

Personalities define mayoral candidates

By Tim Neff
Emerald Associate Editor

Debates between the four Eugene mayoral candidates may be a little tame this year. On any given issue they're more likely to nod their heads in agreement rather than start spirited arguments.

But what the campaign lacks in conflict, it makes up for in personality.

If elected, you may spot Ruth Bascom chiseling away at the downtown fountain with a jackhammer.

You'll probably run into Mary McCauley Burrows at Knight Library, checking out books with the University library card she's kept for the past 30 years.

Greg Evans will be running local government with a straight-faced business demeanor.

And if he wins the election, James "Izzy" Whetstine's black derby hat and cigar would become universal symbols of the mayor's office.

Each aspirant stresses the importance of a clean environment, supports efforts to develop new housing in the downtown area and views the University as a cornerstone of the community.

Ruth Bascom



Bascom, 66, has lived in Eugene for 32 years. She is a city councilor, chairs the Metropolitan Policy Committee and represents the council on the Eugene Housing Policy Board.

Bascom said economic development and environmental

concerns must go hand-in-hand.

"We should spend our efforts increasing the vitality of existing businesses, rather than recruiting new businesses," Bascom said. "Recruiting is done best by maintain-

ing a beautiful city and a beautiful University."

Much of the problems plaguing the downtown mall could be solved by building new residential housing to "get some people down there," she said.

Bascom said she would "jackhammer" the crumbling downtown mall fountain, open Olive Street for vehicle traffic and institute a new downtown strategy.

"It will never be a retail area, but it can be a cultural and financial center," she said.

Bascom envisions the Hult Center as an "anchor" for the downtown area. She also supports construction of a new public library to occupy the remodeled Sears building at 10th and Charnelton streets.

"The Eugene Library is a disgrace," Bascom said. "It's a size-46 body trying to fit into a size-eight coat."

Local taxes would probably finance construction of the new library, Bascom said.

"It will be tricky to craft something that 51 percent of the voters will agree to."

Mary McCauley Burrows



Burrows, 59, served in the state legislature from 1973 to 1987. She has lived in Eugene since 1965. She said she has always felt drawn to Eugene because it is an "exciting city."

"It's so diverse. It's a challenging city."

Burrows said the University is a major factor in maintaining that diversity.

"This community is what it is because of the University. It's also what makes the electorate so sophisticated."

Like Bascom, Burrows stressed the need for a new library and suggested that a combination of taxes, foundation grants and lottery money could pay for it.

"I can't imagine a sophisticated city with-

out a good library," she said.

Burrows also said Eugene must not pursue economic development at the expense of the local "quality of life."

"Because of the values in this city, they're not going to attract businesses that'll conflict with the quality of life. I think we can be picky and choosy."

Burrows said one of her main concerns is building a better relationship between the city government and the public.

"There is such a feeling of 'us' and 'them' in Eugene — us and City Hall. There's got to be a conduit with the people."

Greg Evans



Evans, a 31-year-old real estate loan officer, is running his campaign on a platform that emphasizes human rights, local government reform and economic development. He said the key to achieving any goal is building coalitions.

"We need to look more and more toward bringing environmentalists, labor and other groups into the processes that affect the city," he said.

Evans said he also would push for a leaner city government by cutting several mid-management positions.

Evans, who is the Northwest regional president of the NAACP, said the city's human rights code needs to be updated to protect against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

Under Evans' economic development plan, downtown renewal would begin by opening Olive Street and encouraging private developers to build residences. He would also remove the downtown tax-financing district, which he said has not met

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