

# 2 candidates, 1 opening for GOP governor

From The East Oregonian

Two Republican candidates for governor — Bud Pierce and Allen Alley — are facing off in the May primary.

Five names will actually appear on the ballot for Republican voters, but the race will undoubtedly come down to Pierce and Alley, who have both the funding and wherewithal to win the nomination.

It's a solid 1-2 punch for a party that hasn't held the governor's office since 1987. (Incidentally, Republican governors led the state for 42 of the 48 years before this recent 30-year drought.)

**EDITORIAL**

But only one can survive to take on Kate Brown in November, and Republican voters should consider the general election when voting in the May primary.

If Oregon is to avoid the one-party rule that has plagued other states, Republicans need to prove they can win every once in a while.

Which potential Republican nominee has the best chance this time around? We've spoken to both, and are impressed with both.

Pierce is the kind of Republican we'd have supported in the last few elections, when the GOP let social issues derail campaigns.

He doesn't have time for that kind of nonsense. He is a successful doctor and private sector businessperson, with reasonable solutions to making state government more efficient and customer friendly. He has taken a keen eye to rural issues and has pounded the pavement (and the wheat fields and the forests and the deserts) of Eastern Oregon to secure support and raise money. He may lack in pizzazz, but he's a well-informed outsider with a reasonable approach to the big state issues that Democrats have been unable to tackle — PERS, a statewide transportation package, Columbia River Crossing and rural economic struggles.

Perhaps his nice-guy image carries with it some naiveté. And if Republicans can somehow claim the governor's mansion — they sure want someone who can swing some elbows, cut some bloated departments and shake up Salem. It's difficult to picture Pierce in that role.

Alley is similar to Pierce in many regards, but he may have more political polish and the hard edge needed to step into what would be a difficult situation.

He is a latecomer to the campaign and this election cycle has not reached out to Eastern Oregon as much as he said he would like to. But you can bet if he survives in May, he'll be drumming up votes in the reliably red side of the state.

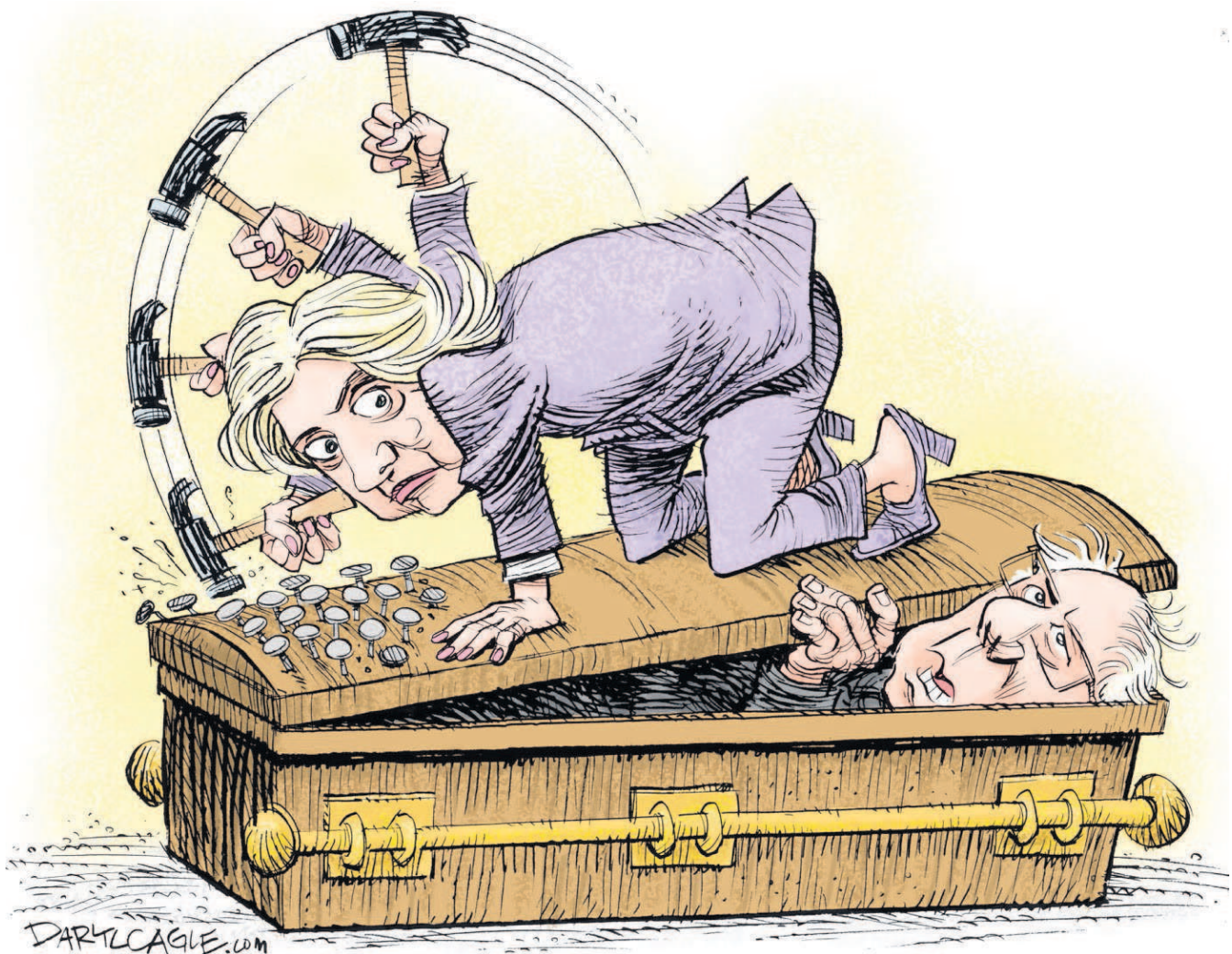
He, too, has stayed away from the unpopular issues that have tripped up predecessors, most notably Dennis Richardson who was in a seemingly winnable race with John Kitzhaber just two years ago.

