

Appeal Tribune

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New Marion DA will start job early

Whitney Woodworth
Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

Marion County will be getting a new district attorney sooner than expected.

Governor Kate Brown announced Sept. 25 that she will appoint Paige Clarkson to be District Attorney effective Oct. 1. Clarkson will complete the term of retiring District Attorney Walt Beglau.

In September 2017, Beglau announced he would not be seeking re-election after 13 years in office. He threw his support behind Clarkson, one of his senior deputy district attorneys.

Clarkson ran unopposed in the May election and was set to take office in January 2019.

Beglau said it felt like the right time to turn the helm over to Clarkson and the team at the district attorney's office. His last day is Sept. 30.

In a letter to Brown announcing his resignation, Beglau said it was an honor to serve as district attorney.



Paige Clarkson

"The time has come for me to step down," he said. "I hope I have served the people of Oregon with the integrity and leadership they deserve from office of District Attorney over my 14 year tenure."

Beglau said he's not sure what the future will bring for him.

When asked in 2017 whether he would seek another public office, he replied that he wasn't sure.

"There are no plans yet," he told the Statesman Journal. "No second act has been designed."

In her announcement Sept. 25, Brown also appointed Bradley Cascagnette to the Lane County Circuit Court.

"While Brad Cascagnette and Paige Clarkson come from opposing sides of our criminal justice system, these bright lights of the legal profession have demonstrated a commitment to the fair administration of justice," Brown said. "These two individuals are the right

people for these jobs; the people of Lane and Marion Counties are fortunate to have these two public servants."

Clarkson told the Statesman Journal she grew up wanting to be a prosecutor but had no plans to run for office until Beglau announced his retirement.

She graduated from Willamette University College of Law in 1999 and has worked with the Marion County District Attorney's office since 1997. Starting as a law clerk, she later became a line attorney, a senior deputy district attorney and trial team leader for the drug team.

Clarkson and her husband, a police officer, live in South Salem with their four kids, two dogs and rabbit.

Clarkson will be the second female Marion County district attorney. In 1956, Hattie Bratzel was the first woman in Oregon to be elected as a district attorney.

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

Marion Co. residents get hit with recycling fines



Suburban driver Shane Kuenzi sorts through a recycling bin in northeast Salem on Sept. 24. Residents who fail to follow Marion County's strict new recycling rules are starting to receive fined. MICHAELA ROMÁN/STATESMAN JOURNAL

Tracy Loew
Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

Marion County garbage haulers have begun a widespread program of fining residents for improper recycling.

That's led to hundreds of complaints each week, said Art Kuenzi, owner of Suburban Garbage company, one of seven haulers in the county. Suburban covers part of Northeast Salem and Marion County.

But it's still just the tip of the iceberg. "We're currently only fining for things that never should have been in the cart – plastic bags, swimming pools, umbrellas," Kuenzi said.

Soon the fines – as much as \$15.45 per pickup – will extend to newly banned items, such as waxed milk cartons, plastic clamshell containers and egg cartons.

In March 2018, Marion County drastically scaled back its curbside recycling program, in response to

China's refusal to take most recyclable materials from the West. The new rules also apply to Salem residents in Polk County.

China was the world's largest importer of recycled paper and plastic, and previously took most of Oregon's recycling.

Since then, the county and garbage haulers has sent residents flyers about the new rules, and some customers have complied.

But others still are throwing garbage in their carts, which can contaminate a whole load, making it impossible to recycle and costing haulers money.

Kevin Hines is the general manager of the Mid-Valley Garbage and Recycling Association.

On Sept. 24 he walked a Northeast Salem street checking out recycling containers.

Even though many of the residents had multiple previous warnings, their bins were filled with plastic

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Behrens, Wren vie for suspended judge's seat

Whitney Woodworth
Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

After an unusually competitive May primary, two Salem men are vying for the Marion County judicial seat vacated by suspended judge Vance Day.

Races for positions on Marion County's circuit court are typically uncontested and quiet. Incumbents usually run unopposed and garner 99 percent of the vote.

But with Day signaling he wasn't going to run in the face of a looming three-year suspension for misconduct, the race for his seat drew three candidates.

Daniel Wren, a judge pro tem at the Marion County Circuit Court, came out on top in the May primary but garnering 43 percent of the vote was not enough to win the race outright.

In November, he will face off with the second-place finisher, Anthony "the Bear" Behrens, a senior policy adviser and legislative liaison for the State of Oregon. Behrens collected 36 percent of the vote in May.

With 21 percent of the vote, Jon Weiner, a Salem attorney and municipal court judge pro tem, failed to earn enough votes to continue to November's runoff election. He has since endorsed Wren.

Circuit court judges are tasked with a wide array of life-altering decisions, including overseeing criminal and civil trials, ruling on bail amounts, determining what evidence is allowed into proceedings and sentencing people to jail or prison.

Daniel Wren

Wren knows many people casting votes in November's election may never have to appear in court, but voters understand the importance of having a fair, community-involved judge on the bench.

"They want a judge, at the end of the day, who will ultimately treat people with dignity and respect, treat people with fairness, and protect the vulnerable – victims of crimes, children, the elderly, people with mental health issues," he said. "Those are people that need protecting."

For the past two years, Wren has been working as a judge pro tem in the Marion County Court Annex, hearing 70 to 100 cases a day, including arraignments, bail hearings and probation violation hearings.

Wren said he believes those serving on the bench should demonstrate integrity, fairness and a judicial temperament.

"That's what a judge does and that's why you need somebody in there that has that experience and that desire to really help people in this community," he said. "I left my private practice in 2016 because I felt like it was time for me to serve and give back to my community."

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

Almost immediately, he knew he wanted to work toward becoming a judge.

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.

Wren pointed to the creation of the Veterans Treatment Court as an example of his community-minded judicial philosophy. In 2011, Wren was one of

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Homeowner burning yellow jackets instead starts brush fire

Virginia Barreda
Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

A homeowner trying to burn out a yellow jacket nest using lighter fluid set off a brush fire near Silverton on Sept. 23, prompting six fire agencies to respond.

The fire in the 16000 block of Stormy Drive east of Silverton threatened several structures as it burned through grass and brush, a Silverton fire department official said.

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A homeowner trying to burn out a yellow jacket nest set off a grass fire east of Silverton. PHOTO COURTESY OF SILVERTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

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