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OUR VIEW

Attitude, outlook define judge race

Perhaps the *East Oregonian* editorial board is not the best judge of judges. None of us has a law background and we can't speak a lick of Latin.

But we imagine we have those traits in common with many readers and voters. And because the race for Umatilla and Morrow County circuit judge is one of the May election's most competitive and most important, it deserves some comment and discussion.

John Ballard, a Hermiston attorney specializing in divorce cases, is taking on Jon Lieuallen, a Pendleton-based attorney with a wider variety of law experience, but perhaps at less depth. Lieuallen was defeated by Lynn Hampton after challenging the incumbent back in 2012.

The two candidates in this election have tried to distinguish themselves in different ways. Both spoke of the hard campaign slog of trying to get voters if not interested in the race, at least informed about it.

Ballard, at public events and with the editorial board, has represented himself as tough on crime, unconvinced of the value of drug court and probation and treatment efforts. He says there are too many career criminals in our communities who belong in jail for long stretches and as judge he would be more apt to put them there. It's a classic populist argument, and he will win some votes that way.

Lieuallen will win votes with a different tactic, portraying himself as a family man and community leader, a hometown person with high ethics and morals. It, too, is a populist message.

Yet both arguments have little to do with being a good judge.

When it comes down to brass

tacks, Ballard said he will be fact-based and "no nonsense" on the bench, and will be a "predictable" ruler that will allow lawyers from both sides to know what to expect. Although mandatory minimums have greatly restricted judges in their sentencing flexibility, Ballard said he will work to uphold gun rights where possible, help those who have made a one-time mistake get back to their lives, and punish those who have become a drain on society and a threat to community safety.

Lieuallen, on the other hand, said he will be fair, unbiased and approachable. He said he will take the time to explain his reasoning to both the prosecutors and the defense, and be a transparent arbiter of each and every matter that comes before him.

And perhaps that is the main difference. Ballard will be predictably tough and terse. Defense attorneys could look to avoid his courtroom if possible, and that can have a debilitating effect on the efficiency of our local circuit court. Lieuallen will be more open and engaged, but perhaps that will allow attorneys to get away with a few more of the "games" both candidates know get played in a courtroom.

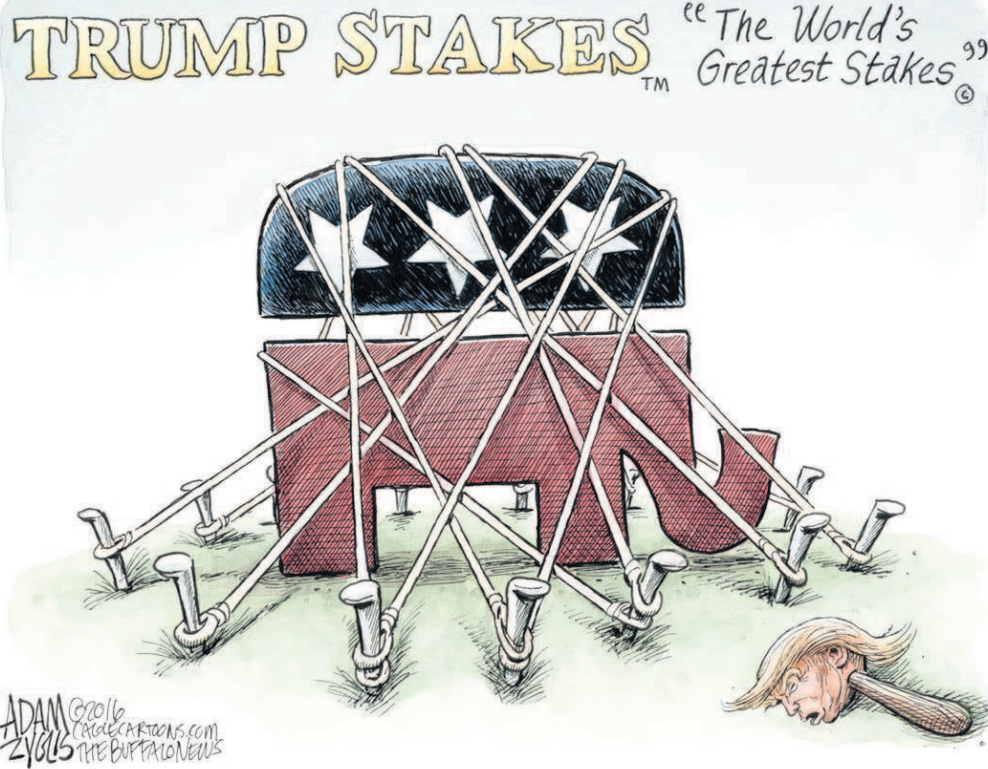
Your personal preference of style is just as valuable as ours to decide who to vote for. In our opinion, Lieuallen's judicial style is more practical and more useful in the circuit court that operates in Umatilla and Morrow counties. And Lieuallen's work history is without the questionable ethical decisions that Ballard has made. In our opinion, there is a greater chance Ballard's style makes him a less effective judge who will be unable to take on the caseload necessary to keep our courts in order.

