

YOUR VIEWS

Spencer will champion the underserved

I felt a twinge of excitement when I saw the announcement that Briana Spencer would be joining the candidates for the Pendleton School District Board. While I did vote for her to serve on the Nixyaawii School Board, I wholeheartedly endorse her for this board as well.

She is a valuable asset to our community out here on the reservation's charter school board, but I feel she would fill a great gap by serving on the Pendleton board. When the decision has to be made on which board she is to serve, I know Briana will make the right one.

Briana is principled, intelligent and has a path before her that will only lead to the betterment of herself and her community. Why? Because she doesn't just think of herself when she is charting her course. She is thinking of all of us.

I am a foster parent of two children that go to Washington Elementary School. I believe within the depths of my being that my children will have far less chance of falling through the cracks if Briana serves on this board. She will look out for the underserved and invisible children of our community. She will be their champion. Our champion.

**Martina Gordon
Pendleton**

Spencer will bring energy, passion to school board

I encourage you to support Briana Spencer for Position 7 on the Pendleton School District Board of Directors. I have known Ms. Spencer since 2016 when we both went through the Eastern Umatilla County Ford Institute Leadership Program.

Briana Spencer cares deeply about this community, and she is well organized and articulate. While working with her during the 2016 program, I was impressed with her passion and commitment to building a stronger community. Briana will bring that same energy to her position on the Pendleton School Board.

We are fortunate to have such a strong young woman who wants to build community and strengthen relationships. Briana is well connected and knows how to bring people together in order to get things done.

Please join me in voting for Briana Spencer for the Pendleton School Board, Position 7.

**Velda Arnaud
Pendleton**

Gregg's expertise will be a valuable asset

Please join me in voting for Patrick Gregg for Position 7 on the Pendleton School Board. I am confident that he is up for the challenge to strengthen our district.

I have known Pat going on six years. During this time, I have always been impressed with his levelheaded decision making and his ability to articulate his ideas. He is invested in the community and his professional expertise will be an invaluable asset.

As a parent to local students, he will bring an excellent perspective to the Pendleton School Board. He has always played an active and supportive role in the education and activities of his children. I have had the firsthand opportunity to witness Pat's commitment to his family and career. I know he will bring this same level of commitment to the board. His personal drive is well suited for this role and I have no doubt that he will work hard to support students, teachers, and administrators.

**Alyssa Alexander
Pendleton**

Dedication to Pendleton just one of Gregg's strengths

Pat Gregg is a candidate for a board position for the Pendleton School District. I endorse him. I would like to share with the public information about Pat which the public may not know, but which to me reflects upon how good a board member he will be.

After graduating from University of Portland, and then Willamette Law School, Pat moved to Pendleton in 2009 to begin law practice in a law firm in which I also am a partner.

Pat grew up and attended school in Wilsonville. His mother is a retired teacher and was a vice principal. His father is a retired Oregon State Police captain. His parents recently moved to Pendleton in order to be near Pat, his wife Jill, and their three sons, ages 9, 7, and 3.

Pat has been an active Pendleton resident, participating in several community causes. He currently serves on the Umatilla County Historical Society Board. He was on the board of the Cason's Place. He is a leader of a local Cub Scout troop and, professionally, he has served as president of the local lawyer association.

Jill has been equally active, serving for many years as the head of the Children's Museum of Eastern Oregon. She presently is the leader of ASPIRE (college counseling) at Pendleton High School. She also is in charge of the local branch of Communicare, an organization that provides students the opportunity to make grants with funds supplied from the Harold and Arlene Schnitzer Foundation.

With Pat Gregg, you will be electing a dedicated individual and a good thinker. He

LETTERS DEADLINE FOR MAY 18 ELECTIONS

The *East Oregonian* does not run endorsements of more than 400 words.

The *East Oregonian* will institute a deadline for letters to the editor, so we can be fair with all the letters we receive and allow for responses before Election Day, if necessary.

We run local letters of endorsement on a first-come, first-served basis. Please submit your endorsement letters to the editor by 5 p.m. on Friday, May 7. You can email them to editor@eastoregonian.com, or mail them to East Oregonian, c/o Andrew Cutler, 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton, OR 97801.

We will publish our last letters on Saturday, May 15. Any letters received after the deadline will not run. Election Day is May 18.

has three young sons, two of whom already are in the school system. His wife Jill actively is directing Pendleton High School students toward college. Pat has every reason to do a good job as a board member in maintaining a strong and forward-moving public education program in Pendleton.

**Steven H. Corey
Pendleton**

Rose City needs support

As you are probably aware, Portland is grappling with numerous crises. I grew up in Pendleton, then moved to Portland in 2016. Before 2020, it was one of the most livable cities in America. Then COVID-19 hit.

After the senseless panic-buying died down, downtown was empty. Restaurants closed. Skyscrapers void of office space. MAX trains nearly empty. Homeless camps growing.

