

Exercise your right to vote

The online candidate forum sponsored by the EO Media Group is over, and we are all pleased it proved to be a success.

A gathering of candidates during an election to answer questions and present their views is always good news and should help voters who are undecided to make an informed choice. You can still watch the videos on our website or Facebook page.

To make an informed choice, though, one must actually vote. Ballots are already out, and many voters will not be able to exercise their fundamental right to choose who they want to represent them.

There is no other more important element to democracy than the ability and the privilege to vote.

We harp on the importance of voting from time to time for a good reason — it is important.

Especially now as the entire nation staggers under the impact of the COVID-19 virus, our ability to exercise our right to vote is crucial.

The virus has changed our lives in fundamental ways and going forward our nation will be different until a vaccine can be discovered, and then administered on a widespread basis. Until then, we will be subjected to a new paradigm, but what will continue to remain is our

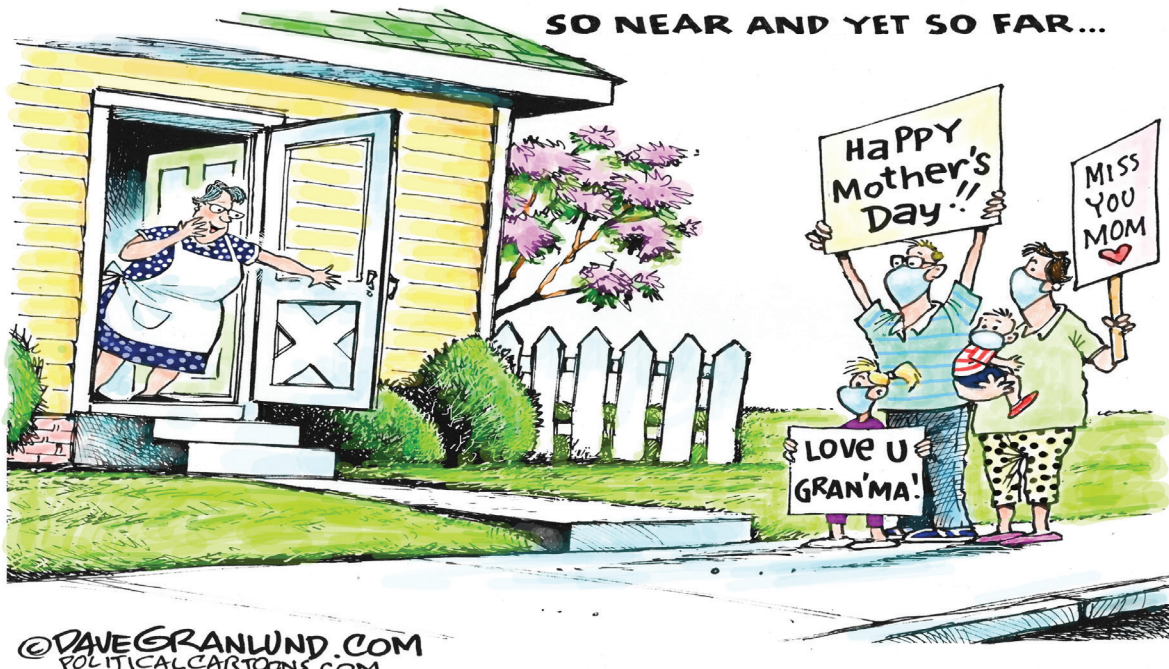
basic building block of government — voting.

Voting — even vote by mail — can end up being a chore. The ballot can sit on the kitchen table or on the couch or chair for days, seemingly forgotten as we all try to find a way to respond and overcome the challenges presented by the COVID-19 virus. This election there are not a long list of candidates vying for positions, but there are some important races that voters should give more than a passing glance too.

First and foremost is the race for Oregon's 2nd Congressional District. As longtime lawmaker Greg Walden prepares to leave that position, a sizable group of people is trying to gain his congressional seat. The position is an important one. The winner will be the direct representative for the people who inhabit Eastern Oregon in Washington, D.C., and therefore should be someone that voters believe understands our unique values and culture well.

So, voters should not shrug off the primary election. A lot may not seem to be at stake but, especially regarding the 2nd Congressional District race, the importance of this election is huge for the future of not only Oregon but our little piece of it.

So, don't forget to vote. Exercise the right so many for so long on foreign shores sacrificed for our democracy.



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Laurie Draper for OTEC board

To the Editor:

I am writing this letter in support of Laurie Draper for the position of District 3-Harney County for the OTEC board of directors.

