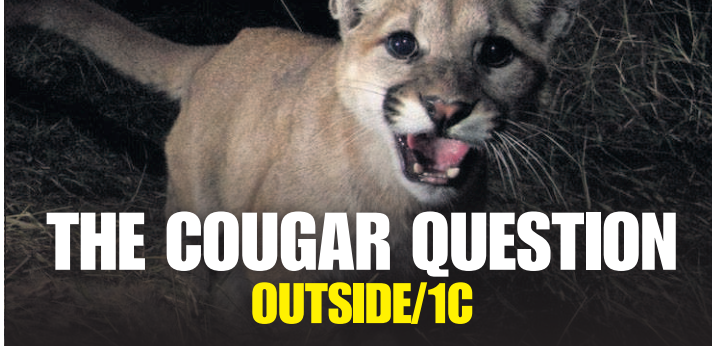




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McLeod-Skinner

## 2nd Dist. challenger saving yard signs

McLeod-Skinner mulls second run for Congress or state office

By ANTONIO SIERRA  
East Oregonian

When Jamie McLeod-Skinner made a longshot bid to unseat 10-term incumbent Rep. Greg Walden, she said she always knew it could take two election cycles to get it done.

After holding Walden to his lowest percentage of votes in his congressional career, McLeod-Skinner is considering executing the second half of that equation.

On her campaign's Facebook page, McLeod-Skinner encouraged her supporters to save their yard signs or banners for "future use."

"I came to the mic for my concession speech and people were already chanting '2020,'" she said in an interview with the *East Oregonian* on Friday.

The Terrebonne Democrat said she spent the day meeting with her campaign team going over the results and considering next steps, which could include a rematch with Walden or a bid for one of Oregon's statewide seats.

If she tries to run against the Hood River Republican again, she'll have some positive signs to work with.

Walden won the 2nd District 56.1-39.1 percent, a spread that doesn't look that impressive until a look at his electoral career reveals that Walden frequently took home 70 percent of the vote in past re-election campaigns.

As Gov. Kate Brown

See SIGNS/10A

## Life after service

Women veterans, Auxiliary members discuss dwindling membership in veterans organizations



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Jody Frost, who oversees child welfare for Umatilla and Morrow counties for the Department of Human Services, served in an administrative capacity for a U.S. Marine Corps motor transport battalion at Camp Pendleton, Calif.

By JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN  
East Oregonian

When veterans come back from the military, they have some options: try to slip back into life as they knew it before, or find groups for those with common experiences that can help support them through the transition.

The latter is becoming less common with younger generations of service members.

Jody Frost, a U.S. Marine Corps veteran, said the number of people seeking out those organizations has decreased.

Frost, who served from 1981 to 1984, never went overseas, and did not qualify for the Veterans of Foreign Wars. But she did serve as a member of the American Legion, and was their secretary for a while.

"I was the only woman, and one of the younger members," she said.

The Hermiston Veterans of Foreign Wars post has about 300 members, though not all are active. Of those, only a few are women. Though numbers are dwindling overall for those organizations, the number of women that seek out those organizations is even lower.

According to a 2015 U.S. Department of Defense report, women make up 16.8 percent



Contributed photo

Jody Frost in her U.S. Marine Corps basic training photo taken in Parris Island, S.C., in July 1991.

of the military, or about 357,276 members.

Amber Randall, an Air Force veteran who served in the early 2000s, said she and some of her peers keep in touch with other veter-

ans through social media, including several Facebook groups, but it's rare to find groups where younger veterans meet in person.

"A reason why the younger service members aren't so close knit, I think, is because the other groups seem to be inundated with older vets that served in a totally different military," she wrote to the *East Oregonian*. "As in, things were a lot different."

Sonja Saltee is a member of the local VFW Auxiliary (a group for veterans, their spouses and immediate family members), as well as on the board of the statewide organization. She said one of the reasons for the decline in enrollment could be simple numbers.

"I think part of it was that back then, 58 percent of the population were in the service," she said, referring to World War II and Korean War veterans. "Now it's about seven percent of the population."

She noted that some women veterans would join the Auxiliary instead, because there weren't many other women in the posts.

But Frost said when she was a member of the American Legion, she wanted to be treated as a veteran — which she said was difficult for some of the older members.

See VETS/10A



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Dave Bowman, left, and Dave Gawf pose with flags on Friday at the BMCC Veterans Breakfast.

## Connected over breakfast

Veterans find each other through annual BMCC meal

By KATHY ANEY  
East Oregonian

Two Vietnam-era veterans who served in Guam in the 1970s connected two years ago thanks to the annual Blue Mountain Community College Veterans Breakfast.

Dave Bowman and Dave Gawf devoured pancakes, bacon and eggs Friday morning at the BMCC com-

mons before they told their tale. Both had worked as Navy corpsmen at the U.S. Naval Hospital on Guam in the early '70s and even slept in the same barracks, but don't remember each other from that time. In the early '80s, both moved to Pendleton. Bowman worked as a veterinarian at the Pendleton Animal Hospital. Gawf eventually started a construction company. Each remained oblivious to the other's presence.

"In Guam, he was a surgery tech and I was an orthopedic tech," Bow-

See BREAKFAST/10A



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