

McCall fighting hard for third round

By MARY BETH ALLEN
Of the Emerald

Former Gov. Tom McCall stressed his enduring popularity among Oregon voters of both parties while defending his Republicanism at a meeting of the Lane County Rubicon Society held Thursday.

Government is "too precious a pursuit to leave up to on the job trainees," McCall said. "The pace has slowed," in Oregon since he has been out of office, he said, and "the leadership Oregon gave the nation has faded."

The former governor, a newsman by profession, has been working as a television commentator since leaving office. The job demands he remain non-partisan, a requirement he finds frustrating.

"It's like being in a fishbowl," he said.

McCall considers his status as a national figure to be a definite advantage in both the primary and general elections. He said publications such as the New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, Newsweek and the Baltimore Sun have either printed stories or are planning stories on the Oregon gubernatorial campaign.

"A national figure making a comeback" is the emphasis of these stories, according to McCall. The stories are "part of a national image you have given me," McCall said, referring to Oregon voters.

McCall is concerned about a lack of vitality in the Republican party, and is particularly distressed by the small number of young



Photo by Dennis Hickok

Tom McCall: Government a precious pursuit

Republicans in Oregon.

"As we get smaller numerically, we get narrower philosophically," McCall said.

"One counterforce is that Republicans often field superior candidates," McCall said. Another optimistic observation he made about the GOP is that "Republicans are always running on a platform not geared to partisan guff but tackling the tough problems head on."

The national image of the GOP

as a party of "inherited wealth and insensibility to social problems" bothers McCall. "We have faith in the individual and belief in the family," said McCall. "We're determined to maintain a climate of opportunity."

McCall refuses to support spending programs with no economic base, which he says lead to "broken dreams and shattered lives." He says, "We must help those who falter along the way, with plans to get them on

their feet, not to keep them on their knees."

Government is not a business but it must be run on sound fiscal and management principles," stressed McCall. "more government is not necessarily the best answer," he said, and he called for a "count to 10" philosophy of cautious legislation, to "solve the problem, not create new problems."

McCall supports strict growth planning and strong environmen-

tal controls. "Environmental health and economic well-being depend on each other — it's not an either-or thing."

Fielding questions from the audience, McCall said if he is defeated in the primary he will return to his job as a newscaster, and in that capacity would be unable to endorse any Republican candidate.

The former governor waffled on nuclear energy. "In the energy forest, don't let go of one secure branch until you have another one to swing to," he said. The analogy illustrates his belief that solar, wind and geothermal energy in their present stages of development, can't take up the slack that would exist if nuclear plants were closed down.

He did call for building nuclear plants as sparingly as possible, and said the problem of disposing of nuclear waste is a concern of "doggone, reasonable Americans," not just a cause for "way-out" citizens.

McCall has frequently been openly critical about Republicans at the state and national levels, and in view of this, a fellow party member displayed skepticism about McCall's legitimacy as a party spokesman. The former governor replied, "if you want to have a victory (the gubernatorial race) and a house with Dave Frohnmayer, R-Eugene, as speaker — let's not take chances with people who can't lead and can't win."

It may be a matter of opinion as to how well Tom McCall can lead, but it's established record how well he can win.



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