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LOCAL ELECTIONS 2021

Cove School Board election has one contested race

Incumbent Andy Lindsey faces challenge from Chris Thew

By **DICK MASON**
The Observer

COVE — Two men, both optimistic about the Cove School District's future, are vying for an opportunity to help guide the school district the next four years.

Chris Thew, an athletic trainer, is challenging incumbent Andy Lindsey, a civil engineer, in a race for Position 1 on the Cove School Board. This is the only contested school board race this year in the Cove School District.



Lindsey



Thew

Lindsey, who works for Anderson Perry & Associates Inc., is completing his fifth year on the school board. He said he decided to seek reelection because he wants to help the school district keep moving in the right direction. "Our current school board works very well together," Lindsey said. "Together, we can help the school district make great strides."

He said the school district is doing well in terms of academic achievement and is on solid ground financially. This was evident when the school district was able to build a new \$1.8 million dining hall, completed in March 2020, with funds from the district's capital construction fund, which it had been putting money in for years.

"It is fantastic that we were able to build it without taking on any debt," Lindsey said.

If voters send him back to the board, Lindsey said he would pursue grants to help the district chart its future course.

"I want to help the school district determine its long-term direction," he said.

The board likely will be taking related steps, such as evaluating the Cove Elementary School building that was built at least eight decades ago. Lindsey said the board, looking

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Planting 100 trees a year

La Grande continues tradition of growing its urban forest

By **ALEX WITTWER**
The Observer

LA GRANDE — The city of La Grande's urban forester Teresa Gustafson said her favorite trees are the Ginkgos that sit along Washington Avenue. During fall months they turn golden and shower the street with their petals.

"Our goal is to plant 100 shade trees every year in the city," Gustafson said.

The numerous trees, she also explained, make La Grande a vibrant place to live, with cooler streets and homes, habitat for wildlife, cleaner air and water and other benefits.

The city celebrated its 31st year as a Tree City USA member on Arbor Day, Friday, April 30. Last year, La Grande won a Growth Award for the 29th consecutive year, one of only a handful of cities to do so nationwide. The city hopes to win the award once again this year.

Among the colorful flowering peach and plum trees that bloom in spring, the city is host to two Oregon Heritage Trees. Those are trees the Heritage Tree Committee, under the Oregon Travel Information Council, deem as worthy of state recognition.

One of the earliest pioneers to the area, James Baker, happened across the treeless plain and began planting in the mid-19th century. The Baker black locust tree at Eastern Oregon University is one of the surviving trees that he planted during his stay. The tree stood above the grave of Baker's wife, Elizabeth. Trees that tell a story are one criteria for earning the honor, according to the Heritage Tree Committee's website.

Gustafson said the black locust may be the oldest planted tree in La Grande at 136 years old.

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Alex Wittwer/The Observer

The Baker black locust tree stands about 180 feet tall outside Hunt Hall at Eastern Oregon University, La Grande, and is possibly the oldest tree planted in town. James Baker planted the tree in the mid-19th century to commemorate the death of his wife, Elizabeth.

Gun restrictions advance in House

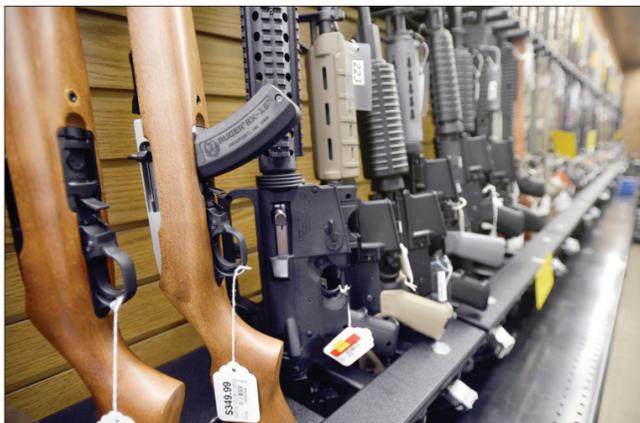
Rep. Bobby Levy says bill criminalizes law-abiding citizens, won't curb gun violence

By **PETER WONG**
Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — The Oregon House, on a largely party-line vote, approved a bill that combines storage requirements for firearms with a narrower ban on guns in some public places.

The 34-24 vote on Thursday, April 29, sends the revamped Senate Bill 554 back to the Senate, which can vote to accept the changes — and send it to Gov. Kate Brown — or reject it and force a joint panel to negotiate the differences.

Support came exclusively from Democrats. Three of the 37 Democrats voted no: Paul Evans



E.J. Harris/East Oregonian, File

A selection of rifles lines the wall in April 2018 in the sporting goods section of the D&B Supply in Pendleton. The Oregon House on Thursday, April 29, 2021, approved a bill that combines storage requirements for firearms with a narrower ban on guns in some public places.

of Monmouth, David Gomberg of Otis and Mark Meek of Oregon City.

Opposition came largely

from Republicans, mostly from rural areas. Exceptions were from Clackamas County, where both Democratic Rep. Meek and

OREGON GUN RESTRICTIONS BILL

- Senate Bill 554 passed 34-24 with no Republican support.
- Requires keeping trigger or cable locks on gun and storing guns in a locked container or in a gun room.
- An offense is a Class C violation unless someone under age 18 obtains access, then it is a Class A violation.
- Bars estimated 300,000 holders of Oregon concealed-handgun licenses from bringing firearms into some public places.
- Raises initial filing fees for concealed-handgun licenses from \$50 to \$100, and for renewals, from \$50 to \$75.

Republican Leader Christine Drazan of Canby spoke against it. No Republicans voted for it.

"This is a misguided proposal that will do nothing to affect gun violence in our state while criminalizing our most

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WEATHER Full forecast on the back of B section

	Tonight 42 Low Patchy clouds		Sunday 59/35 Partly sunny
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Email story ideas to news@lagrandeobserver.com.
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TUESDAY

EOU DIGITAL ARTISTS SHOW

Online at lagrandeobserver.com