

Central Oregon voters voice opinions for change

By HANNAH SEIBOLD and ZACHARY JONES NEURAY CO Media Group

Oregon voter voices often go unamplified because the state is not a major player on the national stage due to its strong democratic tilt driven by the metropolitan areas. To capture the least heard voter voices — youth and those living in rural areas — EO Media Group partnered with students from the University of Oregon's Catalyst Journalism Project to provide a platform for their views in all regions of the state.

The Voter Voices project started in Central Oregon. The tri-county area is comprised of one metro area, Bend, and several rural cities. People were asked about their concerns and hopes rather than their political affiliation or particular candidates in an effort to have an open dialogue. Voters from Madras to Bend to La Pine spoke to reporters about what their friends, family and neighbors feel would make Oregon and the U.S. a better place for all.

"If we just met over the fence and had a conversation then things could actually change," said Prineville resident Diane Belnavis.

Deschutes County, home to Bend, Sisters and La Pine, is Central Oregon's largest county, with about just over 190,000 residents, according to the latest census data.

About 87% of the county's residents are white alone, just over 8% are Hispanic or Latino, and the county's median age is 42.4. A third of the county's 150,000 registered voters are nonaffiliated; 31% are Democrats, and 29% are registered as Republicans.

County, where Prineville is located, has the region's oldest population, with a median age of 46.8 among its 23,700 residents. It's also the region's whitest county, where 88% of residents reported being white alone and 7.7% being Hispanic or Latino. Politically, the county leans Republican, with 44% of its 20,000 voters registered as Republicans, 32% as nonaffiliated and 16% as Democrats.

Jefferson County, the heart of Central Oregon agriculture and home to Madras, is the region's most ethnically diverse county. Of 24,000 residents, 20% are Hispanic or Latino, and 59% are white alone. The county's median age is 41. Just under 40% of its 17,000 voters are nonaffiliated; a third are registered Republicans and 20% are Democrats.

Despite wide differences in voter demographics, concerns and hopes seemed to align.

LINDSAY SERRANO — REDMOND

Children drenched in chlorinated water scooted their way up to Serrano working at the concession stand at Centennial Park, eager to pass her a crisp dollar bill for their Spongebob popsicle. A quintessential summer day brought conversations about an absence of diversity in Redmond.

"We don't have a lot of exposure and education about all different people, and I think it makes people here close-minded, which can be bad and dangerous," Serrano said. "It's hard in smaller towns, but as we grow, it would be nice to see more people move here and feel welcomed to come here."

Serrano, 27, urges for inclusion and diversification in her community. She credits her love for Oregon to the community's respect for nature, which is a sentiment that resonates with many rural Oregonians.

"I love the area we live in; the nature and respect we have for nature is a big one because I've been to other places and the respect is not there," Serrano said.

DEVON BOWEN — REDMOND

"There are always things that are broken, but those are things I respect. Everybody's got a place in our community," said Bowen, while standing by his farmers market canopy, offering fresh produce from the area. His father and 9-year-old son stood at a distance, ushering the local regulars that strolled by.

Bowen owns a ranch and has been a captain of the Redmond Fire Department. He's been fighting fires for 25 years.

The past three years have been, "really bad," he said. "We just have water issues. The environmentalists came in and took our water away for the frog, so they're pretty much putting the frog above humans," he said. "I don't have as much water. They won't give you water because you have 5 feet of water for the frog to breed and that's more important than feeding people and the community."

He's referring to the Habitat Conservation Plan, which places limits on how much water is supposed to remain in the Deschutes River for the frog's survival and reproduction cycle, limiting the amount of water released for irrigation.

"In three to five years, there will be no farming, which is the production of our entire community. My son wants to be a rancher, but it's just not a sustainable livelihood any-



Dean Guernsey/The Bulletin

Carson Janssen, owner of Janssen Metalworks in La Pine, was one of several Central Oregonians who spoke to reporters for the Voter Voices project. He talked about the changes he'd like to see in his rural town and the region.

more," he said as his father and son approached quietly. "Give me an honest answer, and if you're not going to go that way," Bowen said. "Give me a choice or else it's a deception."

DIANE BELNAVIS — PRINEVILLE

Without hesitation, vendors at the CROP Farmers Market stacked leftovers in wagons, filling truck beds with pallets of berries accompanied by sounds of folding lawn chairs squealing. Belnavis said she believes this is a space that creates a sense of community.

"We have different beliefs, but we all love the same thing. This community is forced to interact with each other, and I just love it," said Belnavis, sitting beside the farmer's market that she helps organize weekly. "I've always lived rurally. I like to farm. I've been living in Central Oregon for the past 40 years or so."

Belnavis shares her farmland with her neighbors allowing the bordering sheep extra space to graze, but also provides Belnavis a meeting point for differing political parties to communicate. She says their fence serves as a place to discuss current events and learn about their differing views.

