

File: Lois Capps

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Lois Capps makes it official, she'll run

11/18/97

By NORA K. WALLACE

NEWS-PRESS STAFF WRITER

Lois Capps, driven by a desire to carry on her late husband's work in Congress, said Monday she will campaign to finish Rep. Walter Capps' term.

Surrounded by family members, and wearing her husband's congressional lapel pin on a chain around her neck, Capps said she will seek to be a "citizen representative" for the people of the 22nd Congressional District.

Her husband, a Democrat, died Oct. 28 of a heart attack, after finishing 10 months of his two-year term in the 105th Congress. He was 63.

More than solely championing her husband's legacy, Capps said she would seek to convince voters that she brings her own experience to the race, including two decades as a public school nurse and educator, background as a community volunteer and life as a mother and grandmother.

Although representatives from the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee visited with her for several days last week, and local party activists urged her to run, Capps said the decision was ultimately hers.

Friends told her, "If you want to do this, you've got to do it for yourself," she said. "That's actually why it's taken me the time to come to terms with this," she explained in an interview at her Santa Barbara home. Having been married for 37 years to Walter Capps, "I could do it in a minute if it meant just doing something for Walter's legacy. I would do anything. But this has got to be about what I am, and can offer as a representative."

The day before he died, Walter Capps visited Hollister School in Goleta to congratulate teachers for a technology grant they received. On Monday, his widow visited the school to kick off her campaign.

After his visit, Walter Capps told his wife he wanted to keep the image of the schoolchildren "in my heart, so when I walk onto the floor of the

House to cast my vote, I'll be doing it with the right intention."

Walter Capps, a UCSB religious studies professor for 32 years, often tried during his district visits to establish a connection with voters, and then return to Washington with their interests in mind, his widow said. "This time I've had now, and it's not been very many days, I've used to really think about that kind of public service that he was demonstrating," she said. "It was a conviction we both shared, that the connection you make with the people in a variety of ways as an elected representative is what it is really about."

Capps earned a reputation on Capitol Hill as one of the most visible of congressional spouses. She frequently sat in the gallery during House debates and votes and attended various political events specifically for spouses.

During Walter Capps' failed House campaign in 1994, and his successful effort in 1996, she was almost always with him at debates, forums, fund-raisers and speeches. She was particularly visible after he sustained a broken arm and leg in a head-on car crash in May 1996 in the heat of a nationally spotlighted race. While he recovered, she appeared at campaign functions and gave speeches in his stead.

In addition to building upon the work her husband started, Capps said she would concentrate on health concerns and issues involving children and families.

Her "ordinary, but very real life experience" as a public health nurse, and as a mother who worked while her children were growing up, should bode well with voters, she said. "I've been so privileged to provide health services for the children of other families," she explained. "We've shared the same goals in our community, making sure children had a healthy environment, learn the job skills they need in this complex world, and above all, that they'd grow up to be healthy individuals capable of raising their own families."

Whether at the local or national level, she said, "If we're not about strengthening families, we're missing the basic elements of what it means to live together as people."

Since Walter Capps' death, the district has been rife with speculation about which Democrat would emerge as a candidate. Although Capps was considered a front-runner from the outset, state Sen. Jack O'Connell of San Luis Obispo was also a rumored favorite among Democrats. But O'Connell backed out of the running last week, and pledged his support to Capps. "Although many people have said Walter was the heart and Lois was the soul, Lois is her own person," said Bob Handy, California Democratic Party district representative. "She'll carry on the things Walter cared for, and she'll have her own concerns."

The race is expected to draw national attention - and potentially millions of dollars from outside interests, including political parties, labor and environmental organizations and conservative religious interests. Last year, the campaign between Walter Capps and Rep. Andrea Seastrand, R-Shell Beach, was heavily targeted by such national groups.

A union member for much of her professional career, Capps said she would willingly accept any support from unions - including volunteers

to walk precincts and work telephone banks.

Republicans hold a slim majority in Congress, and the 22nd Congressional District was in GOP hands for almost 50 years before Walter Capps defeated Seastrand. In the district, Democrats have a lead of less than 1,000 registered voters over Republicans.

Last week, Gov. Pete Wilson set Jan. 13 as the date for a special primary election. If no candidate wins more than 50 percent plus one of the vote, there will be a special March 10 run-off election for the top vote-getter in each party. The winner will finish the remainder of Walter Capps' two-year term, which ends next December.

In response to the vacancy, both of the Central Coast's Republican assemblymen are campaigning for the post.

Brooks Firestone, of Los Olivos, and Tom Bordonaro Jr., of Paso Robles, said they'd seek the seat. "I'm looking forward to a positive campaign, based on the issues, experience, legislative and community record," Firestone said. "It's the possibly most unusual campaign in a generation ... with the entire country watching."

Bordonaro, offering himself as a "true conservative," said Capps' announcement would not change his campaign strategy. "My campaign will be issue-oriented," he said. "I'll lay out my record, what I've been doing the last three years. We'll let the voters decide."

Former Santa Barbara County Supervisor Mike Stoker, now chairman of the state Agricultural Labor Relations Board, started campaigning last summer.

Among the Republicans who also have picked up preliminary election papers are Santa Maria Mayor Abel Maldonado, Goleta resident Robert Lovgren and Lompoc resident James DeWilder. Independent Chris Mitchum of Santa Barbara also picked up preliminary papers, as did Libertarians Robert Bakhaus of Santa Barbara and Thomas Rosenberger of Lompoc.

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Who is Lois Capps?

