



• “Red Barn” is one well-known piece from the great legacy of **Oregon artist Mark Clarke**, who died suddenly Jan. 11 at age 80. His memorial was Jan. 17 in The Shedd. Remembered both for how he captured his surroundings in oil and acrylic, and for how he and his family lived in this world, Mark Clarke fortunately had been planning a retrospective in the Schnitzer museum on the UO campus next year. We have that to look forward to.

• “What can we do about it?” was a recurring question Jan. 15 at the City Club of Eugene meeting about **racial and cultural inequity in health services**. Easy answer: Work harder than we’ve ever worked before to keep any of these Republican presidential candidates from winning office in November 2016. If one of them does win, Obamacare will be gone, the Supreme Court will be even more conservative, affecting voting rights, and present inequity in health services will grow, grow, grow. We only have 10 months to keep that from happening.

• Oregon Republicans are gathering for their annual **Dorchester Conference** March 11-13 in Seaside and they will actually be talking about gun safety this year. WTF? Maybe they are feeling pressure to *do something* beyond their usual defense of unfettered gun ownership. On the confab agenda is discussion of whether gun owners should be legally culpable if someone else uses their firearms in criminal acts. We don’t expect the R’s to push any positive legislation, but at least they are recognizing one aspect of our irresponsible gun culture.

• The **VanillaSIS occupation** of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge has drawn a lot of attention, and mockery, to Oregon. But one positive aspect of the shitshow that is the Bundy-led Y’allQaeda takeover of the Malheur is the focus that has come to bear on how much Oregonians love our public lands. More than 100 people slogged out in the cold rain on Jan. 19 to rally for the refuge here in Eugene. More calls for “birds not bullies” were shouted at sister rallies organized by conservation groups in Portland, Salem and Idaho. Meanwhile, Eugene natives Jake and Zach Klonoski are leading an anti-Bundy effort to raise money by pledging donations to groups that are antithetical to the Bundys for each day they remain at Malheur. As of Jan. 19, they had raised more than \$40,000 for Friends of Malheur NWR, Americans for Responsible Action, Burns Paiute tribe and the Southern Poverty Law Center. Their website is [gohomemalheur.org](http://gohomemalheur.org).

### 4J GENDER POLICY SERVES AS MODEL FOR OTHER OREGON SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Until last year, Eugene School District 4J did not have a policy in place to specifically protect transgender and gender non-conforming students.

When 4J school psychologist Brianna Stiller was developing 4J’s gender policy, which the 4J School Board passed in the spring of 2015, district lawyers told her that since 4J already had anti-harassment policies in place, it didn’t need a gender policy.

“I told them, ‘You’re missing the point,’” Stiller says.

Eugene 4J was the first school district in Oregon to pass a gender policy. Now, the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) is sharing that policy with districts around the state, as well as sharing 4J’s push to change first names for students in school databases.

“Kids who are transgender or non-gender conforming need support from the district,” Stiller says.

According to a 4J School Climate Survey, 7 to 9 percent of secondary students in the district identify as LGBTQ, which amounts to more than 1,000 kids, Stiller says. The data also shows that 54 percent of 4J secondary students observe harassment related to sexual orientation at least once a month.

Stiller worked over several years to develop 4J’s gender policy, and she wrote it in partnership with Carmen Urbina, 4J’s parent, family and community coordinator, as well as others in the district and community.

The policy, among other things, allowed 4J’s superintendent to change the district’s administrative rules related to gender, establishing language that protects students’ rights to use bathrooms that correspond to their gender identity as well as participate in athletics, access locker rooms and dress in accordance with their gender identity.

Another gender-related accomplishment Stiller and 4J implemented recently includes a modification to 4J’s student computer information system called Synergy, which generates attendance lists for the district and collects data for ODE.

“What we were finding with transgendered students is that they often go by a name that identifies them as a different gender than they were born with, so they would be living under a different name and doing that for years, and then at the beginning of the school year, the teacher would unintentionally read down the list and out them as transgender,” says Cindy Hunt, government and legal affairs manager for ODE.

The system didn’t allow first-name changes, but after Stiller worked with ODE, students can have their first name and genders changed at the state level, helping prevent students from being outed against their will.

Hunt says districts in Oregon are seeing students come out as transgender earlier, and ODE is working with Stiller and others to develop a toolkit to help other districts in Oregon develop their own policies regarding gender. Districts in McMinnville, Dallas and Portland have expressed interest in developing a gender policy, Hunt says.

Next up for 4J, Stiller says, is ensuring that the policy is followed. Currently, principals are trained on the policy and then expected to pass the information along, but Stiller says ideally, the district would pay for training the entire staff.

“Education and awareness is key,” Stiller says. — Amy Schneider

**‘Kids who are transgender or non-gender conforming need support from the district.’**

— BRIANNA STILLER, 4J



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