

Local

Kitzhaber resigns

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McComb added that he thinks Brown will “hit the ground running” and said, “John Kitzhaber gave 35 years to the State. I think when the smoke clears, people will be able to look back (at that service) with gratitude despite the—as I call it, that bump in the road.”

Suzan Ellis Jones, Chair of the Baker County Republicans reacted differently. She said, “Kitzhaber needed to go in November. It’s a shame the voters did not wake up in time to elect Dennis Richardson, maybe this can still happen in 2016. Instead, we are stuck with Kate Brown, who is even more liberal than Kitzhaber, and she has not been above ethical reproach when you look at the personal support she gave Comcast in its merger with Time-Warner Cable, which happen to be one of her biggest contributors. The Comcast –TWC merger is said to represent a threat to Net neutrality. The Democrats have some pretty big skeletons in their closet to overcome in 2016.”

Said. US Rep. Greg Walden, “John Kitzhaber has a long record of dedicated public service but sadly the circumstances of his resignation leave another stain on a chapter of Oregon history. If what we have all read is true, this may well go down as one of Oregon government’s darkest moments. Many Oregonians are left wondering, how much more is to come? Will those who bankrolled what looks like influence peddling be brought to justice, too? Just how infested is our state government?”

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Timeline.

2002-2009. Kitzhaber meets girlfriend, Cylvia Hayes, while she’s running for State Representative. She loses by an overwhelming margin. Hayes forms an environmental consulting nonprofit and places Kitzhaber on the Board of Directors. In 2009, she converts that nonprofit to a for-profit business.

2009-2010. Kitzhaber runs for a third term as governor. Higher-ups at the Oregon Department of Energy give \$60K out of a \$200K contract to Hayes’ business, even though she placed last and didn’t win the bid. The Oregon Department of Justice launches an investigation and says there’s insufficient evidence to prosecute.

• Hayes becomes Kitzhaber’s live-in girlfriend in the governor’s mansion, sharing a household and presumably each benefiting from the other’s income. Hayes takes the title of “First Lady,” and sets up a taxpayer-funded office under that title in the Capitol building.

October 2014:
• *Willamette Week* breaks the story asserting Hayes, used taxpayer-funded resources to support her personal consulting business. (The editor of that publication is married to Oregon’s Attorney General.)

• Hayes confesses that in 1997 she was paid



Kerry McQuisten / The Baker County Press

Rep. Dennis Richardson, pictured here visiting York’s in Baker City last summer, was among the first to ask an investigation into Kitzhaber and Hayes.

\$5,000 to enter into a false marriage to an Ethiopian teenager who desired his U.S. green card. Though a violation of Federal law, the statute of limitations on the crime had passed.

• Hayes admitted to buying property in Washington State that she and an ex-boyfriend intended to develop as a large-scale marijuana operation. She denies financial ties, but her ex-boyfriend does multiple interviews stating otherwise.

• Dennis Richardson, the Republican gubernatorial candidate lodges a complaint with the U.S. attorney to investigate the funding sources behind Hayes’ private business.

November 2014:

• Hayes and Kitzhaber become engaged.

• The Oregon Government Ethics Commission begins to investigate Hayes.

• Dennis Richardson, carried by only seven Oregon counties, loses by a five-percent margin to Kitzhaber during the election.

December 2014:

• Documentation is released showing that taxpayer-funded staffers often pet-sat for Hayes and booked personal travel for her and her private company.

January 2015:

• Kitzhaber and Hayes hire attorneys.

• Kitzhaber is sworn into office.

• Hayes confirms she was paid \$118,000 over two years (2012-2013) from the Clean Economy Development Center of Washington, D.C. Hayes, while on this fellowship, was advising the governor on the same topics as those at the Center. The Energy Foundation of San Francisco funded the grant from which was paid and then hired her to the tune of \$40,000 when that contract ended. Hayes’ tax returns don’t show this income.

• Hayes travels to Sweden to attend a conference and visit friends. Sweden does not extradite for any of the crimes for which she is or may be investigated, creating speculation. Kitzhaber says he will not resign.

February 2015:

• *The Oregonian* calls for Kitzhaber’s resignation on February 4.

• Correspondence circulates from the media in which Kitzhaber and Hayes say the Oregon

Government Ethics Commission has no jurisdiction to investigate her.

• Kitzhaber releases records confirming he fired a communications director last year for criticizing Hayes in meeting.

• Email records leak in which Hayes is instructing Oregon State employees on implementing the Genuine Progress Indicator, an environmental policy she was paid to create and promote in 2013 to the tune of \$25,000 by an advocacy group from NYC.

• Kitzhaber asks for a review of the entire situation. To his consternation, Attorney General Rosenblum tells the Governor her office has already begun a criminal investigation.

• On February 11, Secretary of State Kate Brown hops on a plane in the middle of a conference in Washington, D.C., after being summoned by Kitzhaber. (Brown was next in line for the governorship if Kitzhaber resigned.) Clearly, Brown expects to hear his resignation at this point. One senior political analyst, and multiple elected officials on site in Salem tell *The Baker County Press* that the Capitol “is a zoo.” Across the board, Kitzhaber’s resignation is expected this afternoon on the 11th. Kitzhaber feverishly begins to set up a taxpayer-funded legal defense fund, something he would not be able to do legally if not governor. Several Sheriff’s deputies and State troopers arrive at the governor’s mansion. Kitzhaber abruptly announces he has no plans of resigning.