11/18/97

NEWS-PRESS STAFF REPORT

Lois Capps was born Jan. 10, 1938, in Wisconsin, the daughter of a Lutheran minister. She graduated with honors from Pacific Lutheran University with a bachelor's degree in nursing, and married Walter Capps in 1960.

Before moving to Santa Barbara in 1964, the couple lived in New Haven, Conn. While there, Lois Capps earned a master's degree in religion from Yale University, and worked as a head nurse at Yale New Haven Hospital. In 1990, she earned a master's degree in education from UCSB.

She worked as a nurse for the Santa Barbara County School District for 20 years, and retired last year, when her husband won his congressional seat. During her career, she was coordinator of the teen parent program and health consultant for all child development programs. Since 1983, she occasionally taught in the Early Childhood Education Department at SBCC.

Lois Capps has been a member of numerous community organizations, including the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association, the Santa Barbara County Women's Political Committee and the Family Service Agency.

She has three children - Laura, Todd and Lisa - and one grandson.

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Issues Capps championed gain backing

11/18/97

By NORA K. WALLACE

NEWS-PRESS STAFF WRITER

During the last weeks of his life, Rep. Walter Capps was working to get congressional support on two issues: pressuring China to improve human rights and banning the importation of assault weapons from Israel. And just two weeks after Capps died of a heart attack at age 63, events have transpired that reflect the positions the Democrat lobbied for.

On Sunday, Chinese officials released dissident Wei Jingsheng, who had been jailed for his political activism and government opposition since 1979. Wei, in failing health from a heart ailment, traveled to Detroit upon his release and entered a hospital there for treatment.

Capps had planned to be on hand for the Washington, D.C., festivities during the visit of Chinese President Jiang Zemin, during the end of October and early November. Capps, who voted last June to extend "most favored nation" status on China, wanted to remind Zemin that many congressional members are concerned about human rights in that country.

But Capps died Oct. 28, just before Zemin's week-long U.S. tour.

Before Zemin's visit, Capps circulated a letter among his colleagues, asking them to put Zemin on notice about human rights abuses. In particular, Capps asked for Wei's freedom, saying his immediate and unconditional release "would constitute a positive confidence-building measure on the subject of human rights in China."

Another project taking much of his attention was the importation of assault weapons. Capps got the signatures of more than 30 members of Congress on a letter to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, which urged an end to the importation of Israeli assault weapons into America. "Semiautomatic weapons are increasingly used by criminals to outgun our police officers and to commit heinous crimes," Capps wrote. "Since 1994, these guns have been used to murder 12 law enforcement officers. To say these dangerous Uzis are merely for sport does a tremendous disservice to those brave officers killed in the line of duty as

well as all individuals who have lost their lives."

Capps had asked other lawmakers to try and stop plans by an Israeli government munitions manufacturer to export slightly altered versions of Uzi and Galil semiautomatic assault weapons.

Two days ago, President Clinton ordered a suspension on the importation of modified assault weapons while his administration studies whether the weapons can be permanently banned.

And Netanyahu, responding to the letter initiated by Capps, said he would suspend the sales of Uzis and Galils while the U.S. review takes place.

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January primary comes at odd time for 65,000 area college students

11/18/97

By BEN HELLWARTH

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NEWS-PRESS STAFF WRITER

The holidays offer one major obstacle along the short campaign trail leading to the special election for the congressional office left vacant by the death of Rep. Walter Capps.

But the most difficult voters to reach between now and the Jan. 13 primary may be the 22nd District's more than 65,000 college students, many of whom will take their winter break during the two-month campaign. Some will be back in class the week before the election, but others will still be on vacation.

Their numbers could prove critical in the race. Capps, a Democrat from Santa Barbara and longtime UCSB religious studies professor, lost by just 1,600 votes in his 1994 face-off with Andrea Seastrand, R-Shell Beach. He then won by more than 12,000 votes in the candidates' rematch one year ago.

If as many people from the UCSB and Isla Vista precincts had voted for the late professor in 1994 as in 1996, for example, he could have closed the 1,600-vote gap.

With Lois Capps now in the running for the office her husband held for 10 months, college students could make a sizable difference in her first showing at the polls, given their past support for Walter Capps on the district's two largest campuses, UCSB and Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. "She'll have a lot of name recognition so people won't need a lot of information if they associate her with him, and that general orientation," said Kent Jennings, a UCSB political science professor. "And that's true not just for students, but for the general public. This is an information shortcut because her name provides a whole lot of information."

David George, a political science professor at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, agreed. "Name identification is an important factor in getting elected, but it seems to me even more important in this election because you've got

such a short time constraint," George said.

The other announced candidates - particularly the two Republicans in the state Assembly, the moderate Brooks Firestone of Los Olivos and conservative Tom Bordonaro of Paso Robles - also enjoy the benefit of name recognition. So does Mike Stoker, a Republican and a former Santa Barbara County supervisor.

But Walter Capps proved to be more popular in some student communities than the conservative Seastrand, an indication that Lois Capps, a retired school nurse, may need to get students to the polls to win. All the candidates will be on the Jan. 13 ballot, the state's first open primary, and voters can choose whomever they wish. If no one wins a majority, a runoff among the top vote-getters from each party will be held March 10.

The winter holidays remain a key obstacle for any candidate seeking to register and win student voters. Some 18,000 UCSB students and 16,600 from Cal Poly take final exams in mid-December and return for class on Jan. 5. Santa Barbara City College's 12,000 students, and their 8,600 counterparts at Cuesta College in San Luis Obispo County, are off until the week of Jan. 20. At Allan Hancock College in Santa Maria, 8,600 students start their spring semester on Jan. 12, the day before the primary. Westmont College's 1,200 students also return in mid-January.

