

Endorsements 2004

May primary picks for national, state and local races

Below are EW's endorsements for the May Primary. Not all races are discussed since many are uncontested in the primary, and we've given focus and extra space to some of the races that we think are particularly important, or have not gotten much attention. Ballots are due at the county elections department by May 18. It's too late to register for this election, but if you are registered, please take the time to study these important candidate choices — and vote!



John Kerry

U.S. President

John Kerry (D)

We listen to those activist Democrats and respected friends of *EW* who urge us to endorse Kucinich, not Kerry, in the Oregon primary. But we can't do it. The defeat of George Bush is so critical to the kids and grandkids of this country and, indeed, the world, that a unity virtually alien to Democrats is essential this time. Kerry, with all his imperfections, has fought for and secured the nomination. He can only win the presidency if all of us work harder than we've ever worked in electoral politics to defeat the Republican grassroots organization already growing in Oregon and the rest of the country. That's what we endorse — the urgency and unity it will take to defeat George Bush and elect John Kerry.

Secretary of State

Bill Bradbury (D), Fred Granum (R)

Incumbent Bill Bradbury was an effective state lawmaker and consensus builder and has served Oregon well as secretary of state. Bradbury's one of the stars of Oregon politics and deserves re-election. His Democratic opponent Paul Damien Wells has no prior government experience and little to offer in meeting the demands of this important state job as head of elections, audits and record keeping. On the R side, business executive and entrepreneur

Fred Granum appears to be the best qualified candidate to oversee the auditing and efficiency elements of the position.

House District 7

Shirley Cairns (D)

Republican Bruce Hannah was recently appointed to fill the District 7 seat left vacant when Jeff Kruse left to run for a Senate position. Democrats need to pick a strong candidate to run against Hannah in the fall. Our choice is Shirley Cairns over Greg Thorne. Cairns, with her 40 years of civic involvement in Douglas County, is likely to enjoy more name recognition in November. Any Democrat who hopes to win in this conservative district is going to have to appeal to the middle ground, but Thorne goes too far when he declares, "Land use laws are a waste of tax dollars" (LWV Voters' Guide).

House District 8

Paul Holvey (D)

We've always liked Mitzi Colbath's high energy, determination and ability to get things done on the community level. We encouraged her to run for the open City Council position being vacated by Nancy Nathanson. We think she could have been a strong contender against Chris Pryor. But now Pryor is running unopposed and an opportunity to gain a progressive vote on the council is lost, along

with the lively debate that could have happened in Council Ward 8. Colbath's bowing out of the Democratic Party to become more "non-partisan" in a council race backfired when it prevented her from seeking the District 8 appointment after Floyd Prozanski moved to the Senate. Now she is seeking to unseat a proven and progressive Democrat.

Paul Holvey was appointed to the position in January, is performing very well by all reports we hear, and has been named to the important House Business and Commerce Committee. Holvey is knowledgeable, active and effective on issues of labor, business, education and the environment. He's advocated for living wage and labor standards, along with full disclosure and accountability for businesses getting tax breaks. He knows forestry issues, appreciates the folly in unsustainable sprawl and supports "green" building. In short, there's no good reason to give Holvey the boot.

The third D running for District 8 is Hart Williams, who somehow got left out of the Voters' Pamphlet. Williams is solid on land use, tax reform and government accountability, but has not mounted an aggressive campaign.



Paul Holvey

Judge, Supreme Court, 4

Rives Kistler

Incumbent Judge Rives Kistler is being challenged by attorney James Leuenberger, and it's really no contest. Kistler has impeccable academic credentials and a strong record of dedicated service on the Supreme Court as well as the Court of Appeals and the state Department of Justice. Leuenberger, a recent transplant from Idaho, has little experience on the bench and it's obvious he's running on an ultra-conservative agenda. Leuenberger has been associated with Lon Mabon and

the Oregon Citizens Alliance, an avowed anti-gay organization. Kistler is perhaps the only openly gay supreme court judge in the country. Leuenberger is critical of judicial power "subversion" and makes a point of being a devout Christian and a family man.

Judge, Supreme Court

Position 7

William Riggs

Again, we have a hardworking distinguished jurist, William Riggs, being challenged by a significantly less qualified candidate, in this case, 6th District Circuit Court Judge Rudy Murgo. There's no reason to bump Riggs out of office.

Judge, Court of Appeals

Position 7

Robert Wollheim

Robert Wollheim has served Oregon well as a careful and compassionate judge on the Court of Appeals since 1998. He carries on well Oregon's tradition of intelligent, impartial judges. His challenger, Phil Brockett, is an attorney and former CIA officer who's only been a member of the Oregon Bar for the past two years.

Lane County Commission,

Position 4

Greg Ringer

Any challenger for county commission in north Lane County faces a very tough race, with longtime incumbent Bobby Green Sr. deeply established as a leader in the area and on the Board of County Commissioners.

But we have hope for newcomer Greg Ringer, local community planner and university educator with "20 years [experience] enabling local, regional and national governments," he says. Ringer is undaunted by the incumbent and feels north Lane County may be ready for an alternative. "I entered the county race for reasons both personal and professional. ... I did so because the electoral process benefits from a meaningful exchange of ideas and a choice of candidates. I also desire to challenge those who made the term 'progressive' a pejorative in our community, and remind voters instead of the true meaning of the word — to be farsighted and forward thinking. A progressive leader considers the needs of the entire county, rather than select individuals and industries in the decision-making process," Ringer says.

In
Focus