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Bishoff has listeners KAVEing in

By Pat Malach
Emerald Editor

The congressman dressed in running shorts and a "Mopar Power" T-shirt slumps over the microphone scratching and shaking his head as he listens to a caller tell him he's abandoned environmentalists and sold out to the timber industry.

Rep. Peter DeFazio, a Democrat campaigning for re-election, politely offers the man a civil explanation that belies his visible frustration with the familiar charge.

With the press of a button by "Town Forum" co-host Gordon Roberts, DeFazio quickly switches his proverbial hats and becomes an expert on national health care, the next caller's concern.

Such is the roaming fare found on KAVE radio's Sunday morning call-in talk show. Roberts co-hosts the show with Don Bishoff, a man who inspires laughs or hatred — lately depending on how you feel about the Eugene City Council — as a regular columnist for *The Register-Guard*.

Bishoff's entry into the medium of sound, rather than print, didn't come without a bit of a battle, mostly with himself.

"Early in April (KAVE co-owner) Eric Alterman called me and said, 'How'd you like to do a two-hour talk show on Sunday morning?'" Bishoff said. "I said, 'absolutely not.'"

Bishoff has worked for 32 years as a writer for the local newspaper but had no experience in radio.

"It was something I wasn't sure I'd be comfortable with," he said, adding that the 50-hour workweek he puts in at the



Photo by Pat Malach

Don Bishoff (background) and Rep. Peter DeFazio share a laugh during the Aug. 30 broadcast of "Town Forum," a Sunday morning call-in show airing from 9 to 11 a.m. on KAVE, FM 95.3.

Guard was one of the main reasons for his immediate lack of interest. But that initial reluctance slowly turned into curiosity about exploring a new medium.

"The more I thought about it," Bishoff said, "it was, 'Hell, I'm 55 years old. I'm in the twilight years of a newspaper career. Why not try something different?'"

But there was another obstacle to overcome on Bishoff's road to radio — potential conflicts of interest with his columnist job at Eugene's daily.

"No one at the paper had ever done anything quite like this," he said. "Pat Yack, the managing editor, was real good about taking those issues head-

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