

The election eye...

# Candidates take aim at quest for office

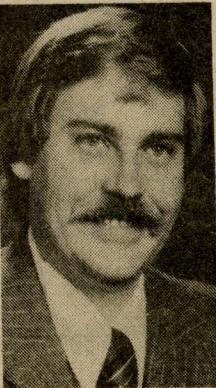
BY BEN J. PLASTINO

Post-Register political editor

With the Idaho Legislature session barely over, the time has arrived for candidates to consider their quest for office.

The filing period opens Thursday morning and continues for a week, closing Wednesday night, April 7, for the May 25 primary election.

As is the case in most past elections, nearly all office holders will seek re-election but there are a scattered few who may decide to avoid the judgment of the voters as to whether they continue in office.



Jerry Woolf

In Bonneville County, two well known incumbents have left it clear they will forego election. They are Rep. Elaine Kearnes, R-Idaho Falls, who is stepping aside after serving six terms, or 12 years, and Prosecuting Attorney Jerry K. Woolf, who also plans to scratch his name from the ballot after holding the office for two two-year terms, or four years.

On the east Idaho front, Rep. Wayne E. Tibbitts, R-Lorenzo, 79, also has formally announced he will retire from public life after serving 20 years, hanging up an amazing record of serving in both houses and as both a Republican and Democrat. He is the dean of the east Idaho legislative delegation with 20 years service.

Rep. Cornell Thomas, R-Pingree, who was just appointed to office for this term also has announced he may skip election but the word is spreading that he may reconsider because his health is improving. Thomas was named to replace Rep. Darwin L. Young, R-Blackfoot, who accepted a gubernatorial appointment to the fulltime Idaho Tax Commission position.

\* \* \*

A few names already have been tossed in the rumor hopper as possible candidates to fill vacancies or seeking to oust incumbents.

Already, George J. Bever, realtor, has announced for Mrs. Kearnes seat' but there are many others mentioned as possible contenders. Among them are Enid David, an active Republican woman member; and Democrats Ann Voilleque, prominent civic worker, and Cyril Slansky, retired scientist, who ran for the state senate two years ago.

Also mention is John Combo, retired Department of Energy legal counsel for a possible shot as a Democrat for the Legislature, possibly to oppose Sen. Dane Watkins, R-Idaho Falls.

Other names tossed about for office at this time include Democrat Larry Reynolds, Moore farmer, to vie for a third time to oust Republican Sen. J. Marsden Williams in District 29;

and Democrat Wendell Miller who says he will try to regain his seat from Republican Rep. Martin Trillhaase, also in District 29.

Lloyd Hicks, Rigby INEL worker, farmer and construction contractor, was the first to announce in east Idaho as a Republican candidate for Tibbitts' seat. Tibbitts has thrown his endorsement for Joan Wood, Rigby, who is expected to run. Joe Treasure, Rigby, also is mentioned as a possible candidate for the position.

Rumored as possible successors for Woolf are Democrats Bill Combo, now a deputy prosecuting attorney deputy; and Russell Webb, legal aide counsel and county Democrat chairman; and Republican Kimball Mason, also a deputy in the prosecuting attorney office.

The job salary was upped from \$24,000 to \$26,000 a year by this last Legislature and also a resolution has been approved to place a constitutional amendment in the Nov. 2 general election to make it a four year office, rather than the present two year.

Also listed as a possible contender is Sherman Norris, a seven-month employee in the assessor's office and a three-year Idaho Department of Labor inspector before that to oppose his boss, Assessor John H. Wasden, in the Republican primary.

\* \* \*

All of the other Bonneville incumbents are expected to seek re-election, including Commissioners Clyde A. Burtenshaw, chairman, and A. Wylie Snarr; Assessor Wasden; Clerk Ronald Longmore; Treasurer Mabel Bingham; and parttime Coroner Verbal C. Rydach. All are Republicans except Democrat Burtenshaw, whose new term is for four years..

Holdovers are Republican County Commission Tom Loertscher and Democrat Sheriff Richard J. Ackerman.

Also up for grabs is the district judgeship vacated by the retiring Judge Williard C. Burton, Rexburg.

Announced so far for the judgeship are Reid K. Larsen, Blackfoot attorney; Magistrate Jerry Reynolds, St. Anthony; and Magistrate Grant L. Young, Rigby.

Precinct committeemen of both parties also will be elected. In recent years it has been an effort to fill the posts in contrast with 10 years ago or more when factions often entered opposing candidates for control of the central committees.

\* \* \*

All state offices also will be on the ballot with Gov. John V. Evans, Auditor Joe Willians and Marjorie Ruth Moon, Democrats; and Secretary of State Pete T. Cenarrusa and State School Supt. Jerry L. Evans, Republicans, to seek re-election.

Lt. Gov. Philip E. Batt is vying the Republican nomination for governor and is paired with House Speaker Ralph Olmstead in this primary contest.