



School Board Candidates Share Vision for Education

District 7 and Three Rivers School Board Candidates were our guests for the April meeting. With so much happening regarding curriculum, school safety, and student achievement, everyone in attendance was paying close attention to candidates' answers.

On the next pages, you will find two charts that give a brief reminder of the candidates' responses. The formal questions that were asked were compiled and chosen by the Executive Board and are at the top of each section.



*Josephine County
Republican
Women
April 2025*



District 7 Candidates - Joe Schmidt, Gary Richardson,,
Cassie Wilkins, Marjie Wilkie, Tom Sheckells



Remember - ballots must be turned in by May 20th! While mailing them is the standard way to get your ballot to the clerk, many believe that dropping them in one of the ballot boxes around town, or even dropping it at the court house, is a much better and safer way to get your ballot counted.



Three Rivers Candidates: Rick Nelson,
Bill Ertel, Neigel Von Hruska

Dist.7 School Board Candidates	Question #1 What are the 2 most important issues you see that need to be addressed and what will you do to help solve them?	Question #2 Recently, Dist.7 opened their meetings to public comment. Will you ensure that this continues?	Question 3: What are the educational strengths and weaknesses in the district that need to be addressed?
Joe Schmidt, Pos.7 40 yrs, conservative educator, stresses parent involvement, budget management, served on Dist. 7 board for 2 yrs.	Ensure academic standards so kids are prepared to be outstanding citizens; focus on basic skills (reading writing math, technology) get rid of culture wars, DEI, oversexualizing our kids at a young age; student behaviors; where one child can disrupt an entire class	Yes, and I was very pleased when Cassie brought up expanding our public comments. But we do much more; we hold Community Nights in the cafeteria, that are announced in advance. We have an extremely supportive and	Positives: A new leadership team is in place, and they are very responsive to board requests. Weaknesses; student behavior. Especially at the lower levels. One disruptive child can shut down an entire class, because there is no way to deal with the behavior at present time.
Gary Richardson, Pos.3 On the School Board for 20 years, worked on making changes to parental rights policy.	We have great teachers and admin. We need to have the board direct the administration, so they do the right things for the kids; much of what comes from Salem is a distraction, and we need to get the kids to be able to read. A little math is good but mostly know reading. Budgeting is done really well to keep important programs.	We've always had public comment, but I see a little negative to opening it up. Because of social media some come to get their likes and views up on social media. One way to handle problems is always to get a hold of a board member to look at the situation. That's the most effective way to get problems dealt with.	Strengths: we have great teachers and many fine programs to keep kids involved. We have excellent budgeting that keeps band, art, sports, etc. We only use 85% of budget for salaries, keeping 15% for student programs. Weaknesses are in students not getting to grade level in skills.
Cassie Wilkins. Pos.5 5lifelong GP resident, small business owner for 26 years, on the board for 7 years, has served as Dist.7,Chair	My top two issues are academic excellence and behaviors. We do highs really well, and lows really well, but there's a big crack in the middle. And I'd like to see us focus more on those students in the middle who need more help...	Yes, I would, and I did! We always allowed comment, but it was only attached to what we were discussing that evening. Now it's open to anything they want to bring up to discuss.	Positives: We do high levels well, and lows really well. The ones in the middle need more help. Weaknesses would be really focusing on the kids in the middle who fall through the cracks.
Marjie Wilkie Pos.4 retired Conservative. Lived in area 36 years. Preschool tchr; director school based programs.20 years.	We're like frogs in a pot with the "garbage" that we have to deal with in our schools. This is what brought me out of retirement. We need to tell Salem NO when they send materials for the classrooms that are full of DEI ,etc.	Absolutely by advocating and supporting families; advocating for more parent/teacher associations. Families need a voice in what happens	There should be more Special Ed. Funding. Every child could benefit from an Individual Education Plan (IEP). More individualized help is needed.
Tom Sheckells, Pos. 5 Raised in GP, lived in Las Vegas, pulled daughter out and put her in private school. No board experience.	In classrooms you have a bell curve, some kids are advanced, and some not so much so. The ones who are advanced master the skills; they get bored and become a distraction. Then there are kids like my daughter who fell behind and needed extra help; combine all that and you have behavior issues.	Absolutely, I think the more people involved, the better it is, and that's like a pressure releases valve. But I will say this, I have my own opinions when it comes to me, and like, at my core, teach the kids at their level.	Salem needs to be told NO about the garbage they want teachers to teach. Positives are all the good programs – music, sports, etc. but look at the test scores. Teach kids at their level.

