

# Close contests loom in city election races

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As the city campaign winds down to a close, it is apparent that those who are the best known and worked the hardest hold the favorite role in the overcrowded field of 14 candidates seeking the three City Council positions.

Issues appear a secondary issue but arguments on the Jennie Lee Mall, how to handle the 1 Percent Tax Initiative cut-backs, the alcoholic park ban and, power loop proposals and city communication with the public have emerged.

Actually none of the issues have surfaced as strongly as first anticipated which places the campaign largely on a personal popularity and intensive campaigning basis.

Many of the candidates have canvassed door-to-door which is the most effective way, distributed campaign literature, placed yard and car signs and advertised through the news media.

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On this basis it appears that Art Chandler, the retired city fireman and credit union executive likely will decisively lead the ticket. His extensive news media advertising, placement of some 600 yard signs and efforts in his behalf by most members of the police, fire and other city departments indicate he has had a most effective campaign. He said he has spent more than \$2,500.

The battle for the other two positions could be tight but generally there are surprises that some candidates will do better than expected and others not as well.

Grouped in this leading bunch are former City Clerk Roy C. Barnes, Wes W. Deist, the sporting goods representative and prominent in recreation; the incumbent, Sam Sakaguchi, pumping company representative; and Marion Orme, EG&G employee and city and county planning commission member.

Deist appears to have campaigned the hardest in this group and Sakaguchi the least. These efforts may show up in the final balloting. These two, along with Barnes, may hold a shaky edge to pick off the other two seats.

Their statements indicate they all are friendly with the city administration policies.

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Another contender who has campaigned extensively is

coming up fast, and could spring an upset is Albert Pasta, speech pathologist. He appears to have been forging ahead of the back pack and should finish in the top half of the jammed field, and could even nudge into the winner's circle.

The two candidates who have taken the leading opposition stands are Milton Adam and Joe Plum, INEL workers who have participated in some past public activities. If there is a widespread hostility against the present city administration they should do well. However, there are no apparent signs of this development.

The other candidates include William Hatch, realtor and former farmer and foreign attache; Van Frandsen, battery company employee who ran for mayor two years ago; Peter Schuelke, ANL worker and active in conservative political groups; Wendell Camp, bus driver who ran twice for assessor; Donald Duwayne Patterson, telephone company employee; and Dave Archuleta, former radio broadcaster.

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Close to 20,000 have registered and the large field and their campaigning could coax a vote of between 10,000 and 12,000, likely near 11,000. Many candidates said however, they have found considerable apathy.

The 1977 vote when there was a brisk contest for mayor attracted the all time record of 11,218. With no mayor's contest this year, the turnout may be slightly smaller although the larger field should partially offset this. The 14 aspirants surpass the record of nine in 1957. Registration last year totaled 18,356.

It must be remembered each voter can cast three ballots which means more than an aggregate of 30,000 votes.

Even with a large field this would indicate each winner must attract upwards of 4,000 votes. That's because there may be a wide disparity between the leaders and the tailenders.

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Elsewhere in East Idaho, there are elections in some 35 cities, most of them for councilmen and a few for mayor in the smaller cities. There are contests in most cities with the briskest council races at Blackfoot, Rexburg, St. Anthony, Rigby, Sugar City and Rigby.

One of the stiffest races looms in Ammon where the veteran mayor George Wehmann, is opposed by Steve Pierson, insurance adjuster. Ammon observers generally give Wehmann slight edge for re-election, but a Pierson victory would be no startling surprise.