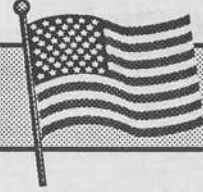


Election '96



Challengers gear up campaigns

(Part one in a three-part series)

By Nichole Davis
Sentinel-Voice

Whether running for partisan or non-partisan offices, many first-time candidates say finding money and getting organized has been challenging.

New candidates have to cope with sometimes slow first-time fundraising, difficulties in putting together an election team on top of trying to get their message out to voters, they said.

And it's not always easy for the largest pool of black candidates to file for election in recent years, local political observers said.

"Fundraising has been the number one thing, because I'm a very pitiful beggar," said County Commission, District D candidate Anthony Snowden. "I'd rather go without than beg, and that's not working right now," he said.

Snowden, who would like to see a barber and beauty school in West Las Vegas, said he plans to refocus his fundraising efforts, because he wants his message to get out.

"A lot of people are involved in crime, because it's the only game out there," Snowden said. If elected, "I would encourage developers to come in and develop the West Las Vegas infrastructure."

Judicial candidates Michael Douglas and Lizzie Hatcher are also experiencing fundraising difficulties for a different reason.

Unlike partisan candidates, who can promise donors access to themselves if elected, a judge can only promise to be a fair and honest, and that makes it hard to get donations in judicial races

Clinton

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the president as "not the only highlight of my career but my life," he said.

Burgess also moderated a panel held at UNLV where he told the president about three Youth and Family Services programs working to stem youth crime.

"As a professional to be able to showcase your program for kids on a national level, it was our grand day," Burgess said. "It brought some additional awareness about how effectively we keep kids from committing further crimes, using drugs and all of those other negative things."

Calling himself "almost obsessed" with juvenile crime, the president urged the community to seek out and support anti-crime programs, because juvenile crime rates across the nation have risen for the last three years while rates for all other types of crime have dropped.

Clinton discussed the topic with Burgess, Miller, Senators Richard Bryan and Harry Reid, Las Vegas police Undersheriff Richard Winget at one of two public events during the brief trip.

Nevada authorities have adopted a popular approach to crime: hold children and parents accountable for youth crime, and juvenile panelists shared personal experiences to show how the concept works.

After three months of detoxification at a local teen drug treatment center, panelist Shane Quick entered the Community Based Probation Community Supervision Program where he meets weekly with a probation officer.

Now clean, Quick credits the program, his family and himself with getting him back on his feet and keeping him out of trouble.

"If you really want to do it, you'll do it," he said.

Panelist Anthony Covarrubias said he would likely be in a juvenile detention facility were it not

where candidates may run unopposed, Douglas said.

"You can't promise to do anything specific for people," he said. "When you're giving a judge money, you're trying to put the best person in position to make the decision."

And with 21 judicial races, a lot of potential donors waited to endorse candidates hoping to weed out unopposed candidates, he said. Now that filing has closed and he has opposition, fundraising may be easier, the judge said.

Douglas, who was appointed to the office in January, has also faced the challenge of trying to learn how to do his new job while campaigning.

"As a person who is doing the job, the frustration is that my time should be spent doing the job," he said. "It takes time away from learning how to be a better judge."

But, "the reality is that you can be the best judge that you want to be, but if you can't get reelected it's a waste," Douglas said. "The flip side is no one wants a purely political judge. People want to feel their judges are above bias."

Like Douglas, Hatcher is trying to maintain her current job while campaigning, but she has been able to reorganize her practice, she said.

for the Freedom Program for high-risk and serious offenders. Instead he is staying out of trouble, getting along with his parents and planning to graduate from high school, Covarrubias said.

Covarrubias is on house arrest where he checks in twice a day with his probation officer, who also does surprise visits.

Like Quick, he has a new outlook on crime, Covarrubias said.

He said he probably won't hang around the same friends he used to or participate in the same crimes, because "all you've got to do is walk away. That's all there is to it," Covarrubias said.

Third youth panelist Stanley Johnson is part of a 24-hour supervision program funded by a Clinton initiative called New Directions.

The relatively quiet Johnson, who spoke less than three minutes during the 45-minute roundtable, said he is picked up five days a week by a probation officer and goes to a homework program.

His mother, who was not on the panel, also attends focus groups where she learns to reassert control of their family environment.

Troubled youth frequently lack supervision, because they come from single parent homes, panelists said. And, Nevada has the highest percentage of single parents in the country.

Single parent and panelist Joy Gladwin said the classes have helped her learn how to better manage her son.

"It makes it a lot easier for me, because I know someone else is out there to help me," Gladwin said.

"He's in a gang that I want him to be in, a gang that's positive," she said. "He's able to give something back to the community, instead of just taking."

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Judge Micheal Douglas is running his first campaign to retain the District Court he was appointed to in January.

Meanwhile, State Assembly, District 6 candidate Anyika Kamal said getting his political machine organized has been one of his biggest tasks.

"As a first-time runner, it's just trying to get my campaign to move smoothly," the 35-year-old firefighter said. But, "fundraising is the biggest thing. We're trying to set up fundraisers now."

State Assembly, District 7 candidate Louise Banks, a 55-year-old retired police detective, said she filed for office May 14 only after attending a one-week self-empowerment workshop.

"It's been a dream of mine to be in the political arena. Before I wouldn't take the risk," Banks said recently.

"It's (running) been in the back of my mind. I even talked about it to other people before last week," she said.

Although she called education "the key to everything," Banks said she will attempt to look at more than just her personal feelings to see what her potential constituents felt the issues should

be.

"I really want to take the issues that the community has back to Carson City," she said.

For some first-time candidates advance planning has lessened some of the trial-run difficulties.

Douglas, for example, said a well-publicized campaign committee may have deterred a few candidates in his race. He also makes about a dozen appearances a week, Douglas said.

State Assembly, District 7 candidate the Rev. Chester Richardson calls every campaign day exciting.

"Every day has been a challenge. Every day has been a new opportunity," he said.

His flyers and signs are already up, and he is ready to campaign.

"I don't have any problems," Richardson said.

Clark County school trustee candidate Shirley Barber is singing a similar tune. After working on her campaign for more than a year, her funds are already in place, her signs are already up and she is now planning to go door-to-door in her district, Barber said.

Barber, who has wanted to be on the board for more than 10 years, waited until she was ready to face rigors of campaigning, including going door-to-door in July and August's 100 plus degree heat.

Although she hates the heat, Barber said "I have to get out and walk and meet all my (potential) constituents."



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