Three Rivers School Board Candidates	Question #1 Whose perspective will you be representing if you are elected? Teachers, Students, Union Parents. Etc.,	Question #2 What are the educational strengths and weaknesses in the district that need to be addressed?	Question 3: What are the 2 most important issues you see that need to be addressed and what will you do to help solve them?
Rick Nelson, Zone 5	I want to be the voice of reason. Parents are the first educators, but they need to know what's happening in the school. I want to be a voice for parents and sanity. There were no parents at the school board meeting. They are clueless about what's going on. Reason and sanity. Two years ago, 68 of the teachers didn't have teaching degrees. They weren't real teachers. We have to increase the skill levels of our teachers.	The strengths are the kids. The beautiful kids that we have. The weaknesses are the parents. 70% of the district is at the poverty level. We only go to school 4 days a week. Why? Have to save money. How do you get better cutting off your study time? I'd like all 3rd graders to be able to read; have the football team in last place and have all kids reading at grade level.	Reading! If you can read, you can get a job anywhere, we need to have courses that have a good track record. Get rid the "gay stuff"; stop indoctrinating our kids. We're getting a new program for reading that costs \$600,000, but there's no background to tell us it will work.
Bill Ertel, Zone 3	Parents are important. Students are important, too, but every time I look at what's being done in the schools, I ask "is this the best use of the money given by the taxpayers"? And the students – how is this going to benefit the students in the classroom. I also want to be a champion for teachers. They do incredible work, and I appreciate that they go into the classroom every day. I will always ask how the money is being spent and how it's going to benefit the students.	I've been looking and looking for programs that we can use that will educate our kids. We need more parent involvement. We have a 50 – 60% poverty level, so we have all those kids with no home base. And another problem I saw just yesterday as I toured the schools in the district, we don't have a lot of school safety. That will be one of my first items to work on – school safety.	Well, first it's test scores. The administrators and teachers know about the test scores, and they are all working very hard on that problem. We also have a declining enrollment which means less money from the state. 30% of funding comes from taxpayers, 60% from the state and 10% from federal. It's all based on the number of students. We have a lot of Covid money going away. There's a big opportunity for experienced board members to help the administrators figure out these problems.
Neigel Von Hruska, Zone 1	The parents in Illinois Valley have stopped giving you a lot of action, so they need help out there. I'd love to be a voice for them. Someone needs to be able to give the students a bigger voice so they can deal with all the stuff they're getting caught up in. They're getting fed up with things. Also, it would help students if they could read better.	Strengths – well, our kids are our strength. They are pretty well informed and act and speak as if they're adults because parents are nowhere to be found. Security is big issue. It takes a keen eye and never let your guard down. Also reading is the number two problem. Just get out there and vote.	Cell phones are #1. With 20-30 kids who can communicate silently with each other – well, it's got to be impossible. Also, there's no discipline. When a student is a problem, they should be punished, but the administrator's hands are tied, so we have to untie them, because when they get out in the real world, they'll just end up in jail. So cell phones and discipline.

**Happy
birthday**
*Angela Carter
Susie Wheaton
Sandy Mewhinney*

Remember we meet the third Tuesday of every month at Wild River Pub, 533 NE F St. 11:00 AM Doors open. Lunch starts at 11:15. Meeting is from noon - 1:00 PM.

Looking AHEAD

May 20th-

Grants Pass Animal Shelter & Rogue Valley Humane Society

June 17th-

Kerry McQuisten & Solomon Yue-
They will be discussing the Oregon Conservative Caucus.

CARING FOR AMERICA
FIRST QUARTER PROJECT
2025

SPONSORING THE VETERANS
BREAKFAST

at Elmers Restaurant
Thursday, May 1st

★ ★ ★ ★ ★
**THANK YOU
VETERANS**

Our goal was \$960. Thank you to our generous members! We raised **\$854** to give Team Senior for our support of the breakfast!!!

A Message From Your President



FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT

Happy May!!

Have you been paying attention to all of the activities connected with the Board of County Commissioners? A bit shocking all around, but my understanding is that it's not over yet! Chances are, by the time you read this, it will all be different!! One thought though; What a mess!!

Now then, on to what we are working on!

