



The Berry's house after the Beachie Creek Fire. MANDY SCHOEDEL / SPECIAL TO THE STATESMAN JOURNAL

Poetry

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ber" (Traprock Books, 2007). "As an archaeologist knows / an ancient civilization, I know you / mostly by pottery," the poem begins. It lingers affectionately on one piece in particular, a "curious dish, maybe meant / as sauceboat," which this great-aunt, a painter, had used for rinsing her brushes:

... its celadon glaze streaked with long drips of burnt sienna, its inner surface

stripped to traces of aquamarine, glimmering through encrusted rings of dark pigment.

In the fire debris of our home, I spotted the quirky form of that dish. When I lifted it out, I saw that its celadon glaze had been replaced by something like raku. I suspect that my artist great-aunt would have marveled, as I did, at the strange artistry of wildfire.

In the aftermath of the fire, poems that I wrote before it, read differently, at least for me. And the many books of others' poems that lined shelves in my study and in our living room and bed-



The Berry's house before the Beachie Creek Fire. RICHARD BERRY/SPECIAL TO THE STATESMAN JOURNAL

room, have turned to ash — strikingly white ash, the whiteness likely due to a clay coating on the paper used for their pages. Still, passages and themes that come to mind, seemingly as I need them.

Over the past couple of weeks, I've thought often of the books of Salem poet Virginia Corrie-Cozart, who died several years ago. Even their titles — A Mutable Place and Wavering Reflection — convey the keen sense of mutability and ephemerality that intensifies her poems' attention to particular objects and moments. Growing up on a farm near

Bandon, Corrie-Cozart was very much aware of the 1936 fire that had destroyed much of that town. Perhaps that awareness of the power of fire honed her sense of the mutability of everything we hold dear.

This article is one of a monthly series on Oregon poets and poetry, past and present, written by members of the Mid-Valley Poetry Society. Eleanor Berry eberry

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Election

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passed the long-debated second coronavirus aid package, the \$2.2 trillion HEROES ACT, though previous attempts to pass it into law have been stalled by infighting in the legislature.

"I would hope there would be an opportunity in the lame duck," Schrader said. "Once the election's over, there's no reason to make the other side look bad like (Mitch) McConnell and (Nancy) Pelosi are doing."

Republican Amy Ryan Courser

Ryan Courser, who formerly was known as Amy Ryan, held her first public office as a city council member in Keizer from 2015 to 2018.

In the Republican primary, Ryan Courser beat out more well-funded candidates Angela Roman and Joey Nations, as well as G. Shane Dinkel, to win by a large margin and face Schrader in the general election.

She said she decided to run for the offices after attempting to contact Schrader's office dozens of times concerning bi-partisan issues while a city councilor and not receiving a response.

"I think our leadership, including Kurt Schrader, has been the status quo," she said.

"I feel like Oregon has lost its voice and been abandoned for a very long time. I've been waiting to run for this seat for five years."

Ryan Courser, 51, said her background as a businesswoman gives her a unique perspective.

She owns a Keizer-based carpet cleaning company, and said she worked three jobs for years as a single mother to raise her two sons.

Hers was one of many businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and she said she supports tax credits for essential workers who continued their

employment during the pandemic.

"It's going to take years. This is not a quick fix," Ryan Courser said. "This is going to take people who can fight for us on a federal level."

Ryan Courser said the main issues she wants to tackle include finding solutions for homelessness, mental health and protecting veterans.

"There's a lack of affordable housing on the coast," Ryan Courser said. "They're driving from an hour, and hour and a half, to be able to work. The land's there. We have to change some of the codes."

Libertarian Matthew Rix

Rix, 29, said he's never run for or held a public office.

He says he's working 50 hours per week in his job as a field service engineer for a vacuum pump company while completing an engineering degree from Southern New Hampshire University.

"Ultimately I'm just trying to make my son proud about his dad and do all the things a good dad should do," Rix said.

Rix said that as the Libertarian candidate, he provides a different voice for those who don't want to vote for Republican or Democrat candidates.

"If there's that much of a population out there that is disenfranchised to what we have then maybe I can be a better option," Rix said.

Rix said government shouldn't have as much control as it has in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. He points to the example of grocery stores setting their own regulations regarding mask use and distancing before government mandates were handed down.

"When the government said we have to reduce all public gatherings to groups of less than 10, that number, that 10 number kind of came from nowhere," Rix said. "We have a few virologists or epidemiologists that that was their best guess."

"The beauty of the market, even

these social situations is that the market, while it doesn't get it perfect the first time, it has a much faster rebound rate when getting its feedback from users. The government is simply too late."

Rix said he and his family were evacuated from their Oregon City home during the wildfires.

He said changes are needed in the way the forests are managed, including privatizing forests.

"We need to fund this, it's clearly important and it's clearly going to need more work done," he said.

Bill Poehler covers Marion County for the Statesman Journal. Contact him at bpoehler@statesmanjournal.com or Twitter.com/bpoehler

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Amy Ryan Courser

Party: Republican.
Age: 51.
Home: Keizer.
Family: Husband Jon, two sons.

Work: Owns Ecostar Carpet Care.
Public offices held: Keizer city council from 2015 to 2018.

Matthew Rix

Party: Libertarian.
Age: 29.
Home: Oregon City.
Family: Wife, one son.
Work: Field service engineer for a vacuum pump company.
Public offices held: None.

Kurt Schrader

Party: Democrat.
Age: 68.
Home: Canby.
Family: Wife, Susan, and eight children.
Work: Veterinarian, small businessman, farmer.
Public offices held: 5th District seat since 2009; Oregon Senate, 2003-09; Oregon House, 1997-2003; Canby Planning Commission, 1981-96.

FEMA

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Tracey said FEMA currently has about 2,000 evacuees in Oregon in about 1,000 hotel rooms across the state.

"We also have rental assistance, which is available to people when there's rental property available," she said.

FEMA trailers are the next step

Tracey said the next step is the direct housing mission, commonly referred to as FEMA trailers.

"The need is based on what is available in terms of rental units in the county," she said. "A big problem is more than 50% of the homes that are destroyed are mobile homes. Typically, people in mobile homes are what's considered affordable housing."

Tracey said FEMA has identified 576 applicants that may be eligible for a housing unit, including 52 in Marion County and 14 in Linn County.

But it hasn't been determined when the FEMA trailers will arrive or where they will be placed.

FEMA tries to place the housing units as close as possible to where the displaced residents live, but Tracey said that may be difficult in many cases as the properties where the debris needs to be cleared and the property inspected for trailers to be placed there.

In some cases, though, removing that material could take a year or more.



Resources are available through FEMA for Santiam Canyon residents recovering from the wildfires on Monday at the Community Center in Stayton.

most people have asked is about debris removal.

The Oregon Debris Management Task Force said in a release a coordinated debris removal effort between the state, FEMA and impacted counties will be at no cost to impacted homeowners.

Homeowners must sign a right of entry form by Oct. 16.

The forms require the homeowner's name, address and insurance information, if the homeowner has insurance.

The crews will remove hazardous material first and then ash and other debris.

The form for those in Marion County is located at <https://www.co.marion.or.us/fire> and for those in Linn County at <http://www.co.linn.or.us/index.php?content=wildlandfire>.

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