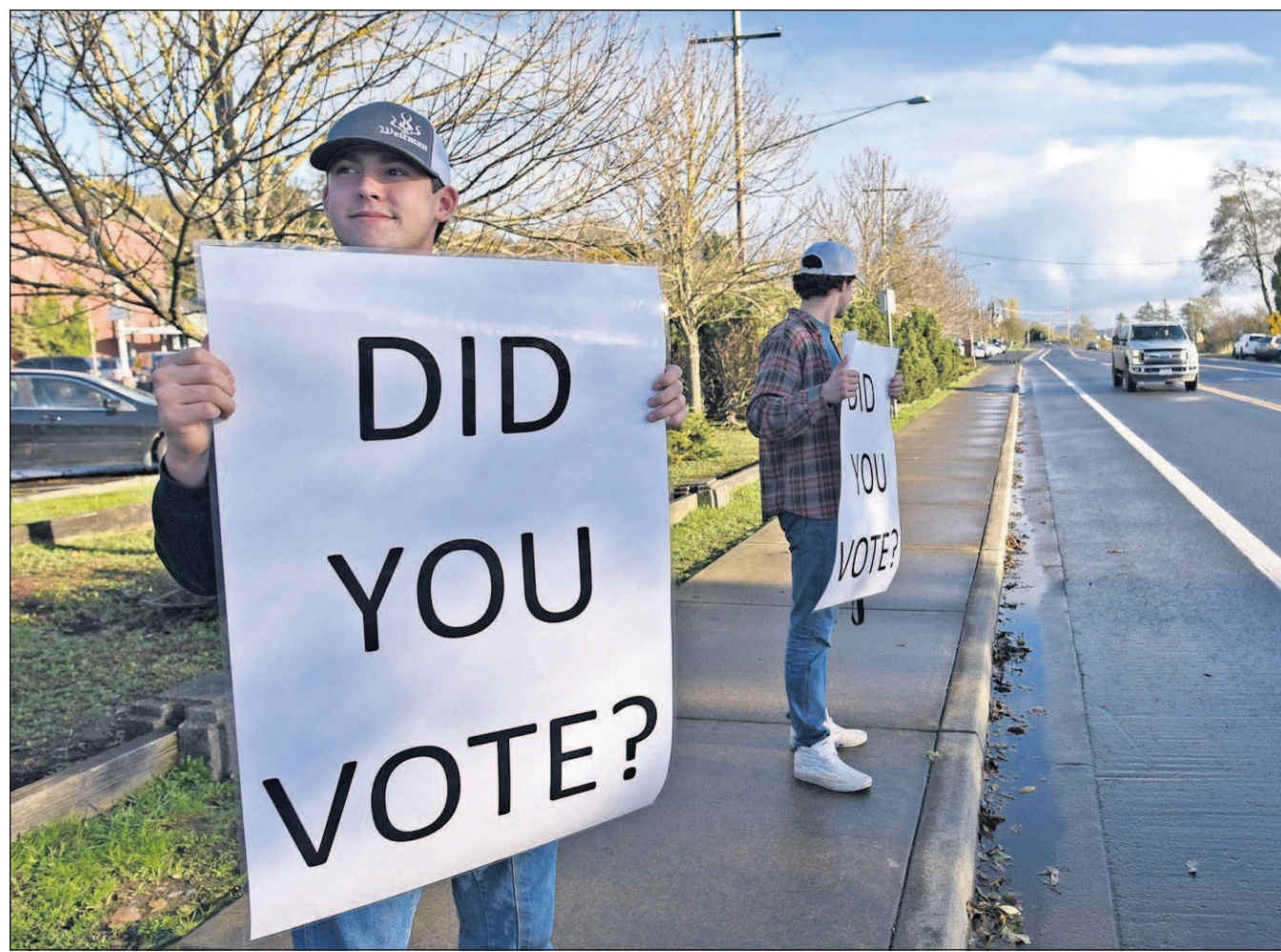


MIDTERM MATH PORTLAND POLLSTER ANALYZES STATE ELECTION RESULTS



Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Burke Matthews, left, and Josh Shipley held up signs in front of Astoria High School on Election Day.

By JACK HEFFERNAN
The Daily Astorian

The narrative in the past week has been that Oregon's voter turnout in the general election has been about average. But is the full story being told?

The state's motor voter law, enacted in 2016, automatically registers voters every time they apply for or renew driver's licenses. This year, about 91 percent of eligible voters are registered, roughly 20 percent higher than before the law.



"That means there's hundreds of thousands of new people who are registered to vote who most likely would not have been if not for automatic voter registration," said John Horvick, vice president and political director of Portland-based polling firm DHM Research, at the Columbia Forum speaker series Tuesday night at the Baked Alaska Annex.

