

Buehler gets \$2 million from Knight, GOP governors

By PARIS ACHEN
Oregon Capital Bureau

Nike co-founder Phil Knight and the Republican Governors Association poured another \$2 million into the campaign of Republican Rep. Knute Buehler in the past week for his challenge of Democratic incumbent Gov. Kate Brown.

The \$1 million check from Knight brings his overall contributions to Buehler to \$2.5 million, about 26 percent of the Republican candidate's overall campaign funds. That is a record amount to an Oregon political campaign by an individual.

The governors' associa-

tion contributions now total over \$2 million, or nearly 21 percent of Buehler's campaign funds.

As of Wednesday night, the campaign had yet to report either of the checks to state campaign finance filing



Buehler

The Oregon Capital Bureau learned about the contributions Wednesday from a source close to the campaign. The campaign has seven days from receipt to report the contribution.

Jon Thompson, governors' association press secretary, on Wednesday confirmed the new \$1 million

check to Buehler's campaign.

"We see the Oregon governor's race as a top pick-up opportunity," Thompson wrote in an email. "Knute Buehler is running a focused, policy-driven campaign, and we believe he has a strong chance to win."

Thompson cited the Cook Political Report's assessment Tuesday upgrading the Oregon gubernatorial race from "Lean D" to a "Tossup."

On Monday, the Republican Governors Association announced plans to spend over \$60 million on gubernatorial races around

the country in the final three weeks before the Nov. 6 election.

The most recent check to Buehler tops off a \$1 million check from Knight Aug. 13, and \$500,000 he gave a year earlier.

The \$1 million from the Republican governors follows contributions of \$250,000 on Aug. 27, \$250,000 on Aug. 30, \$250,000 on Sept. 14 and \$175,000 on Oct. 1.

Knight recently gave \$1 million to the Republican governors group but Thompson, their spokesman, said Knight's gift had "no impact" on its decision to write a check to Buehler's campaign.

"We don't solicit or ear-

mark contributions for a particular race," Thompson wrote. "All of our contributions to the RGA go into one big pot."

Brown, meanwhile, has received more than \$650,000 over the past year from the Democratic Governors Association and \$85,000 from Nike, according to state campaign finance data.

This year's governor's race is the most expensive in Oregon history. As of Wednesday, campaign finance reports showed Buehler and Brown were about even in campaign fundraising. Both have raised more than \$9 million. That was without the newly disclosed \$2 million to Buehler.

Before those donations, campaign finance reports showed that Buehler had about \$1.8 million of cash on hand, while Brown had about \$3.2 million.

Buehler's campaign spokeswoman, Monica Wroblewski, said the campaign has a policy of not commenting on donors or donations.

Knight could not be reached for comment.

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HERMISTON

Nuisance policies are updated, authority handed back to police

By JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN
East Oregonian

A broken window or a rusted car in the front yard may be a headache for a homeowner, but according to Hermiston's nuisance ordinance, it can also attract crime and affect livability. The Hermiston Police Department has recently revamped its code enforcement strategy, with a second part-time officer and potential technology updates.

The goal, said Hermiston Police Chief Jason Edmiston, is to increase livability and reduce victimization in the city.

Edmiston said the police department has supported code enforcement for years, but the responsibility has bounced back and forth between different departments in the city. For the past two years, the city's Parks and Recreation department oversaw the nuisance abatement program, and employed a former Hermiston police officer, Mike Marcum, as a part-time code enforcement officer.

In July, the responsibility returned to the Hermiston Police Department, who has hired Tom Spicknall, a former Oregon State Police sergeant, as a second part-time officer.

The two split the job on weekdays, with Marcum covering mornings and Spicknall covering afternoons. Marcum also works the job for some hours on Saturday.

"Livability issues can have an impact on crime," Edmiston said. "A well-kept, well-lit property is less likely to be a victim of a crime."

He said that while the parks department was responsible for code enforcement, they made progress on bringing several derelict buildings down.

The officers will also talk to people about things like overgrown lawns, trees hanging over the road or broken-down vehicles in their yards.

"We don't like to tell people to cut their grass," said Capt. Travis Eynon. "People believe these are pushing the envelope on personal rights

— but somebody's overgrown lawn may affect the neighborhood, creating a fire hazard or a rat harborage."

He added that the ordinances lay out specific violations, and are all publicly available on the city's website.

The officers will start by contacting the person who owns the property, and ask them to fix the problem. If the property owner doesn't do so within a stated period of time, the city will have a contractor go in and fix it themselves, and then place a lien on the property for that cost to the city.

"That has worked better than citations," he said.

Many times, Edmiston said, the problems are on properties where the landlord does not live in Hermiston, and the properties are not maintained.

"At some point with chronic landlords, we may go straight to a citation," he said. "It's a waste of time for everyone to have to continue to babysit certain properties."

He said sworn officers will still handle some issues,

like animal complaints.

"Not because they're fun, but because they're emotionally charged," he said.

Edmiston said the department also plans to look into some other updates to the nuisance abatement policy, including some software programs, which will allow officers and city employees to know what the code enforcement officers are doing so they don't duplicate one another's work.

He said during the winter months they will also review policies to see if they need to make any upgrades or amendments to nuisance ordinances.

He also encouraged residents to call the city or police department if they have violations to report.

"If we wanted to be 100 percent proactive on code enforcement, there would be a lot of unhappy people," he said. "We're trying to balance between being proactive and being complaint-driven. But at the end of the day, the goal is to make sure the city doesn't have hazards and look unappealing."

