

# Senate candidates Vickers, Begich get to know Fairbanks

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FAIRBANKS — The Alaska U.S. Senate campaign continued through the weekend in Fairbanks when Vic Vickers and Mark Begich made appearances at the Tanana Valley State Fair and around the Interior to converse with locals and work on their campaigns.

Vickers, who calls himself a “Teddy Roosevelt Republican,” spent some time swapping stories and getting to know locals at the fair with his wife and two children, then scooted off to see the pipeline and work on new campaign advertisements.

“I want to talk to as many people as I can,” Vickers said. “Interior Alaskans are suffering, and I think it’s outrageous that Alaskans are struggling to fill the tank of their car when oil executives have gotten filthy rich on artificially inflated oil.”

Vickers emphasized his feelings on the need to improve the justice system in Interior Alaska.

“I got in this race to stop corruption,” Vickers said. “If Alaskans get their fair share of oil revenue, then we’ll be able to provide good jobs, more educational opportunities and to support law enforcement in a significant way.”

Vickers wasn’t the only one getting to know Fairbanks on Saturday afternoon.

Just a few yards away, U.S. Senate candidate Mark Begich also spent the afternoon chatting with locals and listening to common concerns around the Interior.

Begich, the mayor of Anchorage, stopped by the fair only after a tour of the flood damage around town.

“At a time when Fairbanks residents are already struggling with sky-high energy prices, many now have to deal with the aftermath of what’s been called the worst flooding since 1967,” Begich said in a press release.

Begich announced Friday that his campaign formed a Fairbanks advisory team to offer local support and guidance on issues and strategies of particular importance to Fairbanks and Interior regions.

“Fairbanksans are resilient, and Alaskans across the state are rallying to support them,” Begich said.

The advisory committee will address key issues such as heating fuel and energy costs, among others.

The 10 members on the committee include John Davies, former state Representative and current research director at the Cold Climate Housing Research Center; Kathy Richmond, a former social worker; and Rep. David Guttenberg and Elyse Guttenberg.

Bill Stringer of the Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly; Jeff Jacobson, former mayor of North Pole; and Kathy Mayo, an Alaska Native organizer, join the committee along with several other lifelong Fairbanksans, educators, authors and research scientists.

Begich will join Vickers for the 2008 Congressional Candidate Primary Candidate Forum at the Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce at 11 a.m. on Tuesday.