Alley told the editorial board this week that he watched the Kitzhaber debacle and resignation from afar and saw the state needed a change in party, a change in culture and a change in leadership.

He spoke mostly about Oregon's poor education system — near the bottom for K-12 graduation rates despite a recent overhaul of the entire system — and the quickly rising costs of a college degree. He's got ways to fix it, and doesn't believe another dump truck of dollars is the answer. Perhaps it will not matter which Republican wins in May.

Perhaps Gov. Brown is untouchable in November — especially in a liberal state where Donald Trump may be on the ballot. Trump will cause 7 in 10 Oregonians to vote against him, and any Republican candidate is going to have to win back at least some of the anti-Trump anger.

For Oregon's sake, we hope Republicans are able to claim statewide office soon. The first step to doing so is fielding quality candidates like Bud Pierce and Allen Alley and letting the best candidate advance into the second round.



## All aflutter as spring hits high gear

Listen, Springtime. Take it down a notch. I've got neighbors and they're probably wondering what kind of show I'm running over here. I just started an important business call the other day and we were still in the pleasantries stage when a commotion under the footbridge in my yard forced me to say, "Hold on. Something's happening." Two ducks were wrestling in the water under the bridge. Then another duck flew in and the two boy ducks started fighting. Everybody knows where baby birds come from. You go to Grain Growers during Chick Days. So I don't know what these ducks were so angry about, but I hope they worked out their differences.

Later the very same day I'm talking to my sister on the phone and two hawks start having Chick Days up in a tree — and you can't not mention it when nature is happening like that right before your eyes. Oh, yawn. Nothing going on over here. Nope. Two raptors are most definitely not procreating in a tree right now. No big deal.

So I had to narrate Springtime in full swing over the phone to my own sister and a friend I'd called to broker a power deal on the sale of used picnic tables. It's just getting a little out of hand, Springtime. That's all I'm saying. Get a room.

Next topic: further proof that Wallowa County is wired to all things.



**AND FURTHERMORE**

Jon Rombach

There's a viral photo blowing around the internet from the last Prince concert. Atlanta photographer Evan Carter was at the show and snapped a quick shot after the final encore. Concertgoers are waving at Prince. He's standing with a purple background in a beam of bright light, holding up a purple power salute, one arm in the air. It would be a heck of a picture any time, but in light of his death not long after, it raises arm hairs.

The Wallowa County connection to the photographer is Joseph resident Mary B Fort. She used to babysit Evan when he was just a duckling. One of the best child care anecdotes I've heard is how Fort was taking care of the Carter kids and this young fella Evan was supposed to go off to kindergarten for the day, but decided not to go — and stuck to it and won. Lots of kids declare a personal boycott of school, but this is the first I've heard of ditching kindergarten. The snacks, Evan. The naps. Stories. Recess. Arts and crafts. Kindergarten is the apex of human activity. How could you

not want to go to kindergarten? I used to be a substitute teacher and filling in for kindergarten was like R&R at Disneyland compared to the running battles of older grades.

I've filled out your report card, Evan Carter of Atlanta. Your Prince photograph earns a score of ten flashbulbs. Your determination to avoid kindergarten scores one graham cracker, because the rules state I cannot award any lower score. But I have to admire the pluck required to take a stand at such an early age, so you also get a bonus of one juice box.

On a final note: rental housing is tough to come by these days and I've got a one bedroom available. It's small. About eighteen inches by eighteen inches. It's a houseboat, floating on my little pond. I built it for those wrestling ducks because I've been finding broken eggs along the edge of the ditch. I figured the mother duck would move right in to this floating nesting box, secure from egg poachers out there on the water. But, nope. She has shown no interest. So ungrateful. If you know of any waterfowl in the market for housing, have them drop an application off with my rental property manager. A family of starlings applied, but their references look shady. First, last and security deposit required.

Jon Rombach is a local columnist for the Chieftain.