Tapping the student vote could be more difficult because many may have moved, and not voted, since last year's November elections and would therefore no longer be registered. The deadline to register is Dec. 15. "If I were to advise the campaigns at this point, I would encourage these candidates to use absentee ballots," said Allen Settle, a Cal Poly political scientist and the mayor of San Luis Obispo.

The last day to request absentee ballots for the Jan. 13 primary will be Jan. 6, said Ken Pettit, Santa Barbara County's registrar of voters. Given the brief amount of time before the special election, however, county election officials will not be able to help in outreach efforts to sign up absentee voters, including those at UCSB.

Previous elections underscore the potential impact of student voters in the 22nd District, which takes in most of San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara counties.

Even when Walter Capps lost to Andrea Seastrand in 1994, he outpolled her by 7-to-1 in the 13 UCSB and Isla Vista precincts, winning 4,067 votes to her 604. Yet the campus community was less enthusiastic in its showing for Dianne Feinstein, the San Francisco Democrat who ran for the U.S. Senate against Michael Huffington, a moderate Republican and freshman congressman from Montecito. Feinstein garnered 2,971 votes to Huffington's 1,215.

The UCSB-Isla Vista turnout in that election was 35 percent, well below Santa Barbara County's overall 61 percent voter turnout rate.

Campus-area turnout in 1996 improved to almost 44 percent, compared to 64 percent countywide, when Capps challenged Seastrand again and won 7,088 votes to the incumbent congresswoman's 1,107.

The Capps-Seastrand contest was closer in and around Cal Poly,

historically a more conservative campus than UCSB, and with one of the most conservative student bodies in the California State University system, said Settle, who has studied Cal Poly voting trends. That could mean more votes for a moderate Republican like Firestone - or perhaps a Cal Poly alumnus like Bordonaro.

In 1994, in the 10 precincts north of Highway 101 surrounding the university, Capps beat Seastrand by 2,146 to 1,474. At the on-campus precinct, the candidates tied at 169, with just 445 of 1,306 registered students casting ballots. Huffington beat Feinstein 204 to 158 on campus, but lost to Feinstein by almost 400 votes in the combined precincts.

Two years later, Capps markedly improved his showing in those precincts, winning 3,393 votes to Seastrand's 1,656 - better than a 2-to-1 margin. The margin was narrower at the campus precinct, where Capps won 404 to 218. Turnout rose to 54 percent from 41 percent.

Settle, who grew up in Santa Barbara and got his undergraduate and graduate political science degrees from UCSB, said the vote in the city of San Luis Obispo is also indicative of student voting behavior because so many Cal Poly students live throughout the city and are involved in civic affairs.

Voting records show that San Luis favored Capps by similar margins as the immediate campus community. Capps won 8,949 to 6,454 in 1994; in 1996 the vote was 11,485 to 6,658. Feinstein beat Huffington 8,167 to 6,532.

Community college voting trends are harder to track because students are dispersed throughout the surrounding areas, but youth may be as much a factor as location. "Typically, the younger the person is, the less likely they are to vote, and this goes for students as well. So we tend to get lower turnout for students than for the general population," said Cal Poly's George.

Voter surveys bear this out. A respected University of Michigan survey of the national 1996 elections, for example, found that 52 percent of 18- to 24-year-olds voted, compared to 69 percent of those aged 25 to 34, 79 percent of those 35 to 44, and more than 80 percent for those 45 and older. "There's definitely a linear-like relationship between voting turnout and age," George said.

At Santa Barbara City College and Cuesta College, more than 60 percent of students enrolled are 25 or younger. The percentage may be somewhat less at Hancock College, where 48 percent of students are 24 or younger, while 23 percent fall into the 25- to 34-year-old group.

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CALIFORNIA 22: Widow Seeks To Fulfill Capps Legacy

Lois Capps (D), widow of the Rep. Walter Capps (D) who died 10/28, said 11/17 "she will campaign to finish" his term. "More than solely championing her husband's legacy, Capps said she will seek to convince voters that she brings her own experience to the race," as a public school nurse and educator. Officials from the DCCC "visited with Capps for several days last week" and local Dems had "urged her to run," but Capps said the "decision was ultimately hers." When Walter Capps broke an arm and leg in a car wreck 5/96, Capps stepped in, appearing at campaign functions and giving speeches "in his stead." Gov. Pete Wilson (R) set a special primary election for 1/13 with a 3/10 runoff if needed. The race is expected to draw "potentially millions of dollars from outside interests," as the '96 race did. GOPers: Announced GOPers: Assembly members Tom Bordonaro and Brooks Firestone and ex-Santa Barbara Supv. Mike Stoker. Santa Maria Mayor Abel Maldonado, Goleta resident Robert Lovgren and Lompoc resident James DeWilder, all GOPers, have picked up papers to file for the race, as have indep. Chris Mitchum and Libertarians Robert Bakhaus and Thomas Rosenberger (Wallace, Santa Barbara News-Press, 11/18). Before he died, Walter Capps was working for cong. support to pressure China to "improve human rights" and a ban on "the importation of assault weapons from Israel." Since his death, Chinese officials "released dissident Wei Jingsheng" who had been jailed since '79 and Pres. Clinton "ordered a suspension on the importation of modified weapons" 11/16, pending an admin. study on a permanent ban. Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu, who recently rec'd a letter with more than 30 reps. signatures, initiated by Capps, said, "he would suspend the sales of Uzis and Galils" while the U.S. reviews a ban (Wallace, Santa Barbara News-Press, 11/18). (Back to Contents)

History is on the side of Lois Capps' bid to replace her late husband, Walter Capps, in the house. In the past 25 years, seven widows have successfully won elections to replace their late husbands: Cardiss Collins (D-IL) and Lindy Boggs (D-LA) in '73; Shirley Pettis (R-CA) in '75; Beverly Byron (D-MD) in '78; Sala Burton (D-CA) in '83; Cathy Long (D-LA) in '85 and Jo Ann Emerson (R-MO) in '96.

