

Republican spearheaded naturalization ceremony

By **PARIS ACHEN**
Capital Bureau

SALEM — While many Oregon politicians hail former Republican Gov. Tom McCall as their role model, Republican Rep. Julie Parrish idolizes former Gov. Victor Atiyeh, the nation's first Arab-American governor.

"Oregon had rich history ... of welcoming immigrants," Parrish said.

The oft-rogue Republican from West Linn wanted to remind legislators and Oregonians of that important history when she suggested hosting a naturalization ceremony on the floor of the House of Representatives.

The ceremony was held in conjunction with Oregon's birthday and Valentine's Day Tuesday on the House floor.

Parrish was an infant when her Lebanese father was naturalized as a U.S. citizen. In 2011, she became the first known Arab-American woman to be elected to the state Legislature.

"I had never been to a naturalization ceremony before," she said. (Parrish was three months old when her father took the oath of allegiance to the United States.)

In January, she attended a naturalization ceremony at a U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services office in



Michael Hickman, Portland field office director of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service, conducts the oath of allegiance during a naturalization ceremony Tuesday in the Oregon House of Representatives.

Courtesy Speaker Tina Kotek

Portland, where Republican Dennis Richardson spoke as part of his first official event as newly-elected secretary of state. Parrish ran Rich-

ardson's campaign against Democrat Brad Avakian, who was seen as the likely victor.

"It's pretty impressive,

pretty powerful," Parrish said of the naturalization ceremony. "At a time when the conversation around immigration is not very posi-

tive, this was an important opportunity to remind folks that we are a nation of immigrants.

"I thought legislators

should see that and experience that."

Naturalization ceremonies had been hosted at the state Capitol in the past but were booked in the basement, far from the public eye. Parrish and one of Richardson's staff members approached House Speaker Tina Kotek to get permission to hold the ceremony on the House floor. Kotek, D-Portland, agreed to host the ceremony to mark Oregon's 158th birthday, which coincides with Valentine's Day.

"That's the first time we have done one on the House floor," Kotek said. "We think it's a really important symbolic way of saying that everyone is welcome here in the state of Oregon."

Fifteen people were naturalized as U.S. citizens during the ceremony. They come from four countries: Mexico, China, the Philippines and Denmark, said Lindsey O'Brien, Kotek's spokeswoman.

Michael Hickman, Portland field office director of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service, conducted the oath of allegiance during the ceremony.

"I feel like it was a neat thing to have it on the state's birthday," Parrish said. "They were able to say not only am I an American citizen, I'm an Oregon citizen," Parrish said.

Oregon wolf count, management plan update delayed

By **Eric Mortenson**
Capital Bureau

SALEM — Oregon's heavy snow in January caused problems for wildlife staff who track the state's wolf population.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife said extreme weather in northeast Oregon, where most of the state's wolves live, interrupted airplane, helicopter and ground surveys of wolfpacks. As a result, the annual wolf report has been delayed a month and won't be delivered to the ODFW Commission until its April 21 meeting in Klamath Falls.

The report usually is released in March and typically includes an updated wolf population count and information on the number of breeding pairs in the state. The count provides an information baseline as the commission considers updates to the state's Wolf Management and Conservation plan. The plan is reviewed every five years,

and the commission will most likely adopt an updated version later in 2017.

Although heavy snow and an extended cold snap delayed ODFW's field work, department spokeswoman Michelle Dennehy said it probably didn't harm Oregon's wolves.

"Wolves typically do quite well during the winter," she said by email. "Winters that are hard on deer and elk may actually be easier on wolves. There is winter (prey) loss to scavenge and it is harder for ungulates (deer and elk) to escape in the deep snow."

Oregon had a minimum of 110 wolves at the end of 2015, according to figures released by ODFW in February 2016. At least seven wolves died in 2016. Four members of Wallowa County's Imnaha pack, including venerable alpha male OR-4, were shot by ODFW in March 2016 after repeatedly attacking, killing and eating livestock. Wildlife biologists speculated at the time that the group began attacking livestock due



Two adult wolves from the Walla Walla Pack were caught on remote trail camera Jan. 16, 2016 in Northern Umatilla County. Extreme weather in northeast Oregon interrupted airplane, helicopter and ground surveys of wolfpacks. As a result, the state's wolf plan update will be delayed.

Courtesy of Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

to OR-4's advanced age and the fact that his longtime mate limped from an injured leg. They had two yearlings with

them, and the four appeared to have separated from or been forced out of the main Imnaha pack.

In addition, a female wolf designated OR-28 was found dead in October 2016 in south-central Oregon. Officials have not said how the wolf died, and Oregon State Police are investigating. A \$20,000 reward for information is available.

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Michelle Dennehy
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife spokeswoman

State police also are investigating a wolf found dead in Northeast Oregon in March 2016.

In May 2016, a sheep herder shot a wolf from the Walla Walla pack that was attacking sheep. State police judged the shooting was lawful under the "caught in act" provision that allows producers to kill wolves that are wounding, biting, killing or chasing livestock, according to ODFW.

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