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FARMER POLITICIAN

Several candidates running for the Oregon Legislature must strike a balance between farm life and the campaign trail



Shelly Boshart Davis is running to replace Andy Olson in the Oregon House of Representatives for House District 15 in the Willamette Valley.



Sen. Chuck Thomsen, R-Hood River, is running for re-election to the Oregon Senate representing Senate District 26.



Rep. Rich Vial, R-Scholls, is running for re-election in the Oregon House of Representatives for House District 26.

Running the farm, running for office

By GEORGE PLAVERN
Capital Press

A large 18-wheeler idled outside the main office at Boshart Trucking in Tangent, Ore., on a gray October morning as Shelly Boshart Davis recounted another successful grass seed harvest in the Mid-Willamette Valley.

Boshart Trucking contracts with more than 40 local farmers to bale and haul grass straw, with Davis, 38, in charge of managing field crews, inventory and other logistics. The job involves a lot of paperwork, especially during harvest in July and August.

With the season now in the rear-view mirror, Davis is focused in earnest on her next big challenge: campaigning for election to the Oregon House of Representatives on Nov. 6.

"Oh my goodness, you should see the calendar," Davis

said. "It's everything from meetings for endorsements to letters, events, knocking on doors, phone banking, putting up signs, and just being out in the community."

Davis, a Republican, is hoping to represent District 15, which covers portions of Linn and Benton counties in the Willamette Valley, including the city of Albany. Incumbent Rep. Andy Olson, a Republican, is retiring after 14 years in the Legislature. Democrat Jerred Taylor and Independent Cynthia Hyatt are also running for the seat.

According to the Oregon Farm Bureau, fewer than a dozen Oregon legislators are directly involved in agriculture, though others may be retired, semi-retired or do some farming and ranching on the side. The Legislature consists of 30 senators and 60 representatives from across the state.

For Davis, the office would add to her already busy schedule. She and her business partner, Macey Wessels, a farmer in Scio, Ore., purchased Boshart Trucking over the summer from Davis' parents, Stan and Lori Boshart, taking over the company founded in 1983 by Stan and his brother, Gene Boshart.

And that is just one arm of the family business. Davis is also vice president of international sales and marketing for BOSSCO Trading, marketing grass straw for animal feed to customers in Japan and South Korea.

Yet when Olson, the incumbent, asked Davis if she would run to be his successor, Davis said she felt the pull of politics.

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Reduced 'exclusion zone' proposed for Willamette Valley canola

Oregon farm regulators to submit recommendations by mid-November

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI
Capital Press

Oregon farm regulators are contemplating reducing the "exclusion zone" for growing canola in Oregon's Willamette Valley by more than half from an earlier proposal. The Oregon Department of Agri-

culture has floated the idea of establishing a new 889,000-acre exclusion zone for the crop, down from the 1.96 million acres proposed five years ago.

Canola is controversial in the region, as some farmers see it as a potentially valuable rotation crop while others fear it will cross-pollinate

with other Brassica species grown for specialty seed.

After ODA proposed relaxing restrictions on canola in 2013, the resulting dispute that erupted wound up before Oregon lawmakers, who imposed a 500-acre cap on its production until 2019.

During an Oct. 25 meeting in Salem, Ore., agency officials proposed a map of the significantly reduced exclusion zone to representatives of specialty seed producers, canola growers and other interested parties.

Jim Johnson, ODA's land use specialist, explained that he designed the map by studying where specialty seeds and canola have been grown and overlaying that data with

information about soil quality and available irrigation water.

Specialty seeds are typically grown in higher-quality soils and require irrigation, while canola can be grown as a dryland crop that would compete with grass seed.

"Canola can go places specialty seed can't," Johnson said.

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Snake River dams seen as possible barriers to saving orcas

Task force working on recovery plan

By DON JENKINS
Capital Press

Washington's orca-rescue plan could include creating more fish habitat in Puget Sound and taking another look at removing Lower Snake River dams, according to a task force's preliminary proposals.

Orcas don't have enough fish to eat, especially chinook salmon, according to a task force report. The group may recommend studying how much the killer whales would benefit by breaching Ice Harbor, Lower Monumental, Little Goose and Lower Granite dams on the Snake River.

Another proposal is to make



Courtesy National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Orcas, also known as killer whales, travel off the coast of Washington. A governor's task force may recommend looking at removing four Lower Snake River dams to help orcas have more fish to eat.

more fish habitat in several basins in northwest and southwest Washington. Such projects in the past have included breaching dikes and flooding fields that had been used

for agriculture.

The 49-member task force, which was created by Gov. Jay Inslee, will meet next week to finalize its recommendations. One task

force member, House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee Chairman Brian Blake, said Monday that there are more effective ways to help orcas than taking out the Snake River dams.

"I personally do not support removal of the Snake River dams. I think it's the wrong thing to be studying," said Blake, D-Aberdeen.

Some 76 orcas that travel between southern Alaska and central California spend most of the year in the Salish Sea and off the coast of Washington. The first census counted 66 orcas in 1973. The population peaked at 98 in 1995. The orcas are believed to be in poor condition and struggling to reproduce, according to the report.

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