## Monument idea ignores our voices

My family has lived and worked in Southeast Oregon since the 1800s. We are people of the land and for the land. Our businesses have worked hand-in-hand with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and Oregon Department of State Lands to care for this land since the agencies were created.

With our intimate knowledge of the lands, we assist in reporting, locating and fighting rangeland fires and helping with search and rescues missions. Our goal for our own land and the public's land is to maintain a healthy viable sagebrush ecosystem in the high desert of southeast Oregon.

Now, all of this may come to an end. An outdoor clothing corporation and special interest groups have proclaimed 2.5 million acres in Southeast Oregon as "unprotected" in their campaign to pressure President Obama to turn the land into a monument.

To call this public land "unprotected" is like saying the land in downtown Portland has no zoning code.

The Owyhee Canyonlands along the Oregon-Idaho-Nevada border and the

**GUEST EDITORIAL**

Linda Bentz

water and wildlife that run through it enjoy protections from more than seven layers of local, state and federal government and is actively managed by professional resource managers employed by the three state or federal agencies.

The protections include at least five federal acts (Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968, Endangered Species Act of 1973, Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 and Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979) and three land-use plans (Federal Land Policy and Management Act, Southeastern Oregon Resource Management Plan of 2002 and Oregon Greater Sage-Grouse Approved Resource Management Plan of 2015).

When likely Oregon voters were told in a recent poll about the existing protections and plans in place for these lands, 61 percent said the Owyhee Canyon-

lands has enough protection.

This monument declaration doesn't offer further protection. It's more an act of exclusion.

Once a monument is declared, public land becomes less accessible, not more. It would restrict road maintenance and that would inhibit search and rescue and firefighting operations. It would also restrict ranchers' ability to care for the land under their grazing permits, limiting our ability to maintain water sources and reservoirs that benefit all wildlife.

The monument would limit access for people who are not aggressive hikers, especially the elderly, handicapped and veterans. Those who enjoy hunting, fishing, rafting and viewing birds, wildlife and wildflowers in the Canyonlands area also will be greatly restricted.

Special interest groups are urging President Obama to act alone under the Antiquities Act of 1906 to cut Congress and our community out of this decision. But their agenda runs counter to the voice of Oregonians across the state, from Malheur County to Multnomah County.

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## Irresponsible suggestions on wolves

Barry Qualle's dad must have been a heck of a guy, but I wonder if he also believed like his son that if the law don't suit, then break it.

In his piece (April 20), Barry implicitly threatens to illegally kill wolves if conservationists don't kowtow to his interpretation of the wolf plan. He figures it a good idea if wolves were blamed right off for all dead, missing or injured cattle or economic loss in any place that's wolf habitat, and all presumed losses compensated by wolf supporters. And he reckons if wolf supporters (the majority of Oregonians) would just agree with him, it "would bring a lot of good will to the range." Un-hunh.

Barry also congratulates himself for not poaching wolves — that is, committing a crime — just the way regular citizens should congratulate themselves for not mugging old ladies or robbing banks. The thousands of Oregonians who

**LETTERS to the EDITOR**

don't shoot cows, yet deeply resent cattle on public lands, must also feel virtuous.

They might feel that there would be "good will" in the West if producers would remove from public lands the introduced European species that have over-run native grazing ranges, trampled streams and marshes, browsed aspen saplings so much that groves must be fenced, and required barbed wire to protect riparian zones.

They must also wonder if livestock producers shouldn't consider voluntarily changing public land grazing rules so that ranchers should pay for the environmental damage their stock cause. After all, a cow-calf pair currently grazes on public land for a measly \$2.11/month, a tenth of the commercial rate.

Barry's article encourages law-breaking, suggests blackmail and is entirely at odds with the statements of the Oregon Cattlemen's Association and the editorial position of other EO Media Group publications on the wolf issue.

The Chieftain should be ashamed of printing it.

Wally Sykes  
Joseph

### A nod to reporter

What treasure you found when you hired Steve Tool. Such style, compassion and warmth he brings to a story. Especially one of "human interest"; his summation of the life of my friend Bob Ferguson (April 20) epitomizes his skills. He is thorough, immensely articulate and totally enjoyable to read. Thank you, Steve.

Mike Kolosi  
Enterprise



USPS No. 665-100

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Wallowa County's Newspaper Since 1884  
Enterprise, Oregon

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PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY BY:  
EO Media Group

Periodical Postage Paid at Enterprise and additional mailing offices

Subscription rates (includes online access)	1 Year
Wallowa County	\$40.00
Out-of-County	\$57.00

Subscriptions must be paid prior to delivery

See the Wallowa County Chieftain on the Internet  
[www.wallowa.com](http://www.wallowa.com)  
facebook.com/Wallowa | twitter.com/wcchieftain

POSTMASTER — Send address changes to  
Wallowa County Chieftain  
P.O. Box 338  
Enterprise, OR 97828

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Volume 134