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The election eye

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Brisk contests loom for primary election

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There were a few surprises but most incumbents, as is generally the case, will be uunopposed in the coming May 25 primary election.

Sherman Norris

The situation will be different for the Nov. 2 general election when most of the major legislative and county offices will be contested.

Also, the central committees and the legislative committees of both parties have the option of naming nominees for vacancies by the April 22 deadline and a number are expected to take this action. They then have until April 22 to do this and then until April 29 for the candidate to qualify by submitting the names of at least 50 registered voters. This will not affect primary races but may furnish added competiton for the general election.

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In Bonneville county, the assessor's office which ordinarily is one of low profile appears to be a feature in this election. That's because Republican Assessor John Wasden promptly fired his deputy appraiser, Sherman Norris, after he filed to unseat him. It prompted fiery exchanges between the two which should furnish more than usual fireworks. Adding spice is a third Republican entry, John Lurus, who ran unsuccessfully for the Demoratic nomination for county commissioner in 1978.

The winner will oppose Aaron L. Robinson, former Republican assessor who is switching to the Democratic ticket.

The only other Bonneville primary contest is scheduled in District 30 where Rep. Elaine Kearnes, R-Idaho Falls, is vacating her seat. Three Republicans have leaped into the race to replace her, George Bever, realtor; K. Dale Leatham, high school tracher; and J.C. "Chad" Chadband, Idaho Falls furniture dealer. The winner will face Democrat Anne Voilleque in the general.

County Commissioner Clyde A. Burtenshaw, Democrat; and Clerk Ron Longmore, Treasurer Mabel Bingham and Coroner Vernal Rydalch, all Republicans, are unopposed for both the primary and general election.

Two prosecuting attorney deputies, Democrat Bill Combo and Republican Kimball Mason, are unopposed in the primary but will clash in the November election to replace Prosecuting Attorney Jerry Woolf, Democrat, who is stepping aside.

Fifty have filed unopposed for precinct committeemen, 40 Republicans and only 10 Democrats.

The salaries are $20,800 for assessor, clerk and treasurer, raised for county commissioners from $15,000 to $16,000, raised for prosecuting attorney the coming year from $24,000 to $26,000, sheriff $23,575, and parttime coroner $2,700.

The legislators, counting both salary and expenses, get about $7,200 a year, the seventg lowest of any state in the nation.

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The only primary legislative races are in District 20, Jefferson, Clark, Lemhi and Custer counties; and District 27, most of Bingham County.

In District 27, Cornell Thomas, R-Blackfoot, who was appointed this year, is challenged by Craig Calvin Goodwin for the Republican nomination, while Ray Alexander, and Jerry L. Wellard are paired in the Democrat race. The winners will face each other in November.

In District 20, Joan E. Wood and Lloyd Hicks are battling for the Republican nomination to replace Rep. Wayne E. Tibbitts, R-Lorenzo, who is not seeking re-election. The winner will face Democrat Joe Bodell in November.

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Other counties of the Upper Snake River Valley furnish scanty primary contest fares but most face challenges in the November election.

Jefferson county offers primary races for Republican clerk and prosecuting attorney; Madison for two Republican county commissioners and a rare one for Republican coroner; Fremont for two Republican county commissioners, and clerk, and Democratic county commissoner; Teton for a Republican clerk and county commissioner; Butte County for a Republican treasurer and a Democratic county commissioner; and Custer County for a Republican assessor, clerk and county commissioner.

The state ticket likely will furnish the greatest primary excitement, topped by the Republican gubernatorial race between Lt. Gov. Philip E. Batt and House Speaker Ralph Olmstead, Democratic 2nd distrct Congress race between Richard Stallings Rexburg college instructor, and George Anthony, Filer farmer, and Republican state auditor between Nolan Young, longtime Idaho Falls CPA but now of Boise, and State Sen. Dean Van Engelen, R-Burley.