

DESPICABLE TACTICS

In September 1988 the National Security Political Action Committee started running ads against the Democratic nominee for president, Gov. Mike Dukakis. They accused the governor of allowing Willie Horton, an African American and convicted felon, to be released from prison on a prison furlough program and then committing another horrible crime. In October 1988 the George H.W. Bush campaign piled on, with an attack ad of its own. The ads, taken together, are known to campaign professionals as the “Willie Horton treatment.” The ads and the connotation are despicable.

Fast forward to the 1994 general election right here in Lane County. The rural Lane County district was represented by Karsten Rasmussen. I remember what happened to then senator (now judge) Rasmussen when Bob Kintigh’s backers, Rasmussen’s Republican opponent, ran a series of Willie Horton-type ads on him. This resulted in the seat switching from a moderate Democrat (and a state senator with a bright career in elective politics) to that of a conservative Republican. I remember having voted with Rasmussen on most issues in the Senate and then spending the entire 1995 grueling session having virtually all of my votes countered by Kintigh’s votes.

Now, State Rep. Phil Barnhart is the victim of Andy Petersen’s Willie Horton-type tactics. Campaigns run these ads because, although they are despicable, they work.

If you want to return a progressive legislator to Oregon’s House, please vote for Phil Barnhart. If you oppose the “Willie Horton” tactics, vote for Phil and send a

message that this tactic, while it works elsewhere, isn’t welcome in our county.

Pete Sorenson
Lane County commissioner
South Eugene District

VETS ARE SUFFERING

Surely we can do better than to leave our veterans out in the rain in holey tents with little food and no running water. The city set up this camp in my neighborhood some months ago, right next to the train tracks and Northwest Expressway. The city chose the 15 really nice people who live there and Mayor Kitty Piercy has called it a model camp.

Please go and visit. It will break your heart, as it does mine every time I find a ride to deliver what little food I can collect from my neighbors. If you have anything to bring them, especially food, bedding or even cardboard for burning in their fire pit, they will be so grateful.

Last time I was there they insisted on sharing some food with me! They don’t want to beg or complain but they do sometimes completely run out of food. And please, *EW*, run some photos of this sad place so everyone understands how we’re treating our vets.

Margareta Gannon
Eugene

OUR DEMOCRATIC PROCESS

As this election cycle winds down, those who go the extra mile to help get out the vote want our candidates to win and put forward the ideas and values we support. But above and beyond that, we hope our democratic due process will

continue to thrive. We work today so future generations of Americans will receive the priceless gifts of our beloved democracy.

As mature citizens, we know that we will not always agree with all the decisions of our elected officials. We continue to participate in the democratic process, however, because all other options are far less acceptable than the American Dream we have inherited. We know our system is not perfect. We know powerful undemocratic interests would like it to fail. It is up to us to see that they do not succeed.

There is something we have that the undemocratic forces do not have and can never have: We have the ability to set aside our personal selfish interests and seek a common agreement. I am a registered Democrat, but I am an old-school, Kennedy-era Democrat. I have always been willing to work with moderate Republicans to seek that common path.

After this election, we must work together to save the underlying principles of our *democratic republic*. Those two words say it all.

Thank you very much for reading, and see you at the round table after the election.

Mary D. Stephens
Florence

CHOICE FOR EAST LANE

Many voters don’t realize that though Faye Stewart won the primary in May, there is still an opportunity to write in a candidate for East Lane County commissioner on the November ballot.

Stewart avoided a run-off with Kevin Matthews by only nine votes. For all the voters who want to see a change in our county government, there is still an

opportunity to act. Matthews is running a write-in campaign to provide East Lane County voters with a choice.

Matthews received endorsements from the Lane County Labor Council, the AFL-CIO, the Oregon League of Conservation Voters, Mayor Kitty Piercy and former Lane County Commissioner Jerry Rust among many others [*Eugene Weekly*]. The majority of his campaign contributions came from private citizens rather than the timber and gravel industries. His campaign ran on the energy of local volunteers rather than robo-calls made from Texas and campaign ads paid for by right-wing PACs.

Kevin represents the interests of all the residents of Lane County. He has taken a strong stand on issues such as protecting our clean water and building long-term economic prosperity with a focus on recreational tourism and revitalizing our rural communities. When we have commissioners who continually side with industry at the expense of community residents, there is a vital need for an advocate who will speak for the people of Lane County.

There is still an opportunity to make a choice — write in Kevin Matthews for East Lane County commissioner.

Cristina Hubbard
Cottage Grove

AN EMBARRASSMENT

EPUD customers from Veneta, you have an opportunity to put some dignity and respect back into the EPUD Board of Directors. It is way past time for Patti Chappel to move on. A vote for your local candidate Lee Kelley would be an opportunity to elect a responsible, respectful professional to the board.

VIEWPOINT BY JUDGE BILL RIGGS

A Judge’s Perspective

LEGALIZING MARIJUANA MAKES SENSE

As a former Justice of the Oregon Supreme Court and with more than 30 years of experience as a judge, I have reviewed thousands of laws. I have also carefully read and considered Measure 91, which will regulate, legalize and tax the adult use of marijuana. I believe it is both a solid, well-written law and the right thing to do.

As Oregonians, we have an opportunity this November to cast a vote for common sense. The legalization of marijuana is inevitable, but it is important that we do it right. If Measure 91 passes, Oregon will have a safer, more sensible policy on marijuana, with strict controls and protections and much needed revenue flowing to state and local law enforcement, drug treatment and schools.

At the same time, it will deal a crippling blow to the



criminals and drug cartels who control and profit from the current system of treating the adult use of marijuana as a crime. The current system does not deter drug dealers — who don’t ask for ID — from selling to youth. On the other hand, Measure 91 keeps the act of selling to anyone under 21 a felony, and provides additional resources and regulations to help enforce that.

Additionally, the resources and time spent on the current system represent both a waste and a damaging distraction for law enforcement. Rather than arresting or citing a person every 39 minutes for a marijuana-related crime, I’d prefer our police officers and deputies spend more time going after violent criminals, identity thieves and child predators. We pay for the police to keep us safe. Diverting law enforcement resources to pursuing adults over 21 for no other reason than they choose to use marijuana doesn’t do that.

That is why prominent voices from law enforcement and the criminal justice system have spoken out in favor of Measure 91.

Another compelling reason to vote “yes” on 91 is that we have the advantage of being the third state to regulate, legalize and tax marijuana. Legal, regulated marijuana is on sale in Washington and Colorado, and by the time it’s on sale in Oregon in 2016 nearly a decade of experience will be shared among the three states.

Traffic fatalities are down or flat in Colorado and Washington. Wasteful arrests are down. In Colorado, teen use is down. Both states have already collected millions of dollars in new tax revenue.

As you consider your vote, I would encourage you to read the measure itself in the Voters Pamphlet. I believe you will see that it is a thoughtful, careful approach that has earned the endorsement of Oregon newspapers like *The Oregonian*, *The Register-Guard*, *Eugene Weekly* and the *Medford Mail Tribune*, alongside an impressive number of respected organizations representing senior citizens, working families and health care professionals.

You don’t have to like marijuana to see that the regulations and protections of Measure 91 are far better than the system we have now. An Oregon with Measure 91 will be a safer, healthier place than an Oregon without it. I hope you will join me in voting “yes.”

Bill Riggs of Wilsonville served as an Oregon Supreme Court justice from 1998 to 2006. His current status is senior judge for Oregon.