

Ashworth wants 'no-nonsense' race

Calls Straub 'unresponsive'

By ANN TRENEMAN
Of the Emerald

There is something odd about Democratic gubernatorial candidate Emily Ashworth — she speaks her mind and answers questions directly. In a campaign year of "Well, let me give you some background..." and "Let me rephrase your question..." Ashworth sticks out like a sore thumb.

That's not the only thing setting the "Widow" Ashworth, as she calls herself, apart. Her stands on the various issues are enough to make anyone listen, as she sets out her controversial views in a forceful, no-nonsense manner.

"I think it's fairly clear what my views are," she says with a half-smile. "If you straddle a fence long enough you get a splinter up your crotch. I don't waffle on any issue."

Ashworth says she is not afraid of anybody and last week she picketed Gov. Bob Straub's Portland campaign headquarters, detaining the governor as he tried to enter, asking him to set a date for a candidate debate.

"He said he didn't have time to debate the issues," Ashworth pooh-poohs. "At least Tom McCall is man enough to debate Martin and Atiyeh."

Ashworth calls Straub a "turkey" who is "afraid to face the public because he hasn't done any-

thing" and "has been unresponsive to the common people."

The governor, in a late March speech in Springfield, agreed to debate his democratic opponents. Len Bergstein, Straub's campaign manager, says "I wouldn't be surprised if there weren't some joint appearances before the primary" but adds that Straub feels his policies get debated every day and that his schedule is "extremely full."

One of Ashworth's primary issues, which she spoke out for during the state Democratic convention in Springfield 10 days ago, is decommissioning the Trojan nuclear plant. The Democrats adopted a statement advocating the plant's decommissioning.

"Trojan is a bad thing. Being a little radioactive is like being a little pregnant — you can't be," she says.

When asked if she thought decommissioning the plant wasn't an idealistic goal, she countered with, "The governor has tremendous power. A governor could do it through appointing a new public utilities commissioner, through the siting council, and through the department of energy."

Ashworth has stated her choice for public utilities commissioner, a position currently held by Charles Davis, would be anti-nuke advocate Lloyd Marbet.

"The real criminality of Trojan is

that it's preventing Oregonians from developing environmentally sound energy sources," she says.

"This is not Star Wars. Alternatives aren't a thing of the future. They're here — right now. The vested interests just don't find it to their advantage."

Her standing on field-burning is no less provocative. "I am totally against it. I don't believe in anyone contaminating the air in the name of profit."

Ashworth favors banning herbicides, saying, "a chemical is not a human being and it doesn't deserve due process."

And she thinks herbicides and food additives are "really frightening."

"The real question is what price are we going to pay for progress," she says.

Oregon's liveability is her primary concern and she would like to develop labor-intensive industry around the state. She is pro-equal rights, favors abortion for poor women and is a strong advocate of high-caliber day-care.

"I think good day-care is the key to breaking the welfare cycle. You breed success and good self-esteem at an early age."

Ashworth refuses to speculate on her chances of winning the race. "It's not possible to estimate. If I could get exposure, I just might do it."

Getting exposure shouldn't be



Photo by Patrick Sullivan

Emily Ashworth

too much of a problem for Ashworth since she recently purchased a \$6,500 red, white and blue hot air balloon to use with her campaign.

When asked about her campaign strategy she says, "I don't know what I might do on any occasion."

Ashworth is a life-science teacher in Coos Bay. She has

been active in Democratic and state politics since 1972 when she chaired the Coos County McGovern organization. She attended the Democratic National Convention as a Carter delegate and has served on Oregon's Teacher's Standards and Practices Committee and the Welfare Reform Board. She is also included in the 1977 "Who's Who, Women in American Politics."

Hostel planners seek house near downtown area

Transients passing through Eugene may have a cheap place to crash if Switchboard's plans to open a youth hostel by June go ahead as scheduled.

Switchboard, a local referral service, is behind the project. "There's a real big need for emergency housing in Eugene and that's why we decided to do something about it," Switchboard Director Larry Wheeler says.

Wheeler, who is coordinating the effort to open the hostel, says the group has money and energy. All they need now is a house.

"We're looking for a house within a mile of the downtown area with four or five bedrooms in a \$300 rent range," he says.

However, the group would like to lease a house with the option to buy it rather than rent a house on a month-to-month basis," Wheeler adds.

A Springfield couple has already volunteered to be house parents for the hostel, he says. Shelter and cooking facilities would be available for about \$2 a day.

"We haven't set a fee yet, but we'll probably ask for a certain amount. If someone can't afford it,

we'll ask them to work around the house or yard."

A few years ago an attempt was made to establish a hostel in Eugene, but repeated drug and crime incidents caused the hostel to close, according to Wheeler. For this reason, he says a stigma is attached to the idea of a youth hostel in Eugene.

Wheeler is optimistic about the success of this hostel. He and other Switchboard staff members have "an investment in it," he says. Switchboard has set aside some of its extra monthly funds to put into the project, and members of Switchboard's staff will be working in the hostel.

"It's not a hassle to run a youth hostel, but it's got to be tight," Wheeler says. "It's important to be there and to be on top of what's happening."

Wheeler helped found the Berkeley Youth Hostel and worked for the original Haight-Ashbury Switchboard in the early 1960s. He has been with Eugene's Switchboard since 1966.

Anyone knowing about a house suitable for the hostel should call Switchboard at 686-8453.

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