



Post-Register/Robert Schweiger

## On campaign trial

**LLT.GOV. PHILIP E. BATT**, left, announced Republican gubernatorial contender, chats with two of his Bonneville County committee members at a reception

here Thursday night attended by some 150. The committee members are Mike Crapo and Edith Ward.

# Batt's campaign fund nears \$100,000 mark

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Lt. Gov. Philip E. Batt, exuding confidence for his quest for the Republican gubernatorial nomination, Friday announced his campaign fund has already reached near \$100,000.

"I'm extremely pleased at the progress of the campaign this far," said Batt in a Post-Register interview.

Batt said he has placed only \$2,500 of his own money in the campaign so far but there have been more than 1,000 contributors to his fund, averaging close to \$100 each.

Batt said he was the acting governor as Gov. John V. Evans is out of the state for a couple of days.

He said he has strong organizations in both Twin Falls and Idaho Falls to help in his campaign. He plans to raise \$200,000 for the nomination and if a primary winner as he expects, a similar amount will be sought for the general campaign against Democrat Gov. John V. Evans.

His Bonneville County committee headed by Edith M. Ward, Sens. J. Marsden Williams and William L. Floyd, Eugene Bush, Michael Crapo, Kenneth Drewes, Tim Hopkins, Richard Smith and Steve Taggart hosted some 150 followers at the Stardust. The guests were treated to a menu of homemade breads and preserves.

Tonya Erickson, Sugar City, his fulltime paid east Idaho field coordinator, said the Thursday night event was mostly a get acquainted social where donated homemade bread and preserves were served, rather than a fund-raiser.

Batt said a fund raising event at Twin Falls Wednesday night netted him some \$1,000.

Batt said he expects to do well in the Twin Falls area despite the fact that his main primary contender, House Speaker Ralph Olmstead, lives there.

"I'm going to spend a lots of time in the Twin Falls area and east Idaho because I know these are critical areas," said Batt.

Two others have announced for the Republican nomination, Bernie Fisher, Kuna farmer, and a Shelley naturopath surgeon, Dr. Lee Richardson.

He said he anticipates that Fisher will draw as many votes from Olmstead as he will from himself.

Batt said there is no question the economy as it affects people's pocketbooks, is the main campaign issue.

As such, he said "I believe I can furnish better leadership in encouraging business than Evans has done. That, of course, is my central campaign theme."

In other matters, he said he was pleased at the appointment of Larry Mills, former Boise Cascade executive but now retired, to the Pacific Northwest Power Council to replace Chris Carlson and had urged this be done immediately; that he would lessen divisions among the various geographic divisions of the state; and for the state to become more self reliant to handle many functions now the responsibilities of the federal government.

He also said he felt the Legislature did as well as could be expected in funding the general fund budget.

"Perhaps," he said, "it may have been over cautious in its estimates but in view of the present recession, that might be a good thing for the future."

He said he also believed the funding for the Department of Health and Welfare was adequate to give help to those truly in need but not to make it attractive for people to go on the state welfare roles.

"I think this was the best method to do this," he said.

Batt expressed opposition to a state gross severance tax but added he had no objection to one that would apply to a net mineral tax.

Batt acknowledged a heavy coal severance tax is working well in Montana and Wyoming because of the large deposits in those states.

He pointed out, however, there have been no coal or oil resources found in this state so far.

He pointed out the 1981 Legislature did enact a severance tax on gas and oil.

"I think it was wise to do this at a time when there is no lobbying pressure against such a tax," he said.

He pointed out a gross severance mineral tax would only bring greater financial difficulties for many of the companies engaged in mineral mining which are now not making profits.

He pointed to the collapse of the Bunker Hill mine company at Kellogg which is closing because of the depressive silver prices, and others which also are having financial setbacks.

He also said he favored the lieutenant governor running as a team with the governor and introduced such a proposal in the Senate but it was defeated.