There has been at least one exception, which may prove the rule. In '89, following the death of Larkin Smith (R-MS), widow Sheila sought the GOP nod. But after local GOP leaders gave the nod to Tom Anderson, Democrat Gene Taylor won the seat.

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HEADLINE: VENTURA COUNTY FOCUS;
WEST COUNTY;
O'Connell Opts Not to Run for Congress

BYLINE: SCOTT STEEPLETON

BODY:

State Sen. Jack O'Connell (D-Santa Barbara) said he won't run for the congressional seat left vacant by the death two weeks ago of Santa Barbara Democrat Walter Capps.

Instead, O'Connell--whose 18th Senatorial District includes San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara counties and a portion of western Ventura County--said he will focus on his 1998 reelection bid.

"Obviously, this was not an easy decision to make," O'Connell said in a written statement Wednesday. "And many compelling reasons were brought to bear on both sides."

Ultimately, O'Connell said, he could not in good conscience take time away from his wife and young daughter to serve the residents of Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties in Washington.

Capps died of a heart attack as he flew back to the capital from a weekend in his district.

O'Connell said the best person to carry on Capps' "rich legacy" is the late congressman's wife, Lois.

"I hope Lois Capps runs for Congress, because I know she can win," O'Connell said. "More important than that, however, I believe she would be a fantastic member of Congress in her own right."

Capps narrowly defeated Republican incumbent Andrea Seastrand last year, in one of the nation's most closely watched races.

LANGUAGE: English

LOAD-DATE: November 13, 1997

As Democrats Try to Hold California Seat, Republicans Debate Ideology

By Lou Cannon

Special to The Washington Post

SANTA BARBARA, Calif., Nov. 17—A special election to fill a vacant congressional seat has become a national contest between moderate and conservative wings of the Republican Party and a test of whether Democrats can hold a district in which they won a political upset in 1996.

The campaign to replace Rep. Walter Holden Capps (D), who died of a heart attack on Oct. 28 after only 10 months in office, has already drawn attention from the congressional leadership of both parties. Capps was a popular professor of religious studies at the University of California

at Santa Barbara and the first Democrat to represent this central California coastal district in Congress since World War II.

"Few congressional districts in the nation are as competitive or have voters who are more independent," said Bill Carrick, a Democratic consultant who is advising Lois Capps, the congressman's widow. Lois Capps announced today that she will run for her husband's seat in the open primary election Jan. 13.

Three Republican candidates also are vying for the seat. There will be a runoff on March 10 between Capps, the only Democrat, and the leading Republican vote-getter unless one of the four candidates wins a majority in the January election.

The Republican candidates include state Assemblyman Brooks Firestone, one of the legislature's most liberal GOP members on social issues, and Assemblyman Tom Bordonaro, one of its most conservative. The third candidate, a moderate conservative, is former Santa Barbara County supervisor Mike Stoker.

Firestone, 61, a local vineyard owner and heir to a tire fortune, calls himself "a reasonable Republican." Politically unknown outside the district when first elected to the state Assembly in 1994, he has become a hero to GOP moderates in Sacramento for his stands in favor of gun control and abortion rights and for his repeated warnings in party caucuses that Republicans could become a permanent minority unless they are tolerant of diverse positions within their ranks.

Until Capps's death, Firestone had been campaigning for California's lieutenant governorship in 1998, and was favored to win. But he abandoned that race after former president Gerald R. Ford, who was a friend of Firestone's deceased father, Leonard, urged him to seek the congressional seat. House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) also urged him to run.

Firestone's entry spurred opposition from the Christian Coalition and conservative House members who prefer Bordonaro. One of them, Rep. John T. Doolittle (R-Calif.), attacked Firestone for his support of gun control and gay rights and called him "the Christine Todd Whitman of California," a reference to the recently reelected governor of New Jersey.

Bordonaro, 38, a businessman and second-term assemblyman, considers himself a Jeffersonian who seeks to give state and local governments more power at the expense of the federal government. He is the only quadriplegic in the legislature, where his conservatism is matched by a sense of humor.

Asked by a reporter in his first campaign whether he preferred to be referred to as "disabled" or "physically challenged," he replied, "Actually, I'd prefer to be called Tom."

Stoker, 41, a lawyer, who unsuccessfully sought the seat in 1994, is widely regarded as a spoiler likely to draw more votes from Firestone than Bordonaro. He is chairman of the State Agricultural Relations Board in Sacramento, but has maintained a residence in the district and had planned to oppose Walter Capps in 1998.

Republican and Democratic registration is evenly divided at 41 percent in the district. The remaining voters declined to state a partisan preference or belong to one of five minor parties.

Firestone, who has the resources to finance his own campaign, is considered the favorite. But he may be at a disadvantage geographically because Bordonaro is the only candidate from San Luis Obispo, the northern and considerably more conservative county in the two-county district. The three other candidates are from more liberal Santa Barbara County.

All the candidates agree that the result will depend on turnout, which tends to be low in special elections, particularly after a holiday period. This could help Bordonaro, because conservatives often vote heavily in Republican primaries.