If you remember, our second quarter focus for Caring for America will be adoptable animals in our county. In Josephine County, we have several groups that work in rescue and re-homing "companion animals." The two largest players are Josephine County Animal Shelter and Rogue Valley Humane Society. The two leaders of each organization, Laura Jansen & Margaret Varner, will be visiting us to let us know what they do in our community, how they serve and what we can do to help them. Please plan on joining us for what should be a fun and informative meeting!

June will be Kerry McQuisten and Solomon Yue with Oregon Conservative Caucus and their plan to turn Oregon RED!!

The Josephine County Fair will be July 30 – August 3.

We will be manning our own booth!! Several volunteers will be needed to help us out. It's actually a lot of fun, talking to people and sharing ideas. Put that on your calendar and start thinking about volunteering!

Enjoy these warmer temperatures, plant your garden, get your flowers blooming and HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!!

The Heroes Dinner and Auction last Saturday was such fun!!
Just see for yourself...



**YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE
PART 2!
-OR-**

Chasing Knowledge in Legislative Stuff

Sometimes, the urge to dig deeper hits us. Right here,, once again, you'll find loads of resources to help you dive into the twists and turns of Senate and House Bills.

But, a little heads-up: you might end up in the same boat I was in not too long ago. A while back, I needed to get a handle on an issue that was about to be voted on. So, I started on a little adventure to figure out where to find the info I needed. They were looking for testimony, and I felt a bit nervous; I didn't have much experience, and I was worried my words might just blend into the background noise.

But the bill was pretty serious, and it fired me up. I threw myself into reading everything I could get my head around, carefully put together my testimony, and then took a deep breath and hit 'submit.' It was important for me to do my part, even though I wasn't sure about the "right" way to go about it. The process is pretty simple, and with some honesty, you can either show your support or, with some convincing words, get legislators to rethink their not-so-great ideas and drop those bad proposals!

You can click on the source you'd like to subscribe directly to.

- **Oregon Citizen's Lobby War Room**
- <https://oregoncitizenslobby.org/>
-
- **Visit the Legislative Bill Alerts page directly** at <https://oregoncitizenslobby.org/action-alerts/>
-
- **Senate Republican Leader Daniel Bonham's Legislative Newsletter**
- <https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/bonham>
-
- **Your Voice Matters: How You Can Engage in the 2025 Legislative Session**
- <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/ORLEG/bulletins/3ce2bb3>
-
-

Your Elected Officials

Senate District 2 - Senator Noah Robinson

Phone: 503-986-1702

Email: Sen.NoahRobinson@oregonlegislature.gov

Website:

<https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/robinsonn>

House District 3 - Representative Dwayne Yunker

Phone: 503-986-1403

Email :

Rep.DwayneYunker@oregonlegislature.gov

Website: www.oregonlegislature.gov/Yunker

Congressional District 2 - Cliff Bentz

Phone: (202) 225-6730

Website: <https://bentz.house.gov/>

House District 4 - Representative Alek Skarlatos

Phone: 503-986-1404

Email: Rep.AlekSkarlatos@oregonlegislature.gov

Website: www.oregonlegislature.gov/Skarlatos

Senate District 1 - Senator David Brock Smith

Phone: 503-986-1701

Email:

Sen.DavidBrockSmith@oregonlegislature.gov

Website:

<https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/smithd>

Fight For Oregon Legislative Alerts

<http://www.fightfororegon.com/wordpress/>
Weekly Legislative updates as received from
SD1 Senator David Brock Smith

<https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/smithd>
**Legislation of Concern and Bills to Support
for the Coming Week 3-31 through 4-4**

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/ORLEG/bulletins/3d98570>

Josephine County Republican Women

Membership & Renewal Application

(Please print clearly)

Club meetings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at the Wild River Pub, 533 NE F St Lunch is served at 11:15 am, \$20 at the door. (cash, check, or credit card; RSVP is required – see email address below). If you don't wish to eat lunch, we ask for \$5 to help pay for the room.

Just to let you know, as our Bylaws state, we allow two visits before we ask you to join.

Annual club dues are \$40 for new members & renewal; new associate member & renewal dues are \$20. Associate members are non-voting positions and are men or women, and women with membership in another Federated Republican Women club.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Email (our preferred communication): _____

☐ I am a registered Republican ** required for both full and associate members **

☐ I am a biological female. (required for full members)

(check all that apply):

☐ applying for new membership ☐ renewing full membership (\$40)

☐ applying for associate membership ☐ renewing associate membership (\$20)

☐ I need to update contact information. Please make the following changes: _____

Optional: Name badges are \$12.50 (pin) or \$14.00 (magnet). Please write how you want your name to appear: _____

I am interested in helping to promote JoCRW values as a volunteer for (mark all that apply).

