



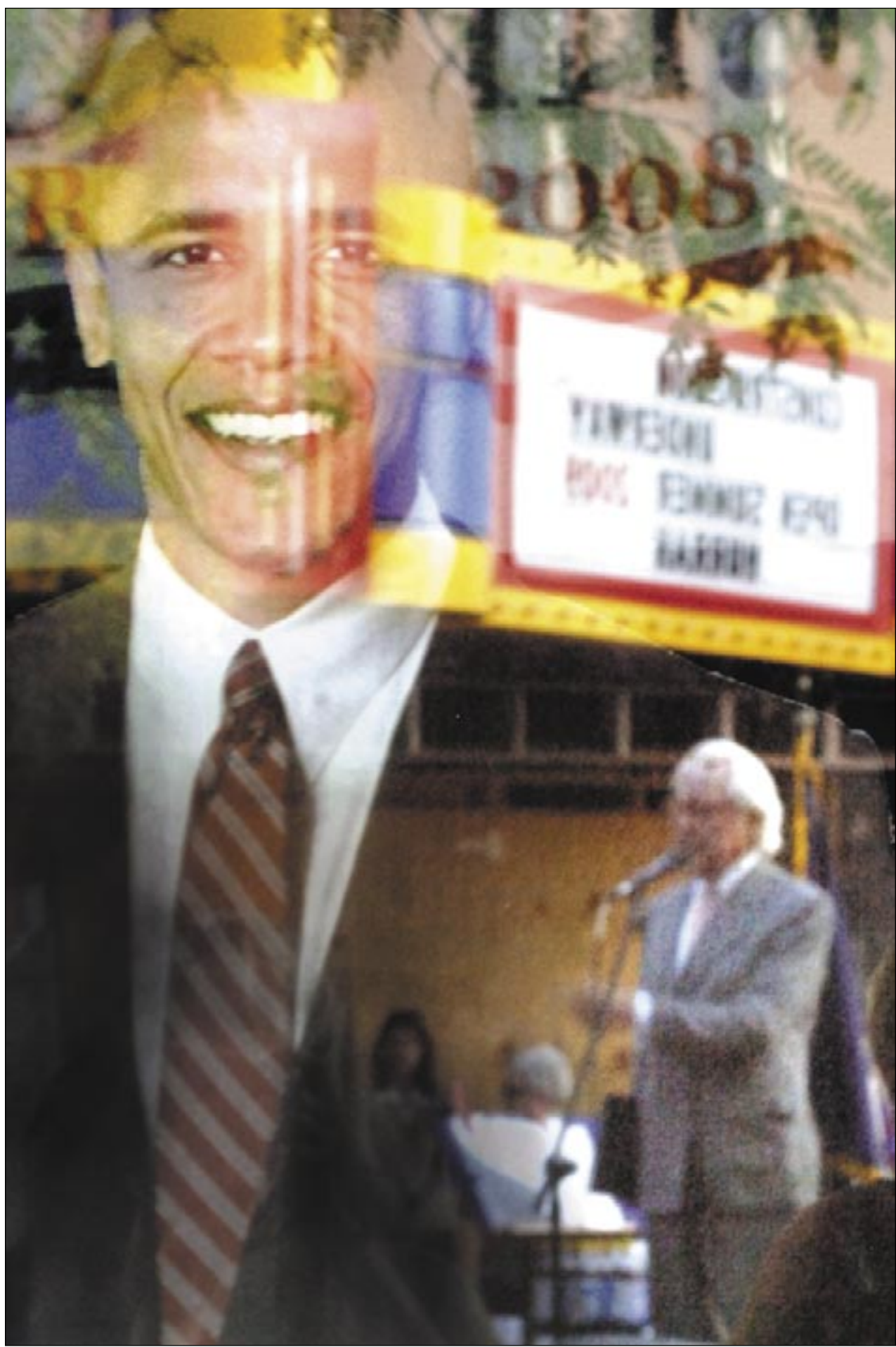
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2008 ELECTION

Democrats roll out downtown office



STATE JOURNAL/KELLY MACKEY

Prominent Kentucky Democrat Terry McBrayer's reflection shows on the shoulder of a life-sized cardboard cutout of Democratic Presidential nominee Barack Obama in the window of the new Democratic headquarters on St. Clair Street. McBrayer spoke about supporting Democrats in November's election and backing Obama at the opening of the new office Tuesday.

McBrayer touts strength of party ticket

BY JOHN ZAMBENINI
STATE JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

Local Democrats rallied around party leaders and elected officials Tuesday night, kicking off the opening of Franklin County's Democratic political headquarters – the first downtown in 16 years.

