

Placer County's Tahoe area supe faces four challengers

By Ed Fletcher, Sacramento Bee

In Placer County's reshaped 5th District, conventional wisdom says Supervisor Jennifer Montgomery will eventually go up against either Mark Wright or a guy named Johnson in a November runoff.



The question, under that scenario, is whether the runoff will feature engineer Mark Wright, businessman/investigator Jerry Johnson, county Planning Commissioner Richard Johnson or retired peace officer Gary Johnson.

To avoid a November runoff, one candidate would need to get 50 percent plus one vote in the June 5 election.

"With five candidates it (will be) very hard for anybody to get over 50 percent," said Bill Halldin, a member of Placer County's Republican Central Committee.

While the race is officially nonpartisan, GOP activists said they sought out someone to run against Montgomery, a Democrat. Officials said Wright was the first candidate to emerge and won the endorsement before any of the three Johnsons became candidates.

Halldin said any of the candidates – Montgomery included – would be hard-pressed to get more than 35 percent to 40 percent of the vote.

Montgomery has the power of incumbency, but since District 5 boundaries were expanded to include Auburn, her advantage is not as strong as it would have been had the district borders

remained unchanged.

The sprawling district now runs from Auburn along Interstate 80 all the way to north Lake Tahoe.

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