

Is It Time For A Woman President?

By Donald M Rothberg
 WASHINGTON (AP) - Not once in American history have voters given serious consideration to a woman as president. Not even close.

Forty-one presidents, 41 of them men. Yet, polls show voters are more likely to trust women politicians.

At a time when the public is bombarded with allegations of personal misconduct by a male president, might the political atmosphere be growing more favorable for women who dream of running for the White House?

"I hope so," said former Rep. Pat Schroeder, D-Colo., who came within a teardrop of running for president in 1988. "Wouldn't that be nice." "We trust women more than we trust men," said pollster Peter Hart. "So on questions of integrity women have a higher credibility factor." He said women also get higher marks on questions of moral values.

But there still is the commander

Bloodhounds, High-Tech Fencing Deter Prison Escapes

Knowing that the touch of a fence sets off alarms, and that a run for freedom means being chased by bloodhounds, the majority of state prisoners prefer to stay put and obey the prison rules. Consequently, the number of escapees reached an all-time low of 142 last year while the prison population peaked. "Let's not forget that nearly 6,000 inmates work outside the fence, in the community, which makes this escape rate even more remarkable," Correction Secretary Mack Jarvis said. "In addition to the aggressive construction of more secure prisons, I believe Gov. Jim Hunt's mandate to put more inmates to work has kept prisoners occupied and their minds off running."



Daisy the bloodhound helps return escaped prisoners.

The highest recorded number of escapes was in 1973, with 2,054 escapes out of a prison population of less than 11,000 inmates. Since then the department has tripled its prison capacity and now has 32,000 inmates.

All but two of the 1997 escapees were assigned to minimum custody prisons, and 81 had been working in jobs away from the prison.

Other reasons for the dramatic drop over the past three decades include better staff training, a better classification system and fewer misdemeanants being sent to prison.

Currently, 18 prisons are equipped with electronic alarm system fencing and plans are to add it to several other prisons. No inmate has been successful in escaping over a fence equipped with the electronic alarm system.

Escapes can happen at any time, but more occur in springtime, and home is usually the destination.

"When an inmate does escape, correction bloodhounds, the fugitive staff and members of the Prison Emergency Response Team aggressively pursue that individual," Jarvis said. "Most escapees are recaptured within 24 hours."

There have been 17 escapes so far this year and 15 captures.

in chief factor.

"The most important factor is what we call the competency element: Can I feel comfortable with a woman as chief executive?" said Hart. "A lot of that has to do with what we call gender modeling. Can we trust a woman to be commander in chief?" No one can be sure of the answers to those questions, particularly at a time when pollsters concede the public mood is very hard to read.

"We are in a very bizarre climate of opinion. We are in uncharted waters so to speak," said Andrew Kohut, director of polling at the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press.

He puzzled over polling numbers that suggest most people believe the allegation - denied by Clinton - that the president had an affair with

a young intern, and at the same time give him the highest job approval ratings of his presidency.

"The public is acting in a hard-to-interpret manner," Kohut said.

The public mood toward women candidates certainly has changed markedly in the 10 years since Schroeder explored seeking the Democratic presidential nomination.

At tearful news conference, Schroeder declared she would not run. In an interview the next day, she said that one obstacle she encountered was a "hard core that say, 'No way, I'll never vote for a woman.'" When Schroeder was considering a White House bid there were two women in the Senate. Now there are nine.

Asked if the current attention given morality in the nation's high-

est political office was helping women with presidential ambitions, Schroeder replied: "I want it to be that, but I just don't know. All I can say is I hope so." Traditionally, politicians who are elected governor or senator from the nation's largest states automatically become presidential prospects.

Both California senators are Democratic women - Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer - and Rep. Jane Harman announced recently she would seek the Democratic nomination for governor of the nation's largest state.

Maine is not among the large states, but it has two women senators - Olympia Snowe and Susan Collins, both Republicans.