While registered voter turnout in Oregon in midterm elections typically ranges between 69 percent and 71 percent, as it did this year, the number of eligible voters who participate typically flat lines at 52 percent. This year, roughly 63 percent of eligible voters participated.

"So for an apples-to-apples comparison, it makes more sense to look at the percentage of eligible voters who turned out in past elections, and we'll compare that to 2018," Horvick said. "Turnout was exceptionally high here in Oregon."

Oregon Republicans have turned out to vote at a higher rate than Democrats since at least 1964. This year, both political parties turned out at an 80 percent rate.

"That actually is consistent with the national story," Horvick said. "Democrats turned out, and so did Republicans."

With voter rates being equal in both parties, Republicans face a significant challenge due to the overall number of reg-

istered Democratic voters. A massive population of Democrats lives in and around Portland and, since they live bunched together, can be easier to energize.

"They are so much better organized. It is night and day compared to what Republicans have, in terms of, the unions are organized, progressive groups are organized and they worked hand in hand to get the vote out in 2018," Horvick said. "It's just the turnout, you know, machine is much stronger on the Democratic side."

As a result, Republicans generally face about a 9 percent incline at the start of every election, Horvick said.



Jack Heffernan/The Daily Astorian

John Horvick, a Portland pollster, spoke at the Columbia Forum in Astoria on Tuesday night.

'VOTING, MORE AND MORE, HAS BEEN ABOUT WHO YOU DISLIKE MORE THAN WHO YOU LIKE.'

John Horvick | a Portland pollster

That impacted the strategy of state Rep. Knute Buehler, a Bend orthopedic surgeon, in his failed bid to upset Gov. Kate Brown, a Democrat.

Governor's race

Buehler needed to target suburbanites, moderate Democrats and independent voters rather than playing to a more right-wing base, Horvick said. He focused on convincing them that Brown had failed on the issues they cared about like education, foster care, housing and homelessness.

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Hammond fisherman convicted of sex abuse

Sturgell guilty in split decision

By JACK HEFFERNAN
The Daily Astorian

A well-known Hammond fisherman was found guilty Tuesday of sex abuse and bribery charges stemming from a day of drinking and drug use with a young woman in 2015.

Dennis Lee Sturgell, 66, was convicted of four counts of first-degree sodomy, two counts of first-degree unlawful sexual penetration and one count of second-degree sex abuse after jurors found that the woman did not or was unable to give consent.



Dennis Lee Sturgell

The jury — nine women and three men — included 10 people that found Sturgell guilty of all charges. One juror found him guilty on all but one charge, while another found him not guilty on all the sex abuse charges.

Oregon is the only state to still allow split verdicts in felony trials, except for murder. Voters in Louisiana this month ended the practice of nonunanimous verdicts.

Sturgell was indicted last year along with James Herbert Cunningham, 47. The two men were accused of committing several sex crimes against a young woman who was roughly 40 years younger than Sturgell at the time.

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Road rage suspect charged with murder

Stone allegedly hit and killed a man

By JACK HEFFERNAN
The Daily Astorian

The Westport man accused of killing another man with his truck in October now faces one count of murder on top of a slew of other charges.

Jeffrey Craig Stone, 65, allegedly hit Curtis Michael Russell, 22, of Longview, Washington, with a Dodge truck. Russell became trapped underneath the truck and was dragged more than 1,300 feet, according to court records. After suffering serious head injuries, Russell died at the scene.



Jeffrey Craig Stone

Police initially charged Stone with first-degree manslaughter, among other crimes, but a grand jury added a murder count Tuesday in its indictment.

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Warrenton delays vote on Pacific Seafood housing

City will hold a town hall

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ
The Daily Astorian

WARRENTON — Concerned about how a new kind of workforce housing proposed by Pacific Seafood might impact a surrounding neighborhood and influence future development, the City Commission delayed voting Tuesday on a code amendment that would allow the project to proceed.

Instead, city leaders said

they will hold a town hall meeting with the company and the community to flesh out details.

The development code amendment would allow Pacific Seafood to develop dormitory-style housing for seasonal employees inside an unused portion of a warehouse and fabrication facility near Carruthers Memorial Park on land zoned for industrial, water-dependent use.

Details, like how many workers would live there or what the accommodations would look like, are yet to be determined. The company still needs to work with the city to

answer these questions.

Neighbors worry the housing could have a major impact on the character of the neighborhood, as well as open the door for dense workforce housing on other land with the same zoning.

The City Commission decided to continue the public hearing on the code amendment until Dec. 11. The town hall will happen earlier, but a day has not been set.

The Commission had already gained a vote of approval from the Planning Commission in October.

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Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Pacific Seafood wants to build dormitory-style housing for its workers in Warrenton.