• *The Baker County Press*’s insiders say Cylvia Hayes has indeed returned from Sweden and dissuaded Kitzhaber from resigning, resulting in his sudden change of mind.

• On February 12, Brown issues an unusual statement about her meeting

with Kitzhaber. She said, “This is clearly a bizarre and unprecedented situation. I informed the governor that I am ready, and my staff will be ready, should he resign.” Brown said Kitzhaber, who had called her back to Salem, then strangely asked her why she had returned and said he had no intention of resigning.

• The Oregon Attorney General receives documentation that Kitzhaber’s staff, at his request, had requested the deletion of thousands of emails from Kitzhaber’s email accounts from Oregon State servers.

• The U.S. Attorney’s Office for Oregon launches its own investigation and files a subpoena with the Department of Administrative Services requesting financial documents relating to both Kitzhaber and Hayes. A federal grand jury is scheduled for March 10.

• Democratic party leaders Senate President Peter Courtney, House Speaker Tina Kotek and Treasurer Ted Wheeler call on Kitzhaber to resign.

• *The Baker County Press*’s insiders call and say the believe a resignation is scheduled for the afternoon on February 13.

• Two hours later, on February 13, Kitzhaber issues his statement of resignation to the media.

• February 18, Kitzhaber’s resignation becomes effective and Brown takes the helm at 10 a.m. A new Secretary of State will be appointed.

• November 2016 will see a special election to determine the next governor. Brown will enter this election as the incumbent, should she choose to run. State Treasurer Ted Wheeler has already expressed the desire to run against her for the Democrat nomination. Republican candidates are still up in the air, with most eyes on Dennis Richardson.

Civil Air Patrol medal awarded



Submitted Photo

Chris Barreto accepted the medal on behalf of the Jones family. Sen. Jeff Merkley presented the medals.

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The Barretos will give the medal to Jones’s oldest son, Keith Jones.

Also presented were official certificates from both Congressman Greg Walden and Senator Jeff Merkley. Professional photos were taken at the event, and will be mailed to the family at a later date.

Said Keith Jones, who is also a member of this newspaper’s editorial board, “The medal came as a surprise to us, but we’re pretty honored to have it. There are two flags folded up in triangle cases on our fireplace mantel. One presented to us for my dad, Gilbert, during his funeral. The other was for my father-in-law, Andrew Racey. We have a long line of veterans in our family. Mom’s medal will go right up there between those two flags.”

Son, Alan Jones, expressed that his mom hadn’t spoken much about the CAP, but said he was proud that she was awarded this medal.

Dean Jones was born on September 8, 1924, at North Star, Idaho, to Clark and Alice Baldock Allen.

In 1950, She married Gilbert C. Jones, a long-time and well-known Baker City postal carrier. Gilbert was in the Navy between San Diego and the South Pacific during the war. He was on Enewetak, an atoll near the Marshall Islands where he became a nuclear vet. Together they raised three children: Keith Jones, Alan Jones and Nancy Williams.

Her grandchildren are Kerry McQuisten, Kasey Phelan, Tonya Pierce, Amber Bailey, Tobbie Jones, Celia Jones, Simon Jones, Michelle Jones, Ryan Allen and Curtis Williams—and she had quite a number of great-grandchildren.

Jones was a granddaughter of the pioneering families of Charles and Minerva Baldock and great-granddaughter of William Baldock, who settled in Baker Valley in 1864. She was also a descendant of the Campbells who came to Baker the same year.

Jones attended school in Portland where she was in the CAP during World War II. She also worked as a telephone operator and would sometimes show historic Baker City phone number listings and joke about how short the numbers were back in those days.

Many amazing CAP



Submitted Photo.

A close-up of the medal.

accomplishments are documented in the Bill approving the medal such as the sinking of two enemy submarines, reporting of submarines sighted, and spotting of ships in distress – which saved thousands of lives, according to event organizer, Scott McGuire.

CAP members who served during WWII were awarded the Congressional Gold Medal on December 10, 2014. The gold medal itself was accepted on their behalf by Lester Wolf, a member of the CAP during the war and who later served in congress for 17 years. The original will be placed in custody of the Smithsonian Institution and become a traveling display available to show around the United States. CAP members or family members received bronze replicas of the medal, which was the purpose of Monday’s ceremony in Portland.

The very first gold medal ever was presented to General George Washington on March 20, 1776. It has since been presented only 151 times to individuals and groups such as Orville and Wilber Wright, Charles Lindbergh, Brigadier General Billy Mitchell, Howard Hughes, the Tuskegee Airmen, and the Woman Air Force Service Pilots (WASPS).

Several of Oregon’s national senators and representatives, both Republican and Democrat, all signed the petition to give the award to the Civil Air Patrol—Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden, Suzanne Bonamici, Earl Blumentauer, Peter DeFazio, Kurt Schrader, and Greg Walden.

Six medals were awarded in total with the 45-minute ceremony held at the First United Methodist Church. The only living person from the six families honored in Oregon was Hellenmerie “Rie” Walker of Lewiston, Idaho. The Columbia Composite Squadron of CAP hosted this ceremony for the Oregon Wing of CAP.

Others awarded posthumously were George Felt, Obed Donaldson, Dean Rankin, and Harry M. Hewitt.

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BRUCE NICHOLS, CPA
STAN MITCHELL, CPA
2550 Broadway, Baker City
541-523-6471 • brucenichols@integra.net

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