Laurie is well grounded in the issues of electric co-ops with her husband, Rex, employed for 32 years as Harney Electric Co-op's serviceman in its northern Harney County territory. She can recall the days before cellphones where there was no central dispatch and outage calls were taken directly at the lineman's home, usually by the spouse after he went out to correct the problem.

I have known Laurie for nearly 40 years and find her to be exceptionally intelligent, resourceful and interested in her community's wellbeing. It is highly unusual to have someone of her caliber willing to serve on a board, especially one as important as Oregon Trail's.

Not being an OTEC member, I have no ax to grind or expectation of some favor down the road by supporting Laurie for the board position. I live in Harney Electric Co-op's service territory and served as its general manager from 1983 to 2002.

Have also known Bob Cargill for nearly as long as Laurie. I feel he has done a fine job on the OTEC board. No one will ever accuse me as a champion of diversity or change for their own sake. These are both quality candidates. However, if casting my ballot, I would choose Laurie Draper.

Jack Heaston
Hines

'We are the beneficiaries' of WWII sacrifices

To the Editor:

VE Day, victory in Europe, was 75 years ago when on May 8, 1945, the Allies forced Germany into an unconditional surrender, ending the war in Europe, six years of misery, death and destruction. Nations were in ruins with cities obliterated and many millions dead, displaced and in terrible plight.

The war was two years old before America was drawn into the fray after the "infamous surprise" attack on Pearl Harbor by Japan on Dec. 7, 1941. Hitler declared war on the U.S. just days later. We were in a war on two fronts, the Pacific and Europe. Japan ran wild in the Pacific Ocean, capturing huge areas. Germany's blitzkrieg seemed unstoppable as first one country, then another, fell to the Nazis. England held on by a thread with support from our Lend-Lease effort. Hitler could not defeat the Royal Air Force and turned his attention on Russia where warfare was fearsome and brutal with the Russians finally beating Germany into retreat.

We fought on the seas, in the air and stormed beaches from Normandy, North Africa across the Mediterranean up through Italy into the heart of Germany. It was total war and a costly victory as the Allies finally defeated aggressor Germany. Sixteen million Americans served in the war, and 186,000 died in the European conflict with many thousands more wounded. At home a civilian populace rolled up their sleeves, tightened belts a notch or two, often went without, but in doing so, built an infrastructure that had the world in awe. Ships, planes, tanks and armaments poured from our factories as we fed, clothed and trained a fighting force like the world has never seen.

The veterans from that era are dwindling with fewer than 400,000 left, and they die nearly 400 a day. Search one out and thank them for their service. Perhaps talk with someone that worked in a war plant. Learn something of what it was like during those uncertain days of World War II. For it certainly was a time of hardship and sacrifice, and today we are the beneficiaries of that time 75 years ago.

Be thankful.

Dave Traylor
John Day

Carpenter has 'knowledge, integrity, work ethic'

To the Editor:

I have known Jim Carpenter and his family for over 20 years, both personally and professionally, and believe he would be an outstanding judge. I had the opportunity to work with Jim when I worked in the District Attorney's Victim Services Department. His work ethic and family values, his passion for the profession and compassion for all those involved in court cases define him. An example of this character showed in his concern for child witnesses. As a defense attorney, Jim understood how frightening the judicial system can be, especially for children, and he frequently worked with the Victim Services program, to help introduce child witnesses to the courtroom, knowing where they will be sitting and what to expect helped alleviate some of the fear and anxiety the witnesses were feeling. This genuine concern for others, problem solving and purposeful service are core character traits that reflect in his interaction with others.

Jim has both defense and prosecution experience making him the most qualified candidate for this position. He started his career as a defense attorney where his experience ranged from traffic tickets, juvenile, civil and criminal cases. Since 2015, when he became our district attorney, his focus changed, and he learned the judicial system from a prosecution perspective. He developed skills in evaluating the facts of a case judiciously, fairly and impartially. He stays current with ever-changing case law and applies that knowledge to charging decisions, prosecuting or settling cases, as well as keeping abreast of the rights of the victim and the accused. As the district attorney he is responsible for both juvenile and adult cases from charging decisions through case disposition and post-conviction issues; oversees the victim services department; presides over the child abuse multi-disciplinary team; and works closely with law enforcement. All this experience and knowledge will serve him well as a judge.

As a longtime resident of Grant County Jim understands and embraces the uniqueness of small rural communities and advocates for their best interests. Vote for a leader with the knowledge, integrity and work ethic that will keep our community safe and strong.

Karen Johnston
Canyon City

Raschio has 'experience, integrity, character'

To the Editor:

I am supporting Rob Raschio for circuit court judge. I urge the voters of Grant and Harney counties to vote for Rob for three main reasons: experience, integrity and his deep connection to our communities.

