

## These Oregon candidates should be honored — or ashamed

Dick Hughes

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Post-election commentary has a short shelf life, so I'll make this quick. Here are my post-election awards from Tuesday's primary:

### Best campaign

The Salem mayoral race between Chuck Bennett and Anna Peterson. They campaigned with class, demonstrating that negative campaigning isn't necessary to attract votes.

Each did well, with Peterson prevailing in a close outcome.

### Worst campaign

The anti-Measure 24-292 "Protect Public Safety" misinformation.

The Marion County charter amendment had nothing to do with law enforcement. Rather, the measure deserved defeat for other reasons. Voters obliged overwhelmingly.

I wonder whether the inane opposition signs and fliers actually created sympathy for the proponents, possibly helping their cause. Maybe this would be a good research project for a social-science class.

### Accurate self-analysis

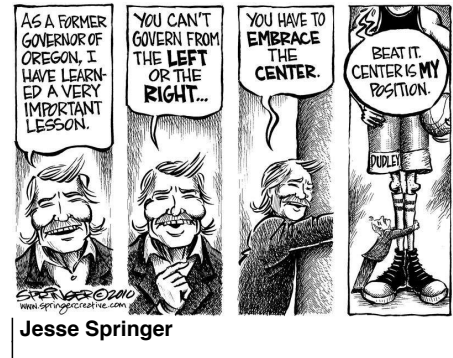
Ex-governor and governor-wannabe John Kitzhaber.

In his meeting with the Statesman Journal Editorial Board, the cerebral Kitzhaber conceded that he needed to improve his political social skills. Unlike Govs. Tom McCall and Neil Goldschmidt, Kitzhaber said, he isn't good at hanging around to talk and shake hands with people after giving a speech.

Sure enough, as soon as Kitzhaber's Editorial Board interview was over, he left the room — without shaking hands or saying anything.

(P.S. I cringed at the bare mention of Goldschmidt's name, which holds a special place in Oregon's Hall of Reviled People.)

### Most-moving campaign



Online  
ELECTION RESULTS:  
[StatesmanJournal.com/elections](http://StatesmanJournal.com/elections)

Mark Adams, owner of Supervinyl Signs, ran for Polk County commissioner. Almost every day, passers-by could see one or more vehicles with big Mark Adams signs parked in downtown or West Salem.

Smart campaigning!

Adams didn't make the mistake of parking the vehicles where they interfered with traffic, as did one not-so-savvy campaign two years ago.

**Best sets of candidates**

The four Republicans and two Democrats running for Polk County commissioner Position 2. They all had good ideas and treated one another respectfully.

**Worst sets of candidates**

A tie between two races, but I won't spill the beans. Suffice to say that one set of candidates seemed clueless. The other set filled the room with mutual animosity.

**Weakest major incumbent**

Susan Castillo, superintendent of public instruction. A two-term incumbent, she should have easily won a third term. Her tight race with little-known Ron Maurer illustrates how Oregonians view her educational leadership — or lack thereof.

**Most overblown incumbent**

Democrat Ted Wheeler, who was appointed state treasurer in March after the death of Ben Westlund.

Wheeler said that because he technically was the incumbent, he deserved support unless challenger Rick Metsger proved Wheeler wasn't performing his job.

Sheesh. A few weeks is not much of an incumbency.

**Best dig at the newspaper**

Our mini-questionnaire for candidates ends with this question: "Any skeletons in your closet or other potentially embarrassing information that you want to disclose before it comes up in the campaign?"

Metsger's answer: "I sometimes read the Statesman Journal!!!"

**Best parental line**

Rep. Sherrie Sprenger's response to that question: "My 12 year old son would love to share embarrassing stories on his mom, but I don't believe that is what you are asking."

**Most likely not to succeed**

The unknown candidates who filed for U.S. Senate and governor. Why did they run? And how did each of them manage to attract at least several hundred or a thousand votes?

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