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## 'Bandwagon' a lively campaign stop

By **TaMaryn Waters** • DEMOCRAT STAFF WRITER  
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This wasn't your typical candidate forum, but it's one that many voters look forward to.

Four men, dressed in crimson vests with royal blue lapels, belted out barbershop tunes during the Bandwagon 2010 Primary Election forum Monday at the WFSU television studio. Swarms of candidate supporters, many decked in campaign T-shirts and buttons, waved signs hoping to snag camera time as crews panned the audience.

The two-day event, which ends today, was hosted by WFSU and the Tallahassee League of Women Voters. Monday's lively festivities included candidates from 12 races on this year's primary election ballot. Some candidates were nervous under the hot studio lights. Others targeted their opponents with laser-like precision.

Nick Maddox, 29, who is among those challenging Leon County Commissioner Cliff Thael in the at-large Group 2 race, said Thael was making too much of an issue of Maddox's voter record, which reflects he has never voted in an election. Maddox said the attention ought to be on such issues as curbing gang violence and helping small businesses prosper.

"My voting record is not in front of the (Florida Commission on Ethics)," Maddox said.

Leon County Republican Chairman Dan Abel filed a complaint last month saying Thael failed to disclose he was a consultant for a local developer involved with the Centerville Farms project while he owned property in the area in 2006 and 2007. Thael has said he won't talk about the issue until the commission has finished its investigation.

Maddox went on to say Thael didn't register to vote until he was 29. After Thael gave a rousing delivery of how he helped bring jobs and budget oversight to the county, he told the *Tallahassee Democrat* he first registered to vote at age 21 in Hillsborough County. He said he moved to Leon County at age 29 and that's why his local registration shows he registered at that age.

"I wasn't running for political office then," Thael said. "That's the difference."

Other candidates running for Congressional, state, county and city offices offered their reasons on why they'd be the best choice in their race. Many of them said job creation was paramount, along with fiscal responsibility and strong leadership.

Marilynn Wills, president of the Tallahassee League of Women Voters, said the Bandwagon event has been going on for decades.

"I think it's good for the people to at least see who the candidates are," Wills said. "A lot of (residents) have never ever seen any of these people."

"Our mission is to get as many people as possible to get out and vote," Wills added.

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Various supporters hold signs in hopes of getting on TV during the Bandwagon 2010 Forum on Monday at WFSU. (Reid Compton/Special to the Democrat)



A barbershop quartet performs during the Bandwagon 2010 Forum on Monday at WFSU. (Reid Compton/Special to the Democrat)



Senator Al Lawson speaks during the Bandwagon 2010 Forum on Monday at WFSU. The forum featured the candidates from each of the races on the upcoming ballot, and gave viewers a chance to hear the candidates speak for themselves. (Reid Compton/Special to the Democrat)

### Broadcast schedule

Here's the Bandwagon 2010 Primary Election broadcast dates and times:

#### Leon County Races

(Also U.S. Rep.-Dist. 2, State Senate- Dist. 6, State Rep.- Dist.9)

- Thursday — 8 p.m.
- Saturday — 7 p.m.
- Sunday — 9 p.m.
- Aug. 10 — 6:30 p.m.
- Aug. 14 — 7 p.m.
- Aug. 16 — 8:30 p.m.