, understandably, shouldn’t be too difficult after the last eight years of failed economic, foreign, and domestic missteps.

So, what should he focus on?  
In a report by the Washingtonpost.com, Obama will dive right into foreign policy on his first full day as president.

Seeing the recent violence in the Gaza Strip -taking into consideration the war in Iraq and the growing tension with Iran-Obama criticized his opponents for treating those elements as “discrete” problems.

Under his watch, Obama summarized in an interview with CNN, policy in that region will be treated as a single, unified one, and one that he will want to tackle personally, quoting: “One of the principles that we’ll be operating under is that these things are very much related and that if we have got an integrated approach, we’re going to be more effective.”

The report went on to say that Obama will likely tap key strategic aides to fill out his remaining foreign relations posts. More specifically, he wants his newest envoys to move quickly to engage warring Israelis and Palestinians in an effort to secure peace.

It is nice to see that area of his budding presidency so comprehensively covered, but what about certain domestic issues that af-

fect John Q. Public; like healthcare, or the economy?

As far as the average man of America should be concerned, creating jobs, stabilizing a struggling -if not deathbed ridden-economy, and providing universal health-care seems most likely to be the culprits to face the iron gauntlet of Obama’s first term in office.

As seen on certain gas guzzling, soccer-mom inhabiting, SUVs, the Neanderthal-laden motto for the opponents of Obama-was “drill baby drill.” Countering that with an equally asinine, but morally more appropriate, line by Hilary Clinton was “jobs baby jobs.” In Obama’s first term, that will, hopefully, ring true.

According to CNN.com, Obama will invest \$150 billion over 10 years to advance the next generation of biofuels and fuel infrastructure, accelerate the commercialization of plug-in hybrids, promote development of commercial scale renewable energy, invest in low emissions coal plants, and begin transition to a new digital electricity grid. The plan will also invest in America’s highly skilled manufacturing workforce and manufacturing centers to ensure that American workers have the skills and tools they need to pioneer the first wave of green technologies that will be in high demand throughout the world.

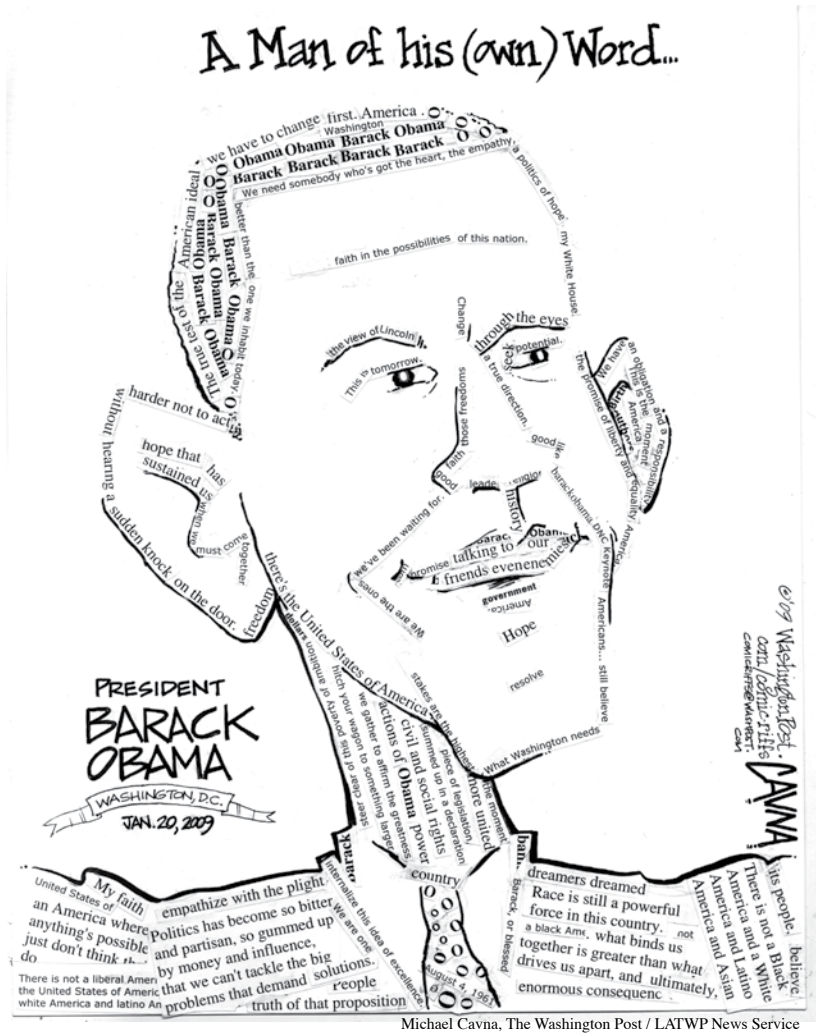
Apparently, more green for the atmosphere equals more ‘green’ for one’s pocketbook.

