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ELECTION 2004



Owen serves up unexpected endorsement at county forum

Commissioners: *Democratic hopeful for Position No. 3 offers praise, not criticism, for GOP foe*

By **JOHN SOWELL**
The News-Review

Steven "Shorty" Owen delivered a ringing endorsement Thursday for who he considers the best candidate running for the Position No. 3 seat on the Douglas County Board of Commissioners.

Since Owen is the Democratic nominee for the post, it would be fair to assume that he gave the backing to himself. However, he sang the praises of his Republican opponent, sitting Commissioner Doug Robertson, instead.



Owen

Robertson's position as the point man for the more than 800 counties nationally who receive money from the federal timber safety net program make him invaluable for the fight to ensure that the legislation is extended before it expires two years from now, Owen told an audience of more than 100 people at a candidate forum at the Douglas County Library.

"He has to be re-elected if we're going to get the money," Owen said. "He's the only one who has been working on it."



Robertson

Robertson, sitting a few places away from the lectern from which Owen was speaking, smiled in acknowledgment.

During the entire campaign, Owen has said that he likes Robertson and believes he is doing a good job. As a log truck driver, Owen said he is running primarily to provide a voice for working-class people. Owen and

Robertson were among 16 candidates for various offices, along with a representative for U.S. Rep. Peter DeFazio, who attended the forum. The two-hour gathering, focusing mainly on health and social service questions, was sponsored by the Douglas County Non-Profit Coalition and Children First for Oregon.

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