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ALERT TOP STORY

Corvallis Women's March draws hundreds

Maddie Pfeifer

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Protestors gather in front of the Benton County Courthouse during the 2021 Corvallis Women's March.

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Hundreds of people gathered at Central Park in downtown Corvallis Saturday morning to participate in a nation-wide women's march in support of reproductive rights.

Corvallis has hosted a women's march for years, but the focus of this year's event was to protest the Texas Heartbeat Act. This act went into effect in September and puts a ban on abortions as early as six weeks into pregnancy in the state of Texas.

The rally at Central Park and subsequent march to the Benton County Courthouse included hundreds of men, women and children who carried homemade signs and chanted phrases like "My body, my choice" in unison.

"I'm really excited and overwhelmed with how much the community has helped with this," event organizer Kathryn Overton said. "I'm passionate about the cause and I think the people of Corvallis feel the same way."

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Before the march, multiple speakers addressed the crowd. Corvallis School Board member Sarah Finger McDonald and Corvallis City Councilor Charles Maughan shared their own thoughts on abortion and reproductive rights.

“I have never lived in a country where illegal abortions is a public health crisis,” Finger McDonald said. “I don’t want to live in a country like that. I want to live in a country where women and all people are supported in all aspects of their lives including safely making very personal reproductive decisions.”

When Maughan addressed the crowd he noted the importance of men getting involved with supporting women’s rights.

He urged the crowd to call out injustices in public and to have conversations with people who don’t support access to abortions.

The attendees cheered as each of the speakers shared their own thoughts on the matter. The group then began walking towards the Benton County Courthouse where they chanted, cheered and peacefully protested.

People lined the sidewalk in front of the courthouse as cars drove by and honked in support of the cause and of the crowd.

“I marched for myself, I marched for my daughter and now I march for my granddaughter,” Corvallis resident Tanya Shively said.

People of all ages marched side by side. Children held signs they made themselves, college students came in groups with their friends and families proudly stood together.

“We need to stand up for people who might not have an opportunity to,” Oregon State University student Ashton Burrell said. “Everyone should have a choice.”

The crowd was full of energy throughout the entire event as they chanted, “women’s rights are human rights.”

The group in Corvallis was just a fraction of marchers across the country on Saturday, with the biggest march planned for Washington D.C. From the west coast to the east coast, the goal was the same.

“It’s our time to speak out and say something and be heard,” event volunteer Kaysey DelCollo said.

Maddie Pfeifer covers public safety for Mid-Valley Media. She can be contacted at 541-812-6091 or Madison.Pfeifer@lee.net. Follow her on Twitter via [@maddiepfeifer_](https://twitter.com/maddiepfeifer_)

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Sarah Finger McDonald, Corvallis School Board member

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By Maddie Pfeifer
Reporter