One ironic sign of the progress of women in national politics is the case of New Jersey Gov. Christie

Whitman. When she ran for governor in 1991 she promised a tax cut, and she delivered. For a while after that she was a favorite of many Republicans and often mentioned as a prospect for the national ticket.

But for reasons unrelated to her gender she alienated a lot of New Jersey voters and barely won reelection. Conservatives bitterly opposed her because of her support for abortion rights.

So far, the candidates mentioned most often for the presidential nominations in 2000 are men - Vice President Al Gore and House Minority Leader Dick Gephardt among the Democrats. There are far more Republican names, including Gov. George W. Bush of Texas, Steve Forbes and former Vice President Dan Quayle.

Then there is Dole - not the 1996 GOP nominee, but his wife, Elizabeth.

The likeliest route for a woman onto the national ticket would be as a vice presidential candidate. Geraldine Ferraro of New York was the first woman on a major party's national ticket when she was Walter F. Mondale's running mate in 1984. They lost in a historic landslide to President Reagan, a defeat that could not be blamed on Ferraro.

Pollster Hart said one or both parties might pick a woman for the second spot on the 2000 ticket.

"There's no reason why they shouldn't. The only question is do you have a woman who's credible enough and popular enough to help the ticket," Hart said. "My guess is both do at this stage."

Durham County's Most WANTED Deadbeat Parents



Alonzo Vernon Bullock
 Owes His Child: \$3974.
 Age: 31
 Hair/Eyes: Black/Brown
 Last Known Whereabouts:
 Durham/Warrenton, NC
 Possibly NJ



Norman Earl Vick
 Owes His Child: \$22,009.
 Age: 32
 Hair/Eyes: Brown/Brown
 Height: 5' 8"
 Last Known: Wake Forest
 Occupation: Painter



Michael Junior Bolton
 Owes His Child: \$18641.
 Age:
 Hair/Eyes: Brown/Blue
 Height: 5' 11"
 Last Known: Durham
 Occupation: Construction



Harold G. Woodruff, Jr.
 Owes His Child: \$18007.
 Age: 40
 Hair/Eyes: Lt. Brown/Brown
 Height: 5' 11"
 Last Known: Raleigh
 Occupation: Land Surveyor



Andrew L. Cadlett
 Owes His Child: \$5828.
 Age: 32
 Hair/Eyes: Black/Brown
 Height: 5' 9"
 Last Known: Durham
 Occupation: Day Laborer



Eric L. Harris
 Owes His Child: \$5828.
 Age: 35
 Hair/Eyes: Black/Brown
 Height: 6' 1"
 Last Known: Durham
 Occupation: Day Laborer



Sherea R. Jones
 Owes Her Children: \$12822.
 Age: 26
 Hair/Eyes: Black/Brown
 Height: 5' 10"
 Last Known: Raleigh
 Occupation: Food Service



Randy W. Holsonback
 Owes His Child: \$5970.
 Age: 33
 Hair/Eyes: Sandy/Brown
 Height: 5' 6"
 Last Known: Hillsborough
 Occupation: Painter



Lee Thomas "Sack" Harris
 Owes His Child: \$7110.
 Age: 49
 Hair/Eyes: Black/Brown
 Height: 6' 1"
 Last Known: Durham
 Occupation: Mechanic



Robert D. Carrington
 Owes His Child: \$8934.
 Age: 31
 Hair/Eyes: Black/Brown
 Height: 6' 3"
 Last Known: Durham
 Occupation:



Harold Lewis Hargrave
 Owes His Child: \$4824.
 Age: 48
 Hair/Eyes: Black/Brown
 Height:
 Last Known: Durham
 Occupation:



Don Alvin Evans
 Owes His Child: \$22708.
 Age: 38
 Hair/Eyes: Black/Brown
 Height:
 Last Known: Durham
 Occupation:



Bobby Brown
 Owes His Child: \$1951.
 Age: 27
 Hair/Eyes: Black/Brown
 Height:
 Last Known: Durham
 Occupation:

If you have information leading to the whereabouts of any of these people call the Tip Line 919-560-8926

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