Ballard will be predictably tough and terse. Lieuallen will be more open and engaged.

Unsigned editorials are the opinion of the East Oregonian editorial board of Publisher Kathryn Brown, Managing Editor Daniel Wattenburger, and Opinion Page Editor Tim Trainor. Other columns, letters and cartoons on this page express the opinions of the authors and not necessarily that of the East Oregonian.



OTHER VIEWS



How GOP bigwigs made their peace with Trump

With Donald Trump heading toward what more and more Republicans believe will be victory in the GOP primaries, an increasing number of party figures — none fans of Trump originally — are making their peace with the idea of Trump as their nominee. Some are even working out an argument, at least in their own minds, that Trump has a plausible chance to defeat Hillary Clinton in a general election.

There have been brief establishment flirtations with Trump in the past. But those flirtations ended when Trump said something outrageous or the campaign took some (brief) anti-Trump turn, most recently when Ted Cruz won the Wisconsin primary on April 5. Now, with Trump's five-for-five victories in the Northeast last Tuesday, some establishment members are doing more than flirting with the idea of Trump. They're accepting it.

What follows won't include names, but is based on private conversations with several stalwart Republicans, including a former top party official, former members of Congress who have been active in the campaign, a member of the party's foreign-policy establishment, two former managers of GOP presidential campaigns, and more. In addition, several other influential Republicans, like Sens. Bob Corker and John Cornyn, along with former House Speaker John Boehner, have spoken out publicly in a somewhat Trump-friendly way recently.

Each says different things, but overall, there is one reason for the change in attitude: voters. In this case, 10,056,690 Republican primary votes for Trump (so far) have a way of changing a politician's mind.

The GOP politicos carefully count delegates — some the old-fashioned way, on a legal pad, instead of using the various delegate calculators on the web — and now believe Trump will win at least the 1,237 required to clinch the Republican nomination on the first ballot. Most began to feel that way after Trump won New York with 60.5 percent of the vote, not only stopping the momentum Cruz had gained in Wisconsin but also punching a hole in the idea of a Trump "ceiling."

"They are recognizing that the voters are speaking," said one GOP veteran of his establishment colleagues.

Because of that, the insiders dismiss continuing efforts to stop Trump as too little, too late. In hindsight, they now say that was true all along. The millions spent on ads against Trump in Florida? Too late. National Review's "Against Trump" broadside? Too late. #NeverTrump? Too late. For whatever reason, the GOP politicos have concluded, anti-Trump forces in the party were always behind the times, to Trump's benefit.

The insiders also know other Republicans think the same thing. They took notice recently when Republican National



BYRON YORK
Comment

Committee members held a meeting in Hollywood, Florida. At that meeting, member after member said that he or she would support Trump if Trump is the party's nominee. Now, Republican National Committee members pledging to support the Republican nominee should be no surprise. But it was an institutional confirmation that the party will accept Trump.

Perhaps most importantly, some have begun to game out a Trump vs. Clinton general election contest. They

know that dozens of polls have shown Clinton trouncing Trump, often by double digits.

But they were struck by a recent George Washington University Battleground Poll that showed Clinton winning by just 3 points. It's just one poll, but for some it confirmed the idea that there might be a different dynamic

at work in the race once Trump becomes the nominee and the contest is simply Donald vs. Hillary. The fight will become more even.

"Trump does bring a little magic to this in that he could shuffle the traditional battleground map," one former presidential campaign manager told me. "I haven't seen any data on that, but I'm just getting

a feeling that he's going to put a couple of Midwestern states in play."