About 150 Franklin County Democrats were on hand at the St. Clair Street ceremony, complete

with stump speeches, free food and live music.

Terry McBrayer, long a familiar face among state and local party faithful, and now a member of the National Democratic Committee, touted the Democratic ticket's strength.

McBrayer, who ran Paul Patton's gubernatorial campaign, attacked newly anointed GOP vice presidential nominee Sarah Palin as unqualified, but emphasized pride in his party.

"I am a Democrat without prefix or suffix," McBrayer said, calling the ticket an agent of change in "critical times."

McBrayer, who first entered the Kentucky legislature in 1966, is a Lexington attorney and super delegate who originally supported Hillary Rodham Clinton's failed bid for her party's nomination.

But, when Clinton voiced her support for Barack Obama, he fol-

See **PARTY A7**

CITY SCHOOLS

\$45,000 needed for inauguration trip

At least 80 percent of Frankfort High students must make deposit by Nov. 10

BY SCOTT UNGER
STATE JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

The presidential inauguration trip for Frankfort High School students is back on if students can meet a series of stipulations set forth by the Frankfort Independent Board of Education.

Organizers need to get \$45,000 in pledges, at least 80 percent of students must deposit \$100 and approximately 25 chaperones must sign up – all by Nov. 10 – for the board to approve the trip.

FHS senior class president Shelley Hayden urged the board to approve the January trip to Washington D.C. – a district tradition since 1992.

"I can honestly tell you that ever since we were freshmen the inauguration trip has always just been assumed as something we would do as seniors," Hayden told the board.

"When we got the devastating blow that our inauguration trip

See **FHS, A7**

FISCAL COURT

New employees no longer automatically qualify for hazardous duty benefits

Changes impact retirement in three departments following legislature's approval

BY CHARLIE PEARL
STATE JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

New Franklin County employees in the jail, sheriff and fire departments – hired after Aug. 31 – no longer automatically qualify for hazardous duty retirement benefits.

Changes impacting hazardous duty positions were prompted by retirement legislation in House Bill 1 approved in this year's special session.

Franklin County Fiscal Court discussed the changes in a work session Tuesday and whether to re-establish hazardous duty retirement benefits for employees of three departments.

That would require a petition to the Kentucky Retirement Systems Board. Fiscal Court took no formal action on the matter, but discussed it for 2½ hours.

Judge-Executive Ted Collins said the changes eliminating the hazardous duty benefits do not impact employees hired before Sept 1.

Before the meeting, Collins said it's an issue where "my heart wants to do one thing, but our pocketbook says something different."

In the last 10 years, Fiscal Court has contributed \$4.1 million to hazardous duty retirement. The annual average increase in that contribution has been 10 percent.

Magistrate Don Sturgeon said, "\$4 million is a lot of money, gang. That might build a swimming pool."

Magistrate Lambert Moore said, "In 1998 it was costing us a little over a quarter million a year. Now it's three-quarters of a million. In the next couple of years

The county's total hazardous duty contribution for the last 10 years included \$1.7 million for firefighters and \$77,295 for the fire chief; \$1.4 million for correctional officers and \$90,439 for the jailers; \$650,448 for sheriff deputies and \$94,115 for sheriffs.

it's going to be about a million. It's just going up and up and up. We need a way to retain our employees that's controllable."

As an alternative Moore suggested a "401(k) match at a rate we can control."

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The county's contribution in the last 10 years for hazardous and nonhazardous duty retirement combined was \$9.3 million. That contribution increased from \$646,486 in 1999 to \$1.7 million in 2008.

Nonhazardous duty employees must contribute 5 percent of their gross pay to retirement and hazardous duty employees must contribute 8 percent. The employees' contribution rate hasn't changed but county government's contribution rate increases almost every year.

In fiscal year 2007-08, Fiscal Court's contribution was a rate

See **BENEFITS, A7**

PLANT BOARD

7 percent rate increase possible

Price rise to customers result of wholesale power costs

BY PAUL GLASSER
STATE JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

Customers of the Frankfort Plant Board could be facing a 7 percent rate increase later this year – the result of wholesale power price increases.

The directors of the Frankfort

Plant Board Tuesday said they plan to discuss at the monthly meeting on Oct. 20 a possible rate increase from Kentucky Utilities, which sells it wholesale power.

General Manager Warner Caines said he expects Kentucky Utilities to seek a rate increase with the Federal Energy Regulator-

ry Commission, and if approved, it would take effect at the end of the year.

Caines said Kentucky Utilities has passed on additional costs through fuel charges but has not made an official rate increase since

See **RATE A7**

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