

# Minorities may run for state office

By LAURIE DUNCAN  
Staff Writer

In an effort to bring several minority issues to the forefront, a former state senator and a Fayetteville businessman are considering entering the 1988 lieutenant governor's race.

Marion "Rex" Harris, a black businessman from Fayetteville who operates a dry cleaners and washerette and 16 other businesses in eight states, said he would run for the Democratic nomination if former state Sen. John Winters declined to enter the race.

Winters, a 67-year-old Raleigh land developer, said he has been studying the financial feasibility of running for lieutenant governor because until now no other minority candidates have expressed interest in the race.

"This is the time for a minority

candidate to win the office," he said. "The other candidates out there aren't charismatic."

But neither has decided which man should run.

If younger and more viable minority candidates enter the race for lieutenant governor, Winters said he would bow out. He said he would rather pay attention to his land development business than reenter politics.

"I'd like to see a younger person with far more time (to spend in office) running," Winters said. "If Mr. Harris will run, I'll gladly back off."

Harris, in his fifties, said he could afford to run a \$500,000 campaign.

Both men support more funding for traditionally black universities and eliminating second primaries during elections. Winters said black universities historically have

been underfunded.

"There shouldn't be any traditionally minority schools," he said. "Since we have 16 (state) institutions, we need to have some of them deal in specialized areas to attract all kinds of people."

If minority institutions want first-class status, they need to have the money to establish policies and programs that will increase enrollment, Winters said. For instance, making them institutes of special training would increase enrollment and encourage integration of black and white students, he said.

Another issue concerning candidates is second primaries or runoff elections. If no candidate wins at least 50.1 percent of the vote in the first primary, a second primary is held for the two top vote-getters.

Second primaries have caused

bitter fights among both political parties in North Carolina since the late 1950s, because they favor white male candidates over minorities.

"(Second primaries) are a tool to keep minorities from winning office," Winters said.

Sen. Tony Rand, D-Cumberland, a contender in the race, also said second primaries tend to discriminate against black candidates.

"Second primaries are expensive and make for a great deal of hostility for members of both parties," Rand said.

Rand supports a bill to lower the required percentage of votes for first primary victories from 50.1 percent to 40 percent. The bill, introduced in the N.C. Senate in 1987 by Democratic Sen. Ralph Hunt, would increase a minority candidate's chances of getting elected.

# Court reopens compensation cases

By MICHAEL JORDAN  
Staff Writer

The N.C. Court of Appeals reversed a decision by the state Industrial Commission to close four workers' compensation cases last Thursday.

The commission closed the cases without making a decision in any of them, but will now have to reopen them, the Court of Appeals' decision

said.

The former chairman of the commission, David Brooks, abused his authority by intervening in the cases, said Paul Pulley, the Durham attorney who handled the appeal.

"The Industrial Commission has had a political swing since Governor (Jim) Martin started making appointments," Pulley said.

Brooks had defended the state in

two of the compensation cases before Martin appointed him to chair the neutral commission, which clearly violated the political balance, Pulley said. The appeals court did not address Pulley's charges in its decision.

The court said the commission closed the case on an inapplicable technicality.

William Stephenson, one of the three commissioners on the Industrial Commission, refused to comment on Pulley's charges against Brooks, but he defended the commission's actions.

"We've been severely criticized over the years for dragging our feet, and we felt it was time to settle these claims," Stephenson said.

Stephenson said the cases were more than a year old when the commission closed them in 1986.

The workers said in their claims

that they were seeking compensation for loss of hearing caused by their working conditions.

The commission closed the cases after successive delays in scheduling the depositions of former audiologist Clarice Hug, Stephenson said.

Pulley said the depositions were vital to the workers' claims, but Hug was unable to present them because she moved three times during the cases.

Pulley said the commission erred by closing the cases without informing the workers' attorney, Charles Hassell of Raleigh, of its intentions.

Pulley said Hassell would probably continue to represent the workers in the reopened cases.

Neither Pulley nor Stephenson knew when Hug would present the depositions, and Hassell could not be reached for comment.

# British crewmen still missing after Iranian attack on tanker

From Associated Press reports

MANAMA, Bahrain — Iranian gunboats ambushed a British-flag tanker, leaving two crewmen missing about 100 miles north of Bahrain Monday night.

The attack on the British tanker Gentle Breeze, which was set ablaze by Iranian gunboats, took place about 9 p.m. (2 p.m. EDT).

