

***At the Alaska Legislature —***

# **Bush caucus on the road to re-election**

The incumbents of the bush caucus at the Alaska Legislature seemed headed toward re-election for the most part following last week's primary election.

Rep. Nels A. Anderson, Jr. (D-Dillingham) and Rep. Leo P. Schaeffer, Jr. (D-Kotzebue) defeated challengers in the Democratic primary and will run unopposed in the general election.

Rep. Phil Guy (D-Kwethluk) is the strong favorite in the gen-

eral election over Republican John Malone of Bethel, having outdistanced the challenger by a margin of more than two to one in the primary.

Senator Frank R. Ferguson (D-Kotzebue) is also a strong favorite for re-election from District P. He collected nearly three times as many votes as the Republican candidate, Tony Schuerch of Kotzebue.

In District 18, Rep. Billy A-

kers (R-Chuloonawicj) faces what may be a close race in the general election. Unofficial results showed challenger Vern Hurlbert (D-Sleetmute) collected five votes more than Akers in the primary, although neither had primary opposition.

Rep. Merle G. Snider (D-Kodiak) was defeated in his re-election bid by Kodiak Native Fred F. Zharoff in the Democratic primary. Snider, although not

himself a Native, was a member of the bush caucus. He parted ways with Native lawmakers on several critical issues during the last legislature. Zharoff has been an officer of the Leisnoi Inc. (Woody Island) village corporation.

Another maverick in the bush caucus, Rep. Alfred C. Nakak (D-Nome), suffered a resounding defeat to Nome Democratic challenger John G. (Jack) Fuller.

Nakak frequently split with the rural block of lawmakers on crucial issues at the legislature. Fuller, a major in the Alaska National Guard, is expected to win an easy victory in the general election.

Bush caucus leader Alvin Osterback (D-Sand Point) appears well on his way to re-election. He was the top vote-getter among three Democrats and three

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# ● Bush legislative races

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Republicans in the District 15 race.

The first serious Native legislative candidate in Southeastern

Alaska in several years, Albert M. Kookesh (D-Angoon), is narrowly trailing Dick McCormick of Wrangell in the District 2 Democratic primary by 29 votes. A count this week of questioned and a handful of absentee ballots will determine the outcome of that race.

Edgar Blatchford, a shareholder of Chugach Natives, Inc., built an early lead and ended the second top vote-getter among seven candidates for the District 5 house seat. The Seward Democrat was defeated, however, by James D. Ginotti of Valdez in that race.

The District 19 primary election was a familiar story for Native candidates. At a caucus of villagers this spring, it was agreed that Native interests would present only one serious candidate for the house seat. As it turned out, however, two Natives filed as Democrats while a third filed as Republican for the primary.

None survived the primary. This is a repeat performance of previous elections for Native candidates from this district.

Native candidates from two Anchorage house districts will be on the ballots in the November general election. Democrat Gordon Jackson was the second highest vote-getter among eleven candidates in District 11 and will be one of four candidates competing for the district's two house seats.

In District 12, Democrat Frank Peratrovich survived the primary, placing number four in votes of five candidates. He faces a challenging fight for one of the district's two seats.

In Senate District L, Republican Bob Mulcahy received the highest number of votes, despite lack of any primary opposition. He may have a close contest against former Representative Ed Naughton, who defeated fellow Democrat Mike Swetozof for the Democratic nomination.

Winners of these races in the general election will join State Senators George Hohman of Bethel and John Sackett of Galena to form the rural block of legislators in the last legislature before the 1980 reapportionment.

Hohman and Sackett did not face re-election this year, although the Bethel Democrat made his first attempt at statewide office in the primary, finishing third among eight candidates for the Democratic nomination for lieutenant governor.

After the 1980 reapportionment, Anchorage is expected to have more than half of the population of the state, and therefore more than half the senate and house seats in the legislature at the expense of bush and southeastern representation.