

Campaign countdown

3 days until the election

FEAR

FROM PAGE A1

a very bad four years, if not longer."

Take a pulse of the electorate, and you'll find they're especially anxious this year. They're worried about what the world will be like if their candidate for president doesn't win.

Every presidential election has a fear factor: During the Cold War, Americans worried about Russia and the nuclear-arms race. In 2004, Americans worried about terrorism. This year, most voters are worried about the economy.

"People are panicked about the economy, about the stock market, about their jobs," said Jim Kitchens, a Maitland political consultant. "Whoever can best calm the fear will be the best leader."

The politics of fear

Contributing to the anxiety — and aggravation — is a highly polarized electorate.

"If you're a conservative, you run over to Fox and watch that. If you're a liberal, you run over to MSNBC," Kitchens said. "Each

side has vilified the other side constantly. Part of the anxiety stems from this question: Where is this country going? We've got a two-front war and an economy that seems to be imploding like it's never imploded."

Fear is a powerful motivator, which is why some politicians try to make voters afraid of their opponents.

"If you can generate enough fear about the other person, that can work to your advantage," said Stephen Craig, a political-science professor at the University of Florida.

Craig thinks that voters this year seem as anxious as those in the 2004 election, when George W. Bush ran against John Kerry.

But the past two elections have been remarkably fear-driven, he said. Craig said he can't recall an election so motivated by fear and loathing since the elections of 1968 and 1972.

"Back then, there was war on two fronts: the Vietnam War and a cultural war. That culture war hasn't gone away. I think that's a big part of the fear this year."

This year, there have been allegations about "palling around with

terrorists" and defining the "real America."

"That's nothing if it's not a culture conflict," Craig said.

'Willing to risk change'

It's human nature to be afraid of change. But after the housing crisis, the free fall of the stock market and the specter of a deep recession, Americans are worried. And that's the root of this year's fears.

"There is something going on in the electorate. People want change and are willing to risk change," said Kevin Lanning, a political-science professor at Florida Atlantic University. "We live in a world where things are changing. We're also in a time of economic volatility. Terrorism matters less than their concerns about their jobs, the price of gas and holding on to their homes."

And with some pundits drawing comparisons to the Great Depression, experts say it's not surprising that candidates are throwing around charges of socialism.

"If you go back to the 1930s and the debate about the New Deal," Craig said, "you'll see a pretty intense conflict there as well — sur-

rounding the role of government and this redistribution of wealth."

At the Supervisor of Elections Office, that's what worried Orange County voter Gina Fleming.

"I don't agree with any politician giving Americans the sense that we are owed something," said Fleming, 55. "Teaching greed and selfishness is not the American way."

Fleming said she wasn't terribly worried about an Obama victory, because she was confident that God's hand is in the election — and that McCain will win.

"I'm thankful," she said, "that I have a faith in a God that is much bigger than him [Obama]. I have little or no faith in Barack Obama."

Not surprisingly, some disagree. When asked about the possibility of McCain winning, Obama supporter Sandra Brookins-Crudup, 44, said, "If we have another four years, it's going to be devastating."

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Poll patrol

National

51% Obama
43% McCain

Of interest: Of those surveyed, 14 percent can't decide which candidate to vote for, or back a candidate but might switch.

The AP-Yahoo News phone poll of 1,040 likely voters Oct. 17-27 included 147 likely voters considered persuadable and 893 considered not persuadable. It had a margin of sampling error of 8.1 percentage points for persuadables and 3.3 percentage points for those not persuadable.

Indiana

46% Obama
45% McCain

Of interest: John McCain had a 56 percent-35 percent advantage on the question of who had the experience to lead, while Barack Obama led 46 percent-40 percent on who would make better decisions about the economy.

The Indianapolis Star/WTHR-TV poll was done by phone Oct. 26-28 among 606 likely voters. The margin of sampling error is 4 percentage points.

Virginia

51% Obama
47% McCain

Of interest: Obama holds a 6-percentage-point lead among registered voters. More independents say they are backing McCain over Obama, 54 percent to 42 percent.

