

QuickPoint! – Yearning and Burning on the November Ballot

By Eric Fruits, Ph.D.

This week, ballots for the November election will be mailed to Oregon voters. It's become clear that no one is happy with the status quo in Oregon, and Portland in particular. Voters are clamoring for change. But, what kind of change?

For people who want to see a change, you can put them into two categories: Yearners and Burners.

Yearners hope for change that will restore Oregon's status as one of the Most Livable Places in the Country. They hope the candidates and measures they vote for will bring down crime, end homelessness, bring back businesses, improve our schools, and reduce taxes and burdensome regulations.

On the other hand, Burners have lost hope. They've witnessed decades of voters electing—over and over again—the politicians who have sent the state into a spiral of crime, drug addiction, homelessness, failing schools, and a downright hostility to business owners trying to make an honest buck. They've taken a “let it burn” attitude, believing that the only way for the state to bounce back is when it's hit rock bottom. They echo the words of the famous curmudgeon, H. L. Mencken: “Democracy is the theory that the common people know what they want, and deserve to get it good and hard.”

If you have to choose, be a Yearner, not a Burner. Oregon's best days may be ahead of us.

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