

THE INSIDER

Perry hints at another run for governor in 4 years

By ANNA M. TINSLEY, MARIA RECIO AND JOHN MORITZ
Star-Telegram Staff Writers

Never mind that he'll likely have as many as two independents plus a Democrat and a libertarian trying to get his job this year. Republican Gov. **Rick Perry** has never lost an election, and he doesn't plan to start now.

"I may have a vegetarian running against me next time," Perry said last week. Next time? That's right: There are no term limits for state officeholders in Texas. So Perry could keep running even if voters make him the longest-serving governor -- 10 years total with another four-year term -- by re-electing him in November.

Told by a reporter that it was widely assumed that he would support Lt. Gov. **David Dewhurst** for governor four years from now, Perry quipped, "Who told you that, Dewhurst?"

Political reincarnation

Apparently there is life after elected office for several Texas politicians.

Former U.S. Reps. **Max Sandlin**, D-Marshall, and **Charles Stenholm**, D-Abilene, who lost in 2004 after being targeted by redistricting, are ready to lobby now that the federal one-year ban has expired.

Sandlin, who lost to **Louie Gohmert**, R-Tyler, after eight years in Congress, has joined Greenberg Traurig, the former law firm of **Jack Abramoff**, the uber-lobbyist who recently pleaded guilty to conspiracy, mail fraud and tax evasion. Sandlin, a former judge in Harrison County, will work in Washington and Texas in the firm's governmental-affairs and litigation practices.

"I expect the firm's locations, industry expertise and client services will prove a perfect fit for my strengths," Sandlin said in a news release.

Stenholm, who is not a lawyer but is now with the firm Olsson, Frank and Weeda, will lobby his old colleagues on the next farm bill. In the course of 26 years in Congress, Stenholm, the former ranking member of the House Agriculture Committee, wrote the farm bills. He'll probably have to work with the man who beat him: Rep. **Randy Neugebauer**, R-Lubbock.

Reincarnation, Take Two

Former Republican state Rep. **Arlene Wohlgemuth** has also taken on new responsibilities.

Wohlgemuth, who quickly moved into lobbying after losing a bid in 2004 to unseat U.S. Rep. **Chet Edwards**, D-Waco, recently announced that she will also help the **Texas Public Policy Foundation** with Medicaid reform.

"I'm pleased to join the foundation's efforts to bring dignity and fiscal accountability to the Medicaid system," said Wohlgemuth, known for staging a legislative maneuver in 1997 now known as the Memorial Day Massacre, which killed dozens of bills, apparently in retaliation for the death of a proposal that would have required parental notification before an abortion.

"If we do not make important reforms soon, taxpayers will not be able to bear the price [for Medicaid], and recipients of aid won't be able to get needed care when they fall on hard times," she said in a news release.

Staff writer Jay Root contributed to this report.

Staff writer Anna M. Tinsley covers politics from the Fort Worth newsroom. (817) 390-7610 atinsley@star-telegram.com Staff writer John Moritz is based in the Austin bureau. (512) 476-4294 jmoritz@star-telegram.com Staff writer Maria Recio reports from the Washington bureau. (202) 383-6103 mrecio@krwashington.com