

Going Forward

The 2022 Primary Election, except in Clackamas County, is pretty much complete in Oregon. Thank you to the voters who participated, no matter how they cast their ballots. Now we're headed to the General Election in November. As the old saying goes, "Fasten your seatbelts, space cadets. It's going to be a wild ride."

Going forward, we're still uncertain about who our new Governor will be, and how each of us will fare, as individuals and as communities. Politics is a contest with winners and losers, no matter who wins any race. More than ideologies, personalities play into everyday governing. Teamwork is the only way anything gets accomplished, but we run as individuals no matter who helps our campaign.

People all around are saying there's more work to do and more stress. Someone I know and trust told me their job was like "sucking on the tailpipe of the organization." Wow. How can I make their job easier and better? How can I support everyone who's struggling, which is pretty much everyone?

By slowing down, showing patience and trust, looking for small gifts of kindness. I gave the car wash attendant a small bag of dried pineapple, a snack for people doing work that's hard for me right now. Maybe a small uplift will help, in physical energy and the gratitude communicated as more than money, more even than spoken appreciation.

If we could gift each other with small acts of kindness, the world would be a sunnier place, regardless of the wind or rain.

But patience and trust? We have mutating viruses, especially COVID, and other world-wide phenomena. Only finding tender curiosity for our own well-being and kindness to ourselves allows us to give that to others. Climate change? Yup. Species extinction? Yup. Widening wealth gap between rich and poor? Yup. Increasing use of algorithms to control and shape human behavior with our use of technology in myriad forms? Yup. Housing shortages? Yup.

No wonder I'm tired! It's too much for any one of us; it only works as we find ways to work together. We're doing that with our Clatsop Community Water Roundtable. We're looking at inviting a wide variety of community members to come to a roundtable discussion of water: fresh water, wastewater, and storm water.

We're going to create ways of sharing our gathered data, but we're doing more than that. We're gathering histories, hopes, and experiences in dance, song, and art. It's to capture and share lived experience to inform data and make its use more powerful, positive, and long-lasting.

We're looking for you to join us if you're interested. Email me at ltompson@co.clatsop.or.us.