John Davies, Firestone's campaign manager, concedes that Bordonaro could win the primary but said, "He can't win the general election—if he's the Republican nominee the district goes Democratic."

Walter Capps upset incumbent Republican Andrea Seastrand in 1996, in part because she was seen as too socially conservative for a district where polls show 2-to-1 support (and 5-to-4 support among Republicans) for abortion rights.

As for the prospects of Lois Capps, Carrick noted that Republicans usually are more apt to vote in special elections and said, "Our challenge is getting out the Democratic voters."

But Capps, a former nurse and teacher who has lived in Santa Barbara for 34 years, is popular here in her own right. She was a prominent voice in her husband's 1996 campaign after he was seriously injured in a head-on accident in which the driver of the other car was intoxicated. In her announcement today, Capps promised to "wage a positive campaign true to the legacy of Walter's special brand of service."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To read early coverage of the 1998 election, click on the above symbol on the front page of The Post's Web site at www.washingtonpost.com

The Washington Post

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 1997

Calif. Democrats Dellums, Fazio to Retire From House

By John E. Yang
Washington Post Staff Writers

Two senior House Democrats announced yesterday they were ending their congressional careers next year, joining a growing number of ranking Democrats who have chosen to leave the House even as the party seeks to regain control of the chamber.

Rep. Ronald V. Dellums (Calif.), the House National Security Committee's top Democrat, said he would resign Feb. 6, midway through his 14th House term, and Rep. Vic Fazio (Calif.), chairman of the House Democratic Caucus who had signaled his intent to try to move up in his party's leadership, said he would not seek reelection to an 11th term next year.

Dellums's and Fazio's announcements brought to 14 the number of House Democrats who are leaving Congress, only four of them to seek other offices. While some are near—or beyond—the usual retirement age, others, such as Fazio, 55, are young enough to pursue other careers. In addition, Rep. Walter Holden Capps (D-Calif.) died late last month.

Analysts rate six of those seats being vacated by Democratic lawmakers—including Fazio's—as ones Republicans could win next fall now that incumbents will not be defending them, complicating Democratic hopes of picking up the 11 seats they need to reclaim control of the House. Last week, Rep. Paul McHale (D-Pa.), said he would not seek a fourth term representing his competitive district on the eastern edge of the state.

"The Democrats have been trying to use Republican retirements to create a momentum, but these recent retirements really blunt that," said Stuart Rothenberg, a political analyst who focuses on congressional elections.

Fazio, who has been widely mentioned as a possible successor to Erskine B. Bowles as White House chief of staff, said he would leave Congress to spend more time with his family. His congressional career "has forced me to choose between my passion for public service and my family far too often," he said. "And we've paid the price. It is now time to follow the path that will allow me to put my family first."

Fazio's announcement set off speculation at the White House about his prospects as Bowles prepares to depart around the end of the year; Clinton and Bowles are scheduled to meet today to discuss plans.

"It's the \$64,000 question over here," one White House official said. "Everyone figures that it's a matter of not very much time."

Other possible candidates include national security adviser Samuel R. "Sandy" Berger, budget director Franklin D. Raines, deputy chief of staff John D. Podesta and chief White House lobbyist John L. Hilley. Raines has said he is not interested, although some colleagues take that demurrer more seriously than others.

Several months ago, Fazio expressed some interest in the job. According to administration and congressional officials, he asked Vice President Gore whether rumors that he was a strong candidate were true. Gore, sources said, gave a neutral response, telling him there were numerous candidates and nothing was decided.

Different officials gave different assessments of who has the inside track. Those who sensed momentum for Fazio attributed it to the need to rebuild the administration's ties with congressional Democrats following their rejection of Clinton's "fast track" trade legislation last week. "Erskine didn't have entree to the Democrats on the Hill, but did have it with the Republicans, which then hurt him with the Democrats," said a White House official.

Earlier in his House career, Fazio had cited family concerns in not seeking leadership posts. His youngest daughter, Anne, then a teenager, was diagnosed with leukemia in 1990. She died in 1995 of complications from pneumonia at the age of 22.

Among House Democrats, Fazio is seen as a leader of the more moderate faction while House Minority Leader

Richard A. Gephardt (D-Mo.) and Minority Whip David E. Bonior (D-Mich.) are allied with the more liberal wing. Earlier this year, Fazio signaled his intention to challenge Bonior as whip or, if Democrats control the House, as majority leader after the 1998 elections.

Many saw Fazio's efforts in support of fast track as a likely precursor to a Fazio-Bonior race—only about 40 other House Democrats joined Fazio in backing fast track while about 160 House Democrats stood with Bonior against it.

Fazio was head of the Democratic House campaign committee from 1991 until 1994, the year the GOP won its first House majority in four decades, and was elected chairman of the House Democratic Caucus in 1994 and again last year.

Redistricting after the 1990 census radically changed Fazio's Sacramento-area district, resulting in a series of close races. Last year, he improved his percentage of the vote to 54 percent after winning 50 percent in 1994 and 51 percent in 1992.

Dellums, 61, did not say what he would do when he left office next year. "I choose to make a personal decision and to empower myself to regain my life," he told an Oakland news conference. "It's important for me to now move on."

Tall, lean and elegant, Dellums frequently argues for collegiality and courtesy in an institution that had become increasingly vitriolic in the past three years.

Elected in 1970 as an opponent of the Vietnam War, Dellums rose to become

chairman of the House committee overseeing the military, then known as the Armed Services Committee. Though an advocate of cutting military spending, Dellums ran the committee evenhandedly, winning the praise and respect of even the most ardent hawks on the panel.

