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## Snapshots From Around the Mall

*Amy Chozick and Amy Schatz round up crowd reaction.*

New Jersey residents **Jon Bozard** and **Barbara Pittala** figured they'd be watching Obama take the oath of office on TV back home. But when the couple improbably managed to snag a hotel room at the Silver Spring Comfort Inn, in suburb Washington, late last week, they jumped at the chance.

"We got lucky," said Pittala, who lives in Freehold.

Not only did the couple manage to luck into a last-minute hotel room, it happened to be a short walk from the Silver Spring metro station. At 7 a.m. they took off for downtown D.C., and only had a little trouble squeezing onto one of the packed trains. Their luck ran out when they got to Union Station. So much of the city had already been shut down around Capitol Hill and the Pennsylvania Avenue parade route. They trekked from Capitol Hill some 18 blocks to the other side of town, past the Washington Monument, before doubling back.

They ended up huddled on the Washington Monument end of the Mall, within view of a jumbotron screen and a wall devised of hundreds of Porta Johns.

"I just love the history of it," Bozard said, his jacket festooned with Obama buttons. "We're really watching history."

Meanwhile, **Cassandra Haire**, 51 years old, drove six hours from her home in Fedville, N.C. to attend the inauguration. She says her 99-year-old grandmother died shortly after the election but had the chance to cast a vote for President **Barack Obama**. "'Look what God gone done,' she used to say when Obama came on TV," Haire, an etiquette coach, says of her grandmother.

"Look what God gone done," Haire repeated gently crying as she watched Obama take the oath. She stood pressed up on a security barrier she had leaned against for four hours. She said Obama doesn't just mean change in Washington, but change in race relations in North Carolina and elsewhere. "I've seen so many [injust] things," she said. "This changes everything."

**John Wilson**, 51 and an African-American professor in Washington, woke up at 3:30 a.m. in order to get a good spot in a standing-room-only section in front of the Capitol. "It's a new day," he said. "And not just because he's African-American, because he has the right idea about America."

**David Wilson**, 54, a chancellor at the University of Wisconsin college system, grew up in rural Alabama, the son of sharecroppers and a descendant of slaves. He flew in from Madison, Wis., so his 12-year-old son could see the inauguration. "I wanted him to see this so he'd know that the

whole world can be his oyster,” Wison said. “Dr. [Martin Luther] King’s words finally ring true that we’ll be judged by the content of our character.”