

# COMMUNITY

## Political newcomers vie for Ward I Briggs, MacDonald site timber concerns

By Don Peters  
Emerald Associate Editor

Eugene City Council elections are usually low-key, but with the November elections just around the corner, the Ward I race is beginning to heat up.

The candidates, Randy MacDonald and Richard "Dick" Briggs, are both political newcomers. While they both may be running for their first elected office, each brings a wealth of talent and experience into the campaign.

Emily Schue, the current City Council representative from the southern section of Eugene, chose not to run for reelection.

Briggs, 56, is the governmental coordinator for the Eugene Chamber of Commerce and holds a 1956 business administration degree from the University. His experience ranges from school finance and workers compensation to environmental issues and senior services.

"I think I can contribute," Briggs said. "I want my grandkids to have a nice place to live."

MacDonald, 31, is also a University graduate (1990, B.A. in political science, Phi Beta Kappa). For the past three years, he has been a legislative assistant for State Sen. Larry Hill (D-Springfield); a background which he says gives him an edge.

"I do have the experience at the state and county level," MacDonald said. "I'm running because government should represent public interest, not special interest."

With financial experts predicting an imminent recession, talk in Eugene has turned to the economy. The city, as well as the entire state of Oregon, is timber dependent; something which worries both candidates.

"I think we've moved away from an overdependence on timber," MacDonald said, adding only one-third of manufacturing in the city is timber-related. "We need future-oriented businesses, responsible to the environment and the community."

"The real problem is stability of finance," Briggs said.

Housing, especially for the homeless, is another big local concern. Briggs said an overdependence on property tax has contributed to the problem of affordable housing, while MacDonald favors the Lane County Homelessness and Affordable Housing plan.

"It's comprehensive," MacDonald said of the task force's plan, completed after a 10-month study. "We need to find a way to fund it."

"Talk is cheap. Now is the time to take significant action."

"Why does it cost so much to buy a house?" Briggs asked. "We're building for the wrong people. We're building very few households for sin-

### BIOGRAPHY

#### Randy MacDonald

**Candidacy:** Eugene City Council, Ward I  
**Party:** Non-partisan  
**Age:** 31  
**Home:** Eugene  
**Occupation:** Legislative assistant for State Sen. Larry Hill



**Background:** B.A. from University in political science; former president of the Eugene Commission on the Rights of Minorities

#### Richard "Dick" Briggs

**Candidacy:** Eugene City Council, Ward I  
**Party:** Non-partisan  
**Age:** 56  
**Home:** Eugene  
**Occupation:** Governmental coordinator for the chamber of commerce



**Background:** B.A. in business administration from the University, 1956.

gle residents.

"We have to have a lid on property taxes," he added. "We have too many people being forced out of their homes."

The environment has always been an issue in the Eugene area. Both candidates have opinions on what should be done, and how to go about doing it.

"So many (government processes) don't work," Briggs said. "There is a shortage of resources, so we have to make the processes work."

MacDonald is looking to sponsor clean air legislation. South Eugene, he said, "has the worst smog of any part of Eugene."

Briggs praised the local transportation system, but said it could be improved.

"We have a tremendous system here," he said. "But I think if LTD and the city got together to plan out long-term policy, it would be better."

Briggs said one improvement could be combining the Eugene school district bussing with LTD.

"Why aren't 4J kids using LTD?" he asked. "We integrate it and all of a sudden we have a fantastic transportation system."

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