At the end of the tragic day George Floyd was killed, downtown came back to life. Not by business travelers and tourists, but massive protests. Most remained peaceful until a black-clad group of anarchists hijacked them. The events became violent and destructive. Even worse, Trump sent his homeland security team here, only to escalate it. The unrest continued over 170 nights. Businesses became boarded up. People were scared away. Graffiti appeared everywhere.

Since then, downtown has slowly improved. However, we still have a small group of "Direct Action" demonstrators who want to destroy our city. The homeless and trash crises remain worse than ever. However, little by little, we are coming together to take our city back. Rioters are going to jail and trash is being cleaned by the city and community organizations. Gun violence seems to be decreasing and new stores are opening downtown.

Portland will survive this dark time. It will just take a lot of patience and effort. I know Portland has fans in Umatilla County. We need you to return and support our businesses. The entire state must help to prevent the Rose City from wilting.

**Michael Vescio
Portland**

Gardner the best candidate for the job

I am supporting Dain Gardner for the Hermiston School Board. I have known Dain for over 20 years, both personally and professionally. Dain steps up whenever there is a need, so it was no surprise to me that he chose to step up now, by running for the Hermiston School Board.

Dain is extremely loyal, steadfast and confident. These traits make him a natural born leader and the most logical choice for the position on the school board.

Dain is a father of two daughters and recognizes the need for education and accountability, one that he will take great care with and manage well. He will be a huge asset for all of Hermiston.

Dain saw a need for our kids to get back into the schools full time. He joined a group dedicated to this endeavor, supporting those parents who had like-minded goals. Dain is methodical in his actions and thoughts, looking at the totality of the situation, reviews the documented criteria, and then moves forward, observing all the guidelines and rules with fairness and equality.

I hope you will join me in voting for the best candidate available. Dain will work in partnership with teachers, management and parents to provide the best possible outcome for our community and children. Isn't that what our ideal goal is when selecting a candidate? Someone who will do their very best for our kids? I believe that it is Dain Gardner.

**Karen Primmer
Hermiston**

Spencer's voice counts

I am pleased to endorse Briana Spencer for the Pendleton School District, Position 7.

Briana and I have known each other for several years. We first met through work, and then getting to know each other through the participation of local community events. Since day one, Briana has been friendly, open to discussion on a variety of topics, and genuine.

In recent years, I have noticed that she has become a part of a variety of local groups/organizations and of different settings. Her mindset and voice is very specific, consistent, and respectful. Her goal is to always to make the community a better place with respect and her time investment is beyond measure.

I am very proud of Briana's accomplishments and respectfully recommend Briana Spencer for the Pendleton School Board, Position 7. Her voice counts.

**Terri Carnes
Mission**

Gregg has the temperament to serve Pendleton schools

I was born and raised in Pendleton, and I attended Pendleton public schools from kindergarten through high school. I have practiced law here in Pendleton since 1980.

I first came to know Patrick Gregg over 10 years ago, when he began his civil law practice as a young lawyer at the Corey, Byler & Rew law firm. Over that time, I have watched him grow and mature, both professionally and as a member of this community. Professionally, Pat is bright, dedicated, hardworking, and even-tempered.

As a small-town lawyer, he has represented a wide variety of individuals, farmers, and businesses. As a member of the community, he and his wife, Jill, have put down roots in the community by purchasing a home and raising three young children.

I served on the Pendleton School Board for nine years. Much of what school board members do is the hard, tedious work of reviewing written documents and listening in order to become educated enough to make the kind of informed decisions school board members must make. Most of those decisions are not controversial, and therefore don't generate much publicity. Good board members know this, and understand that they have been entrusted by the public to do their homework and make wise decisions.

I believe Pat will approach his duties seriously, and that he has the skills to perform them well. Occasionally, school board service can be challenging, when hot-button issues arise, and then different skills are required. I believe Pat has the temperament and ability to serve in those situations as well.

I urge you to vote for Patrick Gregg for Pendleton School Board Position 7.

**Michael Collins
Pendleton**

Gregg is a serious, devoted candidate

I am writing in support of Patrick Gregg for Position 7 on the Pendleton School Board. Pat is a devoted family man who will bring his vision, expertise and dedication to the Pendleton School Board.

Pat is a proactive volunteer who has shown his commitment to local and state organizations past and present, such as serving as a lawyer representative for the state of Oregon, serving on a Merit Selection panel, president of the Umatilla/Morrow Bar Association, a member of the board of directors for the Umatilla County Historical Society, leader for Pendleton's Cub Scout Pack, a board member of Cason's Place, and the Pendleton on Wheels bicycle club.

The decisions the Pendleton School Board will make in the coming years will determine the opportunities our students will enjoy for the rest of their lives. Pat has shown through his own life's journey that education is paramount. As a successful lawyer and business owner, Pat takes the time to do his homework and fully understand the issues that he is working on from every angle. He will apply these same critical thinking skills as a school board member.