Rob has been practicing law in Eastern Oregon for nearly 20 years. He started in Canyon City, and subsequently made partner in law firms in both Burns and The Dalles before moving back to Grant County to open his own private law practice in John Day in 2014.

Rob has deep roots in our community. His wife, Sena, grew up in Burns and teaches in John Day. Rob has always fully committed himself to the communities where they have lived. When in Harney County, Rob served on the Burns City Council. In Grant County, Rob served as an appointed county commissioner, and while in the role, he wrote Grant County's objection to the U.S. Forest Service Malheur forest plan. As commissioner, he supported the sheriff's office reorganization, and he created a permanent deputy district attorney position to improve the functioning of the DA's office.

Rob shares our core values. Rob is fair, balanced and thoughtful. He truly cares about our laws, the people of our

communities and our state. He will serve with integrity. Not only will he protect our rights and uphold our laws, but he will do so with transparency and accountability to us, the citizens of Harney and Grant counties.

Rob Raschio is the type of leader we need and that we deserve.

I know that Rob will serve this community as our next judge with experience, integrity, character and commitment to us. I hope that you will join me in voting for Rob Raschio as circuit court judge before May 19.

Gretchen Bates
Rural Burns

Support Beth Spell

To the Editor:

We support Beth Spell for state representative, 60th District.

Sandy and Mark Murray
Prairie City

Circuit court judge considerations

To the Editor:

At the candidate forum on Feb. 28, Rob Raschio was professional and presented himself as a serious judicial candidate. His answers assured me he is knowledgeable in a wide range of legal areas and would be unbiased and effective. He exhibited a fair-minded and compassionate approach. He presented a good understanding of mental illness, options for treatment and how to improve services in the community.

I have been unimpressed with Mr. Carpenter's knowledge and conduct in the courtroom. A 2004 Oregon Supreme Court opinion found that Mr. Carpenter "engaged in conduct involving dishonesty" and that he "lacks aspects of trustworthiness and integrity that are relevant to the practice of law." Now his campaign information implies that he will be a good judge because he hasn't supported Gov. Kate Brown. This is prejudicial and inappropriate when running for a nonpartisan judicial position. His lack of judgment and integrity seem unchanged.

Mr. Lamborn lacks the stature and composure that a judge needs to command respect and order in the courtroom. During the candidate forum, he said he would make sure offenders got a spanking and referred to his use of a crystal ball. These statements are not professional and are dismissive of the seriousness required in a judicial position. I have seen him admonished in court for not presenting himself in a professional manner.

Vote for Rob Raschio! He is clearly the best candidate, with the knowledge and integrity to be our circuit court judge.

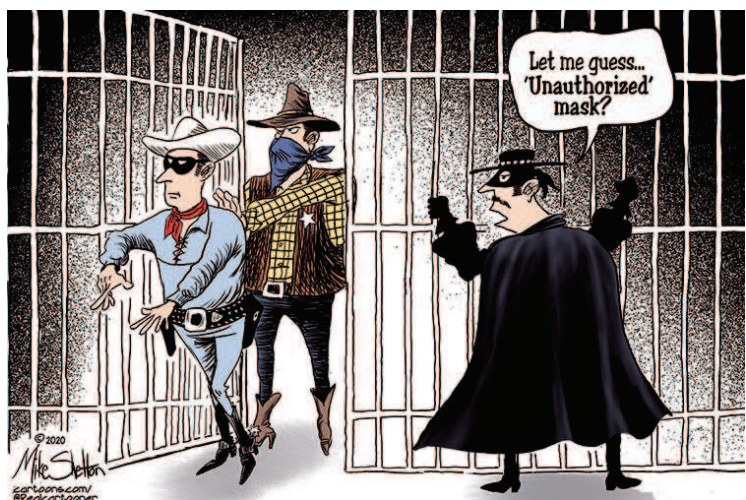
Victoria Thompson
Mt. Vernon

Beth Spell for House District 60 representative

To the Editor:

I support Beth Spell for House District 60 representative. As a lifetime Grant County resident, an educator and a parent, Beth understands the financial challenges working parents face and will advocate for greatly increased state support for child care and increased access to early education. Beth has personally experienced the sacrifices that a family has to make to provide daycare for their children so the parents can work to support them. Child care workers and preschool teachers earn less than many other professionals, yet their jobs are critical to the well being of our children. Our local economy will be boosted by better pay for those workers and by allowing working parents to pursue better job opportunities. Beth understands the links between affordable child care, early education and a strong and vibrant rural economy and will support current efforts in the Oregon House of Representatives to address these critical issues. Please vote for Beth Spell.

Adele Cerny
Bear Valley



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