

Tony's Palm Card

The view from the left field bleachers

Been livin' down here as a hermit for the last three years in the foothills of the Cascades, south of Cottage Grove. I've missed you folks, and I've missed doing the column. Jeannie still lets me clean the horse stalls, so I have continued with my fascination for all things political.

One of the services I used to provide for my friends and co-workers, long before going into elected office, was a "palm card" of recommendations on candidates and ballot measures to take with them into the voter's box at their precinct polling site. These days, with vote-by-mail, you don't have to shrink it down to palm size; so here you go:

Federal and Statewide Candidates

4th Congressional District – Peter DeFazio. He's the top of the Lane County Democratic ticket, in more ways than one. Peter embodies all the best characteristics of a Democrat taking on the robber-baron mentality of Bush-Cheney-Rove-Rumsfeld, the real axis of evil, who make American government look heinous to even our closest allies.

His opponent, Jim Feldkamp, is one cheeky guy. He sends out disinformation on Peter's record supporting veterans. He takes a campaign donation from Tom Delay and doesn't return it even after Delay faces indictment for campaign fraud. He takes money from convicted Republican Congressman Duke Cunningham and doesn't return it. He gets nailed for federal campaign violations and simply waves them off as insignificant. Who is this guy, Feldkamp? How did this former federal agent show up on our doorstep? Oh, that's right, he's independently wealthy; he's an heir to a Roseburg dairy business. He's the Umpqua dairy-heir! Who'da thunk he's just a bad pun?

Governor – Kulongoski – I know some of my Democratic friends are mad that Ted and the Senate Democrats didn't stand up more visibly to the Republican House leadership's intransigent position on a bad state budget in 2005. Having said that, if you're a progressive, a K-12 or higher ed supporter, a senior, a private sector union member, a PERS member, an uninsured worker or Latino, you'd be nuts to support Saxton.

Oregon Supreme Court – Ginny Linder – Most qualified judge, by experience alone. Her opponent, Jack Roberts, is a nice man, but he hasn't practiced law for years. Supreme Court judges are not problem-solvers; their job is to interpret the law, not to change it or create it.

Oregon Legislature

Senate 4 – Floyd Prozanski – my old seat couldn't be held by any better.



Senate 7 – Vicki Walker - Jim Torrey is anti-choice, anti-civil unions, and pro-Bush; enough said.

House 8 - Paul Holvey – great voice for labor and progressives.

House 9 – Arnie Roblan – a class act.

House 10 – Jean Cowan – she may unseat Alan Brown.

House 11 – Phil Barnhart – solid and thoughtful.

House 12 – Terry Beyer – smart, widely respected.

House 13 - Nancy Nathanson – We'll all be watching you, Nancy.

House 14 – Chris Edwards – Debi Farr is an anti-education vote. She calls Speaker Minnis her role model; enough said.

Statewide Ballot Measures

39 – NO? – Eminent Domain – bad public policy, but then, so is condemning private property for private parties.

40 – NO – Requires Supreme Court and Court of Appeals judges be elected by district. Last time I checked, our statutes are statewide, not by district.

41 – NO – Cuts state revenue by taxing the rich less. Bad idea.

42 - ? – No use of "credit scores" by insurance companies. This is bankrupt Bill Sizemore's proposal, but he does have a point: There's no proof that lower credit rating means higher misuse of insurance.

43 – NO – Parental notification.

44 – YES – Residents without prescription coverage can access the Oregon Prescription Drug Program; helps the uninsured working poor.

45 – NO – Legislative term limits. You can vote and get same result. I was there the first time around, it did nothing but increase the lobbyists' power.

46 & 47 – NO – Campaign finance reform proposals. When Planned Parenthood, NARAL, OLCV, Stand for Children, Basic Rights Oregon, Ecumenical Ministries, and the unions think it's a bad idea, it's a bad idea.

48 – NO – TABOR, government spending cap. Another Bill Sizemore-Grover Norquist proposal to shrink government to fit in a bathtub, then drown it.

Lane County Ballot Measures

Lane County #20-120 – YES – An LCC levy costs an average of \$10 a year for five years for instructional support only, not for buildings. Despite layoffs, these folks do great work, and they have no resources.

The key in the Nov. 7 election is: whoever turns out their base better – progressives or the radical right - wins. So, JUST VOTE, dammit!

Tony Corcoran is a former legislator and EW columnist, currently on the state payroll. This column represents his views as a private Oregon citizen.



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