Though an unabashedly liberal Democrat, he has joined with Rep. John R. Kasich (R-Ohio) to kill further production of the B-2 "stealth" bomber beyond the 20 planes the Pentagon has said it needs.

Dellums's district, which encompasses Oakland and Berkeley, is solidly Democratic. He never won less than 55 percent of the vote.

Staff writers Peter Baker and John F. Harris contributed to this report.

The Washington Post

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 1997

CALIFORNIA 22: Don't Forget The El Nino Factor

Santa Barbara News-Press' Hellwarth reports, the race to replace the late Rep. Walter Capps (D) "may end up looking like the political equivalent of a Super Bowl that's played in one quarter instead of the usual four." The election's timing, with the open primary on 1/13/98, is "presenting numerous strategic quandaries, not the least of which are the long Thanksgiving weekend, Christmas and New Year's" holidays. More than 50K college students in the CD, which has 430K regis. voters, will be on break until "one week before" the election. "El Nino could even come into play by making an expected low voter turnout even lower with an Election Day downpour." Even the Super Bowl "could have an effect" by "diverting attention." A "more practical difficulty may be enlisting campaign volunteers," and "party loyalists may have holiday plans that prevent them from playing their usual roles." Widow Lois Capps is scheduled to make a "much-anticipated statement" today (11/17) about whether she will run to succeed her husband. Her announcement "will greatly shape the election." Announced GOPers: Assembly members Tom Bordonaro, Brooks Firestone and ex-Santa Barbara Supv. Mike Stoker (11/15). (Back to Contents)

4TH STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

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February 11, 1997, Tuesday, Final Edition

NAME: WALTER CAPPS

SECTION: STYLE; Pg. C01; THE NEW CONGRESS

LENGTH: 1168 words

HEADLINE: Lawmaker With A Soul Purpose

BYLINE: John E. Yang, Washington Post Staff Writer

BODY:

As Walter H. Capps sat through the orientation sessions for new lawmakers, listening to explanations of how to file a bill or manage an office, another thought kept nagging at him.

"The question I always wanted to ask is: Do we know why we're here? What are we doing here?" the former religious studies professor says as he sits in his small Capitol Hill office. "In the world I came from, the world of religion, people don't worry about procedure. They just give you the high ideals."

Most House freshmen hit Capitol Hill preoccupied with scoring juicy committee assignments, deciphering Byzantine rules of order and locating hearing rooms and restrooms. Capps, however, isn't like most House freshmen.

For 33 years, he taught and wrote at the University of California, Santa Barbara, contemplating the nourishment of the soul, not the building of electoral blocs. He counts among his influences the late U.N. secretary general Dag Hammarskjold, psychoanalyst Erik Erikson and the Dalai Lama.

"One of the challenges is to see if someone with the training and experience I have can work in a world like this," the Democratic congressman says with characteristic low-key candor. "It's a big experiment to see if it works."

Many lawmakers have, in fact, struggled to mesh pedestrian politics with a spiritual life. The Rev. Robert F. Drinan, a liberal Massachusetts Democrat, perhaps confronted the dilemma most directly. After 10 years in office, he left the House in 1980 on direct orders from Pope John Paul II, who barred Jesuits from public office. Currently, there are two ministers in Congress, Rep. Floyd H. Flake (D-N.Y.) and Sen. Tim Hutchinson (R-Ark.). Meanwhile, the strong religious faith of former senator Mark O. Hatfield (R-Ore.) animated his opposition to both abortion and the death penalty, just as the ardent anti-abortion efforts of Reps. Henry J. Hyde (R-Ill.) and Christopher H. Smith (R-N.J.) have roots in their Catholicism.

"At some level, I hope [Capps] doesn't fit in too much," says former Clinton adviser George Stephanopoulos. The onetime House aide is the son of a Greek Orthodox priest and is himself a former theology student. Capps's daughter, Laura, worked for Stephanopoulos at the White House, and he campaigned for Capps last year. "His strength is to bring that outsider's perspective to the House," Stephanopoulos says.

The Washington Post, February 11, 1997

It's a perspective, as Capps describes it, that puts a greater emphasis on principles than on issues or party loyalty. Those principles, Capps explains, Does an initiative build up the community? Is it fair? Does it promote social and cultural diversity? Does it honor civility? "This is all about the human spirit."

Capps, 62, says he is not likely to be in Congress for a long time and has not given up his academic appointment. "This for me is not the beginning of my life," the lanky, balding Capps says. "The real struggle is to integrate this with the kind of man I've become until now. I need to be sure I'm in balance."

Sen. Bob Kerrey (D-Neb.), who has known Capps for more than a decade and taught a course on the Vietnam War with him, believes "it is likely that Walter is going to be able to teach a lot of us the important things."

It was Kerrey who persuaded Capps to make his first run for the House in 1994, when he was narrowly defeated by social conservative Andrea Seastrand. And Kerrey encouraged him to make the rematch last year.

Instead of interpreting the viewpoints of others for students, Kerrey told Capps, he would have the opportunity to develop his own voice. "That really nailed it," Capps recalled. "You don't do that much as a teacher."

Backed by organized labor and environmental groups, Capps became the first Democrat to represent the district along the Southern California coast since World War II. Kerrey suggests that Capps's impact will derive more from his spiritual underpinnings than any specific legislative accomplishments. "Let's say he doesn't get a single bill passed in two years," Kerrey says. "That doesn't mean he hasn't gotten anything done. Some of the most important things in his place are how we touch other people's lives. It's not the words in legislation."

