

Race for President: Poll reveals early leaders

by: RANDY KREHBIEL World Staff Writer
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Results show Oklahoma Democrats favor Clinton and Edwards; GOP voters like Giuliani over McCain.

REPUBLICANS

Rudy Giuliani

STATE: 32% **TULSA:** 35% **OKC:** 32% **NON-METRO:** 32%

John McCain

STATE: 23% **TULSA:** 22% **OKC:** 25% **NON-METRO:** 23%

DEMOCRATS

Hillary Clinton

STATE: 29% **TULSA:** 33% **OKC:** 32% **NON-METRO:** 25%

John Edwards

STATE: 29% **TULSA:** 33% **OKC:** 27% **NON-METRO:** 28%

The 2008 presidential field is crowded, but two Republicans and two Democrats are ahead of the pack with Oklahoma voters, according to the most recent Oklahoma Poll.

U.S. Sen. Hillary Clinton of New York and former U.S. Sen. John Edwards of North Carolina were the clear choices of 416 registered Democrats surveyed April 27-30, while former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani led U.S. Sen. John McCain of Arizona by 9 percentage points among the 310 Republicans questioned.

More Democrats were surveyed because the state has more registered Democrats. Republicans made up a disproportionate share of the sample because Oklahoma Republicans vote more regularly than Democrats.

All of those surveyed have a history of voting in recent elections.

Giuliani was favored by 32 percent of Republicans, compared to McCain's 23 percent. Former Tennessee U.S. Sen. Fred Thompson, who is not a declared candidate, was the only other Republican in double digits, at 15 percent.

Thirteen percent of Republicans -- including 19 percent in Tulsa -- were undecided.

Edwards and Clinton were each supported by 29 percent of Democrats. Sen. Barack Obama of Illinois was named by 13 percent, with 17 percent undecided.

Oklahomans explained their choices by saying honesty and integrity are the most important qualities

of a presidential candidate.

By a large but smaller margin, they said the war in Iraq is their most important issue.

Just over half of the respondents said honesty and integrity were "the most important qualities or characteristics." Nothing else broke double digits.

"Honesty and integrity are clearly the most important," said poll consultant Al Soltow, vice president of research at the University of Tulsa. "All of the others are a distant second. With the margin of error, there's no real difference among the others."

"Truthfulness is the most important thing there is, but I know we don't get much of it," said Delphine Rohde of Locust Grove.

"If you can't tell the truth," said Geraldine Day of Skiatook, "it's all a lie."

Soltow speculates that this desire for forthrightness and concern about the war may be why Oklahomans seem to like Giuliani, despite his checkered personal life and relatively liberal views on such issues as gun control and abortion.

Giuliani was the only candidate to have an approval rating of more than 50 percent of all those surveyed, including Democrats and independents.

"This goes back to the idea that honesty and integrity are the driving force," Soltow said. "It's not his stand on abortion or his stand on gun control that people are focused on. These results add to the notion that abortion and immigration and gun control are peripheral issues."

Thirty-two percent said the Iraq war was "the single most important issue" in their choice for president. Just under 15 percent said the candidates' personal qualities were most important. More than a dozen other factors were named but none by more than a few percent of the respondents.

Fifty-two percent said they had a favorable opinion of Giuliani, with McCain second at 47 percent. Third overall, and tops among Democrats, was Edwards at 42 percent.

Clinton, while tied with Edwards among Democrats, did much worse with Republicans, and her overall approval rating of 33 percent was fifth behind Obama's 36 percent.

Perhaps more telling, Clinton's unfavorable rating of nearly 62 percent was by far the worst of the nine candidates included in the survey and the only one over 50 percent.

Her long public career, from first lady of Arkansas through the presidency of her husband, Bill, and now her own tenure in the Senate, has created many allies and, in Oklahoma at least, even more enemies.

"I don't believe Hillary is honest in anything she's ever done," Day said. "It starts all the way back in Arkansas. Anything she's ever done had people covering up for her."

Former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee, a Republican candidate, had the lowest favorable rating at just under 20 percent. Forty-three percent said they had no opinion of Huckabee.

Edwards, the 2004 Democratic vice presidential nominee, has been a frequent visitor to Oklahoma and seems to be the choice of the middle. He had the best approval rating among self-described moderates.

"He comes across like he doesn't know a lot of things but he's willing to learn," said Earl Ballinger of

Copan.

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John McCain set to speak at Legislature, fundraisers

Republican presidential candidate John McCain will make a quick trip through Oklahoma on Monday that's scheduled to include a speech to the Oklahoma Legislature and fundraisers in Tulsa and Oklahoma City.

McCain will appear at a \$500-per-person luncheon at the Summit Club, 15 W. Sixth St., before going to Oklahoma City. The Arizona senator will address the Legislature and attend a \$1,000-per-person fundraiser at the home of businessman Fred Jones Hall.

Former Oklahoma Gov. Frank Keating is listed as a host of both fundraisers, and businessman Howard Barnett is listed as a co-host of the Tulsa event.

