

Brinkley Beats Ferguson in Frederick GOP Senate Primary

Claggett, Zimmerman Win Democratic Slots for House

By DAVID SNYDER
Washington Post Staff Writer

9/11/02

David R. Brinkley handily triumphed yesterday in what many observers had expected to be a close fight in the Republican primary for Frederick County's Senate District 4, beating two-term incumbent Timothy R. Ferguson by a nearly 3-to-2 margin.

Brinkley, who surrendered his House of Delegates seat for this contest, was the only challenger to oust a county incumbent in either party last night. In November, he will go against Democrat Timothy Schlauch, who was unopposed yesterday.

The most contested General Assembly primaries involved the two House seats in the new District 3A. With all precincts reporting, Democrats Galen R. Claggett and Dick Zimmerman outpaced the four other party candidates. Of the four Republicans, Timothy W. Brooks and Patrick N. Hogan move on to the November ballot.

Voters faced a similar onslaught of candidates in the race for the Board of Commissioners, with 11 Republicans and nine Democrats vying for support.

With all but one precinct reporting, Democrats Jan Gardner, an incumbent, Bruce Reeder, Bonnie Bailey-Parker, George Smith and Belinda Teague-Levy secured spots on the general election ballot. In the Republican primary, John R. Lovell Jr., Mike Cady, incumbent John L. Thompson Jr., Hugh Warner and Charles A. Jenkins advanced.

Despite the large number of candidates, election officials said 23.4 of registered Republicans and Democrats voted—lower than in the 1994 and 1998 primaries, said county election director Stuart Harvey.

"That's a pretty low turnout," he said, "and not a trend I like to see."

Returns were slowed yesterday when one of the ballot-counting machines jammed. It was repaired and another brought in from Hagerstown, but the repaired machine continued having difficulty tallying about 900 votes, elections officials said.

Democrats covet District 3A, created

this year by legislative redistricting, because it encompasses the city of Frederick, perhaps the county's most Democrat-rich area, with virtually an even split between registered Republicans and registered Democrats. By contrast, registered Republicans outnumber registered Democrats countywide 46 percent to 38 percent. The remainder of voters either are unaffiliated or registered with minor parties.

In the November general election, Democrats hope to diminish the GOP's dominance in the county's delegation in the General Assembly; seven of the delegation's eight members are Republicans. They received some help from this year's redistricting, which lumped three popular Republican incumbents, Joseph R. Bartlett, Louise V. Snodgrass and Paul S. Stull, into District 4A and carved the new 3A out of Frederick City.

The two men will advance in November.

The Annapolis delegation's lone Democrat, Del. C. Sue Hecht, is aiming for the state Senate this year against District 3 incumbent Alex X. Mooney (R). Neither faced opposition yesterday.

With so many commissioner candidates, no single set of issues defined one group of candidates or a single candidate. Virtually everyone running pledged to support "responsible growth"—though they defined that in widely different ways.

Growth was also a key issue in the nonpartisan primary races for the Board of Education. More than half of county schools are crowded by state standards, and while a multimillion-dollar building effort is underway, the student population is expected to continue growing steadily through the next decade.

In 2000, voters chose the board's first three elected members—the governor appointed previous boards—and this fall's general election will usher in the first all-elected board. Both incumbents, Jean A. Smith and Daryl A. Boffman, garnered enough votes yesterday to win a ballot spot in November, although Michael E. Schaden and Bonnie Smith Borsa were the top vote-getters. With 55 of 56 precincts in, Julie Christman White, Donna J. Crook, John H. Bane and Rick Karmowski also were ready to advance and compete for the four board seats in the general election.

In the House of Delegates District 3B, Democrat Lisa Baugher beat Paul Gilligan and will face Republican Richard B. Weldon Jr. in November. Weldon was unopposed in the primary.

Only the Republican primary for Circuit Court clerk was contested, and incumbent Sandra K. Dalton beat retired five-term court clerk Charles C. Keller.

Staff writer Christine Swerda contributed to this report.