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steppin' out



PHOTO BY LINDA CARTER

editorial

Who says your vote doesn't count? Many races still too close to call.

This was the first primary to give us a plethora of candidates who support lesbian and gay rights. It seems the Oregon Citizens Alliance needs to be given some credit for that. Since the OCA launched its petition drive last year, candidates have been coming out of the House, Senate and every other elected office door to denounce the OCA and everything it stands for. It was an issue that made candidates a Maypole for lesbians and gay men to rally around.

This was the first primary in Oregon history to have an openly gay man and an out lesbian running for office. Jerry Keene ran as a Republican and won his party's nomination. Now he will run against Democrat, and long time supporter of lesbian and gay rights, Tom Mason, for the District 11 seat.

Gail Shibley beat her opponents by a landslide for the Democratic nomination for the District 12 seat. She will run against Republican Susan Ward in November.

The race between Kate Brown and Judy Bauman for the Democratic nomination for the District 13 seat remained neck and neck as of press time. The absentee ballots left Brown only three votes ahead. If a recount shows Brown to be the winner, she will run against Republican Mike Erickson.

Avel Gordley and Tom Novick caused many to pull their hair out before making a decision. Both are excellent candidates, and each had their own seat until district restructuring pitted them against each other. Winning by just 145 votes, Gordley ended up on top and Novick is committed to helping her defeat Republican Marilyn Schultz for the District 19 seat.

Bob Roth and Juanita Hernandez were both good candidates for District 5. Roth garnered more votes than Hernandez and will need our support to beat John Meek, assuming Meek makes it back from his Oregon Trail trek.

The Oregon Citizens Alliance supported several candidates in this primary. In one district they actually won.

Republican Mike Wiley, the man who had Lon Mabon's job during Ballot Measure 8, will run against Frank Shields for the District 16 seat. Shields will need our support to keep Wiley, the raging homophobe, out of office.

Les AuCoin and Harry Lonsdale warmed up to each other during the days that their race was too close to call. AuCoin shut out Lonsdale to go after the big cheese Packwood. The Republicans pumped \$500,000 into advertising against AuCoin, theorizing that Lonsdale would be easier to pick off in the

general election. Fortunately it didn't work. Though Packwood has signed on to the Federal Lesbian and Gay Rights Bill, we need to back AuCoin in November.

The attorney general's race is an important one because of the test cases the OCA's ballot measures will stir up. It is crucial to have Ted Kulongoski in the office, but he will have to defeat Republican Rich Rodeman to do us any good.

Corvallis 1, Springfield 0

The OCA had two measures in the May 19 primary, one in Springfield and one in Corvallis. The Corvallis measure was resoundly defeated by a two to one margin, while the Springfield measure won by less than 1,500 votes. Now the city of Springfield has 30 days to figure out how to implement the new measure that bars the city from "facilitating, encouraging or promoting homosexuality, sadism, masochism, and pedophilia."

Imagine the discussion the city commissioners will be putting forth. Do you think perceived queers will be able to drive on public roads, drink public water, use public bathrooms? Is there a blood test to identify sexual minorities? Who will determine who is queer? Will there be a homosexual determining committee? Will lesbians, gay men and bisexuals be tagged, or merely tattooed?

Pretty scary, isn't it? No matter what, we cannot turn our backs on Springfield. We have to go there by the thousands and be present at the rallies, marches, and demonstrations that will test this new measure. We need to look around, feel how it feels to be outlaws in our own cities. This could well be our home, our neighborhood and our American dream after November if the OCA succeeds statewide as it did in Springfield. Anyone who has not done anything to prevent the OCA's initiative from getting on the ballot, needs to get up, dust themselves off, roll up their sleeves and get to work. There are plenty of groups organized against the OCA, representing every sector of the community. There is one to fit you.

As Donna Red Wing says, "We have to take care of each other. We have to know how serious the OCA is with its work. There are too many people who think someone else is going to do it."

No one is going to do it but you. These are frightening times, and without all of us taking on a piece of the work, we will all lose.

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