About the Oklahoma Poll

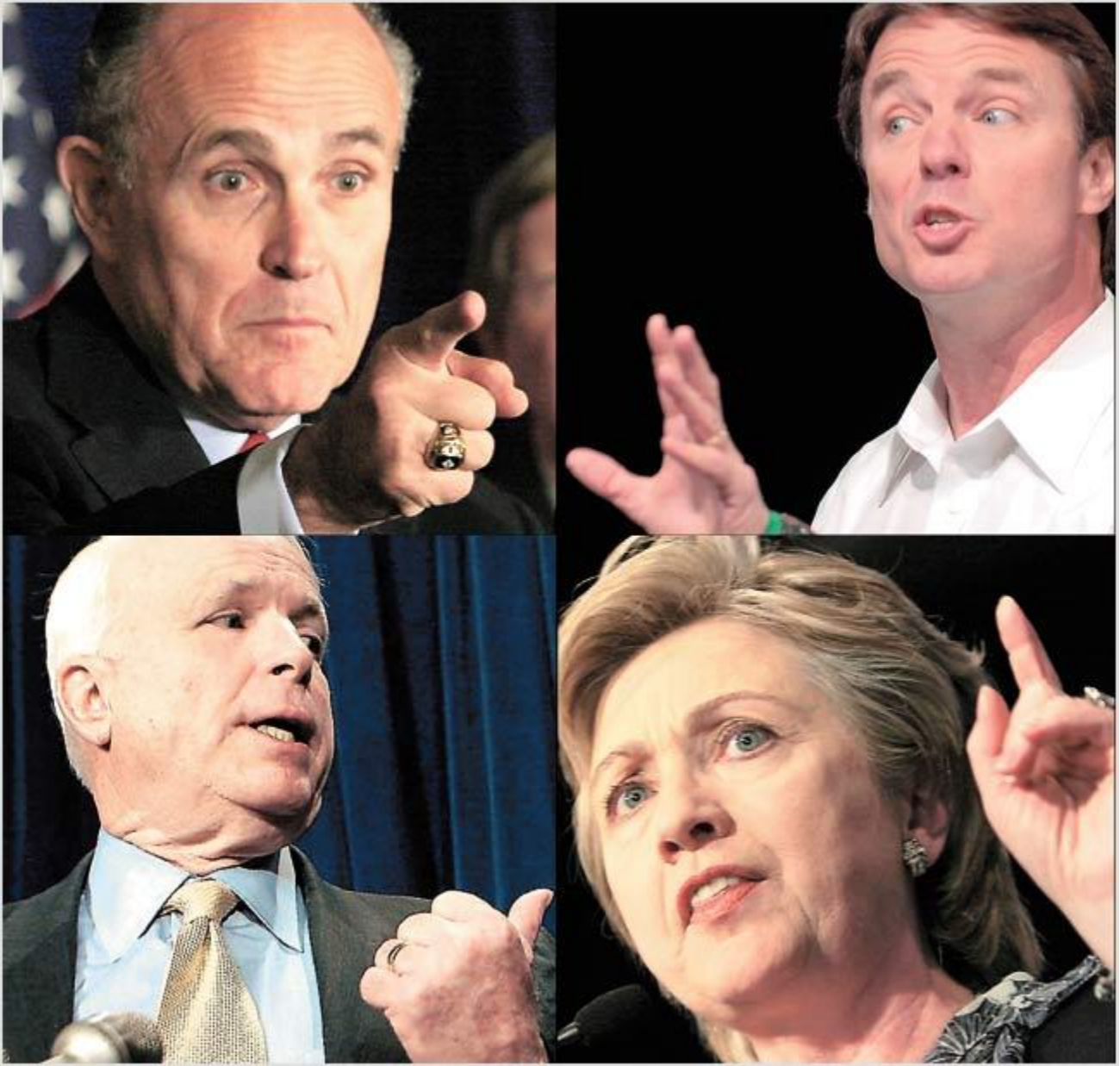
Soonerpoll.com conducted the scientific telephone survey April 27-30 of 752 likely Oklahoma voters.

Respondents included 310 Republicans, 416 Democrats and 26 independents selected randomly from voters who have established a frequent voting pattern.

For the questions in which Democrats and Republicans were asked their presidential preferences, the margin of error is 4.8 for Democrats and 5.6 for Republicans. For all other questions, the margin of error is plus or minus 3.5 percent.

The Oklahoma Poll is sponsored by the Tulsa World and KOTV, channel 6.

Associate Images:



Clockwise: Rudy Giuliani, John Edwards, John McCain, Hillary Clinton

TULSA WORLD

O K L A H O M A



POLL



Edwards



Clinton



Obama



Richardson



Biden

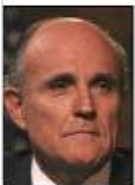


Dodd

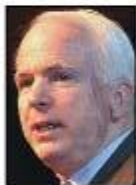
Which one of the following Democrats would you vote for if the election were today?

(Asked of Democrats only)

	Statewide	Tulsa Metro	OC Metro	Non-Metro
John Edwards	29%	33%	27%	28%
Hillary Clinton	29%	33%	32%	25%
Barack Obama	13%	10%	16%	14%
Bill Richardson	8%	14%	6%	6%
Joe Biden	3%	1%	3%	3%
Christopher Dodd	1%	0%	2%	1%
Don't Know/Refused	17%	9%	14%	23%



Giuliani



McCain



F.Thompson



Romney



Brownback



Huckabee



T.Thompson




Hagel

Which one of the following Republicans would you vote for if the election were today?

(Asked of Republicans only)

	Statewide	Tulsa Metro	OC Metro	Non-Metro
Rudy Giuliani	32%	35%	32%	32%
John McCain	23%	22%	25%	23%
Fred Thompson	15%	15%	12%	15%
Mitt Romney	6%	5%	9%	6%
Sam Brownback	5%	3%	6%	5%
Mike Huckabee	2%	0%	3%	2%
Tommy Thompson	2%	1%	3%	2%
Chuck Hagel	2%	0%	2%	2%

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