

Carroll a favorite of voters all over District 4

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Republican Ray Carroll's victory in the District 4 Pima County supervisors race Tuesday was even bigger than a simple vote count might indicate.

Carroll got 43 percent of the vote. Another 33 percent went to Brenda Even while Ken Marcus received 24 percent.

But a closer analysis of voting patterns shows Carroll was the preferred candidate in every region of the district, winning 72 of 93 precincts outright and tying for the most votes in five others.

Despite being the most liberal of the three candidates, Carroll also was the favorite in usually conservative Green Valley, where he made one of his strongest showings. Of the 3,414 votes cast at 13 Green Valley precincts, 1,726, or just over half, went to Carroll.

He got the most votes in all 12 Tanque Verde Valley precincts, in the northeast corner of the district, where voters were casting ballots on an incorporation issue the courts have already ruled invalid.

It went the same way throughout the district.

In the 16 precincts where Carroll didn't get the most votes, he was within 22 votes of the leader in all but one. Even led in 12 of those precincts and Marcus in four. Most of the precincts were scattered around the eastern edge of the city.

By comparison, Carroll won by more than 50 votes in a dozen precincts.

Carroll said he believes his election performance should give him a little more clout with fellow supervisors.

"Now that I have the support of the people of District 4, I believe my voice will be stronger," Carroll said yesterday.

"I hope now that I'm elected, other supervisors will respect my position on issues affecting my district the same way I respect them when it comes to their district," he said.

Although Carroll has been in office for 15 months, his status was always a little clouded because he was appointed to fill the seat until a special election could be held. It was to replace former Supervisor John Even, who died shortly after being sworn in last year.

Nobody knew how long Carroll would be around.

Now they know he'll be there for at least two more years, until he and all four other members of the board must run for re-election.

With the results in, the phone in Carroll's office seldom stopped ringing yesterday, with many calls coming from people who didn't seem to have time for him before the election.

"Suddenly, I'm on the map. I seem to have a lot of new friends," he said.

Despite winning, he said, several people have told him he needs to change, and have volunteered to "guide me into the mainstream of the Republican Party.

"I told them thanks, but no thanks. The District 4 voters had already spoken loudly and clearly," he said.

Carroll credited his success to following his conscience and voting with the will of the majority of his district.

Few election forecasters, for instance, expected him to do so well in Green Valley because of his liberal image. They also thought he would be hurt by a flap early in his tenure when he tried to pressure an organization that puts flags up on patriotic holidays to include Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

But Carroll said a more significant issue to Green Valley area residents is the proposed development of 6,500 homes at Canoa Ranch, which he has opposed.

Carroll said a development of that magnitude would devastate the ambience of the area, put a strain on public services and hamper the ability of astronomers to see the stars from the observatory at nearby Mount Hopkins.

“What I'm looking to do is put a big ranch over there,” Carroll said. He is lobbying to get the Smithsonian to put a Western museum there.

Now that he has “the power of the voters” behind him, Carroll said he intends to push for completion of the Sonoran Desert Protection Plan to preserve environmentally sensitive areas, improved library service on the eastside and a tram up Mount Lemmon.

“People can expect me to be as green as I ever was,” Carroll said, adding that doesn't mean he will always side with environmentalists in conflicts with developers.

• Caption: Photo by Sarah Prall , The Arizona Daily Star: Ray Carroll expects more respect from fellow supervisors

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