

GREEN PARTY FIGHTS FOR EQUITY

While many Eugeneans have already settled on voting for Democrats or Republicans in the Nov. 6 election, other parties are on the ballot, and third parties are actively registering new voters. According to the *Oregon Blue Book*, about 26 percent of Oregon voters were registered with third parties or are unaffiliated with a party.

Pat Driscoll, Pacific Green Party candidate for Oregon state treasurer, says that in the upcoming election, the Green Party's goal is to provide voters with information and alternatives on issues and give voters a broader point of view than they see from the two "corporate parties."

Driscoll says that environmental destruction, corruption in the banking industry, targeted kills abroad and the deaths of innocents by remote drone control all go completely unchecked under President Obama, so it's hard to consider him the lesser of two evils. "When you talk about evil, what line do you have to cross before recognizing that certain actions — like murder, theft, torture, destruction of the environment — are those actions enough on their own to warrant saying, 'I'm not voting for that; that's a line I'm not willing to cross'?" Driscoll asks.

While the Green Party is known for its pro-environment positions, Driscoll says that the biggest misconception voters have about the Greens is that they're only concerned with sustainability. "We're also very supportive of social and economic justice and also peace and nonviolence," he says. "Our four pillars of the Green Party are sustainability, social and economic justice, grassroots democracy and peace and nonviolence."

To make the elections process more inclusive of third parties, Driscoll thinks that barriers to participating in events such as debates need to be removed. "Any candidate who's on the ballot should be in front of the American people," he says, citing Green Party presidential candidate Jill Stein's presence on 85 percent of U.S. ballots this year. He says that getting the money out of politics is also vital to leveling the playing field.

Driscoll says that about 11,000 Oregonians are registered with the Green Party, including about 2,000 voters registered in 2012. About 69 percent of Oregon's Green Party voters were born after 1980, he says.

Green Party presidential candidate Jill Stein and Libertarian candidate Gary Johnson debated for the Independent Voter Network Oct. 17, and footage can be viewed at wkly.ws/1dj. *EW* did not get a response to an interview request with a representative from the Oregon Libertarian Party, but you can check out our interview on marijuana regulation with Libertarian vice-presidential candidate James P. Gray at wkly.ws/1dk — *Shannon Finnell*

MORE VOTERS REGISTERED ON CAMPUSES

People in their late teens and early 20s don't have the best track record when it comes to voting. That's why around election time, voter registration volunteers show up on college campuses, encouraging students to fill out their registration cards. The registration deadline has passed, but now it's up to students to follow through and vote.

Students especially tend to not vote "down the ballot," meaning they vote for president but not for key local races, but student voters living close to campus will want to pay attention to Phil Barnhart in District 11, Paul Holvey in District 8 and Nancy Nathanson in District 13, all state representatives in districts surrounding UO. Also of interest is longtime City Councilor Betty Taylor vs. Juan Carlos Valle in a race for southeast Eugene's Ward 2.

Merriam Weatherhead, president of the Associated Students of Lane Community College, says she wants to make a positive change at LCC through voter recruitment.

"The moment we don't vote is when we lose our voices in the political system," Weatherhead says. "We've seen tuition increases year after year, and I think that students see registration and voting as a way to be more involved than in the past. If we don't vote, we're contributing to our tuition going up."

In the last presidential election, voter turnout in the 18-

to-24 age group was at 49 percent, the lowest percentage of all the age groups in 2008. With LCC's voter recruitment efforts this year, the registered LCC student population now surpasses the average.

Weatherhead says that 6,886 students were registered to vote at LCC, comprising more than half of the on-campus student body. Calling it the "single largest voter registration campaign ever" for LCC, Weatherhead says registration this year is an improvement over two years ago, when less than 4,000 students were registered.

The UO saw a record-breaking year as well, with more than 9,000 students registered. Greg McAteer, legislative director for Associated Students of the University of Oregon, says ASUO far surpassed their initial goal of registering 6,000 students. Starting in the summer, ASUO volunteers, along with volunteers with the Vote OR Vote Campaign, gave classroom speeches and recruited voters off the sidewalk.

