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News briefs on the California recall campaign

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(08-19) 20:54 PDT LOS ANGELES (AP) --

Although Arnold Schwarzenegger captured a string of world bodybuilding titles, fellow gubernatorial candidate Nathan Whitecloud Walton also boasts an athletic pedigree.

His father is basketball Hall of Famer and NBA television commentator Bill Walton, and his brother Luke Walton is a rookie with the Los Angeles Lakers.

The 25-year-old independent candidate, one of 135 on the Oct. 7 recall ballot, said he stands for strong environmental protection, affordable higher education and less traffic.

Nathan Walton played basketball at Princeton and professionally in France before working as a junior partner for a hedge fund in New York. He will soon begin an MBA program at Stanford University, where Schwarzenegger adviser George Shultz is a fellow of the Hoover Institution.

He said politics is a constant topic of conversations with his father.

"My dad and I talk about it too much for the rest of the family," Nathan Walton said.

RIVERSIDE, Calif. (AP) -- Recall voters will cast touch-screen ballots in Riverside County, which has selected the technology as the ballot of choice this October.

Registrar Mischelle Townsend, one of touch-screen technology's biggest champions, had asked the California secretary of state's office to run the election by mail, saying the switch to mail-only ballots would save the county hundreds of thousands of dollars.

It will take too much time, effort and money for Townsend's office to get Riverside County's 4,250 touch-screen units tested and running for the October and November elections, she said.

But the secretary of state's office said the elections code prohibits their office from granting permission to counties to conduct mail-only elections. Permission could only be granted by county vote, and there wasn't enough time for that, Townsend said.

Townsend's office must now get the county's 4,250 touch-screen units tested and running for both elections, and she expects to get up to 2,300 poll workers to cover 425 polling places.

County officials estimated that costs for the special recall election could reach \$1.1 million, money that will come from the county's approximately \$20 million reserve fund.

"There's no budget for it. An election like this is a major hit for us," Supervisor Roy Wilson said of the recall election.

Townsend said a mail-only election would cost an estimated \$600,000.

Still, touch-screen balloting will be cheaper than the estimated \$1.5 million it would cost if the county had to print ballots for the recall vote.

"We're offering (ballots) in Spanish and English. It's ballot on demand. I don't know what we'd do without them," Townsend said. "Touch screens will make a tremendous difference.

"We'll expect our returns as we normally do. Hopefully, we'll be to bed by 11 p.m. or so."

ANAHEIM, Calif. (AP) -- Through his Traditional Values Coalition, the Rev. Louis P. Shelton is telling California's religious right that "trading Gray Davis for Arnold Schwarzenegger produces no net gain for moral government."

Sheldon is asking 10,000 California pastors and conservative activists to share information packets about Schwarzenegger's unsuitability for governor. The coalition's Californians for Moral Government project is distributing a letter and packets this week.

"Arnold Schwarzenegger comes from the world of acting and pretense," the coalition chairman said in a statement released Tuesday. "He favors abortion, homosexual marriage, homosexual adoption and tax increases.

"He is no conservative and Californians need to look beneath the makeup and recognize this act."

The 6-page information packet includes two pages of quotations from conservative leaders - including Rush Limbaugh, George Will and Cal Thomas -- who oppose Schwarzenegger's candidacy.

"Once you scratch the superficial screen persona of the 'Terminator,' you discover the same old, tired rhetoric of the anti-religious left. Schwarzenegger sees all of us who oppose abortion and cloning as religious fanatics. He favors both homosexual marriage and adoption," Sheldon wrote in the letter.

LOS ANGELES (AP) -- Gubernatorial candidate and adult film actress Mary Carey on Tuesday offered a personal dinner date to anyone contributing \$5,000 or more to her campaign.

Carey, running as an independent in California's Oct. 7 recall election, said her new strategy was necessary because her campaign does not have the financial backing of a large political party.

"I have to be creative and develop more unconventional methods of raising money," Carey said in a news release.

A self-proclaimed "political outsider," Carey's platform includes taxing breast implants, making lap dances a tax-deductible business expense and installing a Webcam in the

governor's mansion.

During the dinner dates, Carey will gladly discuss "any issues of importance to the contributor" the press release said. A call to Carey's campaign office was not immediately returned.

Last week, the Game Show Network announced that Carey has agreed to take part in an election debate spoof against fellow candidate and "Diff'rent Strokes" star Gary Coleman on the Game Show Network on Oct. 1.

LOS ANGELES (AP) -- Some of Gov. Gray Davis' union allies are hoping to borrow a page from Davis' political rival Arnold Schwarzenegger to terminate the recall effort.

At Davis' Tuesday speech, some of those allies distributed a flier portraying former Republican Gov. Pete Wilson in "Terminator" garb warning, "I'm back! My old staff and I are running the Schwarzenegger campaign. This time, Ill finish the job! Hasta la vista, unions!"

Wilson is a co-chairman of Republican actor Schwarzenegger's gubernatorial campaign and many of his old aides are also involved in the effort. He's a polarizing figure among Hispanics, a heavy union constituency, in part because of his support of 1994's anti-illegal-immigrant measure Proposition 187.

The red-white-and-black flier shows Wilson's head digitally placed on a muscular, gun-toting body as he says, "When I was governor I almost terminated prevailing wages! I tried to terminate apprenticeship standards! I almost terminated labor's voice with 226! I did terminate overtime pay! I terminated labor law enforcement!"

The flier printed in English and Spanish was funded by the State Building and Construction Trade Council.

Campaign officials for Schwarzenegger, who has played the "Terminator" character in three movies, did not immediately return a call for comment.

LOS ANGELES (AP) -- The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors gave its unanimous approval Tuesday to the registrar's office to use anticipated revenue from real estate recording fees to pay for the Oct. 7 recall election.

Los Angeles County Registrar Conny McCormack told supervisors such revenue as filing fees from liens, grant deeds and refinancing documents would help pay for what she estimates will \$13.4 million in election costs to the county. Statewide the election is expected to cost more than \$60 million.

The department has received more recorder funds than originally anticipated this year, due to a boom in the housing market and lower interest rates, said Chief Deputy Christine Heffron of the Los Angeles Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk's office.

The increased revenue would normally be turned over to the general fund, but the board's approval Tuesday means the registrar's office will be allowed to spend that money on the election.

McCormack said Tuesday that her department would ask the state to reimburse the county for at least part of the election cost.

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