☐ Awards ☐ Bylaws ☐ Community Outreach ☐ Education. ☐ Executive Board

☐ Fundraising ☐ Membership ☐ Phone tree. ☐ PR/FB/Website

Please include payment with your application. Make checks payable to Josephine County Republican Women or JoCRW. Bring your completed application to the next meeting or mail it to: JoCRW PO Box 2461 Grants Pass, OR 97528. Cash or checks are preferred, but we do take credit cards with Square at the meetings.

Required: Your signature: _____

Falsifying any information may result in termination of your membership.

For more information about the club or an RSVP for lunch, email

josephinecountyrepublicanwomen@gmail.com

For club use only: Name of person receiving payment: _____ Amount. received: _____

Paid by: _____ Check # _____ Cash _____ Square / Dues amount: _____ Badge amount: _____

Donation amount: _____ Membership notified: _____ Funds passed to Treasurer: _____

Republican voter registration confirmed: _____ Name of person submitting confirmation: _____

AND NOW A WORD ABOUT BOTTLE DROP

A few months ago, an account was started at Bottle Drop to create a new way to collect a little money to help pay for things in the club. Ok, I'll go ahead and take credit for this idea, but I actually read that other clubs around the country are doing the same thing and I thought it would be an easy way to gather a little operating money.

I presented it to the Executive Committee as a small income stream to help pay for the website. (If you haven't checked out the website, go to jocorepwomen.org).

So. Here's the deal... if you have bottles or cans, ask me for a green bottle drop bag that will already have the identifying sticky tag on it for the club, fill it up (I know, it takes a while - it does for my bags, too), and take it to Bottle Drop across from the Fruitdale Grange, or bring the bag with you to a meeting and I'll take care of it.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT !!!



AND WHILE I'M TELLING YOU ABOUT
NEW INCOME STREAMS...

LET'S TALK ABOUT ADVERTISING,
AND BUSINESS CARDS.



Take a look at the last page!

Our newest advertiser is

Cassie Wilkin's salon

- *Ambiance*

It's the best advertising deal in town !

All year for \$60.

And all the money goes to help pay for
the website.

Good websites are
kind of expensive, but it's so good
to have a web presence -
along with our Face Book
page.

See me, Linda Smith, to put YOURS
in our newsletter.

photolinda58@gmail.com; 971-678-1313

Advertise in our Newsletter!

Rates are really reasonable!

Space is \$60 for the entire year. I will reproduce your business card, your photo or insert any information you'd like. Just send it to:
Linda Smith at photolinda58@gmail.com.



Linda Smith
Artist/Photographer
971-678-1313
Linda@tftphotos.com
www.tftphotos.com
FB - Two For The Road Photography & Art

The business card features a blue background with a white border. Below the text is a photograph of a serene landscape with a river, trees, and a sunset.



Windermere
REAL ESTATE
SOUTHERN OREGON

Marian Szewc & Susan Jaeger

541-778-3400/Call or Text Marian Today!
www.SearchSouthernOregonHomes.com

The business card shows two women, Marian Szewc and Susan Jaeger, smiling. The Windermere Real Estate logo is prominently displayed.




THE RFD GROUP OF COMPANIES
Real Property: Development - Management & Sales

Kathleen Coelho
PRINCIPAL BROKER

kathy@rfdrents.com

The business card features a scenic image of mountains and a lake. The text is centered and easy to read.



**Your
Business Card
Could Be Right
HERE!!**

The text is in a bold, purple font, centered within a black rectangular border.



MINI MAC
SELF STORAGE
LLC

www.minimacselfstorage.com
541-255-2740
Marty & Sandy McKenna

The business card has a green shamrock logo above the company name. The contact information is listed below the company name.

Newsletter Editor - Linda Smith
Questions, concerns, or comments -
send to photolinda58@gmail.com.



Ambiance
Hair and Nail Studio

Nails	Hair
Cassie Wilkins 541-218-1915	Amy McGillivray 541-218-1817
Tracy Easter 541-659-6872	Jodi Jaburg 951-541-3345
Stephanie Young 541-660-8022	Jordyn Church 541-660-1640

We are excited to serve you

The business card features a decorative leaf graphic above the studio name. The staff list is organized into two columns: Nails and Hair.