WHITNEY BELL — MADRAS

"I like that we are the hippie state; people in Oregon are a lot nicer and a lot more accepting of everything," said Bell, sitting behind a white foldout table, which was covered with sweet treats, including shortbread cookies glued together by strawberry jam. The tantalizing baked goods could not divert from the concern-ridden conversation.

While Bell has utilized health care to overcome an inability to eat — she was prescribed a pool pass to swim weekly — the Madras resident recognizes that not all health conditions are equally considered.

"I hope our government puts mental health in the same category as physical health," Bell said. "We go once a year to get physicals, but your primary care provider never says, 'Hey maybe you should check in with a counselor.'"

LAURIE GONZALEZ AXSOM — MADRAS

"They say we can't save the world, but we can save one

soul at a time," said Gonzalez Axsom, working at the Madras Saturday Market at Sahalee Park. She comes from a family of addicts. A lack of rehabilitation facilities and focus on mental health causes the "generations to mess up."

The percentage of Oregon residents addicted to drugs and alcohol is among the five highest in the nation, and the state's access to drug treatment is the worst in the U.S., according to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health 2020 state report and the nonprofit Oregon Recovers.

Gonzalez Axsom shared that she sees a pattern of parents not having resources to help themselves get through addiction, jail and mental health crises. Children are left to fend for themselves, often falling into drug use as their parents did.

Her daughter struggles with mental health. "She's at the point of smoking marijuana, and I kind of just want to say it's OK because it's better than doing meth because that's where I come from."

JEREMIAH TETER — LA PINE

The aroma of greasy, home-cooked burgers wafted around the red leather booths and framed jerseys at Coach's Drive-In. Heavenly scents were paired with a discussion of the rising living costs.

Teter has lived in La Pine since 1996 and loves the hospitality of Oregonians. His appreciation of Oregonians' kindness is outweighed by frustrations that resources are inaccessible in his community.

"I want to move out of it because everything is getting too high priced and political everywhere," Teter said.

Classifieds

Classified Hours: Monday - Friday, 10:00 am to 3:00 pm
541-385-5809 • classified@redmondspokesman.com

100 NOTICES

105 Lost & Found

found pistols Sig Colt Dave Colwell 2910 sw lava ave redmond claim 11-4-22 bend, OR (541)633-7255

200 TRUCKS/AUTOS

219 ATV's/Motorcycle

2017 Harley Sportster 883 Iron, Only 154 Miles, \$6995 O.B.O., 541-548-7171 CCR, Can Text Pics

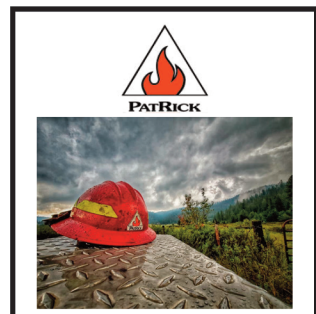
403 BARGAINS

407 Under \$25

For Sale: Dresser, 64" x 18" light brown, \$10.00, must sell for space, has some cup rings on the top, Call 541-588-0193. Twin Bed with Frame and Headboard, mattress in great shape, upgraded to a queen. \$10.00. Call 541-588-0193 Exercise Bike - Quad, may need new belt or just tightened. Very nice bike. \$20.00. Call 541-588-0193

650 HELP WANTED

651 Help Wanted



Exciting Job Fighting Forest Fires! We have crews Nationwide working hard. Join our Team, Travel, and help us make a difference! Apply online at: https://patrick.hiringplatform.com/list/careers

651 Help Wanted

Companion Caregiver needed, 2 afternoons a week (Mon and Tues), 1pm-7pm, no experience needed, Cloverdale Rd area, Call 541-668-0736

660 SERVICES

664 Services



Advanced Commercial Cleaning

We clean offices, schools, restaurants, retail stores, buildings, bathrooms, floors, construction sites, VRBO check in and outs

We have available cleaners in Bend, Redmond, Sisters and Sunriver.

Please call us for a FREE quote.

Bend, Oregon (541)749-8974

860 EQUIPMENT & TOOLS

866 Medical Equipment/Supply

Therapeutic Treadmill For Sale: comes with railing, seldom used. \$250. O.B.O. Call 541-771-2756.

100 NOTICES

102 Public Notices

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE STATE OF OREGON FOR THE COUNTY OF DESCHUTES PROBATE DEPARTMENT IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF Case No. 22PB07031 COLLIN C. DAY, NOTICE TO INTERESTED PERSONS

Deceased. Notice is hereby given that David R. Potter was appointed as the Personal Representative of said Estate on August 9, 2022. The above-named dece-

102 Public Notices

dent died on July 5, 2022 at St. Charles Medical Center 1253 N Canal Boulevard, Redmond, OR 97756, Deschutes County, Oregon. Decedent died testate; therefore, decedent's Will has been admitted to probate. All persons having claims against said estate are hereby required to present the same, with proper vouchers, within four (4) months after the date of first publication of this Notice, as stated below, to the Personal Representative at: David R. Potter, c/o DONALD V. REEDER, LLC, Attorney at Law, 35 SE C Street, Suite E Madras, Oregon 97741, or they may be barred. All persons whose rights may be affected by the proceedings in this estate may obtain additional information from the records of the Court, the Personal Representative, or the attorney for the Personal Representative. Dated and first Published: August 16, 2022

