



Amy Ryan Courser

Former councilor will try to unseat Schrader

Amy Ryan Courser tosses hat into Congressional ring

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

Keizer residents might notice a familiar name on their Republican primary ballots in 2020.

Amy Ryan Courser, a former Keizer city councilor, announced this week she intends to challenge Rep. Kurt Schrader (D-Canby) for his seat in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Courser, who went by Amy Ryan when she was on the city council, said she's contemplated a run for Congress throughout the past two years, but it's the right time now.

"With my time on the city council, I had the opportunity to be at the larger table and

work through the learning curve of how policy is made," she said.

Courser was elected to the city council in 2014 and served until January 2019.

She set her sights on Schrader's seat, Oregon's fifth district, out of a sense of growing frustration during her times in the same room with Schrader.

"I was constantly frustrated by the lack of answers and excuses for not knowing what's going on in our backyard. It was multiple

regional issues, a multitude of things. With all the issues our state is facing, I didn't see leadership," Ryan said.

As of the 2010 Census, Oregon's 5th District covered

a large swath of the central Oregon coast between Lincoln and Tillamook counties.

Courser said her list of concerns is long, but she is most intent on listening at the moment. She and her team are in the process of setting up listening sessions throughout the 5th District that will be known as

"Heart-to-Hearts with Amy."

The first listening session for the candidate will be Saturday, Sept. 7, in Keizer at Jeff and Sheryl's, 165 McNary Estates

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— Amy Ryan Courser

55 incorporated town and cities with about 770,000 residents. It includes portions of Marion County, Clackamas County, Yamhill County and

Drive. It begins at 10 a.m.

Topping the list of Courser's personal concerns is healthcare. On Tuesday, Sept. 3, she spoke with the Keizertimes during a surgery appointment for her father, a veteran.

"My dad went in today for surgery at the VA (Veteran's Administration) and it is a complete mess. Firsthand, I am dealing with that and seeing it's not being addressed. The VA is flooded with need and people are dying," Courser said.

While she is able to act as an advocate for her father, others might not be as fortunate, Courser said.

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Photo by KEIZERTIMES/Dee Moore

Zielinski re-convicted of murdering wife

By DEE MOORE
For the Keizertimes

For the second time in six years Peter Zielinski sat in the Marion County Circuit Court and heard the words "We the jury...do find the defendant on the charge of murder, guilty." Zielinski was charged with the murder in 2011 of his wife, Lisa.

Zielinski was stoic as he sat between his two attorneys, Matthew Tracey and Aaron Jeffers. Their hope for a lesser charge or acquittal were dashed as the judge continued to read the rest of the jury's verdict to the packed courtroom.

"Was the defendant acting under the influence of an extreme emotional disturbance when he intentionally caused the death of Lisa Zielinski? No."

After eight days of testimony, Zielinski is once again facing a life sentence for the murder. He was slated to appear for sentencing on Thursday, Sept. 5.

Zielinski was previously tried for murder in 2013 during which the presiding Judge Dale Penn, siding with the state's attorney's, excluded psychological testimony relating to the defendant's

parole.

Zielinski's appeal was granted in 2017 and his sentence overturned, the case was sent back to the circuit court. Zielinski had hoped to be able to mount a defense

Brendan Murphy and Katie Suver were prepared for the new defense position. The prosecution brought forth witness after witness to detail Zielinski's relationship with Lisa. Witnesses called to testify

history, financial struggles and past lovers were brought forth to demonstrate Zielinski's self-involvement and lack of concern for others.

Two heartwrenching moments during the trial came when the prosecution played video-taped interviews with the defendant's children which were made the day of Lisa's murder. His oldest child Hunter, a daughter from a prior relationship, was 11 years old at the time she was interviewed by the Keizer police.

His daughter with Lisa, Payton, was 5 years old when she was interviewed at Liberty House. At the time, neither child knew that Lisa was dead. While Payton had been home at the time of Lisa's death she was not aware of it. Hunter was staying with her mother that week.

Det. Emanie Bravo of the Marion County Sheriff's Office testified that she

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Lisa Zielinski

Payton kept asking over and over again, 'Why did she have to die? Why did she have to go to heaven?'

— Det. Emanie Bravo,
Marion County Sheriff's Office

mental health.

Due to this exclusion, Zielinski, who originally pled not guilty, changed his plea to guilty with the condition that he could appeal the judge's decision. It resulted in a sentence of 25 years to life in prison with a possibility of

for his actions based on the mental health diagnosis he received. Oregon law allows for an extreme emotional disturbance (EED) defense. Zielinski's attorneys were required by law to notify the prosecution that this would be their tactic.

Deputy district attorneys

described his controlling behavior.

Corey Smith, once one of Zielinski's closest friends, testified that the defendant's attitude was "my way or no way" that he "liked to win, he didn't want to lose" whether it was a game or an argument.

His church attendance, job



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