Whether Capps's constituents agree is another question -- a fact that Capps is not unaware of. His legislative goals are decidedly earthly -- a community college for Paso Robles, cleaning up Morro Bay. "You do have to be good at politics or you can't win and you can't be effective here," he concedes.

Indeed, Capps learned that getting elected isn't simply a matter of philosophical query. When Stephanopoulos campaigned for him last year, Capps honored him with a quotation from Saint John Chrysostom, author of the main Greek Orthodox liturgy. Stephanopoulos then delighted Capps by responding with a quotation from Czech playwright and president Vaclav Havel, about whom Capps had just finished writing a book.

Afterward, Capps told Stephanopoulos what a wonderful moment it had been.

"But you forgot to mention Medicare," Stephanopoulos replied.

"I wanted him to win, goddammit," he now adds with a laugh.

Capps also got a tutorial in Electioneering 101 from the consummate campaigner, President Clinton, during a stop in Santa Barbara. After his speech, Clinton called Capps to the lectern. "Stick with me," Capps recalled the president coaching him. "Look straight into the cameras, smile and wave like crazy."

The Washington Post, February 11, 1997

That day, and the election the following week, capped a painful journey that began nearly six months earlier. On May 23, Capps was nearly killed in a head-on collision with a drunk driver who swerved into the path of his car on a rural highway as he and his wife, Lois, returned home from a news conference. Capps, who was driving, had to be cut from the wreckage and suffered a badly broken arm and leg, as well as head and internal injuries. Lois Capps escaped with only cuts and bruises.

He spent three weeks in the hospital and did not return to the campaign trail until Aug. 8. Even then, he could not walk without assistance. He still does not have full use of his right arm and is to have additional surgery on it this spring.

"That was really life-defining because I nearly lost it," he said. "I wake up every morning and give thanks for that one day."

Now Capps considers the more philosophical challenges, when he will face the choice between doing what is politically expedient and standing on principle.

"Then the question is, What will I do?" he says. "Am I being true to who I am? If I go this way, have I violated anything that is essentially human?"

Capps says he is confident he will know the answer, if not in himself then in the voices of his friends and family.

"The Bible tells us we are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses," he says, quoting from Hebrews. "There are so many people with such strong testimony to the truth. If I start down the wrong path they would be so disappointed -- and I would be so shameful."

GRAPHIC: Photo, bill o'leary, Can Capps mesh his political and spiritual lives? "It's a big experiment," says the religion professor. "One of the challenges is to see if someone with the training and experience I have can work in a world like this," Walter Capps says.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: February 11, 1997

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Los Angeles Times

November 7, 1997, Friday, Home Edition

SECTION: Part A; Page 3; Metro Desk

LENGTH: 779 words

HEADLINE: CALIFORNIA AND THE WEST;
GOP ASSEMBLYMEN TO RUN FOR CAPPS' SEAT IN HOUSE;
POLITICS: FIRESTONE AND BORDONARO BOTH SAY THEY WILL ENTER SPECIAL ELECTION TO
SUCCEED LATE CONGRESSMAN. DEMOCRATS DO NOT HAVE A CANDIDATE YET.

BYLINE: CARL INGRAM, TIMES STAFF WRITER

DATELINE: SACRAMENTO

BODY:

Republican Assemblymen Brooks Firestone and Tom J. Bordonaro Jr. announced their candidacies Thursday for the House seat of Democrat Walter Capps of Santa Barbara, who died last week.

Firestone, 61, a Los Olivos winery owner and member of the wealthy Firestone Tire and Rubber Co. family, became the first candidate to enter the special election for the Central Coast seat.

By doing so, Firestone, a moderate, abandoned his fledgling campaign for lieutenant governor.

Several hours later, fellow GOP Assemblyman Bordonaro of Paso Robles, who represents an adjoining district, abruptly disclosed his candidacy for the House seat.

"I'm in the race," Bordonaro said in an interview. "I want to provide a clear choice for the constituents of the 22nd Congressional District. I think the district needs a Reagan-conservative representative."

Bordonaro, 38, the only quadriplegic in the Legislature, called Firestone an "honorable man and a friend" and voiced hope that "we don't have a bloody Republican primary."

Capps, a former college professor who was narrowly elected to Congress last year, collapsed and died of a heart attack while en route to Washington on Oct. 28.

Gov. Pete Wilson must soon call a special election to be held next month or in January. If no one wins outright, a runoff will be held in February or March.

Firestone said he believes the special election will be Jan. 13 but did not indicate why he thinks so. In any case, it will be difficult for candidates to capture the attention of voters during the holiday season. Firestone said he believes he can serve his constituents better in Congress.

Los Angeles Times, November 7, 1997

His departure from the lieutenant governor's contest leaves other Republicans seek the nomination, including state Sens. Tim Leslie of Carnelian Bay and Ward Mountjoy of Arcadia, both of whom have announced their intentions. Assemblyman Charles S. Poochigian (R-Fresno) is also believed to be looking at the race.

The 22nd Congressional District includes San Luis Obispo County, which is considered conservative, and part of Santa Barbara County, which is more moderate.

The district is evenly split 41% to 41% between Republicans and Democrats. Of the remaining electorate, the largest group--12%--is not aligned with any party, but its wild card votes can play a critical role in the outcome.

Last year, President Clinton lost the district to Republican Bob Dole by a margin of 44% to 44.2%.

A Republican victory would mean recapturing a seat that had been in GOP hands for decades until Capps won it by 10,000 votes in 1996. If a Democrat won, House Speaker Newt Gingrich would suffer a new setback as he attempts to shore up a GOP majority that was weakened in last year's general elections.

