

Mayoral election campaigns see large increase in funds

Candidates Kitty Piercy and Nancy Nathanson received about \$64,000

By Parker Howell
News Reporter

Running for mayor in Eugene isn't cheap. Just ask mayoral candidates Kitty Piercy and Nancy Nathanson, who are the main contenders for the position in the May 18 qualifying election.

Piercy and Nathanson had already raised about \$64,000 between them by April 1, far more than the other candidates, according to fund-raising reports filed April 12. Both candidates said they would continue to gather funds, perhaps making this year's campaign the most expensive ever.

At the time of the report, Piercy listed contributions of \$39,423, while Nathanson had received \$24,360.

Piercy, a former state representative and director of public affairs for Planned Parenthood Health Services of Southwestern Oregon, received \$3,000 from the Eugene Firefighters Union, as well as \$1,000 from Eugene's Mel Bankoff, the Monterey Pasta director of Organic Foods, James Gang Publishing of Eugene and Lane Community College Computer Information Technology faculty member Mark Williams. She also received a large portion of funds from contributions of \$50 or less, which totaled about \$11,250.

Ward 8 City Councilor Nathanson received large contributions from several businesses, including \$1,500 from the Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce and \$1,000 donations from Delta Sand & Gravel in Eugene, Hamilton Construction Company of Springfield and timber company owner Greg Demers of Veneta.

Current Mayor Jim Torrey spent \$75,433 to win the post in 1996, running against former Congressman James Weaver. However, Ruth Bascom spent only \$20,565 to become mayor in 1992.

Although both are big spenders, Piercy and Nathanson have been using money differently in their campaigns. At the time of the report, Piercy had spent about \$7,000 on surveys and polls; \$6,138 on wages, salaries and benefits; \$2,604 on yard signs and "other advertising" and \$1,516 on literature, brochures and printing.

CAMPAIGN SPENDING

Amount spent on election campaigns by mayoral candidates in the last three elections

Year	Primary Election	General Election	Total	Winning Candidates	Losing Candidates
1992	33,429	37,628	71,057	20,565	50,492
1996	53,523	61,945	115,468	75,433	40,035
2000	29,484	1,981	31,462	19,465	12,000

SOURCE: City Recorder's Office

Nathanson spent about \$2,500 on management services; \$2,350 on "other advertising" and \$743 on literature, brochures and printing.

The candidates may also shell out money for fundraising expenses, travel, utilities, media advertising and postage.

Eugene residents Alphonsus Donnelly and Eric Gross, who will also appear on the primary ballot, have pledged to participate in Eugene's Voluntary Campaign Finance Program and agreed to limit their campaign expenditures to \$7,500. They will also refrain from accepting donations of more than \$100 from a single person or entity and not contribute more than \$500 of personal money to their campaigns, according to the City of Eugene Municipal Elections website at <http://www.ci.eugene.or.us/cityreco/elections/>.

Piercy, who expects she'll need to raise more than \$100,000, said campaign costs have risen significantly.

"We have to spend way too much money on elections," Piercy said. "A few years ago, this race would have cost \$70,000."

Nathanson agreed, saying that campaigns cost more than ever.

"It seems like the stakes appear to be higher," she said.

Nathanson said she was surprised when Piercy projected that it would be necessary to raise about \$100,000 for the race.

"That really got my attention," she said. "I had not even imagined anything near that level. The stakes had been raised from early on."

Piercy said increasing costs are partially due to voters being home less often and monitoring their phone

calls for political messages.

"Voters are making it harder and harder to reach them," she said.

Nathanson agreed, saying the state's vote-by-mail method has changed the dynamics of the race. Whereas ballot-box voting allowed candidates to organize their campaigns to have voter contact culminate on a specific day, candidates must now maintain contact with voters for weeks after voting

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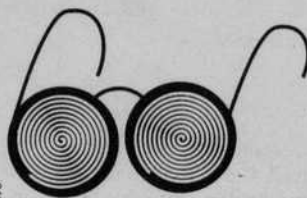
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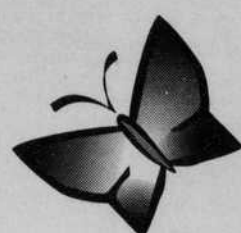
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