

Local News

RPA students walk out of classes

Students rally to support gun control, Measure 114

BY NICK ROSENBERGER
Redmond Spokesman

Redmond Proficiency Academy students walked out of school Oct. 25, joining students in at least six other schools across Oregon in support of Measure 114. The measure, on the November ballot, would increase requirements on some firearms sold in Oregon.

"It's really scary being a student in this day and age," said Juniper Rook, a junior at RPA and the organizer of the statewide walkout. "I can't begin to describe the way that the lack of accountability and action taken by people in power keeps me up at night."

According to Rook, high schools participating in the walkout include Lakeridge, Lake Oswego, Grant and Ida B. Wells, all in the Portland area. The walkout in Redmond drew a couple dozen students and multiple speakers.

Kai Richards, a freshman at RPA, said he was at the Jefferson County Fair with his cousins when a man clashed with officers, then fled and exchanged gunfire with police. Richards said people, including his sister Emma, hid in their cars in fear.

"That is heartbreaking," said Richards. "Many of the students in America in this day and age can't go to school without



Dylan Levi, a freshman at Redmond Proficiency Academy, speaks during a student walk-out on Oct. 25 in support of Measure 114 — a bill that would change requirements to acquire a firearm.

the fear in the back of their minds that they might not be making it home. I am one of those students."

Richards said that when he hears about the shootings that happen across the country on a daily basis, he thinks about how his last text to his mother will read: "I love you."

Measure 114 would require a permit to acquire firearms, require police to maintain a permit/firearm database and would prohibit ammunition magazines to those that hold no more than 10 rounds.

"This measure can help be a stepping stone to begin to solve this issue," Rich-

ards said. "I am exhausted of being on alert at work, school and out in public."

Dylan Levi, another freshman at RPA, also spoke about how many children go to school wondering if they will ever return home.

"We have had far too long to give our thoughts and prayers, we have had far

too long to mourn and do nothing but all to no avail," Levi said. "It's time for a change in policy."

Levi said that when the Second Amendment was created, guns were much simpler. He said that guns have evolved and that laws should, too.

"It's time to say enough," Levi said.

Rook, who turned 17 the day after the protest, said she has been advocating for stricter gun laws since she was 12. That was the year a gunman entered Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Florida and killed 17 students and staff and injured 17 more.

Rook mentioned that the measure will close a loophole that allows people to purchase firearms if background checks are not completed within three days — no matter what that background check eventually shows. Keeping that loophole open, she said, just allows for more mass shootings.

She said that while teachers at RPA couldn't legally walk out with them, many supported the protest. She added that she's in close contact with Redmond City Councilor Clifford Evelyn and Morgan Schmidt, candidate for Deschutes County Commissioner.

Rook said that while she and many of her classmates can't vote yet, it was important to educate people on the measure. "Every vote matters right now," she said.

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- Constructing voter approved police/safety building
- Sewer plant renovation
- Airport terminal expansion
- Highway 97 improvements from Veterans Way to Yew Avenue
- Partnering with all stakeholders to ensure school safety

Growth mandates that we prioritize planning for safety, communication, water, sewer, economic development, livability, infrastructure and our stewardship while maintaining our personality. I bring leadership, transparency, and perseverance to this position. I trust we share in the many values that Redmond holds; that is what has brought us together, and together we will make a difference for generations to come.

I have fond memories of growing up in Redmond. I graduated from Redmond High School, finished my associates degree at COCC and married my best friend. I've devoted 23 years balancing serving on city council while working with technology for a school district. I've been involved in construction projects for city hall, Deschutes County Fairgrounds, Redmond airport terminal, Highway 97 bypass, multiple street projects, Centennial Park, Hope Playground, and Maple Street Bridge. These projects have developed relationships and insights on how to approach future proposals to ensure the best outcomes. Let's move Redmond into the future together.

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