

Seat

Continued from Page 2B

him to perform same-sex weddings and engaging in out-of-court conduct with a veteran's court participant.

The court ordered Day suspended for three years without pay. Day is also facing separate criminal charges for the alleged firearm incidents.

"We don't need to be in the national news," Weiner said. "As a judge, it's important to keep those personal beliefs to yourself."

Jon Weiner

Since moving to Salem from California and graduating from the Willamette University College of Law, Weiner has worked as a lawyer for 19 years. He said he's always done "people law" — civil rights cases, worker rights and criminal defense.

In addition to working in 25 out of Oregon's 36 counties, Weiner has litigated cases in the Oregon Court of Appeals, circuit court and the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

He pointed to this breadth of experience as what sets him apart from his opponents.

Serving on as the executive director for the nonprofit Marion County Association of Defenders and on the board for the Mid-Willamette Community Action Agency helped him work directly with some of the most vulnerable people.

Weiner said dealing with homelessness himself as a young adult helped him understand what it feels like to be disadvantaged.

"I'm not some great legal genius," he said.

"You're a product of your experiences. Those are my experiences and that's why I feel I could be beneficial to the community."

If elected, he said would create a "quality of life" court to help the county's homeless population.

"When you're homeless, every time you interact with the court system, it can be devastating," he said. "You lose your belongings. Your dog goes to the animal shelter. You just start off completely toast before you even get into a courtroom."

After fines and probation, that person is left even worse off, Weiner added. He'd like to see a system similar to the drug and mental specialty courts, where people are connected with community services and diversion programs.

"As a judge, you affect lives permanently," he said. "You place children or not. You convict people or not. You send them to prison or not. Somebody loses their family business or not depending on what you do."

It's important to recognize disadvantages and your own biases in order to be a fair judge, he added.

"If you don't do your best to control your biases and be part of the process, then you are going to hinder that process that you're supposed to be protecting," Weiner said.

Daniel Wren

Wren was the last candidate to join the race but has quickly gathered momentum, winning the Oregon State Bar judicial preference poll and garnering several endorsements from sitting judges, law enforcement and Crime Victims United.

After starting a family and embarking on a career in sales after college, Wren's wife encouraged him to follow his dream of becoming an attorney. He graduated from the Willamette School of Law in 2005.

Almost immediately, he said he wanted to be a judge, but he knew he wasn't ready. Wren went on to clerk for the Marion County District Attorney's Office, start his own practice litigating civil and criminal cases and got involved with the Juvenile Advocacy Consortium helping DHS-involved families, youth offenders and parents.

"I wanted to make sure I could be the most well-rounded person before I took that next step," he said.

He was one of the attorneys who helped set up the Veterans Treatment Court in 2011 and began serving full-time as a judge pro tem at the Marion County Circuit Court Annex in 2016, where he oversees arraignments, bail hearings and other criminal proceedings.

"I think the biggest thing that sets me apart from my opponents is the fact that for the past year and a half, I've been doing the job every day," Wren said. "I'm doing the job of a judge every day, just without the title of elected official."

As judge pro tem, Wren said he interacts daily with people who have mental health conditions. Usually, jail is not the appropriate place for these people, and it can take too long to adequate mental health care. Getting those people into the right setting, whether it's mental health care in jail or community restoration services, is a top priority, he said.

If elected, he said he wants to continue operate a respectful, fair courtroom.

"My personal beliefs don't belong in the courtroom," Wren said. "I think what people want from their judges is someone who is fair and impartial. It's a non-partisan race."

He looks to retired Marion County Judge John Wilson for inspiration.

"I had many clients, after we got done with Judge Wilson, even if we didn't win, they say they felt like the process was fair," Wren said. "They felt treated with respect."

The endorsements of law enforcement, local attorneys and several sitting judges, speak to his broad-base of support, Wren said.

Anthony Behrens

Drivers traveling down Market Street may have spotted a glowing billboard promoting candidate Anthony "The Bear" Behrens.

Behrens said he earned the nickname as a prosecutor specializing in violent and sex crimes in Umatilla County after he graduated from Willamette University's College of Law.

He gained a reputation of being easy-going and affable like a bear.

"But once you poke them, they get really aggressive," Behrens said. "It's like: Play fair with me, I'll play fair with you, but if you start to get a little out of line, I'm going to call you on it."

