

Anchorage Daily News

Going to church

Posted by Alaska_Politics

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From Sean Cockerham in Anchorage--

Most of the Alaska congressional candidates hobnobbed this morning at the Anchorage Baptist Temple's Candidate Sunday. It's a traditional event, considered by many politicians a must-stop for last minute support before Tuesday's election.

They listen to Jerry Prevo, who introduces them to the congregation, and then there's a meet and greet in the lobby after the service.

U.S. Rep. Don Young stood in the middle of the lobby, shaking hands with a jovial grin and a "Hey how are you! Good to see you!" Nearby, Young's campaign staffers had a table with those "I'm a Young Man" and "I'm a Young Woman" buttons. Mike Anderson, Young's chief of staff who is working on the campaign, said the campaign feels like it's pretty much done what it can before the voting. Young himself was planning to do a little more campaigning in Anchorage then head up to Fort Yukon, where he'll vote.

Young said he's not sweating the results.

"The Lord will take care of it. I'm not really concerned one way or the other. I'm working very hard, we're doing everything that we can," he said.

Lt. Gov. Sean Parnell was standing just a few feet away from Young in the lobby. He was having longer, quieter conversations with people, but not shaking as many hands as Young. State Rep. Gabrielle LeDoux, running against Young and Parnell in the Republican primary for the U.S. House seat, was also was there.

But the real star seemed to be Sen. Ted Stevens, judging by the reaction when Prevo introduced him.

All he had to do was say, "I'm Ted Stevens and I'm running for re-election. This is my wife.." and the congregation (which was supposed to hold off on clapping) interrupted him with loud applause.

Dave Cuddy, running against Stevens in the Republican primary, also got some claps. "That's my dog," the guy sitting behind me at the church said when Cuddy was introduced.

Vic Vickers wasn't there.

But other Senate Republican primary candidates were there: Jerry Heikes, Michael Corey, Rick Sikma came. So did AIP U.S. Senate candidate Bob Bird and Libertarian Frederick David Haase.

Not too many Democrats this year, although U.S. House candidate Diane Benson was there, as was state Rep. Max Gruenberg, and maybe some state legislature hopefuls that I didn't recognize.

Benson, sounding a little hoarse, told me she's running on just a few hours sleep. Benson said she'd earlier been at Shiloh Baptist for an 8 a.m. service. "That's a great way to wake you up," she said.

There was a slew of state legislators and would-be legislators at the Anchorage Baptist Temple service.

Most candidates just said their name and that of their spouse when Prevo introduced them, but Republican state Rep. Bob Lynn got some applause when he took it further.

"I am pro-life and I believe in marriage one man and one woman!" he said.