

POSTAL PRIMARY

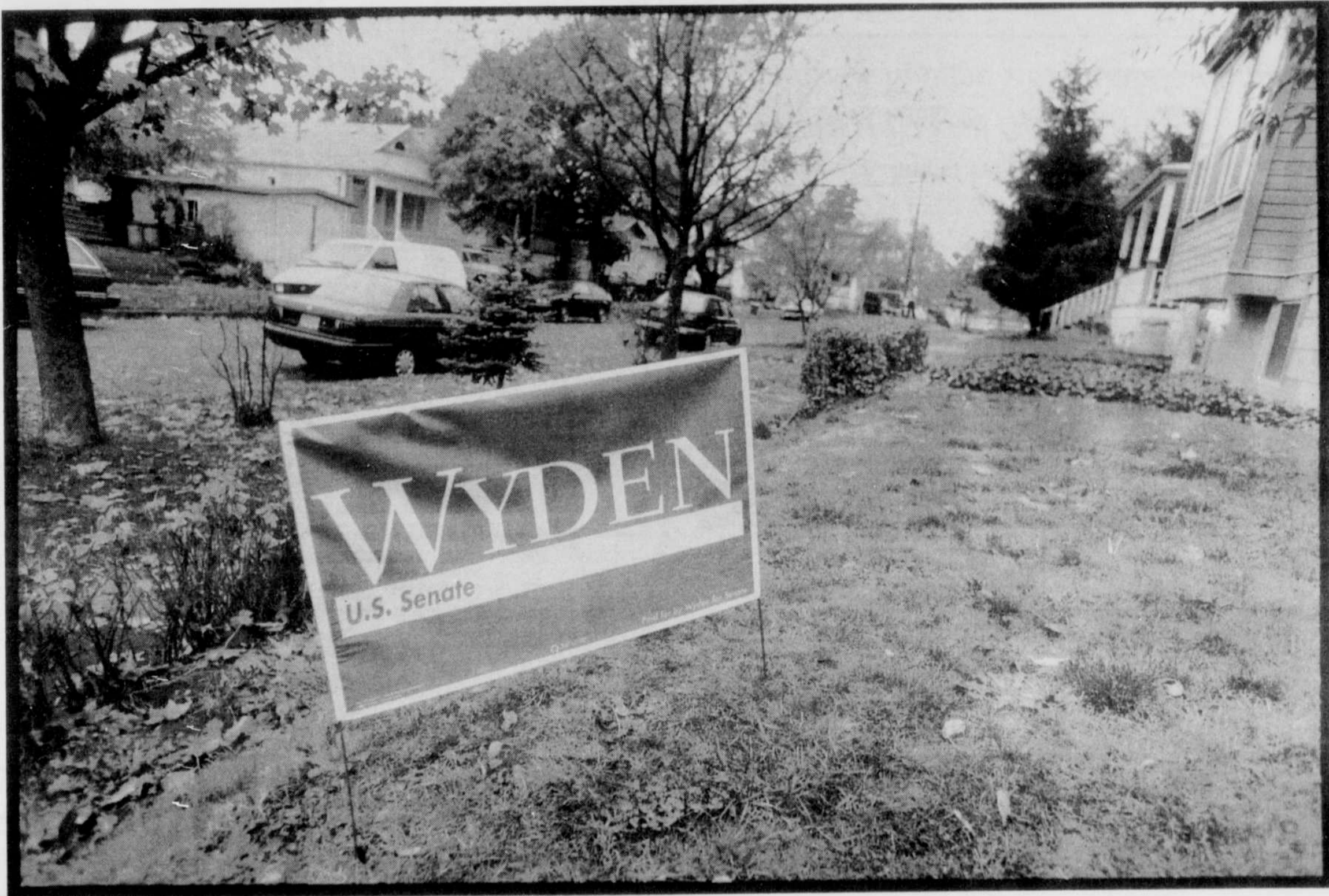


PHOTO BY LINDA KLEWER

Oregon voters, mail in those ballots!

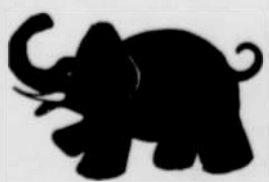
For the first time in 27 years, Oregonians get the opportunity to elect a new U.S. senator

by Renée LaChance and Inga Sorensen

Republican endorsement:

NORMA PAULUS

This is a no-brainer for lesbian and gay Republicans. Paulus has been a staunch supporter of the lesbian and gay community as long as we've been covering politics. We are, however, very disappointed that she is undecided on the same-sex marriage issue. Throughout her political career, we have looked at Paulus' politics and wondered, why isn't this woman a Democrat? She has always been left of center in the Republican Party on every issue of importance to our community: lesbian and gay rights, the environment, women's issues, social services. Lately, many of Paulus' critics claim that she is leaning away from her leftward Republican roots and leaning more toward the



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Democratic endorsement:

RON WYDEN

This was a very difficult decision. We could have done a dual endorsement and weaseled out of a tough choice—but that would be weasely. Both candidates would serve our community well as U.S. senator.

Peter DeFazio would get our endorsement if our only criterion were support for lesbian and gay rights. DeFazio signed on to the lesbian and gay rights bill that has been bandied about Capitol Hill for more than a decade as soon as he reached Washington, D.C. Wyden did not sign on until many years later, after much pressure from our community.

DeFazio has attended every Lucille Hart Din-

ner sponsored by the Right to Privacy PAC. This was the first year that Wyden went, though he has bought tables and sent his staff in previous years.

The thing is, *Just Out* looks beyond lesbian and gay issues. We look at the environment, women's choice, social issues, gun control and much more. And, as frustrating as it is to say it, in this particular election, we're concerned about who could beat Gordon Smith if he wins his party's nomination. Polls show Wyden easily beating Smith in a general election, while DeFazio and Smith would likely be neck and neck.

The economy of DeFazio's district is heavily influenced by the timber industry. He has had to balance votes on timber issues in ways that we feel harm the environment. He sides with the National Rifle Association on many issues of gun control. He does, however, support a woman's

choice, and his stand on social issues is good.

Wyden's record on health issues is superb, his advocacy for elders is admirable, his environmental stances are middle-of-the-road. He usually votes contrary to the NRA.

DeFazio is described by political observers as "feisty and confrontational," while Wyden is described as "a bridge builder and a compromise maker." The difference becomes obvious when watching the two of them in debates. DeFazio attacks Wyden as a means of answering debate questions, while Wyden, in general, answers the question.

We need Wyden's diplomacy in the Republican-controlled Senate. While we respect DeFazio's feistiness—and the work he has done on behalf of the lesbian and gay community—we must give our endorsement to Ron Wyden.

The Elections Division began mailing out ballots on Nov. 15. Ballots are due back by Tuesday, Dec. 5.