And in the same article, they discuss Obama’s healthcare plans.

He will require insurance companies to cover pre-existing conditions so all Americans, regardless of their health status or history, can get comprehensive benefits at fair and stable premiums.

It’s about time. Will he do all the things promised? Will he enact this “change” everyone’s been hearing about for over a year? Or will he succumb to the usual political pandering we have come to loathe and detest for the last eight years? Only time will tell, but in the meantime the optimism is palpable.

So while the nation celebrates its civil-rights-rewarded victory, which is well deserved if not long overdue, the more perceptive of us will keep a watchful eye on the execution of the promised proposals.



# Your Voice: Ambitions reaffirmed in Obama’s 1st presidential speech

By Adam Fishman  
Valencia Voice

January 20th, 2009 is a date that will remain embedded in the minds of millions of Americans for years to come. The 44th President of the United States of America, Barack Obama, was sworn into the presidential office. Hundreds of thousands of Americans gathered in our nation’s capital, as millions huddled around televisions to catch a glimpse of this historic event.

President Obama was sworn in at approximately 12:07 P.M. using the same bible that Abraham Lincoln used for his first inauguration on March 4, 1861. President Obama’s nerves, if he’s ever showed any, were slightly present when he took his oath. Obama forgot the first few words he was supposed to repeat, a minor mistake considering the magnitude of the event. No worries, right after being sworn in, President Obama delivered a speech where the message was clearly reflected upon the faces of all who watched. That message was unity, hope, and determination. CBS analyst

Jeff Greenfield described President Obama’s speech as “very credible.”

The audience present at the inauguration chanted “Obama, Obama, Obama!” Our 44th President opened his speech saying, “I stand here today, humbled at the tasks before us.” He also thanked former President George W. Bush for his service.

Obama sent a message that distances himself from the former president, stating boldly, “we must unify our politics and we are ready to lead once more.” His statement suggests the idea that not only will he lead our country, but all Americans have the right and the ability to catapult our country forward and become leaders themselves.

President Obama is one of the most articulate and motivational speakers our nation has ever witnessed. He carries a certain charisma, confidence, and “swag.” He has the power to rally, and spread hope to those who a few months or years ago, may have not had any hope.

Obama asked Americans to “embody the same spirit our men and women of service carry.” He stated, “The midst of

our crisis is well understood,” and that “America’s challenges will be met.”

President Obama’s ambitions may not come to realization within the first six months, first year, or even first term. It’s easy to be skeptical of his chosen words. “The state of the economy calls for swift and bold action, all this we can do and all this we will do,” Obama stated.

Will he truly accomplish all of what he plans? Perhaps not, but no matter what America must stand together, be patient and push for common goals that will ultimately better ourselves.

January 20th, 2009 proved to America that anything is possible, and America proved to the rest of the world that our nation is the catalyst for change, freedom, and opportunity.

President Obama made one of the most profound statements that defined his speech and our country as a whole, stating, “why a man no less than 60 years ago would not have been served in a restaurant, can now stand before you and take the most sacred oath.”