McAteer says that while registration is important, the next step is being informed.

"Read up, do some literature searching and make sure you understand the language on ballots," McAteer says. "Educate yourself — it's your obligation." — *Amy Schneider*

SANDY'S ENERGY IMPLICATIONS

Just days before Hurricane Sandy smacked into the East Coast, turning New York City streets into waterways, a tsunami advisory was issued for the West Coast from Alaska into California, as well as Hawaii, as a result of an 7.7 earthquake off the coast of British Columbia. These water disasters, or near disasters — the tsunami was in the end rather small — call to mind the 2011 Japanese quake and tsunami and the subsequent nuclear plant dangers that arose. Oregon State scientists recently announced that trace amounts of radiation from the Fukushima nuclear reactors were found in Northwest albacore tuna, but say the fish are safe to eat.

The Oyster Creek nuclear plant in New Jersey shares the same design as the Fukushima Daichi plant that released radiation after being hit by the tsunami, according to news reports. A press release from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission says an alert was released for Oyster Creek on Oct. 29, "due to water exceeding certain high water level criteria in the plant's water intake structure." The agency listed 10 other plants, including Three Mile Island, that were being monitored by NRC inspectors during the storm.

Oyster Creek was already shut down for a regularly scheduled outage, the NRC says, but nuclear energy critics say the danger is as much from the spent fuel rods, which are cooled in pools of water, as it is from the energy generation itself. An "alert" is one level above an "unusual event" and is the second lowest of the four NRC action levels.

Meanwhile on the West Coast, Canadian papers are reporting that activists say the Oct. 27 earthquake and tsunami was a wake-up call for the companies working to build oil pipelines through Canada to the coast where the oil would be loaded onto tankers. They warn of dangers to the pipelines due to quakes and flooding — the 2011 oil leak into the Yellowstone River was believed to be caused by flooding — and the activists warn of oil tankers 10 times the size of the Exxon Valdez that could be swamped by a tsunami.

While earthquakes have not been linked to climate change, scientists have predicted that storms and hurricanes will increase as the global temperatures increase. Scientists at the Oregon Climate Change Research Institute in a 2011 study wrote that in Oregon, "Coastal infrastructure will come under increased risk to damage and inundation under a changing climate," and they note impacted sectors include transportation and navigation, coastal engineering structures and flood control. With the current debates over the International Port of Coos Bay's attempts to export coal via trains and tankers, and liquefied natural gas through pipelines and tankers, it appears that natural disasters, climate-change induced or otherwise, have implications for Oregon's energy industry. — *Camilla Mortensen*

IT'S ABOUT TIME BY DAVID WAGNER

The American wigeons are back in the Delta Ponds. I believe these are the first of our winter migrants to arrive. I look forward to the increasing diversity of waterfowl. On our side of the Delta Highway we have had only mallards and Canada geese for a long time.

Turtles can be seen in the Delta Ponds on the west side of Delta Highway but it appears the cormorants have usurped them from their favorite logs. With increasing cold weather and less sun showing, the turtles will burrow into the mud at the bottom of the ponds to brumate.

Now that summer is over, the old needles are falling from the Douglas firs in great numbers. These are last year's needles for the most part. The needles that emerged from their buds this spring will finally get around to doing their job. Over the rainy season they will double in thickness, storing carbohydrates. When the weather gets warmer in the spring, they will transport that energy down to the tree trunk and put on some board feet.

Seedlings have sprouted everywhere now that the rainy season has begun. Things like bedstraw and bitter cress have a pair of seed leaves, called cotyledons. They were already present in miniature inside the seed. Grass seedlings send up a single, tiny, green spear. That's why members of the grass family are known as monocotyledons while those families with two seed leaves are called dicotyledons. Conifers are different; hemlock seeds have up to six cotyledons.

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