

# GOP leader sees governor's victory chances

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By BEN J. PLASTINO

Post-Register political editor

A Republican Governors Association official said in a press conference here Tuesday afternoon that Democratic Idaho Gov. John V. Evans is considered vulnerable for defeat.

Mrs. Carol Whitney, Washington, D.C., the association's executive director, said Idaho is tagged one of six states listed as "A priority" where Republicans feel they have chances for winning gubernatorial seats now held by Democrats.

She contended Idahoans feel Evans has not handled the present economic crisis properly and made too many administrative mistakes.

She said the Republican contender, Lt. Gov. Philip E. Batt, is looked at as a winning candidate and with an effective campaign organization.

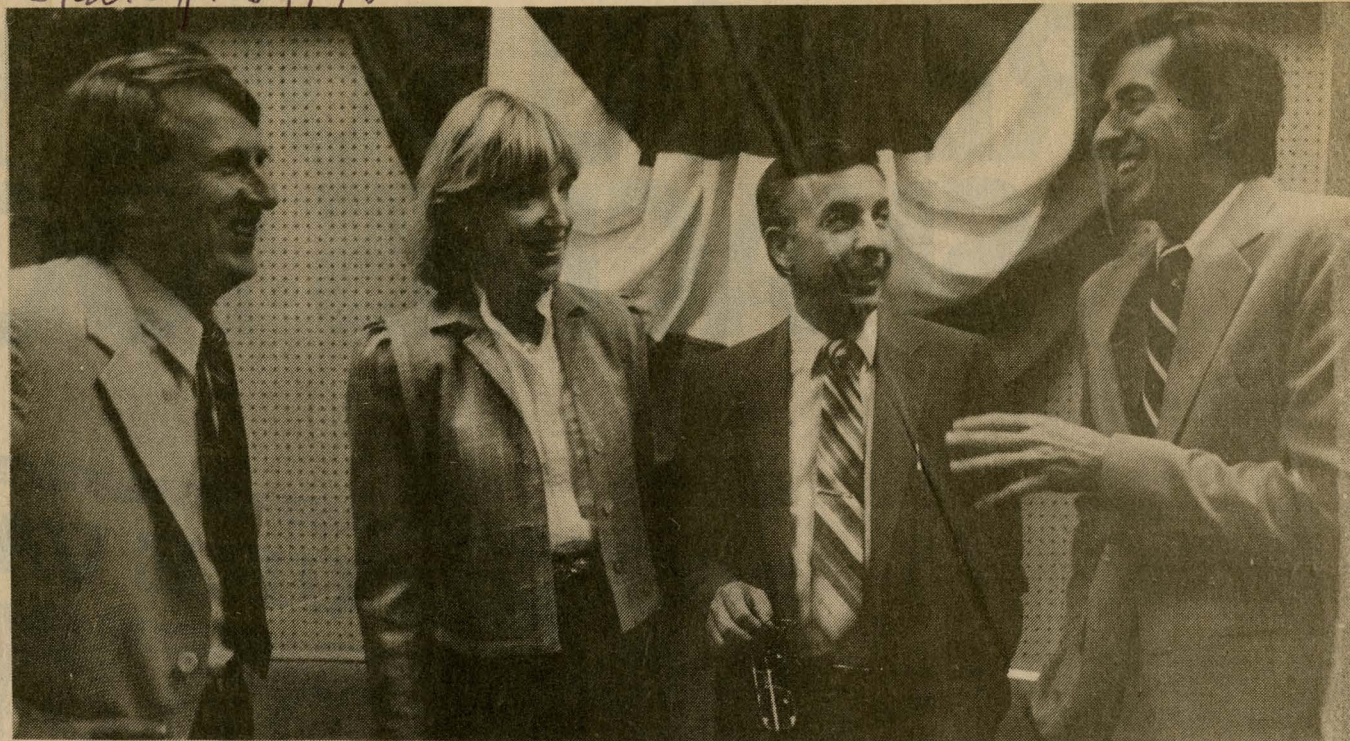
Mrs. Whitney said "we do not target governor races" but explained the association is prepared to offer help in the way of providing speakers, computer service, background material and other informational literature.

"Our field people consult with people of a state and try to provide what they want," she explained.

"Governor Evans," she said, "is dropping in popularity. Batt is a proven winner. He has good organization. We feel the voters in a particular state want to handle their campaign at the local level. We stand ready to give what help we can."

She said 36 governor races are on tap this year, 20 presently held by Democrats and 16 by Republicans. Of these, 15 Democrats and 10 Republicans are seeking re-election while five in Democratic states and six in Republican states are up for grabs.

She said most political observers are scaling down Republican



Post-Register/Robert Bower

## Smell Republican victory

**OFFICERS OF THE Republican Governors Association held a press conference in Idaho Falls Tuesday afternoon to the effect they feel Republican Lt. Gov. Philip E. Batt has an excellent chance of unseating Democratic Gov. John V. Evans. From left are Dewey Newman, Portland, northwest**

**filed representative; and Carol Whitney, executive director, both of the Republican Governors Association; State Chairman Dennis M. Olsen, Idaho Falls; and G. Glen Communtzis, RGA field director.**

losses from earlier estimates.

She said Republican congressional losses which were put as high as 50 at one time, have been reduced to between 10 and 20 while the Senate losses placed at four or more likely will result in a shift of two or less.

She said 27 Democrats and 23 Republicans hold governorships and most believe there will be a shift of four Democrat gains at the most and "it could be an even break."

Mrs. Whitney hastened to add the future trend in the economy

and the type of campaigns conducted by candidates also will determine winners.

"Many who may appear ahead now may lose in November," she said. "There are no safe races. This was proven in 1980 when many senators and congressmen thought to be in no danger were defeated. It could happen again this year."

"We have found people want to know what the incumbent governor has done to cope with the economy. They do not blame the president so much as to know

what their governor has been doing and they feel he has made a lot of mistakes."

Mrs. Whitney, who held the press conference at the new Republican headquarters at the Shoup and B St. Plaza, was accompanied by G. Glen Communtzis, Washington, association field director, and Dewey Newman, Portland, association representative for local election for Idaho, Montana and Alaska.

Idaho Republican Chairman Dennis Olsen, Idaho Falls, also issued a press statement calling

on J. D. Williams, Preston, to formally state his position on the Right-To-Work proposal and criticizing the governor for his handling of the Bunker Hill mine closure which he contended resulted in loss of 2,500 jobs. He also faulted the governor for delaying a decision on whether there will be a holdback on public education funding in view of the state revenue shortfall.

Ann Rydalch, Idaho Falls, state party vice chairman, introduced Mrs. Whitney.