/s/ Donald V. Reeder Attorney for Personal Representative David R. Potter Personal Representative DONALD V. REEDER, OSB #810196 Attorney for Personal Representative 35 SE C Street, Suite E, Madras, OR 97741 (541) 475-2272; Fax: (541) 615-9318 gsr.dvr@gmail.com

DID YOU KNOW

Newspaper-generated content is so valuable it's taken and repeated, condensed, broadcast, tweeted, discussed, posted, copied, edited, and emailed countless times throughout the day by others? Discover the Power of Newspaper Advertising in FIVE STATES with just one phone call. For free Pacific Northwest Newspaper Association Network brochures call 916-288-6011 or email cecelia@cnpa.com (PNDC)



Partners In Care

Upcoming Grief Support Series

Partners In Care offers a variety of support services for families, friends, and the community when a loved one dies. The following series will begin in September and end in November. All conducted virtually.

General Grief Group

8 weekly sessions beginning September 12 - 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM

Spousal Loss Support Group

8 weekly sessions beginning September 15 - 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM

Open to the community at no cost!

Register by calling (541) 382-5882 and a Zoom registration will be emailed to you.

(541) 382-5882 PartnersBend.org

Hospice | Home Health | Hospice House | Transitions | Palliative Care | Grief Support

Puzzle Solutions

Guess Who?

Answer: Chris Hemsworth

WORD SCRAMBLE

Answer: Ball

SUDOKU

3	6	4	7	2	5	9	8	1
8	1	2	6	3	9	4	5	7
7	9	5	4	8	1	2	3	6
9	4	8	3	5	7	6	1	2
5	7	6	1	4	2	3	9	8
2	3	1	8	9	6	5	7	4
4	2	7	9	1	3	8	6	5
1	8	3	5	6	4	7	2	9
6	5	9	2	7	8	1	4	3

A	C	E	D	H	R	S	G	O	O			
S	H	I	E	S	O	O	H	C	A	B	S	
L	I	R	A	S	R	M	A	C	A	B	O	S
C	A	F	E	S	N	A	N	A	E	L	E	A
I	N	F	O	R	M	A	T	I	O	N		
T	O	A	D	I	E	A	N	S				
S	H	A	D	A					T	E	A	S
A	P	E	N	N	I	N	E	S				
D	E	V	E	L	O	P	M	E	N	T		
N	E	P	H	R	I	T	I	S				
B	A	A	L	U	N	H	S	A	G	E	S	
R	A	S	E	C	I	C	A	R	A	T		
I	C	E	D	E	E	C						
O	P	S										

WORD SEARCH

P	O	L	B	C	W	L	C	U	O	V	L	G	D	I	K	K	P	E	V	
A	E	P	H	A	K	V	D	K	O	V	R	N	N	U	M	Y	S	K	L	
A	W	H	W	W	C	L	B	F	K	M	I	P	I	H	C	R	W	M		
I	A	B	C	E	Y	K	S	B	O	U	B	F	S	E	U	I	N	C	T	
M	O	B	B	A	G	Y	S	F	M	N	B	B	Y	U	L	I	O	A	U	
I	L	M	U	G	O	F	S	W	D	V	S	O	G	Y	G	D	I	C	R	
N	S	D	D	E	R	R	A	P	I	T	S	B	G	T	A	D	T	V	C	
G	A	K	P	C	K	T	P	C	L	N	Y	L	E	E	A	A	H	D		
R	D	S	T	N	T	G	D	P	S	Y	G	Y	P	U	Y	C	T	D	A	
L	L	C	L	A	W	M	W	K	A	T	W	C	D	W	H	I	O	B	A	
V	M	N	C	L	R	E	V	I	T	R	D	O	V	F	M	G	K	R	L	M
C	B	K	V	A	C	L	P	O	G	N	I	W	S	S	I	M	E			
B	O	A	P	B	G	P	C	M	H	F	T	T	C	Y	L	G	L	N	U	
I	Y	B	L	O	U	U	A	O	R	F	T	R	P	V	N	G	C	O	U	
R	C	P	L	A	C	H	R	S	P	U	T	F	E	M	O	K	U	S	B	
D	C	T	C	O	T	L	R	U	P	N	A	O	E	K	P	S	H	A	N	
I	H	C	M	G	C	A	Y	P	L	G	U	N	V	V	N	A	U	T	P	
E	Y	L	F	R	B	K	M	Y	D	K	T	Y	A	I	F	U	L	I	K	
P	W	D	W	I	D	U	B	I	N	A	L	G	F	T	D	V	B	G	U	
M	E	I	M	P	M	V	C	O	N	N	E	C	T	I	O	N	D	B	F	

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

CRYPTO FUN

Answers: A. tee B. clubs C. course D. handicap