In the past week, there has been plenty of talk about potential Democratic contenders, but none has emerged as a candidate. Party sources said Capps' widow, Lois, will be the favorite if she runs.

A spokeswoman said Lois Capps "is dealing with her grief" and has not yet talked about entering the race. A Democratic Party strategist identified her as "most as revered in the district" as her husband.

Other Democrats mentioned as possible candidates include state Sen. Jack O'Connell of Santa Barbara and former state Sen. Gary Hart, also of Santa Barbara. An aide to O'Connell said the lawmaker is discussing a possible run with friends but has made no decision. An associate of Hart, now a college professor, said Hart will not run.

The Democratic strategist said the special election will be difficult for a Democrat to win, noting that the independently wealthy Firestone and the GOP can be expected to pour major sums into the race.

"This is going to be tough for Democrats," the strategist said. "We have to figure out how to win the special election and then come back and win again in the fall for the full two-year term It was a tough seat for the Democrats to get and very tough to hold."

Firestone said he had been urged to run by former President Gerald Ford and Gingrich, a development widely regarded as an effort to clear the field of other potential GOP contenders. "That was compelling," he said of the calls. But he sought Thursday to dispel any notion that his candidacy was ordered by national Republican leaders.

He said there is talk that Mike Stoker, chairman of the state Agricultural Labor Relations Board and a former Santa Barbara County supervisor, and Atascadero physician Rene Bravo may run again. Both were unsuccessful candidates in the 1994 Republican primary.

Los Angeles Times, November 7, 1997

Former Rep. Mike Huffington has said he will not run again for the seat,
which he held earlier.

LANGUAGE: English

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Omaha World-Herald

November 9, 1997, Sunday SUNRISE EDITION

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 1b; Michael Kelly

LENGTH: 721 words

HEADLINE: Remarkable Walter Capps

BODY:

Well before he became a remarkable American, long before the Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sen. Bob Kerrey and others eulogized him, Walter Capps was the child of an Omaha family.

Back then he was "Wally," the oldest of four sons of Mildred and Holden Capps, the latter a Union Pacific clerk. They lived in the Benson neighborhood at 5021 Spencer St. and attended Augustana Lutheran Church.

A 1946 snapshot shows Wally and his brothers, part of what a friend called "the Spencer Street gang," when "gang" carried a friendly connotation.

At Christmas, 1947, subscribers on his World-Herald route saw a card:

"I'm Walter Capps, your paper boy,

Who's wishing you the season's joy.

his early Christmas morning

I'm rather sleepy, 'cause, you see,

I'm out of bed at half past three."

The future author, professor and congressman was 14 then. Honor Edson of Omaha remembers him well.

"At Benson High," she said, "if someone talked to him, a girl especially, he'd blush, look at his shoes and shuffle. He was extremely likable, a gentle, kind soul."

She remembers watching in awe in typing class as he exceeded 100 words a minute on a manual typewriter. He grew to 6 feet 4 inches tall and she is 6 feet, so they became dance partners.

Capps later earned a doctorate from Yale University, authored or edited 14 books and, at the University of California-Santa Barbara, developed a course on the Vietnam War that was featured on CBS' "60 Minutes."

A Reconciler

Kerrey, a Nebraskan who lost part of a leg and won the Medal of Honor in Vietnam, became a guest lecturer in that class. Last week, he spoke at Capps' funeral in California.

Omaha World-Herald, November 9, 1997

"He saw the spirit in human beings," Kerrey said after returning. "In the [redacted] y, I said that Ted Williams, the last player to hit .400, supposedly could see the spinning seams of the baseball. Walter could see spirit hurtling toward destiny. But he didn't hit it - he caught it."

Capps, Kerrey said, was a great intellectual who was at ease talking with anyone. And, the senator said, Capps had disarming body language.

"If you asked him a difficult question, he'd look down at his shoes and shuffle his feet and say, 'Gee, I don't know.' That gesture somehow brought people together and got them to stop talking - in essence, joined in communal prayer."

Capps, a professor of religious studies, reconciled those who had stood on opposite sides of the Vietnam issue.

He surprised friends by running for Congress, losing in 1994 before winning in 1996. But in May of '96, a drunken driver struck his car head-on. Capps suffered severe fractures to the right arm and wrist and left knee, internal bleeding and cuts and bruises.

Life a Miracle

Wendy Wright, associate professor of theology at Creighton University, received her doctorate under Capps' direction. She and her husband remained close with Walt and Lois Capps, who became godparents to the Omahans' children.

Capps enjoyed playing the piano for Dr. Wright, an accomplished singer.

"Life unfolded like a miracle to him," she said. "He was extraordinary. He focused on what was full in the present moment - not in the sense of grabbing it and using it, but in appreciating every moment. He was always like that, more so after his accident."

Capps, a liberal Democrat, was liked by conservative Republicans such as Rep. Jon Christensen of Omaha, who saw him on an Oct. 10 flight to Omaha.

"He was bubbling over with enthusiasm about returning to his old stomping grounds," Christensen said. "He was a tender-hearted man who respected and truly loved everybody."

Capps attended his Benson High (Class of '52) reunion, and spoke at Creighton and Augustana Lutheran. Next year, he had planned to return for induction into his high school's hall of fame.

On Oct. 28, Dr. Wright saw that Capps had answered her e-mail that morning before leaving California for the nation's capital. Then the phone rang. She was told he'd arrived at Dulles International Airport near Washington and died of a heart attack.

Six hundred attended his funeral - some, no doubt, in quiet thought and communal prayer, looking at their shoes and shuffling their feet.

Amid the eulogies, Wendy Wright sang for her mentor one last time.