

Election results

Higher turnout comes by mail

■ The exclusively-by-mail election sees the largest voter response in eight years

By **Darren Freeman**
Oregon Daily Emerald

The secretary of state's office estimated late Tuesday night that about 47 percent of Oregon registered voters cast their ballots in this year's primary election, which was Oregon's first state and presidential primary election to be exclusively vote-by-mail.

That figure is up from the paltry 37 percent turnout in this November's special election and the highest turnout since the 1992 primary, in which 49.1 percent of registered voters weighed in.

Annette Newingham, Lane County chief elections officer, said the turnout was encouraging for a primary election.

"We don't get 70-80 percent turnout in primary elections," she said.

Elections experts say voter turnout always varies depending upon voters' emotional attachments to candidates and issues on the ballot, but they also notice a decline in voting due to diminished confidence in government and elected officials.

College-aged voters have significantly retreated from the polls — only about 8 percent of registered Oregon voters aged 19-25 voted in the May 1998 biennial primary election.

"I've heard from students that they don't feel they are represented and that they don't have a lot of respect for our elected officials," ASUO State Affairs Coordinator Arlie Adkins said.

The ASUO and several other state and local organizations have been striving to boost voter registration and participation on cam-

pus and throughout Oregon, and such efforts have been successful this year, according to the secretary of state's office.

Adkins said the ASUO's campaign was "a little more low-key" than expected because many candidates didn't face significant opposition and most issues on the ballot wouldn't have lent themselves well to debates on campus.

Nonetheless, the ASUO registered roughly 400 students in the past few months. The bulk of the registrations occurred May 1 when the ASUO invited a handful of Oregon politicians — including U.S. Rep. Peter DeFazio, D-Springfield, and state Rep. Vicki Walker, D-Eugene — to help flag down students near the EMU Amphitheater and compel them to register.

Adkins said the ASUO will accelerate its registration campaign in the months leading into the November general election.

Statewide, organizations such as Student Vote 2000 and the secretary of state's office contributed to the relatively high turnout by encouraging students and their parents to cast their ballots, said Amy Cody, aid to the secretary of state.

The so called "double majority" rule, passed by voters in 1996 and 1997 to require at least a 50 percent voter turnout to pass certain property tax measures, also contributed to increased turnout as vested interests, such as school districts, have compelled Oregonians to vote, Cody said.

Though critics of vote-by-mail, such as state Rep. Tony Corcoran, D-Cottage Grove, say a hybrid of vote-by-mail and polling places would increase turnout, elections officials say polling in Lane County would cost at least \$175,000 to staff and do little to boost turnout.

Results

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Retired English teacher and incumbent of the City Council seat for Ward 2 Betty Taylor led her race with 58.3 percent of the vote.

"I had a good record and I had a good campaign," Taylor said. "I will [continue to] work for the rights of ordinary people for the environment."

Bobby Green Sr., a current Lane County commissioner, led the race for county commissioner for North Lane County Position 4 over Kitty Piercy with 55.2 percent of the vote, and Lane County District Attorney Doug Harclerod had 67.7 percent of the vote to seemingly keep his position.

Sharon Branstiter secured the Democratic nomination for state representative of District 4, while Alan Brown, who ran unopposed within his party, is now the Republican candidate.

Democrat Vicki Walker also ran unopposed and was able to secure the spot of state representative of the 41st district.

Apparently emerging victorious from the various races were the two Eugene ballot measures aimed at schools, 20-33 and 20-

28. Measure 20-33, with 60.1 percent of the votes in favor, allows for the building of two new schools in the Bethel School district while expanding two others to accommodate continuing enrollment growth.

Measure 20-28, with 61.4 percent of voters supporting it, imposes a local serial option tax levy to maintain the current level of funding in the 4J school district. Voter turnout as of 7:30 p.m. Tuesday was 53.5 percent, ensuring the successful results would count.

Falling short was Eugene Ballot Measures 20-31, which would have authorized the construction of new facilities for both the police and fire departments.

Torrey said that he was disappointed that Eugene's Ballot Measure 20-31 to fund the construction of new police and fire department facilities failed.

"If I was a voter, I would have voted for both [the school measures and Measure 20-31] because I believe in teaching kids to read before the third grade," Torrey said.

Passing with 51.6 percent of the vote, Eugene Ballot Measure 20-30 will allow the Eugene Water and Electric Board to expand into telecommunications activities.

Local positions

MAYOR



Jim Torrey

(71.2%)

Mayor of Eugene since 1996, Torrey attended the University and worked in real estate and media services. He has outspokenly advocated providing more recreational services for children, improving police and fire facilities and

revitalizing downtown.

CITY COUNCIL WARD 3



Bonny Bettman

(57.3%)

Bonny Bettman attended the University and holds a nursing degree from Lane Community College. A veteran community activist, Bettman

hopes to protect environmental concerns, create a city center downtown and strengthen a sense of community in neighborhoods.

CITY COUNCIL WARD 2



Betty Taylor

(58.3%)

Betty Taylor, a University graduate, has served on the Eugene City Council since 1997 and has been a stalwart supporter of environmental concerns. She also advocates revitalizing downtown, creating a downtown youth center

and reducing the city's dependence on property taxes.

LANE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



Bobby Green Sr.

(55.2%)

Bobby Green Sr., a University graduate, has served on the Lane County Board of Commissioners since 1995 and has served on the Eugene City Council. He supports address-

ing traffic problems proactively, encouraging economic growth without sacrificing Eugene's green lands and creating social service programs for troubled youths to help prevent crime.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY



Doug Harclerod

(67.7%)

Doug Harclerod, the current District Attorney for Lane County, graduated from the University of Iowa and the University of Oregon Law School. He has worked exten-

sively on services for victims, including creation of the Child Advocacy Center, development of the Victim Services program and assistance in founding the Domestic Violence Council.

Local measures

MEASURE 20-28

Passing (61.4% YES)

Measure would authorize a local option serial tax levy that would be used to maintain current levels of funding in the 4J school district.

MEASURE 20-29

Failing (50.4% NO)

Amends the Eugene City Charter to allow city councilors to be paid \$1,000 a month and mayors \$1,500. The elected officials would also gain access to the city's retirement and insurance plans.

MEASURE 20-30

Passing (51.6% YES)

Amends the Eugene Water and Electric Board's charter to allow the public utility to consider becoming a telecommunications provider.

MEASURE 20-31

Failing (53.4% NO)

Would authorize a \$36.6 million tax levy to build new downtown police and fire stations and replace the current facility, which has been deemed seismically unsafe.

MEASURE 20-33

Passing (60.1% YES)

Would authorize a \$27.5 million bond measure to build two new schools in the Bethel school district and expand current school buildings.

“ I guess everyone's still partying and they forgot to vote.

Lazar Makyadath
former candidate for mayor

Note to readers:

The results for state and local elections represent figures available at midnight, May 17. The final numbers available after ballot verification may differ.