

COUNTY TO VOTE ON DISTRICT BOUNDARIES

Lane County commissioners will hold one more public meeting on whether and how to redraw county voter boundaries in a once-every-10-years process called redistricting. This year's process, which must be finished six months before the May 2012 election, has been contentious with allegations of gerrymandering to alter the future makeup of the Lane Board of County Commissioners.

The commissioners will take public comment on the three possible scenarios that they will be voting on at a meeting at 1:30 pm Wednesday, Oct. 26, at Harris Hall.

Scenario one is to leave the voting boundaries as they are. According to Commissioner Rob Handy, the majority of public comments at the last public hearing on redistricting on Oct. 5 called for the voting boundaries to be left as is.

Handy said that scenario three, which he slightly tweaked, addresses many concerns, such as moving Glenwood into Springfield to maintain that community of interest, and he said it "makes the smallest adjustments possible to the other boundaries, and where it does make changes it really does a better job of keeping neighborhoods and communities of common interest whole." This scenario leaves Bethel-Danebo intact, and does not move the Whiteaker neighborhood, potential moves that have concerned area residents.

In an email to the commissioners, Mayor Kitty Piercy wrote in support of either option one or three. She wrote, "the Eugene City Council agreed that, like the state, only minor tweaks to our current wards are necessary since no population growth necessitates any large changes. We have moved forward with small changes and little to no controversy and I'm very pleased with that outcome."

Piercy, who is a resident of the Whiteaker neighborhood, which would be split under option eight, continued, "You too, have seen little population change and none that necessitates any large change in current districts." She says, "Whiteaker neighborhood is well served in its current district, and I ask you not to support option eight which would change this designation."

Commissioner Jay Bozievich added scenario eight after the last public hearing. It is a revision of scenario six, which was discussed at the meeting. Bozievich said that scenario eight "does the best job of meeting the secretary of state's criteria" as outlined in a directive sent to the counties in June, "and also follows the descriptions of the districts in the Lane Charter well."

Commissioner Pete Sorenson said that scenario eight is a gerrymander of the county designed to redraw the North Eugene district to move more liberal voters, such as those in the Whiteaker, out of North Eugene to create a conservative majority on the board.

In an Oct. 13 comment to *The Register-Guard*, Bozievich said that his concern over scenario three is that Republican candidate Mike Clark, who has filed a prospective petition to run against Handy for the North Eugene seat next year, would no longer live in the district. Under scenario three, Clark would live in the East Lane district and would run against fellow conservative Faye Stewart for office.

Bozievich said, "I made that comment about Councilor Clark offhand and did not intend for it to become the focus of redistricting."

Handy said it was not his revision that would cause Clark's district to move. That revision was already present in the version of the scenario that the redistricting task force has been examining for several months.

Andrea Cantu-Schomus, communications director for the Oregon Secretary of State's Office, which oversees redistricting, said that if Clark as a candidate were to be drawn out of one district and into another, he would simply run in that new district.

She said that redistricting is determined by the criteria sent to the counties by the Secretary of State's Office, and by the county charter. According to the criteria given to the redistricting task force, redistricting cannot affect a commissioner who is already in office. The criteria also say that there can be "no favoritism to any person."

— Camilla Mortensen

EUGENE PUTS KID ON TRIAL FOR SITTING ON PARK WALL

For years Eugene police have been arguing that they lack the taxpayer money to respond to even serious crimes.

But some crimes the city police and prosecutors have focused their existing resources on aren't so serious.

Josie Johnson said her son Nate, 18, won acquittal in a trial in Eugene Municipal Court last week. The alleged crime was sitting on a low wall in a park downtown.

"It seems kind of silly," Johnson said. "It seems kind of strange."

She said police argued in the citation and at the trial that sitting on the low wall in the park blocks violated a city ordinance against using park property against its designated use. The wall-sitting offense carried a fine of \$75 plus \$40 in fees, she said.

Johnson said earlier her son and a friend had been jumping off walls and trees practicing a sport named parkour but were just sitting when the police arrived. She said the earlier jumping caused someone to call and complain, but they weren't cited for that.

"He's an Eagle Scout; he's an all around good kid," Johnson said of her son. "Gee, the boys were running around having fun in the park. I'm still puzzled by the whole thing."

"I appreciate a good police presence," Johnson said. "But I think they should have bigger things to deal with."

Carol Berg-Caldwell, a citizen who watchdogs the city court, said she's seen the police use the same wall-sitting charge to single out homeless and young people downtown. "I think they simply go through ordinances and try to find things that they can apply to the people they don't want downtown," she said.

Attorney Lauren Regan, who represents a local woman who was also ticketed for wall-sitting, says she has heard that the police have said they will cease giving wall-sitting tickets. But that remains to be seen. — Alan Pittman

OLCV RELEASES SCORECARD ON LEGISLATURE

The Oregon League of Conservation Voters (OLCV) released its semi-annual Environmental Scorecard for the Oregon Legislature Oct. 13 at olcv.org/scorecard and lawmakers in the southern Willamette Valley ranked relatively high again this year.

Earning a 100 percent ranking for his environmental votes was Sen. Floyd Prozanski, up from 79 percent in 2009. Other high scorers were Rep. Phil Barnhart with 93 percent, and Sens. Chris Edwards, Frank Morse and Peter Courtney with 92 percent. Reps. Paul Holvey, Nancy Nathanson and Sara Gelser earned 87 percent ratings, followed by Reps. Val Hoyle and Brian Clem at 80 percent.

Lower on the rankings were Sen. Jackie Winters at 69 percent, Rep. Kevin Cameron at 67 percent, Reps. Vicki Berger and Andy Olson at 64 percent, and Rep. Terry Beyer at 60 percent.

Looking south at the Roseburg area were some surprises.

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Happening people BY PAUL NEEVEL



JESSICA ZAPATA

Born in Mexico City, Jessica Zapata moved with her family at age 8 to Cuernavaca, the "City of Eternal Spring," to ease her brother's asthma. She studied architecture at the local University of Morelos, worked as an architect in Mexico City while she earned a masters in restoration, then went into business with one of her best friends in Cuernavaca. "We did both restoration and architecture," she says. In 1997, she met her future husband, Dan Howard, a Eugene native who was in Mexico to study Spanish. She spent time in the U.S.; he spent time in Mexico, and eventually they married. She joined him in Eugene four years ago and found work as an ESL assistant at Prairie Mountain School. "The Latino kids didn't have their familiar festivities," Zapata noticed, so she organized a Day of the Dead celebration, then got inspired and followed up with more arts and music evenings in Bethel schools and around town. In 2009, she founded Eugene Arte Latino to sponsor monthly cultural events in collaboration with community groups. "Everything we do is free," says Zapata, who also dances with Andean musicians Sol de los Andes. "We volunteer and we never charge." EAL will present a Dia de los Muertos fiesta at Downtown Languages, 1035 Willamette, from 5:30 to 8 pm Friday, Nov. 4.