Flight of aphids clogs Pendleton air

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

Pendleton folks can expect to keep swatting their way through town while the flight of autumn aphids remains aloft.

Locals have noticed the minute insects darting about are far greater in number this year. The bugs created a gray haze Monday afternoon at the youth football game behind the high school, covering onlookers and athletes alike with their minuscule bodies. And entomologist Ira Thompson said he was in Pendleton on Tuesday when "they were pretty bad."

Thompson assists the irrigated agriculture entomology program at the Oregon State University Extension Service in Hermiston. He said the bugs in Pendleton are a type of woolly



Photo contributed by Jack Simons

A flight of aphids swarms a pickup truck on the Umatilla Indian Reservation.

aphid that takes to the air each fall.

"There's basically an aphid for every kind of plant," Thompson said. "I think what's happening is they are searching for their winter host."

Aphids are plant eaters, he said, so their hosts are plants they can eat and reproduce on. The insects

are departing summer villas for sturdier digs they can lay eggs in for the winter. Thompson said the bugs should clear out after a couple of weeks.

He also said putting a pin into the reason for this year's aphid boom is difficult. Their populations tend to be cyclical, he explained, and a variety of factors affect the population, from climate to hosts to predators. Ladybugs are the most well known aphid predator, but big-eyed bugs and other insects also devour aphids. And a species of tiny parasitic wasp lays eggs in the bodies of aphids, which later causes their demise.

Aphids can carry diseases that harm plants and crops, Thompson said, "but for the most part, about this time of the year, they are a nuisance."

152 voters' pamphlets lacked Umatilla County section

East Oregonian

Human error looks to be at blame for why a fraction of Umatilla County voters received a state voters' pamphlet without the county's section.

State contractor Signature Graphics of Portland produced 31,570 of the informational pamphlets for Umatilla County households, according to information from county elections manager Kim Lindell, and 152 books lacked the section for Umatilla County.

Kim Forbis with Signature Graphics explained in an email to the county that an employee "manu-

ally feeds the county insert into a pocket on a binding machine that marries it up with the state book." The machine has a detector that measures the caliper of the entire book to make sure all sections and inserts are inside prior to stapling and trimming. But Umatilla County's insert was just eight pages. The thin section made it difficult to detect when becoming part of the 132-page state book.

Lindell said county elections received 20 calls concerning pamphlets lacking the insert, and based on the numbers, it appears less than half a percent of all the pamphlets did not get the insert.

And for anyone who wants a complete pamphlet, she said, the office has plenty available.

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Steven Duggan delays drug crimes trial

East Oregonian

Sex offender Steven Ray Duggan of Pendleton fired his lawyer just before the start of his trial for drug crimes.

State court records show Duggan, 53, was going to a jury trial Thursday at the Umatilla County Courthouse, Pendleton, on felonies of possession of methamphetamine, delivery of meth within 1,000 feet of a school, and a misdemeanor or frequenting a place where controlled substances are used. That changed Wednesday when his attorney, Robert Klahn of Pendleton, filed a motion to withdraw from the case because Duggan

fired him.

Duggan gave Kline a hand-written note stating, "I can no longer have Robert G Klahn represent me because the attorney client relationship no longer exists."

He did not provide any more explanation, but Circuit Judge Jon Lieualen canceled the one-day trial. Lieualen set a hearing Tuesday to appoint a new lawyer to represent Duggan.

Duggan, 53, has convictions in 1990 and 2001 in Umatilla County for rape and sodomy. He got out of prison in Washington earlier this year after serving time for drug crimes. He remains in the Umatilla County Jail, Pendleton.

PENDLETON

Man faces federal time for molesting a girl

East Oregonian

Shane Britton of Pendleton faces upward of two years in federal prison for molesting a girl on the Umatilla Indian Reservation.

A federal jury in Portland on Wednesday found Britton, 43, guilty of abusive sexual contact. According to court documents, Britton molested the minor in June 2016 while staying with her and her mother at their home on the Umatilla Indian Reservation near Pendleton.

The girl and her mother are members of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office for Oregon. Britton is not a tribal member.

The evidence at the two-day trial showed Britton "subjected the victim to a series of unwanted and progressively more invasive physical encounters," the U.S. Attorney's Office reported. "In a recorded interview, Britton initially denied the allegation of abusive sexual contact, but later admit-

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"He's my go-to guy."
Terry Rowan, Umatilla County Sheriff

"We absolutely have to keep Commissioner Murdock in the Courthouse."
Dan Primus, Umatilla County District Attorney

"Commissioner Murdock understands rural values and he understands what it takes to balance a budget and yet listen to what people think is important. He grew in a small town and graduated in a class of 37 students."
Toni Hamby, Pilot Rock

"I've worked closely with George Murdock since the day I moved to Pendleton. At every step of the way, he is focused on making a positive difference - whatever the project and whatever the challenge."
John Turner, mayor of Pendleton

"If government is going to work in Eastern Oregon, it is vital the cities and the county are on the same page. Commissioner Murdock epitomizes the idea of working together for the benefit of not just Hermiston, but all of Umatilla County."
Dave Drotzmann, mayor of Hermiston

Experience is the Difference

Umatilla County Commission Board Chair George Murdock has earned a second full term
Paid for by Committee to Re-elect George Murdock, County Commissioner.
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