

Crist Win The Primary



It will be a bay area governor

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Republican **Charlie Crist** cruised to an overwhelming victory and Democrat **Jim Davis** claimed a much narrower win in Tuesday's low-turnout primary election for governor, setting the stage for an all-Tampa Bay showdown to succeed **Job Bush**.

In the Republican race, Crist crushed **Chief Financial Officer Tom Gallagher** by a 2-1 ratio. Crist's resounding win exceeded even the most lopsided polls and gives the attorney general a surge of momentum as the general election begins.



The mood was euphoric at Crist's victory party in the Renaissance Vinoy Resort in St. Petersburg. In a victory speech, Crist, 50, called for higher teacher salaries, tougher penalties for sex offenders and more adoptions.

He rallied Republicans to help him in a tough general election campaign.

"It is the voters who decide if these plans become a reality," Crist said. "Our resolve must not waver."

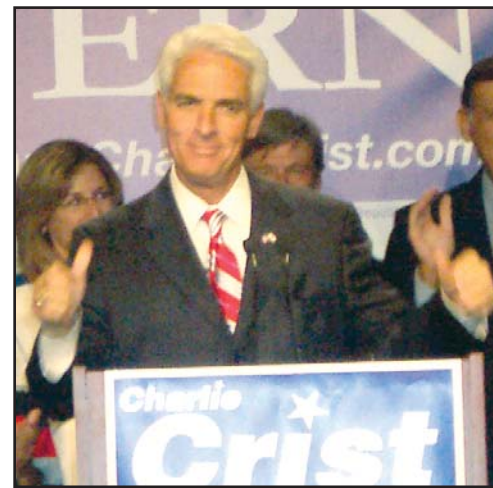
In the Republican primary, events drew to a close much earlier. Gallagher conceded shortly after 10 p.m. at a hotel in Coconut Grove, calling for unity to make sure a Republican remains in the governor's mansion for four more years.

"All of us need to move past our disappointment and we need to do everything we can to help Charlie win this race," Gallagher said.

While he blanketed the state with TV ads, Crist collected support from such powerful interest groups as the **Police Benevolent Association**, **National Rifle Association** and **Florida Medical Association**, and from political stars like **Arizona Sen. John McCain**.

On the trail, Crist's sunny optimism and casual way of connecting one-on-one with voters make him the state's best retail politician. He campaigned tirelessly, eating little and sipping caffeinated Red Bull energy drinks.

Times researcher Angie Drobnic Holan contributed to this report.



Charlie Crist gives two thumbs up at his Primary Victory Party.



PBA officials joined Charlie Crist at his Primary Victory Party on Tuesday night, September 5th.

Rudolph Giuliani endorses Charlie Crist at the rally in Ft. Lauderdale while Florida PBA President John Rivera (second from right) waits his turn.



PBA with Rudolph Giuliani at the Charlie Crist rally in Ft. Lauderdale. Dade County PBA and Broward County PBA, with their respective Presidents, John Rivera and Dick Brickman, supplied the crowd. Thanks!