"I saw Goetas' poll this week," the former manager continued, referring to Ed Goetas, the Republican author of the Battleground Poll. "Look, Trump hasn't even started to take out Hillary yet. He hasn't even begun taking it to her, and when he does, it's a two-prong thing. One, it unites the party like no other thing, and two, it will start to damage her. Look at what he's done to Lyin' Ted and Little Marco and Low Energy Jeb."

Maybe the insiders are deluding themselves. The RealClearPolitics compilation of general election head-to-head polls is a long list of blue numbers favoring Clinton. But the fact is, some influential Republicans are beginning to question the assumption that Trump is guaranteed to lose big.

That's the kind of change that decisive primary victories produce.

"The memories of Trump's last outrageous statements have faded a little bit and he's won big," said another insider.

None of this means party insiders are enthusiastic about Trump. As one less optimistic type told me, they are trying to figure out whether to try to help Trump in a general election race or sit out the campaign in a deep funk. But the bottom line is, they can read election results. They realize the voters are telling them something. And they are moving toward accepting Trump as their nominee. "If anything," said another insider, "it may be happening faster than you think."

Byron York is chief political correspondent for *The Washington Examiner*.

10 million primary votes for Trump have a way of changing a politician's mind.

YOUR VIEWS

Republican drought must end in Oregon

A recent *East Oregonian* editorial described the circumstance of Oregon's governing leadership remaining within one party as a 30-year drought.

In an area such as this, mentioning drought is very apt to draw attention; and, in the context of an election season, it is pretty sure to stir up the base.

Oregon's last Republican governor, Vic Atiyeh, was gutsy enough to face a problem head-on. When the state faced a budget shortfall, he persuaded the legislature to consider a 10 percent state income tax surcharge. It was passed and enacted with a minimum of bloodshed.

A few years later, in retaliation for that dastardly act, some remaining hard-shelled Reaganites managed to banish local control of school funding and install

control in Salem. Thus began the downward spiral of Oregon's K-12 education results. At about that same time the "kicker" rebate was dreamed up and, sadly, enshrined in our state constitution.

If Republicans were to nominate someone with the integrity and good sense of a Vic Atiyeh, this drought might end.

Harvey Foreman
Pendleton

Clinton's experience, skills set her apart

It is time to return our ballots and make a decision about our next president. We Democrats have a choice between two candidates. In many respects, they're not too far apart on the issues, health care, minimum wage, job creation or the environment. Their differences are mostly in the details.

However, when it comes to who is better qualified and prepared to make the decisions that presidents

must make every day, there is a big difference. Bernie Sanders is filled with good ideas, but without the skills needed to accomplish them. Hillary Clinton not only has the ideas, but the necessary experience, skills and integrity to accomplish these goals.

One of the great honors of my life was serving as a delegate for Hillary at the 2008 Democratic National Convention. She was the right choice in 2008, and she is the right choice now. I urge all Oregonians to cast their votes for Hillary Clinton for our next president.

And get those ballots turned in by May 17.

Jack Lorts, former Mayor
Fossil

Sweek for Morrow County Judge

We have known Greg Sweek for many years through his work with Morrow County government. We

have always known Greg to be a good listener, fair-minded, and just.

We believe he will make an excellent Morrow County judge/commissioner. He has firsthand knowledge of how Morrow County government works and is well placed to implement new policies with the future county government system.

Please join us in voting for Greg Sweek, on the May ballot, for our next Morrow County judge.

Raymond and Carol Michael
Boardman

Vote yes on Athena-Weston school bond

Athena-Weston School District received a matching grant in the amount of \$4 million from the state.

In order for our communities to receive the grant we must vote yes on a \$4 million bond. If we do not pass our bond the matching grant from the state will be given to

another school district.

We have a unique opportunity for our communities to improve safety and security for our students and staff, replace much needed roofs, school buses, tennis courts and add air conditioning to the Athena Elementary School and high school gym. This is just a small list of items that will be done with the matching grant and the passing of the bond.

We currently have a bond that will mature in June 2016. Our current rate per \$1,000 of assessed property value is \$1.01. If we pass the bond the levy rate will increase 44 cents and will mature in 10 years. Most schools in our area have much higher levy rates per thousand and their bonds mature in 20 years.

I am proud to be a Tigerscot and I am voting yes for our schools. Please join me in voting yes on May 17.

Paula L. Reich
Athena