

Opinion

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OUR VIEW

All votes matter, have an impact

County makes every effort to ensure the count is right

Spokesman Editorial Board

Two votes. If you think your vote doesn't matter, just a few years ago an election in a Republican primary for state representative in Deschutes County was decided by two votes.

Jack Zika won and went on to become a state representative, representing Redmond and areas nearby.

If you think vote counts are suspicious, the hand recount in that race got exactly the same result. Two votes. The Republican candidates praised the local election officials for their transparency and integrity.

That recount is a point of pride for Steve Dennison. He is the Deschutes County clerk. That makes him the top election official in the county. He wasn't clerk at that time but he was working in the office ensuring that count was right. He told us Tuesday his top priority this election and every election is just that, getting the count

right.

Ballot security and the counts are taken seriously. There is a separate locked room and camera for the machine which takes an image of the signatures on the ballots, the machines that slice open the ballot envelopes and the scanners that read the ballots.

County staff verify signatures on every ballot, comparing them with what the clerk's office has on file. If a signature can't be verified, the voter is sent a letter and told how the dispute can be cleared up.

Temporary elections employees are the ones who actually remove the ballots from envelopes and prepare them to be counted. They are members of a mix of parties. Removing ballots is done in an open room.

The clerk's office does go back and do audits of its counts as an additional check on the integrity of the system. Dennison said he will receive a notice from the Oregon secretary of state to do a hand recount of, say, a certain precincts votes on a few different races. He says the county's record is solid.

Several checks are in place to ensure dead people or people who have moved away don't get to vote. His staff reads *The Bulletin* and other local newspapers to check the obituaries. Voter rolls are checked with DMV records, Post Office change of address notices, records from Oregon and other states and more.

The biggest question his office is getting right now is from people frustrated that they don't get to vote in the party primaries. Oregon has a closed primary. Only Democrats get to vote in the Democratic primary. Only Republicans get to vote in the Republican primary. After a person gets their ballot, it's too late to switch party affiliation from non-affiliated or something else to one of the two major parties to vote in a party primary.

If you have questions or concerns about how elections work in the county, the best source of information is not to dive down rabbit holes with web searches or research posts on Twitter. Call the clerk's office, 541-388-6547. They are the ones who know.

YOUR VIEWS

Outrage over vandalism at parks

I am just outraged at the stupidity and lack of responsibility those folks who broke toilets, wash basins, etc. in the Redmond parks.

If they ever had to live where you had to use a toilet outside a ways from the house without benefit of running water, heat or lights, you would never ever think of destroying a toilet/bathroom again.

Those perpetrators, if ever caught, should be made to clean inside toilets every day for a year to learn to appreciate inside

plumbing and what it costs to replace or repair those broken ones.
— Diana Raske, Sisters

Stand up and help those who need it

Unbelievable, *The Bulletin* recently has a full-page article on a homeless single mother. And on the second page Redmond hopes to gain monetary support and rescue for families wishing to leave Afghanistan.

Both are tragic! However, it sure would be nice to help the homeless mother of four!

How about it Eagle Crest?
— Janice Ruiter, Bend

LETTERS AND COLUMNS

Join in on the topics we're covering. The Spokesman welcomes letters to the editor and guest columnists.

Submissions may be edited or rejected for clarity, taste, libel and space. They must be signed and include an address and a telephone

number where the writer can be reached during business hours. Full addresses and phone numbers will not be published. For more information, call 541-633-2166.

To submit, email is preferred: news@redmondspokesman.com. Submissions can also be mailed to: P.O. Box 6020, Bend, OR 97708

Even in the digital age, personal banking can still be personal

BY TIM DIZNEY

Selco Community Credit Union

In an increasingly digital age, it's refreshing to see aspects of our lives where the convenience of technology and the personal nature of human interaction can still co-exist. And when it comes to being personal, there aren't many things more personal than our financial affairs.

But a trend toward brick-and-mortar branch consolidations and closures, and increased pressure for consumers to go digital-only, risks minimizing the personal touch in personal banking. Many of us, myself included, still have a need and sometimes even a preference for conducting business in person, even as some financial institutions are going in a

different direction.

The experience of walking into a branch, taking care of our banking needs face-to-face, and taking a few extra minutes to get to know the person on the other side of the counter has the ability to transform what would otherwise be an ordinary transaction into a meaningful interaction. After all, in a community like Redmond, these are the very same people we cross paths with at the grocery store, dog park, or our kids' soccer games.

There's no question that digital banking has firmly rooted itself in society, particularly following the pandemic when in-person services were not always available. Like many other businesses, financial institu-

tions have an obligation to keep up with evolving behaviors and demand, and so these digital options remain not only convenient for some, they are often necessary.

The ability to deposit a paycheck or transfer funds from our phones 24/7 is a convenience we can all appreciate. But there are some things, ranging from simple everyday transactions to more complex matters, like deciding whether a cash-out refi or HELOC makes more sense or getting a teen started with their first debit card, that many still like to handle in person, regardless of their ability to do so digitally.

For those occasions and more, it's nice to know you can still walk into

a branch to take care of your banking needs, trading notes on the Redmond-Ridgeview football game in the process. And that some financial institutions, including local, member-owned community credit unions, still prioritize people over profit, keeping their focus where it should be — on strengthening the community.

After all, there are more important ways to gauge success than the bottom line, whether through awarding college scholarships to local seniors, sponsoring and volunteering with area nonprofits, supporting the local 4-H club, or making financial education more interesting (and maybe even fun) for students and young adults. And while a community's

trust doesn't show up on a balance sheet or in an earnings report, for some that's the ultimate bottom line.

Banking digitally versus in person doesn't have to be an either-or proposition. We can have the best of both worlds when it comes to choosing when, where, and how we interact with our financial institution. And it's reassuring to know that personal banking — whether in person or online — is still personal to some. In that regard, there's no question that community banking is not only surviving but thriving right here in Redmond.

— Tim Dizney is the branch manager of SELCO Community Credit Union's North Redmond branch, which opened May 9.

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editorial board

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Redmond's current police station is undersized and insufficient. Our law enforcement needs a facility that works as well and as hard as they do.

Redmond's current police station is not large enough to support the full staff and give victims the privacy they need. Now is the time to show Redmond Law Enforcement our support by funding a new Public Safety Facility that meets our city's growth.

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