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## Spring Election

Ballot filing deadline approaches

John Kitzhaber has cleared out his desk and Gov. Kate Brown faces the tough challenge of picking up the pieces, rebuilding faith and fostering legislation. She's as able as any public servant in the state and all Oregonians should wish her the best in a time when the state needs steady leadership.

It's a good time, also, to ask the question: with Gov. Brown in Salem and Jerry Brown in Sacramento, has there ever been another case of two chief executives of neighboring states sharing the same last name?

While the state's highest-profile elected office gets the bulk of the attention recently, the focus in Hood River should turn to local offices that are also important. Numerous positions will be on the May 19 Special District ballot, and the deadline to file is less than a month away, on March 19.

Potential candidates can find the filing form on the Hood River County Elections website, hoodriver.co.us/elections.

All applications must be in the Elections office no later than 5 p.m. on March 19. For details contact the Hood River County Elections office at 541-386-1442.

Here is the complete list of open positions scheduled to be on the May 19 ballot:

### HRC Transportation District

Director 1 — unexpired 2-year term

Directors — three 4-year terms

### HRC School District

Position 1 — 4 year term

Position 3 — 4 year term

Position 5 — 4 year term

### Parkdale RFD

Directors — three 4 year terms

### Westside RFD

Directors — three 4 year terms

### Wy'East RFD

Directors — two 4 year terms

### Crystal Springs Water District

Commissioners — three 4 year terms

### Ice Fountain Water District

Commissioners — two 4 year terms

### HRC Library District

Board Members — two 4 year terms

### HRV Parks and Recreation

Board Members — three 4 year terms

### Port of Cascade Locks

Commissioners — three 4 year terms

### Port of Hood River

Commissioners — two 4 year terms

### Odell Sanitary District

Director — one 4 year term

### Parkdale Sanitary District

Director — one 4 year term

Directors — two 2 year unexpired terms

## WHERE TO WRITE

**President** — Barack Obama, White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave., Washington D.C., 20500

E-mail: president@whitehouse.gov

**U.S. Senators** — Jeff Merkley, SDB-40B, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington D.C., 20510. Phone: 202-224-3753; E-mail: oregon@merkley.senate.gov; Ron Wyden, 717 Hart Office Building, Washington D.C., 20510. Phone: 202-224-5244.

Web address: www.senate.gov/member/or/wyden/general/

**2nd Congressional District Representative** — Greg Walden, 14 N. Central Ave., Suite 112, Medford, OR 97504. Phone: 541-776-4646;

E-mail: www.walden.house.gov/contactggreg

**Governor** — John Kitzhaber, 254 State Capitol, Salem, OR 97310. Phone: 503-378-3111;

E-mail: www.governor.state.or.us/email.htm

**District 26 State Senator** — Chuck Thomsen, 900 Court St. N.E., S-307, State Capitol, Salem, OR 97301. Phone: 503-986-1726; E-mail: sen.chuckthomsen@state.or.us

**District 52 State Representative** — Mark Johnson, 900 Court St. N.E., Bldg. H-385, State Capitol, Salem, OR 97301. Phone: 503-986-1452; E-mail: rep.markjohnson@state.or.us

**Hood River County Board of Commissioners** — Chair Ron Rivers, Vice Chair Maui Meyer, members Les Perkins, Bob Benton and Karen Joplin, Hood River County Courthouse, Hood River, OR, 97031. Phone: 541-386-3970.

## Obamacare reality

Reality (for me and others — how do I know others? — two weeks of busy lines and no replies!) versus the rose-colored glasses.

Pre-Obamacare: Family was covered by health insurance, affordable and if I had a question, I could actually talk to someone when I called.

Obamacare year 1: Your insurance is canceled Dec. 31. Your college age daughter cannot be on your policy, she has to get her own. There is a problem with your application — “please call back.” Need to fax this document. Faxed, no response, calls no response. Frustrated, wrote letter to our Senator, about 10 days later got a call and got coverage, will never know if it was coincidental or not. However, did not have coverage for two months — glad we stayed healthy! Coverage was still affordable with the tax credits (who pays for those?).

Obamacare year 2: Mid to end of November, got a letter stating coverage was continuing for 2015, but my wife's was changing. Good so far! College age daughter did not get renewal or notice. Refilling a prescription in January — “Your coverage was terminated Dec. 31.” My wife somehow retained her coverage, but mine and my daughter's were out. Online website — “There is a problem ...” After numerous attempts, I actually talked to someone but, “I cannot fix this error code, please call this 800 number.” Well, this number is so busy that you cannot even wait on hold! Experiencing high call volume, please call back. Glad I didn't have a heart attack because I don't have health insurance! Two weeks later, on a random attempt I got through. They fixed the error code. I can pick coverage, but effective March 1. Again, two months without coverage. Guess that's the affordable part — 12 month plan with coverage for 10 months.

