

State and National

N.C. campaigns heat up as November nears

By KARI BARLOW
Staff Writer

In the wake of North Carolina's May 3 primaries, candidates are settling in for the long haul to November. The races for governor and lieutenant governor are quickly becoming two of the key races this year.

Since the primary, Gov. Jim Martin's campaign has continued its efforts in full force.

"We've been focusing our effort at the local level," said Tim Pittman, N.C. campaign press secretary. Two Republican governors have endorsed Martin, Pittman said.

According to Lt. Gov. Bob Jordan's campaign press secretary, Phil Wells, Jordan's campaign is also moving quickly.

"The day after the primary, the lieutenant governor was in the north-

eastern part of the state," Wells said.

Before the primary, Jordan campaigned on television for about a month, and that has helped the campaign, Wells said.

Martin's campaign has stopped running television ads for now.

"We are not on right now. We look at our polls and we don't see a reason to be on television," said Pittman.

Campaign watchers are speculating that the N.C. Legislature's short session in June will have a strong impact on the campaigns. The short session will bring a lot of attention to both Martin and Jordan, Pittman said.

"I think the potential is there for both the governor and lieutenant governor to get a lot of press. I think the pressure is on the lieutenant governor. We expect a lot of negative darts to be tossed at the governor,"

Pittman said.

Wells said the short session would probably last longer than intended, and he expects Martin to capitalize on the session tremendously.

But the Democrats have more party unity this year, and Harold Hardison's decision to forgo a runoff with Tony Rand for the nomination in the lieutenant governor's race

helped the Democratic party, said Wells.

The Republican Party continues to be unified, Pittman said.

The campaign for lieutenant governor is also heating up, receiving more and more attention as November nears.

Jim Gardner, the Republican candidate, has been busy since the

primary, said Terry Noble, his campaign coordinator. Gardner's campaign utilized phoning and television advertising before the primaries.

"We plan to spend a good amount of money," said Noble. "I think it's going to be a tough race and that's why it's getting a lot of attention."

Democratic candidate Rand could not be reached for comment.

Panel seeks legislative pay hike

By JEFF ECKARD
Staff Writer

Republicans and Democrats alike have sharply criticized last Tuesday's recommendation by a legislative study panel to increase state lawmakers' salaries by 111 percent.

The panel was created to examine and recommend the amount legislators and top state officials should be paid to attract the best qualified candidates for public office.

Jim Gardner, the GOP candidate

for lieutenant governor, said during a news conference last Wednesday that he opposed the plan.

"I think a 111 percent salary increase is ridiculous," Gardner said.

The salary increase would diminish the importance of a 5 percent pay raise promised to teachers and other state employees, Gardner said. Until the problems of education in the state are addressed, there should be no salary increases for the legislators, he added.

The legislative panel's recommendation, which would increase legislators' salaries from \$10,140 to \$21,375, has also met opposition from Democratic leaders.

Brenda Summers, spokeswoman for Lt. Gov. Bob Jordan, the Democratic gubernatorial candidate, said, "The lieutenant governor is in favor of some salary increase for the legislators, but he feels the 111 percent recommendation is much too high."

It is not politically smart for legislators to increase their salaries during an election year because constituents do not favor such increases, said Rep. Joe Hackney (D-Orange).

N.C. legislators rank 28th nationally in salary. The increase, if approved by the legislators when the General Assembly convenes June 2, would place them 11th nationally.

The state constitution prohibits legislators from raising their present salaries. Therefore, if the recommendation is approved, it would not go into effect until a new legislature takes office in 1989.

The salary increase is an attempt to address the problem of getting the best people to run for the legislature, and then retaining them, Summers said.

"Increasingly, only those people who are financially well-off can afford to run," she said.

Speaker of the House Liston Ramsey (D-Madison) supports the pay increase. Ramsey, whose salary would increase from \$28,000 a year to \$66,204, said, "The base (salary) is so low we are either going to pay these members, or we are going to continue to lose them."

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