Behrens has worked as the legislative liaison and senior policy adviser for the Oregon Department of Consumer and Business Services for the past decade and previously served as a judge pro tem in Marion County from 2005 to 2007 and as an administrative law judge for the Oregon Office of Administrative Hearings from 2000 to 2005.

He said his experience those seven years overseeing cases, as well as his time as a prosecutor, as what sets him apart from his opponents. Behrens is also self-funding his own campaign, which has tallied \$17,795 in expenditures.

"(Self-funding) is something very important to me," he said. "I don't want to feel like I'm beholden to anyone."

Behrens said his childhood has given him a unique insight in mental illness, domestic violence and opioid addiction. He was raised by a single mother who struggled with depression, alcohol and heroin and lived with an abusive and violent man. The heroin ended killing his mother.

Through his turbulent childhood, Behrens said he learned to be self-reliant, getting a job at a plywood mill in Mill City to pay for college.

He said his goal as a judge is to let parties have sufficient time to present their case and to explain his rulings clearly so people always understand the reason behind every decision. It's also important to be mindful of potential biases.

"For me, personal beliefs don't have a place in the courtroom," he said. "The constitution, the law, and the facts are really what should be considered."

Behren said he's collected several endorsements, including the district attorney who first hired him then became a judge, but he questioned many of the traditions of judicial races, where candidates typically run unopposed.

"I almost wish endorsements were out because they don't really mean anything," he said. "No one knows anything about judges and that's unfortunate because they wield a lot of power."

Behren said he's felt some nastiness during the campaign, like missing campaign signs and lack of establishment support. "I'm an outsider ... and they definitely see me as a threat," he said.

Campaign funds and complaints

All candidates are members of the Oregon State Bar and have no record of disciplinary actions taken against them.

According to state bar records, one open complaint regarding Behren's use of the word "judge" to describe his candidate occupational history was received on March 26. A judge pro tem is not an elected or appointed position, according to the complaint.

The complaint is currently in the screening stage.

A similar complaint was sent to the

Secretary of State Elections Division. Investigators said Behrens' use of the word judge was considered to be "reasonably true" and the investigation was closed.

In his reply, Behrens said the complaint was politically motivated, made with poor legal and analytical skills or submitted with no regard for the truth.

Fourteen complaints have been filed against Weiner since 1999, 13 of which have been dismissed. One remains open in the screening stage.

Two complaints have been filed against Wren. Both were dismissed at the screening stage.

So far, Behrens has been the campaign's biggest spender, with about \$18,000 of his own money listed as expenditures with the Oregon Secretary of State.

Weiner has collected \$11,280 in contributions and spent \$11,314 on his campaign, according secretary of state records.

Wren estimated that he's spent about \$10,500 on his campaign. He's received \$4,770 in campaign contributions.

A judicial candidate may be elected during the primary election in May if they receive at least 50 percent plus one vote. If one candidate does not receive a majority of votes during the primary election, the top two candidates will move forward to the general election in November.

The Oregon State Bar collects detailed questionnaires from judicial candidates as part of its voters guide. Bar members also vote in a judicial preference poll. Of the 309 votes, Wren came out on top with 133. Weiner collected 122 votes and Behrens earned 54.

Some judges in non-contested races will even voluntarily submit questionnaires. Further information is available at osbar.org/judicial/judicialquestionnaire18.

For questions, comments and news tips, email reporter Whitney Woodworth at wmwoodwort@statesmanjournal.com, call 503-399-6884 or follow on Twitter @wmwoodworth

The Candidates

Anthony Behrens
Occupation: Legislative liaison and senior policy adviser for the Oregon Department of Consumer and Business Services
City of residence: Salem
Family: Married with one son
Website: behrens4judge.com

Jon Weiner
Occupation: Private practice attorney, pro tem judge at the Salem Municipal Court, executive director of the Marion County Association of Defenders
City of residence: Salem
Family: Married with three children and five grandchildren
Website: jonforjudge.com

Daniel Wren
Occupation: Pro tem judge and hearings referee at the Marion County Circuit Court
City of residence: Salem
Family: Married with three children
Website: danwrenforjudge.com

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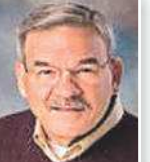
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