What a piece of junk! It should be like home/auto. I can accept mandating coverage, but evaluate your

own risk, pick the coverage you need/want. It stays in continuous coverage, can buy it anywhere and is portable. Is that too much to ask?

Steve Nybrotten  
Hood River

## Got books?

The Warm Springs Library is a nice little place that serves a lot of people with a \$0 budget for buying books. If it is time to clean out your old books, especially kids' books, I will be glad to pick them up and deliver them to the library. Just send me an email at ronghr@aol.com. You'll make a lot of people very happy!

Marg Guth  
Hood River

## Profits rule

I don't trust corporations. Especially international “Big Food” corporations like Nestle which is one of the largest. Whatever corporations say and do, whatever bones they may throw to local governments, whatever they promise in the way of jobs and tax revenues are for the sole purpose of gaining local and international control of the food and water supply and maximizing corporate profits.

It's not for the public good. Do the research.

Jerry Giarraputo  
Hood River

## 'Our song'?

Hood River Valley is so extraordinary. Who else has two snowcapped mountains to see every day? We have two rivers, Hood and Columbia. Annually covered in bloom in the spring.

This valley needs its own song. Someone in this valley is talented enough to compose a song telling folks of our wonderful valley. Maybe the radio station could play a few lines of the tune prior to a commercial every day to familiarize folks of our song.

Put your thinking caps on friends and neighbors. I'm sure a couple of you could come up with a song to go along with our pears, apples and wineries, and after the public was familiar with “our” song, they could whistle a tune as they walk along our streets.

Get busy folks. We have all the rest, let's have a song too.

Peggy Swyers  
Hood River

## Don't privatize water

The letter submitted by Mr. Dave Palais (Feb. 18), while eloquent, is simply untrue.

Make no mistake, Nestle is taking a public resource and will profit handsomely to our detriment. He claims no rights transfer to Nestle but imagine how the language the Nestle lawyers wrote reads. Do you really think Nestle will walk away from its investment before three generations of time passes?

The current attempt to use their megacorporation influence and bypass the existing laws is not what one would expect from a good corporate citizen. Google “Nestle lawsuit” if you want to see the “strong positive track record” of the company. Lists of lawsuits for deceptive, fraudulent and predatory behavior, unfair competition, antitrust, excessive withdrawals causing damage to the aquifer, etc. abound.

Nestle is extracting a public resource. In other extraction industries, such as oil, the public is paid a significant percentage of the profits as royalties (25 percent or more). Have you seen what Nestle has negotiated to pay versus their profit? Nestle is not even a US company. This is not about the money, it is about privatizing the public's water.

And what do we get out of this deal? More trucks on I-84 and millions more plastic bottles littering our environment. Do not allow Nestle to take our water.

David Michalek  
Hood River



## ANOTHER VOICE

# Parent and teacher despairs over 'out of control' standardized tests

By ERIC COHN

Mandated standardized state testing is now officially out of control. It will take seven instructional days to run each grade level through the battery of computerized tests that we must now administer at our local Middle School. To what end? What is the purpose?

The most important test most kids will take prior to graduation is the SAT. That test is a total of 3.75 hours. That's less than one half of one instructional day. That test has real life implications for each student who takes it. What are the benefits to each student that outweigh the seven instructional days it will take my eighth graders to take their battery of tests? What will they gain? More important, what will they lose?

As an illustration, I have recorded the primary topics taught in my vari-

ous math classrooms over the last seven instructional days. They include: transformations of quadratic, exponential, radical and absolute value functions, the quotient and power rules of differentiation, the importance of trigonometric identities  $\sin^2(x) + \cos^2(x) = 1$ ,  $\tan(x) = \sin(x)/\cos(x)$ , translation of sine, cosine and tangent waves along with their amplitudes and periods, the unit circle in radian measure, domain and range of functions along with asymptotes thereof, exponent operations with fractional exponents, simplification of complex rational expressions, 5 point data summaries, Q-point regression lines, positive and negative correlation of data, writing the equation of a line of best fit using the appropriate Q-points, function notation and operations.

It sickens me to think of the empty list of instructional topics I will have over this 7 day testing period. I have

an undergraduate degree from U.C. Berkeley, a Master's degree from the University of Portland, and yet I will spend 7 days basically watching kids take test, after test, after test. School administrators must spend countless ours trying to figure out how to get 450 plus kids to take all of these exams on a very limited number of computers. What a waste. What an inexcusable, colossal waste of time, money and educational opportunities for our students. I've been teaching for 26 years and I'm profoundly upset as a teacher, and very, very puzzled as a parent.

It's not testing that hurts kids. It's what they don't get while they are testing that does the real damage.

Who started this? What was their intent?

More important, who will stop it?

Eric Cohn of Hood River is a math teacher at Hood River Middle School.



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