

World
Low in low 70s. High
in upper 80s. S. 50
winds around 10
M.P.H.; 30% rain.
Data 2-A.

St. Petersburg Times

PINELLAS COUNTY NEWSPAPER

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Officials ready backup system for runoff election today

The runoff around the state, 11-B.

By PATRICK McMAHON
St. Petersburg Times Staff Writer

A short ballot and a lackluster campaign are expected to bring out fewer than 20 per cent of Pinellas County's voters for today's primary runoff election.

County officials, recalling the breakdown of the main computer during the first primary Sept. 7, have taken precautions to make sure that results are tabulated promptly tonight.

Republicans, Democrats and independents may vote in today's election. Polls open at 7 a.m. and close at 7 p.m. Good weather is expected.

"WE HAVE TAKEN every conceivable step to ensure backup capability," said Assistant County Administrator Duane Zussy, in case there is a computer breakdown tonight. He said a backup computer will be available and IBM technicians will be on hand.

Deputy Elections Supervisor David Deveney said that his office also would process returns on its "mini" computer, just in case. Deveney's office ended up supplying the results in the Sept. 7 primary.

"I am tuning up 'mini,' Deveney said, "to do what she did once before — step into the breach."

The county's data-processing coordinator, Richard Hyland, was optimistic. "The system was tested today and it works like a charm," he said Monday. Hyland said the Bank of Clearwater's computer will be available, "but we hope we won't need it."

In today's election all Pinellas voters may choose, in non-partisan voting, between Charles R. Holley and Frederick B. Karl for justice of the Supreme Court, and between Karl Grube and Herbert E. Langford Jr. for a county judgeship.

THE ONLY RACE for Democrats in Pinellas is in the northern part of the county where Miller Newton and JoAnn Saunders are vying for the Democratic nomination to face Republican U.S. Rep. Richard Kelly in November. There are six runoff elections for county Republicans, three for the State House of Representatives and three for county offices.

In State House District 58, former St. Petersburg city councilman Peter J. Caroline is taking on State Rep. George Hieber II. In District 59, Dennis Jones, chiropractor and realtor, faces Robert E. Melby, an optometrist. In District 60, former Seminole city councilman Esther Amor is in competition with St. Petersburg lawyer T. M. "Tom" Woodruff.

The GOP county contestants are John Chesnut Jr. and Frank Donnell for the District 3 County Commission nomination; G. E. "Gil" Thivener and Ray V. Waymire Jr. seeking the nomination for sheriff, and Charles Kaniss and Jeanne Olsen, opposing each other for the election supervisor nomination.

Elections Supervisor Jeanne Hoyt Nelson said she expects that 15 to 20 per cent of Pinellas voters will go to the polls. "This is what we usually have," she said. "The only way you can predict is on the past record . . . Last (run-off election), it was 18 per cent."

Asked about any last-minute problems, she said, "No, I don't see any problems. We run a beautiful election here, didn't you know?"

Even the weatherman was promising good weather for most of the day, saying conditions would be similar to Monday's blue skies.