

BY JOHN TOSCANO

A huge turnout of voters is expected next Tuesday for one of the nation's most historic presidential elections that could give the United States its first African-American national leader.

Although Democratic standard bearer Barack Obama has led steadily in the polls and goes into Election Day with an apparent lead, his campaign against Republican candidate John McCain has sparked fears of a last minute backlash that could put the outcome in doubt.

Besides the exciting and emotional nature of this presidential race, which was given an extra dash of interest when Alaska Governor Sarah Palin came aboard a McCain's vice presidential running mate, Tuesday's balloting also offers the possibility that, along with an Obama victory and his party's continuing control of the House, the Democrats might also win control of the U.S. Senate and give their party control of the legislative branch in Washington.

Closer to home, there's one other score to be settled in the voting—who will capture the majority in the state senate. The Democrats, who have long held the majority in the Assembly, set their sights on the Republican's razor-thin, two-member majority and sent City Councilmembers James Gennaro and Joseph Addabbo Jr. out to challenge GOP incumbents Frank Padavan and Serphin Maltese, respectively, in hopes of a sweep that could tip the scales their way and give them total control in Albany.

The crucial state senate battles will be covered in separate stories in this special election issue as will the several Congressional and Assembly races that will be decided on Tuesday. Polls, as usual, will be open from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m.

The 2008 presidential race started late

Obama, a little-known Senator from Illinois, and John McCain, whose campaign was floundering, staged a comeback to win in Florida, and from that point went on to become their respective parties' candidates for president.

Clinton and Giuliani had hoped to

Clinton, however, managed to win in New York, California and Texas, and the Democratic choice narrowed to the former First Lady and her Illinois Senate colleague.

The 47-year-old candidate, with just two years of Senate service on his resume, took the lead in Iowa and never looked back. His exciting oratorical style and message of "change" attracted a young following. Voters also responded to his pleas for financial help over the Internet, pouring millions into his campaign treasury.

Clinton battled back valiantly, never faltering, thanks to her strong appeal to women voters. She finally, unwillingly stepped aside to clear the way for Obama to become the first black man to be his party's nominee for president.

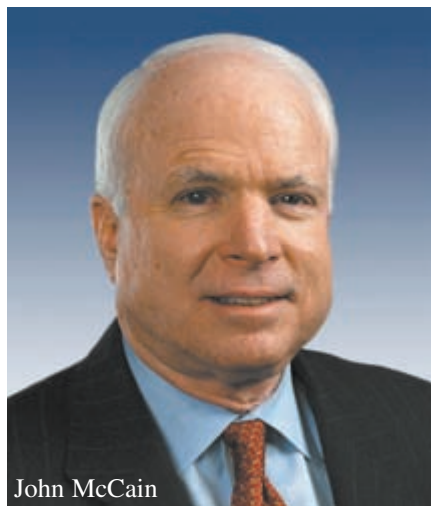
Obama, once he squared off against McCain, clearly set the battle lines against the Arizona senator by charging him with having voted "90 percent of the time" with President George W. Bush, favoring the rich with major tax cuts and leaving the nation's economy in a rut. Obama's running mate, Delaware Senator Joe Biden joined in slamming McCain throughout the campaign.

Obama never deviated from that message, and the benefits he derived from it were multiplied many times over as Wall Street and the financial community took a major dive in September.

McCain, meanwhile, attacked Obama as inexperienced and misguided on the

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Large Turnout Expected For Tuesday's Historic Election Day



John McCain



Barack Obama

in the previous year and offered a real prospect of an all-New York battle as Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton was the Democrats' favorite and former Mayor Rudy Giuliani was the top Republican choice.

But once the early primaries started in Iowa and ended in Florida, Barack

emerge as the leading contenders by sweeping the board on Super Tuesday, February 5, when several states with large delegate counts, including New York, California and Texas, were holding primaries. But Giuliani was virtually out of the picture by the end of the day, despite winning his home state as a Republican.

**Please Remember to
Vote on Election Day
Tuesday, Nov. 4th**



Michael G. Den Dekker



***Please Vote the
Democratic Line
on Election Day***



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