



PRESS-REGISTER

Governor, other debates set for Oct. 30

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MONTGOMERY -- Republican Gov. Bob Riley and Democratic Lt. Gov. Lucy Baxley will meet Oct. 30 for a television debate eight days before they face off in the election for the state's top job.

Former Gov. Albert Brewer will moderate the one-hour debate on the stage of the Alabama Shakespeare Festival in Montgomery. To date, the debate is the first confirmed forum that will feature Riley and Baxley on the same stage at the same time.

The event, which will also include 30-minute lieutenant governor and attorney general debates, is set for broadcast on Alabama Public Television and Alabama Public Radio.

The general election is Nov. 7.

Baxley and Riley are scheduled to debate at 7 p.m. Former Democratic Gov. Jim Folsom Jr. and Birmingham lawyer-lobbyist Luther Strange, a Republican, will follow in the lieutenant governor debate. The nominees for attorney general, incumbent Republican Troy King and Democratic District Attorney John Tyson Jr. of Mobile, will conclude the lineup.

The effort, titled "Focus on Our Future," is planned jointly by Leadership Alabama, a not-for-profit group that provides year-long education and community development courses for civic leaders; the Public Affairs Research Council of Alabama, a nonpartisan public policy think tank based at Birmingham's Samford University; Alabama Public Television; and the Alabama Press Association.

Alabama Power Co., AmSouth Bank, BellSouth, Energen and Vulcan Materials Co. are paying for the event.

"This is a great opportunity for the candidates to present their reason for seeking the office and their vision for what they can accomplish if elected," said Barbara Larson, executive director of Leadership Alabama, which has hosted candidate forums in previous election years.

Organizers said the public will be invited to submit questions for all segments of the debate, while PARCA will also write general questions. Further details about the format were not released. For example, it was not clear Friday whether the candidates will be able to question one another, a feature of Alabama Public Television's televised debates in 2002.

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