WHAT DO YOU STAND FOR?

A guide for engaging with candidates this election

THE ELECTION IS HEATING UP.
As candidates prepare for the November general election, small town Oregonians are deciding what traits are most important to us in elected officials and what issues are most important to our communities in 2012.

THESE ARE NOT YOUR TYPICAL QUESTIONS.
It is created by and for small town Oregonians. In the buzzword frenzy of the electoral cycle, it equips us with tools for critical thinking and model questions to get to the heart of the matter. We need elected officials capable of engaging with the tough questions of the day, and representing our priorities.

A HEALTHY DEMOCRACY IS MADE, NOT RECEIVED.

If democracy is to work, it must uphold these basic principles:

- Majority rule, minority rights
- Inclusion and equality for all
- A well-informed and educated people
- A reasonable standard of living

TAKE THIS GUIDE WITH YOU TO CANDIDATE EVENTS
Pass it out to friends and coworkers. Better yet, get together with others in your community, make a plan to get every candidate on record and publish the results.

2012 ELECTION BASICS
Deadline to register to vote: October 16th
Register to vote at oregonvotes.org or pick up a registration card at your post office or county clerk

Ballots mailed to registered voters October 19th–23rd

Election day: November 6th

Contact your county elections office to find out who is running for office in your community

Use the internet to find candidate webpages and office contact information

RURAL ORGANIZING PROJECT
The Rural Organizing Project exists to advance democracy in all of Oregon’s rural counties.

This Fall, look for our voter guide, STAND: Small Town Actions for a New Democracy.

Contact us to order a STAND Voter Guide or to connect with a local human dignity group in your area:

PO Box 1350 Scappoose, OR 97056
503-543-8417 www.rop.org office@rop.org
WHAT DO YOU STAND FOR?
Questions for Candidates

A HEALTHY DEMOCRACY
Do you believe that we need to get big business and corporate money out of politics? Would you take a pledge to get money out of politics by 2014? If elected, what concrete actions will you take?

STRONG, INCLUSIVE AND SAFE COMMUNITIES
Do you think it is important to make our community a place that welcomes and protects immigrants who are living in our communities? Would you support a resolution that pledges to welcome all people, including immigrants and other minorities?

A HEALTHY ECONOMY AND STANDARD OF LIVING
The number of people living under the poverty line is growing. Do you think it is important to protect and preserve our social safety net from efforts to privatize or further defund? What solutions do you have for the growing poor?

So many of us are now dealing with crippling debt - whether as students, credit card debt or foreclosure. What strategies do you believe are necessary to address and relieve debt for people?

Would you support a moratorium on foreclosures? What solutions do you have for the growing number of families facing foreclosure?

Do you support the creation of an Oregon State Bank as an alternative to depositing public monies in too-big-to-fail banks? What ideas do you have for keeping Oregonians wealth working for the benefit of Oregonians?

Do you think it is a priority to make sure every man, woman and child have access to healthcare, and if so what is the path to achieve that? How do you feel about bringing Universal Healthcare to Oregon?

What do you see as the cause of our current economic crisis? What projects will you pursue to restore economic vitality to this community while preserving our resources and way of life?

DETERMINE FOR YOURSELF!
These are suggested questions to ask candidates. Use these verbatim or as a guide to write your own. The most reliable way to choose a candidate is also the best way to keep that person accountable when in office: decide the issues important to you, make a list of questions, then do what you can to find out where the candidate stands – go to candidate forums, call up campaign offices, write letters to the editor.

When evaluating the response you get, ask yourself whether this person has the traits it takes to win your vote:

Does this person share my values and priorities?

Does he/she use critical thinking to address new questions (rather than canned talking points?)

Is he/she willing to be bold and offer real solutions?

Does he/she have integrity in being truthful and open to new ideas?

Is this person acceptable—does he/she stand for constituents or for outside interests or ideology?