

KELOWNA BYELECTION

Voting process proceeds smoothly

Kevin Craig's win to be recognized by Kelowna city council tonight

By J.P. SQUIRE
The Daily Courier

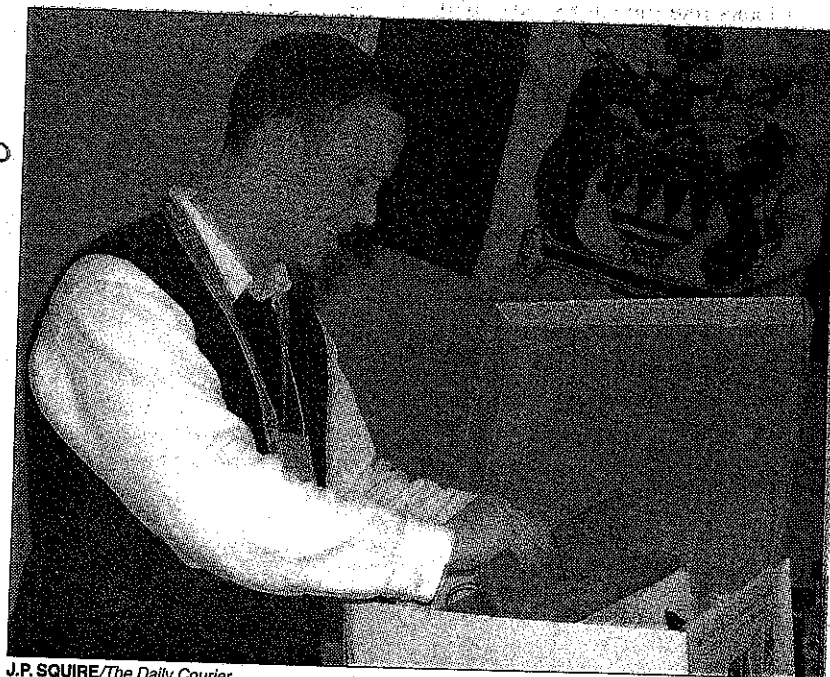
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Saturday's byelection in Kelowna ran very smoothly, according to the deputy chief election officer.

"We did visit all the polls and there were no serious issues at any of the polls," city clerk Stephen Fleming said. "They were all able to report before 8:30 p.m., which is good as well. Within a half-hour of the polls closing, we had all of the results posted to the website."

There were 10 polling stations on election day, two advance polls, a poll at Kelowna General Hospital and voters could mail in ballots. During the 2008 election, the city tried to increase the voter turnout with 20 polling stations on election day. However, the turnout did not dramatically increase, said Fleming.

"At some of the polling stations last year, like the ones at UBCO, we



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Lance Kayfish, presiding election official at the city hall polling station, said there were no problems at any of the 10 polling stations, with results received and posted online by 8:30 p.m. on Saturday.

had very, very low turnouts, so we decided for 2011 to have fewer polls. So this (byelection) did give us an

opportunity to try that out. Having a byelection, it is hard to know what the turnout will be."

The byelection turnout was 10,146, or 11 per cent of the 91,000 eligible voters, compared to 19.6 per cent in 2008, which was down dramatically from 31.5 per cent in 2005.

However, voter turnout at the byelection's advanced polls was higher than during the 2008 civic election, with 872 votes cast on Nov. 18 and 871 votes cast on Nov. 25.

The unofficial results, which city council is expected to make official today, have Kevin Craig as Kelowna's newest city councillor with 2,863 votes.

The unofficial vote totals for the other candidates were: Todd Sanderson 2,427, Vern Nielsen 1,665, Mary-Ann Graham 1,004, Ernie Patterson 527, Mark Thompson 406, Matthew Reed 280, Valerie Hallford 270, Rocky Mix 270, Michael Loewen 172, Dennis Rojem 116, Clay Kessler 53, Kim Ouellette 45, Andy Uitvlugt 30 and James Murphy 18.

The byelection was needed to replace Coun. Brian Given, who died in August. Craig will serve the balance of his term, which runs until December 2011.