

Election of labor candidates May 19 bodes well for workers

Two-thirds of the labor-backed candidates in Oregon's May 19 special election won their races, including three of the four graduates of the Oregon Labor Candidates School (OCLS) who sought office. The election was for nonpartisan school board and local district offices. Voter turnout ranged from 16 to 20 percent.

Voters also approved one labor-endorsed ballot measure: a \$125 million capital bond for **Reynolds School District**, which passed narrowly with 52 percent of the vote. Measure 26-164 had the support of the Northwest Oregon Labor Council (NOLC).

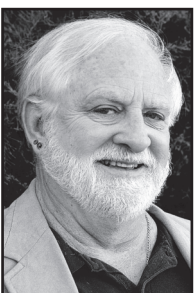
Here's how labor-backed candidates (in bold type) fared:

MULTNOMAH COUNTY

Multnomah Education Service District: **Stephen Marc Beaudoin** won with 55 percent of the vote in a three-way race for MESD position 6 at large, and American Federation of Teachers (AFT) member **Siobhan Burke**, an OCLS graduate, scored a lopsided win for 74 percent of the votes for Position 7, Zone 3.



Burke



Sonnleitner

Portland Community College Board: PCC instructor (and OCLS-grad) **Michael Sonnleitner** won with 38 percent in a three-way race. Sonnleitner is a member of the PCC Federation of Faculty and Academic Professionals (AFT Local 3922) and has taught political science at PCC for 27 years. Under state law, he has to quit his job at PCC in order to serve on the board.

Portland Public Schools Board: **Julie Esparza Brown** and **Paul Anthony** won with the backing of Portland Association of Teachers, but labor

endorsements didn't save incumbent **Bobbie Regan**, who fell short with 41 percent of the vote to 44 percent for challenger Amy Kohnstamm.

Corbett School District: **Lacey Auble**, backed by the Corbett Education Association, won with 58 percent.

CLACKAMAS COUNTY

North Clackamas School District Board: **Trisha Claxton**, **Lee Merrick**, and **Steven Schroedl** won office. Merrick and Schroedl were unopposed.

City of West Linn Mayor: **Thomas Frank**, backed by NOLC and United Food and Commercial Workers Local 555, lost with 45 percent in a race to fill an unexpired term.

WASHINGTON COUNTY

Hillsboro School District:

Kim Strelchun and **Lisa Allen** won, but AFT member **Jaime Rodriguez**, an OLCS grad, lost his second attempt at a school board seat, with 43 percent of the vote in a challenge to an incumbent.

Beaverton School District: **Becky Tymchuk**, backed by the Beaverton Education Association, won with 52 percent of vote in a three-way race. **Melissa Potter**, also backed by the Beaverton Education Association, lost.

Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue: **Randy Lauer** and **Brian Clopton**, backed by the Fire Fighters union, won. Clopton was unopposed.

COLUMBIA COUNTY

Port of St. Helens: Incumbent **Mike Avent**—endorsed by

NOLC, the Columbia Pacific Building Trades Council, and UFCW Local 555—won with 45 percent in three-way race. But incumbent **Robert Keyser** placed second in a three-way race, with 40 percent of vote; and incumbent **Colleen DeShazer** got 24 percent, placing a distant second in a four-way race.

LANE COUNTY

Eugene School Board: **Eileen Nittler** and **Mary Walston** won, but **Kevin Cronin** came in second in a three-way race.

Oakridge School District: Oregon School Employees Association member **Susan Hardy**, an OLCS graduate, won by just four votes—376-372.

Shipyard workers at Cascade General ratify pact

Shipyard workers at Cascade General ratified a new two-year contract May 28. The vote was 74-41. It was the third contract vote for the 184 workers represented by the Portland Metal Trades Council, a coalition of 10 craft unions at the shipyard on Swan Island. The previous contract expired Nov. 30, 2014.

Workers narrowly rejected a tentative agreement Jan. 16. The key issue was health insurance. The sides returned to the bargaining table Feb. 9, at which time Cascade General agreed to changes to the medical plan, but rescinded a ratification bonus that had been included in the first proposal. A new tentative

contract eventually was reached, but in voting held April 6, workers again narrowly rejected the proposal. In another round of bargaining May 8, the union coalition got the employer to move on a slightly better offer—enough for ratification.

"It was a very difficult negotiations over several months," said Bud Bartunek, area director of Painters District Council 5, and president of the Portland Metal Trades Council. "But we had members involved in the bargaining process with the employer. It helps having your members involved to point out different perspectives on issues."

"We were able to avoid a last best and final. You never know what that will look like," said Gary Moore, a business agent for Laborers Local 296 and executive secretary-treasurer of the Portland Metal Trades Council.

The new two-year contract expires Nov. 30, 2016. It adds \$1.40 an hour to the overall package the first year, and \$1.25 an hour the second year.

Workers can choose their preferred medical plan—either a 90-10 deductible plan through Regence Blue Cross or the current Kaiser Permanente plan, or an 80-20 deductible plan with Regence. Workers who choose the 80-20 plan will get a \$1.02 hourly increase on their check. Those choosing to keep the 90-10 plan will see a 20-cent hourly wage increase.

Workers also will receive a

one-time lump sum payment of \$300 on Dec. 1, 2015 to offset the cost of health insurance. Workers must log a minimum of 80 hours in a month to qualify for the medical plan.

Cascade General is owned by Vigor Industrial. Vigor Industrial is the parent company of Vigor Marine at Swan Island, plus several other ship building and repair facilities in Seattle, Tacoma, Everett, Bremerton and Port Angeles.

Shipyard workers at Cascade General in Portland, Vigor Shipyard in Bremerton and Everett, Wash., and Washington Marine Repair in Seattle and Port Angeles, Wash., are covered under one master labor agreement negotiated and administered by the national Metal Trades Department, AFL-CIO. That agreement expires in June 2017. The region's respective metal trades councils (i.e. Portland Metal Trades Council) then bargain local terms and conditions in side agreements, such as the one at Cascade General.

Bartunek and Moore said a goal of the Portland council was to align Cascade General's contract expiration date as closely as possible with the national agreement—as well as with other union contracts at Vigor Industrial facilities—to better position themselves for future negotiations.

You can follow the council on Facebook at: Metal Trades Council of Portland and Vicinity.



James Coon



Raymond Thomas



Cynthia Newton



Chris Frost



Cheryl Coon



Charley Gee



Melissa Haggerty



Sydney Montanaro

The team at
**SWANSON, THOMAS,
COON & NEWTON**
can help you:

**Social Security
Disability benefits:
You paid into the
system while you
worked and if you
can't work anymore,
it's time to obtain
them.**

- Workers' Compensation
- Construction Injuries
- Death Claims
- Personal Injury & Product Liability
- Social Security Disability
- Occupational Disease & Mesothelioma

Call us today at
503-228-5222

Straight answers.
No cost for consultation.
Our law offices are located on the MAX
Light Rail at SW 2nd & Yamhill.



SWANSON, THOMAS,
COON & NEWTON
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

820 S.W. Second Avenue, Suite 200
Portland, Oregon 97204
www.stc-law.com