The Marist Poll was done by phone Oct. 26-27 of 752 registered voters, including 671 likely voters. The margin of sampling error is 3.5 percentage points for registered voters, 4 points for likely voters.

Iowa

53% Obama
39% McCain

Of interest: Most recent polls have shown Obama with double-digit leads in Iowa, but the candidates still have been focusing attention on the state.

The KCCI-TV poll was done by phone Oct. 27-29 by Research 2000 with 600 likely voters. The margin of sampling error is 4 percentage points.

Wisconsin

54% Obama
38% McCain

Of interest: This marks the ninth poll this month showing Obama with a double-digit lead in Wisconsin.

The University of Wisconsin Badger Poll surveyed 538 adults by phone Oct. 21-28. The margin of sampling error is 4.2 percentage points.

Campaign notebook

McCain on 'SNL' tonight?

The McCain-Palin ticket has booked another trip to *Saturday Night Live*, according to aides to McCain. He is to appear on the NBC show tonight, the last live episode before Election Day. There was no confirmation from the show. The host will be actor Ben Affleck, a supporter of Obama. The musical guest is singer David Cook. McCain running mate Sarah Palin appeared on *SNL* on Oct. 18, giving the show a big bump in the ratings.

27,000 can vote after all

Thousands of Colorado residents scratched from voter-registration rolls can cast ballots on Election Day, and their votes will be given special protection to ensure they are counted, after the resolution of a federal lawsuit filed against the state. Colorado Common Cause and other groups alleged in a lawsuit filed last week that the state illegally removed about 27,000 people from the voter list during the 90 days leading up to the August primary. Lawyers for the state didn't dispute that a substantial number of voter records had been canceled but said the numbers were inflated.

— FROM NEWS SERVICES

Down to the wire



ALEX BRANDON/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Democratic presidential nominee Barack Obama greets supporters at a rally at Western Gateway Park in Des Moines, Iowa, on Friday. Four days before the election, Obama campaigned in the state that first vaulted him into front-runner status back in January with his big win in the caucuses.



ROBYN BECK/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE/GETTY IMAGES

Republican candidate John McCain (left) is joined by California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger at Nationwide Arena on Friday in Columbus, the last stop in McCain's 2-day bus tour of Ohio. He reached out to Reagan Democrats and social conservatives whose support he needs if he is to win Ohio.

SENATORS

FROM PAGE A1

and have fought off several bouts of cancer.

"I know he's old and sickly, but I'm old and sickly," said Mary, who's 75 and used to run a jewelry store with her late husband. "I think he'll be able to do the job."

But before you puff up too much, sir, listen to her other reasons for supporting you.

"Obama? I am scared to death of him," she said, shaking her head. "I've listened to him, and I just don't trust him."

How about Maribel Calderon, a 29-year-old from Tampa? She likes you, Sen. McCain, because you've "been through the wars" and describes your running mate, Sarah Palin, as "a real fighter." But there's no question she's motivated, in part, by fear of your opponent.

"I don't trust him," she told me. "He's scary."

These voters are worried and anxious and — in some cases — more than a little bit angry. They see you as a protector — of their lives and wallets — and think Obama threatens both. Sometimes, it's over the top.

In Clearwater, I met a woman at a Palin rally who said she sus-

pected that you, Sen. Obama, might be the Antichrist.

When I chuckled, she touched my arm and said, "Really, I'm serious."

Talk about high negatives. Bill DaRosa has more earthly concerns about Sen. Obama, but they spring from the same anxiety. DaRosa, who's 78, said the nation has become a nanny state, and he fears Obama would work with congressional Democrats — House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid — to make matters worse.

"We've already become socialized," said DaRosa, a retired Department of Defense worker who lives in Lake Mary. "It's gimme, gimme, gimme. More and more, a military junta sounds more reasonable."

I think he was joking. DaRosa respects you, Sen. McCain, and admires your toughness, but his support is more a statement against your opponent than it is an endorsement of you. His preferred candidates were former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney and Huckabee.

"McCain was my last choice," he told me. "He's a little too old."

