

Dem seeking to oust Bentz visits Eastern Oregon

Joe Yetter says he knows taking House seat from incumbent is a high bar to cross

By ANTONIO ARREDONDO
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Joe Yetter, the Democratic nominee for Oregon's 2nd Congressional District, stopped by Pendleton on Tuesday, July 12, during his Eastern Oregon tour.

Yetter is running against incumbent Rep. Cliff Bentz, R-Ontario, and plans to use his trip as a "listening tour," learning from the residents of Eastern Oregon and asking questions about their needs.

"It's my belief that Americans, Oregonians and East Oregonians all share a common body of hopes and dreams and aspirations," Yetter said, "Even though the politics of the moment are so toxic, we can understand our shared values and act on them."

Oregon's 2nd Congressional District, the seventh-largest district in the nation, stretches from Medford to Ontario. With such a large area to cover, Yetter embarked on a 1,100-mile trip across the region. July 12 marked the second day of the trip, following a stop in The Dalles where the candidate met with supporters and visited the local community center.

The son of a World War



Yasser Marte/East Oregonian

Oregon Congressional District 2 Democrat candidate Joe Yetter on Tuesday, July 12, 2022, discusses issues facing Eastern Oregon and the nation at the East Oregonian in Pendleton.

II veteran and the grandson of a World War I vet, Yetter himself served in the military for more than 35 years as a physician. After teaching other aspiring military physicians, Yetter lives on his farm in Azalea.

"The Army, the U.S. military, and the U.S. taxpayer have basically helped with everything for me in my whole life," Yetter said, "and so it's my duty to give back as much as possible."

Yetter touted several proposed policies, including universal health care and Veteran Affairs assis-

stance. As a gun owner, he said he also supports background checks for firearms. He bills himself as the "pro-choice" candidate and said he hopes he can bring together a diverse congressional district.

Yetter also touched on economic development in the region and said he hopes to improve infrastructure to attract larger businesses to Pendleton.

Most of all, Yetter recognizes the campaign road is tough. The district has not elected a Democrat since Al Ullman in 1981, and Bentz

serves as the sixth consecutive Republican representative. But that doesn't mean Yetter will go down easily.

"Two years from now, whether I'll be running for reelection or running to defeat whoever the incumbent is, I'll be back," he vowed.

Yetter met with Pendleton Mayor John Turner in the afternoon and planned on meeting with supporters at OMG! Burgers & Brew in downtown Pendleton in the evening. Following his stay in Pendleton, the candidate heads to Hermiston to meet with more community leaders.



Oregon Beverage Recycling Cooperative/Contributed Photo
Pilot Rock's Nicole Ferguson, left, and her 13-year-old son, Jesse, pose for a photo Friday, July 8, 2022, with the prize bottle they found at Hermiston's Riverfront Park for this year's statewide Hidden Bottle Hunt. The event ran July 6-11.

X marks the bottle

Mother, son, find Hidden Bottle Hunt prize at Hermiston's Riverfront Park

By SHANNON GOLDEN
The Observer

HERMISTON — For Pilot Rock's Nicole Ferguson, a single glass bottle hiding in Hermiston's Riverfront Park gave new meaning to the phrase "one man's trash is another man's treasure."

Ferguson and her 13-year-old son, Jesse, are among the six winners in this year's statewide Hidden Bottle Hunt — a fundraiser the Oregon Beverage Recycling Cooperative hosted. The OBRC donated \$1,000 for each of the six bottles during the five-day hunt.

She and Jesse found the bottle Friday, July 8.

"It was a lot of fun," Ferguson said. "We had fun figuring out all the clues."

This second annual hunt commemorates the 51st anniversary of Oregon's Bottle Bill. With the passage of the bill on July 2, 1971, Oregon became the first state in the nation to implement a redemptive system that reinforced recycling and kept litter out of natural areas.

More than 50 years later, the bill remains a lasting legacy of the state's championing of environmental activism. Oregonians who return empty bottles and cans to stores and redemption centers receive now a 10-cent refund value for each container returned.

The OBRC began releasing clues on July 6. Participants from around the state tried to decipher the cryptic poems. It was on the third

day that Ferguson and her son began to narrow their search.

