

YOUR LOCAL NEWSPAPER
Clearwater Sun

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What does it all mean?

THE RESULTS of Tuesday's Clearwater city commission elections show that this city's voters don't hesitate to elect widely differing candidates.

Incumbent and leading vote-getter Richard Tenney is not much like Rita Garvey, who was elected to the commission on her second try.

Tenney was a one-issue candidate. He bet all his political marbles on his anti-Scientology crusade, and the voters went for it, big.

He received a great deal of criticism from the public and press during the final weeks of the campaign, but that didn't stop him.

The other commissioners should heed the message: Clearwater wants strong leadership against Scientology.

Determining what form that leadership will take is, of course, another matter.

Now that Tenney has been returned to office by such a large vote, odds are strong he will be unmanageable.

He has felt his oats and thrown his weight around a great deal in the past two years, and we can expect more of that now.

A few observers are predicting Tenney will resign and run for mayor in February

We will especially be hoping for courage and independence from her.

The city commission badly needs members who can shrug off the howling mob and political ambition, and then go on to vote his or her own conscience.

The big surprise of the election was how poorly the other nine candidates did.

We expected Jim Gray to do much better because of his forceful campaign and his ability to get his name and face before the public.

JIM CALDERBANK seemed to us to deserve better than his 7th place finish.

However, Calderbank himself had predicted that only one young man would be elected.

He was right.

The Sun had hoped for at least a 35 percent voter turnout Tuesday.

It didn't happen, but the 31 percent that was achieved was a big improvement over the 24.5 percent of a year ago.

Much of the turnout must be credited to anti-Scientists. Not a few votes came from Scientists themselves.

A cult spokesman said his organization did not endorse

MS. GARVEY should bring intelligence and moderation to the commission.

She will replace Karleen De Blaker, an opinionated, hardworking and politically astute officeholder who is leaving the commission to run for clerk of Pinellas County courts.

Some say Ms. Garvey will be a close copy of Ms. De Blaker. We doubt it. We look to Ms. Garvey to forge her own way and develop her own distinctive style.

Tenney.

They should have tried harder. Now they will have two more years of Tenney kicking them around.

THE SUN'S offer to take voters to the polls was taken up by 69 persons, and we thank all of them for calling us.

We offer our congratulations to the winners, our condolences to the losers, and our hope that campaign grudges can be forgotten now that the votes have been counted.

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