Your supporters, Sen. Obama, are different. Many see you and describe you in oversized terms. They talk about "opportunity" and "new politics." A few throw

Have advice for the winner?

OK, imagine it's late Tuesday, and it's all over but the shoutin'. Election totals are in, and your guy lost. Hard to take, we know. Now, if you had a chance to talk to the candidate who won, what would you want him to know? If you're an Obama supporter, what would you tell President-elect McCain? If you're a McCain backer, what would you say to President-elect Obama?

How should he govern? What should he do to heal any rifts the campaign has opened? Moving forward, what would you like to hear from him? Send your comments to jstratton@orlandosentinel.com or call 407-420-5379. Please include your name, phone number and where you live. Also, tell us a little about yourself: age, profession, whether you typically vote Republican or Democrat. We'd like to include your thoughts in an Election Day story.

out the word transformational.

Sal Capozzi lives near downtown Orlando and works as a technology coordinator at a local elementary school. He took some time before making a decision, but now he sees you, Sen. Obama, as the only way to go.

Your campaign, he said, has been "more hopeful than fearful." Republicans, he insisted, have

spent their time trying to frighten the public.

"It's been the whole fear thing that John McCain has bought into," he said. "The truth is there are no monsters under the bed."

Capozzi, who's 54, also thinks that Sen. Obama stands a better chance of improving the country's image overseas. He's worried that Sen. McCain would be viewed as an extension of the Bush administration. Again, pay attention to his language.

"Obama is willing to listen," he said. "That's going to help the U.S. and the world at large."

Truth be told, Sen. Obama, Sal is one of your more understated supporters. Others have been swept up by the historic nature of your candidacy and almost hypnotized by your speaking skills. Many of them can't describe your record or policy proposals. But to them, it hardly matters. If some of Sen. McCain's supporters consider you the Antichrist, some of your loyalists see you as something equally dramatic.

"Obama is who we've been waiting for," said Kris Dunham, a 29-year-old customer-service rep who waited six hours to see you in Kissimmee this week. "With him, I voted with my heart."

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Lottery

For more information, visit flalottery.com or call 850-487-7777.

Lotto/Oct. 29 4-8-11-15-46-53
\$3 Play jackpot Nov. 1 \$37 million
\$2 Play jackpot \$22 million
\$1 Play jackpot \$12 million

Fantasy 5/Oct. 31 Not available
Fantasy 5/Oct. 30 1-2-10-25-27
1 with 5 numbers \$214,203.80
328 with 4 numbers \$105

9,765 with 3 numbers \$9.50
96,906 with 2 numbers ticket

Mega Money/Oct. 31 Not available
Megaball Not available
Jackpot \$500,000

Cash 3/Friday afternoon 9-4-6
Cash 3/Friday night 6-1-8

Play 4/Friday afternoon 6-8-5-7
Play 4/Friday night 5-7-8-3

Corrections & clarifications

Because of erroneous information provided to the *Sentinel*, the continuation of an article about workers' compensation costs on Page C2 of Thursday's Business & Money section misidentified an attorney who is representing a nurse in a workers' comp case. The attorney is Brian Sutter.

Because of an editing error, an article on Page A3 Wednesday was unclear in explaining how GOP presidential candidate John McCain's health-care proposal would affect people who have health coverage through an employer. In McCain's plan, health benefits paid by employers would become taxable, but he also would offer everyone a new tax credit of \$2,500 per individual or \$5,000 per family. The average Florida family's health-care coverage provided by an employer cost \$11,720 last year, according to the advocacy group Families USA. If that family were in the 25 percent tax bracket, the tax on its benefits would be \$2,930. The difference between the tax and the family's \$5,000 tax credit — \$2,070 — would go into a health savings account that could be used for other medical expenses.

Corrections & clarifications: It is the mission of the Orlando Sentinel to pursue the truth aggressively. Our policy, in doing so, is to correct mistakes promptly and to clarify information reported in less-than-clear context. Call 407-650-6410, send a fax to 407-420-5286 or e-mail to: corrections@orlandosentinel.com.

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