



Martin does 'the right thing' in vote

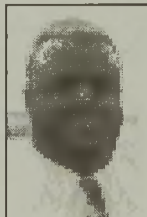
Continued from page 1A

week that he was studying the proposals, but had not made up his mind how he would vote. Traditionally, Martin has been a supporter of public schools. But his acrimonious relationship with the Democratic Party and some blacks caused many to worry that he might actually support James' budget. Last year, Martin voted to cut funding to arts groups because of homosexual themes in some programs and to replace chairman Parks Helms with Tom Bush.

"Some Republicans felt because I supported them on the homosexuality thing, that I would support them on the budget thing," Martin said. "I'm not like that. I have to vote the way I see it."

Bush encouraged James to craft an alternative budget that would hold the line on tax increases.

"James knows the numbers game," Martin said Wednesday. "All of us would have preferred



Douglas

could see the whole plan, he got with someone else. Then I saw things I didn't like. I told him I needed full funding for the schools and social services.

Douglas blasted the Republicans for proposing such sharp budget cuts.

"I think Bill James and Tom Bush were totally out of line in protocol in the way county management is run," Douglas said. "The county manager sets the budget and county commissioners debate and maybe put in amendments. Tom Bush had no right to appoint Bill James to set a budget that affects people not even in his district.

a revenue neutral at 65 cents. I said 'Put some numbers together and let me see what you got.' When I first saw them they looked good, but before I

said. "Even through all the things Hoyle has done, he has been of good service. We can't let a few votes destroy our view of a good public servant."

Norman Mitchell, who won the Democratic nomination for Martin's District 2 seat, was also pleased.

"I was happy that he did do the right thing," he said. "I would have voted against (James') budget."

Mitchell said, despite all the acrimony surrounding Martin over homosexuality, he was not surprised Martin voted with the Democrats.

"With all the things people say about Hoyle, he knows the needs of this community," he

Tune in, welcome back...CBS's purchase of several Charlotte radio stations won't affect business at black-oriented WPEG, WBAV and WGIV. Insiders tell Fly's spies that CBS's buyout of the stations from American Radio Systems only mean a change in ownership, not format. It's also deja vu for Wayne Brown, general manager of the stations. He worked for WCBS, a CBS owned and operated station in New York before moving to Charlotte.



Brown

Petition drive beset by some eligibility concerns

Continued from page 1A

signatures. Those who do will go into a drawing for the scholarship.

"I might have to get 18,000 signatures to cover the loss," Martin said. "We are still beating the bushes. We still have folks going out in different places getting signatures. The ad may help some college or high school students get a taste of what politics is all about."

On Wednesday, Martin seemed resigned to the possibility that he might not get enough signatures.

"If I don't get it, I won't be on the ballot," he said. "I'll be gone in November."

Martin, who represents District 2, abruptly dropped his Democratic voter registration in an acrimonious political spat which began when he sided with the four Republican commissioners to cut county arts last year. Martin sponsored the measure, saying he was opposed to homosexual content in local arts productions, particularly the play "Angels in America," in 1996.

The resulting brouhaha stormed through the community and as the debate raged, talk began of finding a way to oust Martin - labeled a traitor to the Democratic Party - from the board. The black community sat out much of the debate, while the gay and arts communities lambasted Martin and began recruiting someone to run against him.

Norman Mitchell had already indicated he wanted to run in District 2 and Martin was planning to run at large.

Martin, angered by the opposition within his party, sided with Republicans to oust Democratic chairman Parks Helms and replaced him with Republican Tom Bush.

Martin then announced he would leave the Democratic Party and run as an unaffiliated candidate. Because he changed his affiliation within 30 days of filing for office, state law required Martin gather voter signatures.

He has struggled to secure wide support in the black community, though he has appealed to churches and has supporters,

including his wife, seeking signatures.

Eric Douglas, the new chairman of the Black Political Caucus, said black voters began to question Martin's commitment to their needs.

"What he is known for right now is for his position on the Arts and Science council and the homosexuality issue," said Douglas. "People in the black community have a lot more needs that they need Mr. Martin to represent them on than for him to be the poster child for the anti-homosexual movement."

Martin's gotten some support from white conservatives, but needs nearly 5,000 signatures to get on the ballot. Some conservatives have said they want to withdraw their names from his petition.

With the deadline looming and conservatives angry that he voted against fellow commissioner Bill James' budget-cutting proposal, Martin is in no-man's land again.

Martin said some Republicans who supported him last year are no longer doing so. And Democrats are welcoming him back into the fold.

"I told them don't welcome me back, I haven't been anywhere," Martin said. "I am the way I have always been. I'm not a Republican and I don't think I will ever be a Democrat again, either."

"To support someone for one issue is stupid. It was wrong for democrats to vilify me...it was wrong for Republicans to support me on one issue. It is insane to support a politician based on one issue. No elected official can please everybody. If they think they can, they are crazy."

Call him Dr. Fly Jock...Speaking of radio, nationally-syndicated host Tom Joyner, who's heard daily on WBAV, recently received an honorary doctorate from historically-black Edward Waters College in Jacksonville, Fla. Joyner was recognized for creating the Tom Joyner Foundation Dollars For Scholars program to benefit UNCF schools. Joyner will be in Charlotte next month for a live broadcast of his program, which is heard over 95 stations nationally.



Joyner

The rift between Dave Cowens and Anthony Mason is starting to widen. The spies scouted the Charlotte Hornets' coach and forward at the Sting season-opener last week, and there wasn't much said. In fact, nothing was. Both were preening and playing to the crowd, and Cowens even took time to holler at a reporter or two. But talk to each other? Nope.



Cowens

According to the Hornets, Mason's attitude is getting to be a problem and they'd rather it disappear as fast as his game did during the playoffs. It won't happen - nothing could disappear that fast.



Mason

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