

Joe Thompson, who has been honored for keeping alive black string music traditions, said he was honored to play an inaugural celebration Sunday at the Century Center. His rendition of "I Shall Not Be Moved" was one of the highlights of the evening. Thompson turned 93 in December.



The crowd at the Orange County Social Club at noon on Tuesday — the moment it was announced that although he hadn't been sworn in yet, Barack Obama became the 44th president of the United States of America



Complimentary commemorative cupcakes were on hand at Neal's Deli.

ALL PHOTOS BY KIRK ROSS

# **OBAMA**

FROM PAGE I

"In my 65 years, I've never seen anything like that — the magnitude of it," he said.

Farrar, who volunteered last February with the Obama campaign in the early and critical South Carolina primary, said he was confident then that Obama would be elected, but didn't know that he himself would be at the inauguration. The bus ride up and back and seeing the millions assembled have left him charged and ready to continue the work, he said.

"If we're willing and able to stand up for change, then change will come," Farrar said.

A few hundred yards from Farrar's vantage point, at the top steps of the Lincoln Memorial, Carrboro Mayor Mark Chilton, his wife, Quaker Harmon, and their two sons, Alex and Samuel, also witnessed the event.

Chilton said getting around was a lot easier than portrayed in media reports. Though they were at first reluctant to go, watching his sons experience the enthusiasm of the moment and seeing them understand the importance of it was a special joy, he said.

Especially among the African-Americans in the crowd, Chilton said, "you could see this was a very emotional moment. You could see the pride on people's faces."

Fourth District U.S. Congressman David Price had a close-up view of the proceedings,

"We were cold, but we were also very excited," he said. "This was a huge watershed event in our history."

Looking out over the crowd, Price said, it was obvious that this was a once-in-a-lifetime moment. "It was not just the view," he said, "but the echoes coming from the far reaches of the crowd."

Obama's inauguration speech marked more than the passing of the torch to a new generation, Price said, but also was clearly meant to signal the new president's intention to make a "sharp break from the past."

Price, who recently introduced legislation to close the detention center at Guantanamo as well as revamp interrogation procedures, said he has hopes the new administration will act quickly in those

Here at home, with an overnight snowstorm leading to all kinds of changes in plans, the moment was equally powerful.

"The snow made sure we were all at home watching together," said Moses Carey, who served on the Orange County Board of Commissioners for two decades and was recently named head of the state's Employment Security

Carey took in the changing of the country's leadership with his wife, Peggy Richmond, and two grandchildren.

"I was able to talk about it with my grandchildren and it gave me an opportunity to talk with them about the future of our nation seated along with other members and their future," he said. "The of Congress on the steps of the significant thing for me was that he asked us all to be responsible ity in the world.

again as a nation and as people."

Thomas Mills, a Carrborobased political consultant and a Democrat, watched the inauguration at home with his wife and two little ones. The semi-steady fall of snow sealed the excuse to just sit put and savor this historic moment with family.

Asked to describe his thoughts on the day, Mills responded, "I was thinking that the change Barack Obama embodies is truly remarkable. An African-American man with a very short political resume has captured the imagination of the American people by describing a very different country than the one we've been living in."

Having his younger kids bouncing about the house, clearly feeding on their folks' energy and thrilled, of course, with the snow, new snow suits, snow angels and hot chocolate - made this moment more special still.

"My wife and I both felt a renewed sense of patriotism," Mills said, "something we haven't felt in a long time. My 19-year-old daughter was raised hearing me complain about the misguided actions of our government. I hope my 3-year-old and 9-month-old can be proud of what our country is doing and where it's headed, not just what it's done in the past."

Of Obama's speech, Mills said he felt that it "repudiated the failures of the Bush administration while outlining Obama's vision for the future," which embodies "leading by example, not force, and reclaiming our moral author-

Stephen Murtaugh, of the band Transportation, watched at his Chatham County home with wife, Emily.

"It's great to finally say the words I almost feared to speak because I'm superstitious and didn't want to jinx it: 'President Obama," he said. "I thought he gave a great speech, and struck the right tone for the occasion, optimistic but with a clear sense of the challenge.

"I particularly dug the Valley Forge reference. It really brought home the historic nature of this day, to compare it to that time."

Murtaugh also said the snow helped make the day special.

"Being snowed in really made it that much more special, a bonus day off with snow angels and snowball fights and just hanging out around the house. I think I will remember this day for a long time."

Eliza Liptzin DuBose of Carrboro celebrated with family and friends: "One person felt it was easier and cleaner to breathe. One felt like they had to keep checking their reality perimeter. Another felt relieved. Many cried. I put on my Mardi Gras mask and walked up to the Weave to do my volunteer hours and buy champagne."

Those not at home set up televisions and tuned in radios at work or made their way out to the clubs, restaurants and other spots to watch the ceremony.

Hundreds of UNC students bustled into the student union between classes to pack the Great Hall, where a large screen was set up for viewing the inauguration.

way to the union, more students - many of them first-time voters - crowded around a small television to get a glimpse of the new president's address, and hushed one another as the ceremony be-

The atmosphere was overwhelmingly celebratory, and cheers echoed throughout the union as Obama and Vice President Joe Biden took their oaths of office. When the crowd at the ceremony was directed to stand, the students in the union stood with them; and when Rev. Rick Warren over-enunciated Obama's daughters' names - Malia and Sasha – the union erupted with laughter.

Sophomore Sally Turner ducked out of the snow into the union between her classes to watch the president's address.

"It's the first election I could vote in," she said. "I'm excited."

When asked what excited her about Obama, Turner replied, "The idea of change and hope.

Tuesday's weather didn't deter many students; and though some

"It's just so historic."

classes had been canceled, many came to campus just to watch the inauguration. Kita Blackmon, a freshman,

said she felt the inauguration was a turning point for America.

"This is a step for change. This is the beginning," she said.

Blackmon made it to campus to watch the inauguration with her fellow students, despite the cancelation of all of her classes.

"I just think it shows how far America has come," freshman our country's diversity," said Elyse

that she had called her grandmother that morning, who was 'so excited."

"I just think it's amazing," Patterson said.

Disha Gandhi, a junior, said that with Obama being the first person of color to be elected president of the United States, "Now

you know kids have hope." In downtown Carrboro, the Orange County Social Club was packed and broke into cheers at noon when CNN announced that even though the swearing in had not taken place, Obama was officially president. Other huzzahs went out for the new president's pledge to not compromise the country's values in the name of security, and for Aretha Franklin's hat.

Down the street in Chapel Hill, people huddled at the plastic benches of the Italian Pizzeria III on Franklin Street drinking beers and staring eagerly at the two big-screen TVs projecting the ceremony. When Obama was sworn in as

the 44th president of the United States, the bar erupted in a pandemonium of cheers. Beer glasses were raised in toasts and congratulations.

"Progress. He is a symbol of the progress our country has made over the years and the progress that will be made," said Jennifer Elander of Durham.

Others saw the speech as a call to continue the efforts.

"I think this event will also open our eyes to the changes that still need to be made to embrace

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