Gulf-based salvage sources and Lloyds Shipping Intelligence Unit in London said the Gentle Breeze was sailing empty from Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, to Kuwait when it was attacked about 20 miles west of Farsi, a small island used by Iranian Revolutionary Guards for speedboat attacks against neutral shipping in the area.

**Biden gives false information**

WASHINGTON — Sen. Joe Biden claimed during a campaign appearance in New Hampshire last spring that he finished in the top half of his law school class, although records indicate he finished near the bottom.

In a videotape aired by the public service cable network C-SPAN several months ago, the Delaware Democrat was asked at a campaign stop in Claremont, N.H., on April 3 about what law school he attended and how well he did.

"The first year in law school I decided I didn't want to be in law school and ended up in the bottom two-thirds of my class and then decided I wanted to stay and went back to law school and in fact ended up in the top half of my class," he went on.

But last week Biden released his law school records, which showed he had graduated 76th in a law school class of 85. The law school transcript also showed he made

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little progress in class standing throughout the three-year course, ranking 80th out of 100 in the first semester of the first year, and 79th out of 87 the second semester of his second year.

In the videotape, Biden went on to say, "I went to (Syracuse) law school on a full academic scholarship."

The records he released last week indicated he had an \$800 scholarship from the school out of a total tuition of \$1,620 as well as \$1,000 in room and board from his work as a residence adviser in a residence hall and student loans.

Biden also said he won the international moot court competition, was the outstanding student in the political science department (as an undergraduate) and graduated with three undergraduate degrees.

Newsweek magazine said Biden does not mention the moot court competition on his resume, and did not win the political science award at the University of Delaware, where he received a single B.A. in political science and history.

**Falwell plans to stay for now**

COLUMBIA, S.C. — The Rev. Jerry Falwell will not resign at Tuesday's PTL board meeting, but he stands by a pledge to leave if a judge gives supporters of PTL founder Jim Bakker a majority on the television ministry's board, a spokesman said.

Instead, he said he expects Falwell to release some details of the ministry's reorganization plan, though he could offer no details.

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# U.S. cigarette smoking rate hits new low

By SHARON KEBSCHULL  
Staff Writer

The cigarette smoking rate has reached a new low in the United States, a survey released by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) said.

Of more than 13,000 Americans surveyed late last year, 26.5 percent reported that they currently smoke, down four points from a 1985 study and almost 14 points in the last two decades.

The highest rate of smokers, 45.9 percent, was among black men, 25 to 34 years old, said Ron Davis, director of the CDC's U.S. Office on

Smoking and Health. The highest rate for women, 36.4 percent, was in the 35- to 44-year-old black women's group, he said.

Males 35 to 44 years old had the highest rate in the mixed race group, Davis said. For women, the 25- to 34-year-old group had the highest rate.

The decline in smoking furthers a sharp drop that began in 1964 when the U.S. surgeon general's report warned smokers of the high risk of cancer. At that time, 40 percent of the adult population smoked.

An estimated 47 million Americans still smoke, but the surgeon general's goal of a 25 percent rate of smokers by 1990 has almost been met. Researchers are looking ahead to a smoke-free society by 2000.

Both the 1990 and the 2000 goal are realistic because smoking is becoming so socially unacceptable that smokers will not continue to

smoke in the presence of non-smokers, Davis said.

The tobacco industry has been hit fairly hard by the reduction, said Davis, with total cigarette sales down by 1 to 2 percent per year, despite population growth. Although cigarette sales have dropped, more smokeless tobacco products have sold.

In the CDC survey, which covered adults 17 years old and up, male smokers outnumbered female smokers. But in a 1985 survey of college students, 18 percent of women smoked, compared to 10 percent of men. A 1986 survey of high school seniors found that 20 percent of women and 17 percent of men had smoked.

Rates will continue to decline in both groups, said Davis, because the figures are down substantially from a few years ago.

But he said it is possible that women's rates will decline more slowly than men.

"We may have a higher rate of smokers among women in ten years or so," he said.

The slowly declining smoking rates among women are partly because women did not start smoking until about 20 years after men, Davis said.

On the UNC campus, no statistics are kept of how many smokers attend the university, but not many smokers are listed in the housing department's records.

"I doubt if we have more than 100 who communicated to us on their applications that they use tobacco products," said Collin Rustin, associate director for housing. "We may have between 100 and 200, but 200 is on the high side," he said. "The few that we have, we have a hard time placing (out of the 6,925 beds available this year)."



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