Pat Gregg is a serious candidate, who has a devotion to the Pendleton schools, and will help ensure that our students receive the education they need to be successful citizens of the 21st century.

Please join me in supporting this qualified candidate, Patrick Gregg, for the Pendleton School Board, Position 7.

**Gail Turner
Pendleton**

Stokoe brings fairness and respect to port commission

Rick Stokoe is a man of dignity and honor. As the Boardman police chief, he is a trained leader. That leadership has helped him serve as a port commissioner since 2015. He is a man who cares and respects others. He is a fair man who wants what is best for Morrow County as a whole.

Rick has a very busy life with his family and work. That does not stop him there. He volunteers in the community as a coach with our children, Morrow Education Foundation, and even as an ambulance driver. He cares about Boardman but also feels strongly about developing and promoting Morrow County as a whole.

Rick has strong values. He is a fair and honest man. He speaks for all and will represent Morrow County with fairness, respect, and with no hidden agendas.

If you want a Morrow County port commissioner who will work hard, stand up for the little guy, develop Morrow County fairly, and be a respectful and dignified leader, Rick Stokoe is your man.

As the city of Boardman mayor, I strongly recommend Rick Stokoe as Morrow County

Port Commissioner Position 1.

**Paul Keefer
Boardman**

Kilkenny will provide insight, perspective

We are writing this letter to endorse John Kilkenny for Port of Morrow Commissioner.

John has been a lifelong resident of Morrow County where he successfully operates a large generational wheat and cattle Ranch. John understands the economic importance of the Port of Morrow and the effect its operations have on the entire county. John recognizes that diversity in industry is a cornerstone for continued economic development of the County and the role the port plays in it.

We believe that John will be a good working partner with the county commissioners and will provide an insightful perspective to future discussions.

We are excited to have a candidate with John's experience and energy that is willing to serve the residents of Morrow County. We encourage voters to elect John Kilkenny, Port of Morrow commissioner.

**Brian and Susie Thompson
Heppner**

Stokoe committed to port, community

Rick Stokoe has my vote for Port of Morrow commissioner. He has a proven track record for serving the community with high integrity and professionalism.

Since 2015, he has served as a commissioner and supported the activities at the port. The port has continued to grow and support the opportunities for our local communities to prosper as a result. We have more jobs, high than average wages, more diversification of industry. The prosperity of our county has seen enormous impacts due to the work that Rick Stokoe along with the other commissioners have supported and watched over as the port team continues to serve this county and region.

I appreciate that Rick has settled into our community along with his family and chosen to commit his time and energy into our community. His volunteer efforts are so appreciated and felt. As a volunteer myself, it has been my pleasure to work alongside Rick on many occasions.

I ask that you vote alongside me for Rick Stokoe.

**Debbie Radie
Boardman**

Students' futures are in good hands with Spencer

I am proud to give my full support and recommendation to my personal associate Briana Spencer as a candidate for Position 7 of the Pendleton School District.

I have known Briana for several years now. Over the years, Briana has demonstrated she is reliable, determined, and that she is a hardworking individual. In most recent years, her involvement in the community has been extensive.

If elected, Briana would bring diversity to the panel with her Native American and Latina background, and she would represent a portion of the community who is often dismissed or overlooked. As a person of color myself, I appreciate Briana's constant advocacy for those who feel unheard or silenced.

She has been a positive force and is the textbook definition of a leader. She has participated in, organized, and even led multiple events pertaining to social issues occurring across the nation today, with the purpose of bringing a substantial and positive change within our own, as well as surrounding communities. She is respectful, but is not afraid to speak her mind, and will always fight for what is right.

She is authentic, engaging and knowledgeable. Briana also enjoys a challenge, once she has an end goal, she is unstoppable. I know that whatever Briana sets her mind to, she will accomplish. She deserves every potential opportunity presented to her and will, without a doubt, be successful in exceeding any and all expectations.

As a mother of a student who is enrolled in the Pendleton School District, I know my daughter's future and education is in good hands with Briana.

**Tonya Cortez
Pendleton**

Spencer deserves a seat at PSD table

It is my pleasure to write this letter of support for Briana Spencer's seat at the Pendleton School District table. I honestly believe that Briana brings extensive and important diversity to the conversation and will continue to provide honest and straightforward resolutions needed for our education system.

I know that as a natural leader, she will bring about heartfelt and sound judgment when it comes to cultivating change. Her abundance in facilitating and organization with multiple agencies across the state is unmatched. It is critical for the people of Pendleton to have a voice such as Briana's advocating for our children.

I fully support Position 7 being held by Briana Spencer.

**Kola Shippentower-Thompson
co-founder, Enough Iz Enough
Pendleton**