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Coin toss breaks tied Fla. race

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GROVELAND, Fla. - The state that is the king of bizarre election finishes added another page to its quirky electoral history Friday: a city council race decided by a coin toss.

G.P. Sloan, 77, and Richard Flynn, 75, each received 689 votes in the Nov. 2 election. No one emerged a winner after two recounts, so the candidates and three dozen supporters gathered for a coin flip Friday in the community center of this town of 4,400 residents 25 miles west of Orlando.

The city manager flipped a bicentennial dollar coin, and Flynn shouted "Heads." City Manager Jason Yarborough caught it and flipped it on to the back of his hand. "Tails it is," Yarborough said, giving Sloan the victory.

"This is a very unusual occurrence in this day and age when we have such sophisticated mechanisms to vote on, such as a touch-screen computerized voter system," said Mayor Connie Fleetwood. "We've come down to a coin toss."

Florida law provides that candidates "draw lots" to determine a winner in the event of a tie. County election supervisors can determine the method of drawing lots, and Lake County in the past has used a coin toss.

Sloan and Flynn said they thought the method for choosing a winner was fair.

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