The third clue included the phrase, "More Hints and you may celebrate!" This was an anagram of Hermiston — along with other clues about the city's agricultural history and burgeoning population.

The OBRC hid each bottle in a park or trail open to the public, so Ferguson and her son decided to explore all seven parks in the Hermiston area. They tackled Riverfront Park first.

After negotiating which direction to go and admiring the mulberry trees that populated the park, they ventured toward Bridge Road. On the other side of the underpass, they found the bottle; wrapped in orange bubble wrap and tucked into a small culvert.

This year's six winners got to keep the commemorative bottle and direct the \$1,000 to an Oregon nonprofit of their choice. Ferguson selected the Pendleton Animal Welfare Shelter/Pioneer Humane Society.

"We're animal lovers, so we picked the humane society," she said. "I follow them really closely on Facebook and they're always needing donations."

Ferguson, who was born four years after the Bottle Bill passed, credited the bill as a positive incentive for recycling in Oregon. Still, Ferguson pointed out the nearest BottleDrop for her is almost an hour away. She noted it would be useful to have more redemption centers around the state.

"I would hope in the future of recycling, especially in more rural communities like we live in, there would be a more convenient way for people to do it," she said.

Recent arrests have Pendleton police on the go

East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Pendleton police reported the last several days have kept them busy. The department since Friday, July 9, has arrested a man for brandishing a gun at a teen, a woman for an assault with a hammer and two suspects after a car chase.

Police arrest man after weekend search

Pendleton police July 9, arrested a Pendleton man on a warrant after a search that lasted exactly one week.

Mark Alan Deuce Romero, 31, is in the Umatilla County Jail, Pendleton, on several charges. Pendleton police in a press release reported the arrest stems from July 2, when Romero brandished a firearm at a 16-year-old boy.

Police had a warrant for his arrest on charges of unlawful use of a weapon, second-degree disorderly conduct and menacing. According to the press release, an officer July 9 saw Romero on Southwest First Street and recognized him.

"When the patrol officer observed Romero, he took off running west on the (Umatilla River) levee," the press release said. "Officers gave chase and were able

to catch up to Romero and arrest him in the 300 block of Southwest Court Avenue."

Pendleton police reported officers caught Romero with a loaded .22 revolver near where he had been hiding. In addition to the warrant, police tagged Romero with an arrest for felon in possession of a firearm

Police jail woman after robbery, assault with hammer

An altercation over a bag of cans turned violent the morning of July 10, as Pendleton police reported officers arrested a woman for assault with a hammer.

According to a press release, Pendleton resident Theresa D. Guardipee, 41, stole a bag of cans from another man at Roy Raley Park. A 911 call at 11:18 a.m. reported Guardipee unveiled a hammer and began swinging.

"When the male victim attempted to get the bag of cans back, it was reported that Guardipee hit the male in the back with the hammer causing pain and injury," according to Pendleton police.

Officers arrived at 11:21 a.m. and contacted both of the people involved. Police found visible evidence

on the victim's body as well as witness statements that supported the victim's case. Police arrested Guardipee for first-degree robbery and second-degree assault.

In addition to these charges, police found Guardipee to be in possession of a "violation amount of suspected methamphetamine."

Police catch pair after car chase

Pendleton police reported a patrol officer on July 11 at 9:46 p.m. tried to contact the driver of a gray Honda Accord in the Safeway parking lot because a rear tail lights/turn signal was not working.

"The patrol officer did not conduct a traffic stop, rather his intent was to advise the driver of the defective equipment," according to a press release.

As the officer approached the vehicle, the driver hit the gas and took off from the parking lot at a high speed, ignoring the stop sign as the vehicle entered Southwest Court Avenue heading west-bound

The officer gave chase to stop the vehicle for the reckless driving, police reported, but the driver did not stop, and the pursuit was on.

The suspect continued driving on Southwest Court Avenue to Westgate where he turned eastbound, ignoring a total of four stop lights/signs while attempting to flee.

