

# Teacher, Anthropologist Runs for North Star Borough Assembly

Niilo E. Koponen, principal of Barnette School, is a candidate for Seat A on the North Star Borough Assembly in the election to be held Tuesday, Oct. 3rd.

The Koponens homesteaded on Chena Ridge in 1952.

Niilo worked as electrician on the gold dredges and as a surveyor and bull-dozer operator before becoming a school teacher in 1957.

He did anthropological research among the Copper River Indians and was one of the founding members of the Alaska Native Rights Association.

The ANRA became part of the American Association on Indian Affairs and Niilo was

appointed to the AAI A Alaska Policy Committee. He has been active on behalf of native land claims and improvement of native education since 1954 and worked for improved native job opportunities while an official with the Fairbanks Mine Workers Union before that and the American Federation of Technical Engineers (Surveyors Union) after that date.

He went outside for four years in 1962, working first as a doctoral student and later as a faculty member at Harvard University. Offered reappointment, Koponen instead chose to return to Alaska in 1966.