

Appeal Tribune

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Todd, Clarkson vie for Marion County DA

Virginia Barreda
Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

For the first time in 38 years, the race for Marion County's top attorney office will be contested.

Salem-area Spencer Todd announced his candidacy for Marion County District Attorney last summer against incumbent Paige Clarkson in the upcoming May 17 primaries in Oregon.

Clarkson was appointed by Gov. Kate Brown when her predecessor, Walt Beglau, announced his retirement in 2018. She ran unopposed the same year and was elected into office in January 2019.

Clarkson says she believes in "law and order and holding people accountable."



Clarkson

She says her two decades of experience as a prosecutor, as well as her tough-on-crime philosophy, is "trusted and tested and tried" — and they're things her 33-year-old opponent lacks.

"I am not the soft-on-crime-candidate," she said. "I am not the candidate who is going to coddle criminals."

Todd said the "experience argument isn't a good one."

He plans to bring his eight years of experience as a trial lawyer to help protect victims and prosecute cases. His career as a public defender, he says, allows him to bring an understanding of the "other team's playbook," to the District Attor-



Clarkson

ney's office — the ability to better anticipate what a defense attorney would do.

Todd says there needs to be a reinvention of the way the District Attorney's office handles many cases.

While prison may be the answer to high-level crimes, Todd says, more funding should be devoted to helping offenders address their problems, including treatment for drug addiction and mental illness. This approach can help keep people from reoffending and keep the community safer.

"Not everybody is just a villain. Some people, if you give them a chance, are going to be back as productive members of

society," Todd said. "We need to do a better job."

Paige Clarkson: 'If not me, who else?'

Between the COVID-19 pandemic, social unrest, as well as legislative and governor decisions that have "reduced law enforcement's toolbox," Clarkson said her last three years have been the most challenging in her 20-year law career.

"It's hard to think of a time that rivals this," she said.

But Clarkson, who lives with her husband and four children in South Salem, says she has a vested interest in the safety

See DA, Page 4A



Ruth Patching, an Oregon Crafters Market member/vendor, moves some of her market sale items into a temporary storage area at the market, 215 N. Water St. in Silverton. At right is OCM manager Joy Ewing. GEOFF PARKS / SPECIAL TO THE STATESMAN JOURNAL

Crafters Market ready to bring funky wares to Silverton

Geoff Parks
Special to the Statesman Journal

Sandwiched between the newest/oldest restaurants in Silverton and a food truck pod/bake shop, the welcoming little streetside space at 215 N. Water Street will — beginning the weekend of May 6-8 — once again host the summer-long Oregon Crafters Market.

The site of the third-year event may end up becoming a town square of sorts during weekends from May through October.

Visitors will be able to walk the town center, eat in one of several downtown restaurants or grab something from the bakery, food trucks or the market's own new on-site restaurant, The High Water Grill.

Then, while enjoying live music, they can take a leisurely stroll around the market's 42 vendor spaces to seek out items as wide-ranging and esoteric as Funky Fish, tie-dyed shoelaces, massage stones — even Grammie's Drawers.

Oregon Crafters Market manager Joy Ewing said in late April that she already had "well over 60 applications" for the available vendor spaces. She said she an-

See CRAFTERS, Page 2A



Joy Ewing, manager of the Oregon Crafters Market (left), stands with Glen Damewood, property owner, and Ruth Patching, an OCM member/vendor. GEOFF PARKS / SPECIAL TO THE STATESMAN JOURNAL

Homeowners host micro-shelter for homeless

Capi Lynn
Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

At a time when others in the community are saying 'Not in our neighborhood' to micro-shelters for the homeless, one South Salem couple is saying 'Yes, in our front yard.'

Lisa Arana and Brenda Chandler wanted to install a micro-shelter on their property. They informed their neighbors, gathered community support, then worked with the designer to prepare the site and with the manager at SafeSleep United to choose their first

See MICRO-SHELTERS, Page 2A



Neighbors Cindel Mikesell, Lisa Arana and Brenda Chandler spend time in their yard on Friday in Salem. ABIGAIL DOLLINS/STATESMAN JOURNAL

Homeless women outnumber men locally, but services lag

Virginia Barreda and Whitney Woodworth
Salem Statesman Journal | USA TODAY NETWORK

Cindel Mikesell has been told she doesn't act like a "homeless person."

"I mean, I know what they mean," Mikesell said. But "that's not necessarily a good thing."

The word "homeless" often conjures images of a person sleeping on the sidewalk, standing at a street corner asking for change or camping in Oregon's parks.

Mikesell, 42, of Salem, has never slept on a sidewalk or asked for money from passersby. But it doesn't make her situation any less dire.

"I am invisible," she said.

Mikesell has faced homelessness on multiple occasions while working to manage health issues, including Type 2 diabetes.

She is among the thousands of more invisible homeless sleeping in their cars, in motels or on friends' couches. They often flow in and out of homelessness as they struggle with employment, health issues or other challenges. And many of them, particularly in northwest Oregon, carry an additional layer of invisibility — they are women.

In Oregon's Marion and Polk counties, women made up more than half of the homeless population in 2021. According to the Marion and Polk Coordinated Entry data, which surveys people trying to get housing and other services, there were 1,318 adult homeless women, compared to 1,239 men.

Nationally — both in most other specific areas across the nation and nationwide overall — the gender breakdown in recent years has remained consistently about 70% male and 30% female. Individuals who identify as transgender or gender-nonconforming make up about 1% of the U.S. homeless population.

While women make up a majority of the region's homeless, their needs remain largely ignored.

They often carry trauma from abuse or domestic violence, but mental health services are lacking. They are significantly more likely to be abused or assaulted while on the streets than their male counterparts, and yet there are fewer shelter beds available to keep them safely off the streets compared to those for men in the region.

There is a growing population of aging women struggling with homelessness and significant health issues. The lack of affordable child care, the wage gap and rising rents put families, especially those led by single mothers, at another disadvantage.

Number of homeless women is growing across US

While the Mid-Willamette Valley is an outlier for having more documented homeless women than men, it may not be for long. Women make up the fastest-growing segment of the U.S. homeless population, according to multiple studies and papers analyzing homelessness data.

And national data indicates women typically end up homeless for different reasons than men, reasons often connected to domestic violence and their economically vulnerable roles as single parents. The vast majority of

See HOMELESS, Page 3A



Pennie Vandewarkerhansen, 62, spends time in her car or a friend's house when she's not at the homeless shelter. ABIGAIL DOLLINS/STATESMAN JOURNAL

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