Ultimately, the driver and the passenger abandoned the car on the 10th Street Bridge, police reported, leaving the vehicle in gear where it rolled into a residential chain-link fence. The officer observed the pair run over the embankment toward the north side of the Umatilla River.

Police set up a perimeter, and after some searching arrested Edwin Roy Johnson, 58, of Pendleton, and Johny Ray Johnson, 68, of Walla Walla, and booked them into the Umatilla County Jail. Together, police arrested them for attempt to elude in a vehicle, reckless driving, interfering with a peace officer, hit-and-run involving property and a parole board warrant.

"It is unknown if Edwin Johnson and Johny Johnson are related," the press release stated. "The residential fence received minor damage and there were no injuries to anyone involved."

All of the cases next go to the Umatilla County District Attorney's Office for consideration of charges.

Hermiston council discusses psilocybin prohibition

By ANTONIO ARREDONDO
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — Although Oregon plans to make psilocybin legal statewide in 2023, Hermiston may be voting to prohibit the drug.

Hermiston City Council at its meeting Monday, July 11, discussed a ballot measure that would give Hermiston residents a vote on whether or not to make therapeutic psilocybin legal in town.

The ballot is in response to Measure 109, which Oregon voters passed in 2020 that allows those 21 and older to take psychedelic mushrooms in a therapeutic setting. Psilocybin still will not be available for retail sale.

With the measure, though, comes another option: Cities

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To see a video recording of the meeting, go to www.hermiston.or.us/meetings1.

that do not want legal mushrooms can opt out in November 2022.

"This is basically a use it or lose it opt-out option," Hermiston Planning Director Clint Spencer said to the council. "This is the one opportunity that we have to pass a prohibition otherwise it becomes legal effective Jan. 2."

Spencer referenced the voting history of the city often during his presentation. Hermiston voted against

marijuana legalization in 2015 and still prohibits the sale or distribution of medical and recreational marijuana in the city.

The council moved to discuss the psilocybin matter further. Hermiston Assistant City Manager Mark Morgan said all signs point toward the opt-out being on the ballot in November.

Umatilla County Board of Commissioners on July 6 voted to place a county law on the November general election ballot to ban psilocybin manufacturing and service centers.

In other council action, the council approved a supplemental budget to staff a city information technology department.

"IT can be viable if it's turned into a quasi-enter-

prise," Morgan said. "For the largest city government in the area, it makes sense. We can shop the service out to other areas."

Morgan said Morrow County and Umatilla already have deals in place, and the July 11 meeting referenced Stanfield joining in.

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LOCAL BRIEFING

Umatilla Indian Reservation bans open burning

MISSION — Open burning on the Umatilla Indian Reservation ends Thursday, July 14.

The confederated Umatilla tribes in a press release announced the recent dry weather plus grass and vegetation drying out prompted the ban.

The burn ban, which comes later than in past years due to record rain, limits open burning until the fire season ends in the fall. The ban applies to burn barrels and yard debris, but

sweathouse and ceremonial fires are exempt.

Those exempt fires still will need permits for specified burn days from the Umatilla Tribal Dispatch. To obtain a permit, contact the dispatch at 541-278-0550.

For more information regarding the burn ban or agricultural fires, contact the Office of Air Quality at 541-429-7080.

— EO Media Group

Help Jim Stanton Turn 90!
Saturday, July 16th, 1-3pm
Birch Creek Golf Course Dining Room

WILDHORSE RESORT & CASINO
7/15-7/21
Cineplex Show Times
Price changes: Adults: \$10.00 • Child: \$8.00
Senior: \$8.00 • Matinees (before 4:00pm): \$8.00

- Paws of Fury: The Legend of Hank (PG) 3:40p 6:10p 8:40p
extra 1:00p show 7/15-7/17
- Where the Crawdads Sing (PG13) 4:40p 7:40p
extra 1:40p show 7/15-7/17
- Thor: Love and Thunder (PG13) 5:00p 8:00p
extra 2:00p show 7/15-7/17
- Minions: Rise of Gru (PG) 4:00p 6:30p 9:00p
extra 1:20p show 7/15-7/17
- Top Gun: Maverick (PG13) 4:20p 8:20p
extra 12:40p show 7/15-7/17

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