

AUDITOR NEEDED

I waited two weeks before writing to see if any local auditors or CPAs would comment ("Manager Against Audits" news story, 3/4). Apparently none had the guts.

I am a retired CPA with four years as an internal auditor in the public sector and over 30 years as an external auditor in the private sector.

City Manager Dennis Taylor is absolutely wrong. He reminds me of the bookkeeper who never took a vacation. Only when the bookkeeper didn't show up one day did an auditor realize why the bookkeeper apparently never took a vacation.

The statements by Mr. Taylor — by themselves — are adequate reason to immediately hire an independent auditor. The first and only rule of an auditor is to assume everyone is *guilty* until proven otherwise. Hence Mr. Taylor is not qualified to audit himself.

On a more practical level the responsibility of management is to never completely trust anybody. Management at all levels must have checks and balances.

There is, of course, the possibility that Eugene could share an independent internal auditor with Springfield or a lot of other cities or Lane County. And finally, I would hope a local firm would step forward and offer the city a limited "internal audit" of one city department for free or substantial reduced rates. Or why not "steal" Mr. Blackmer from Portland?

*Frank Skipton
Springfield*

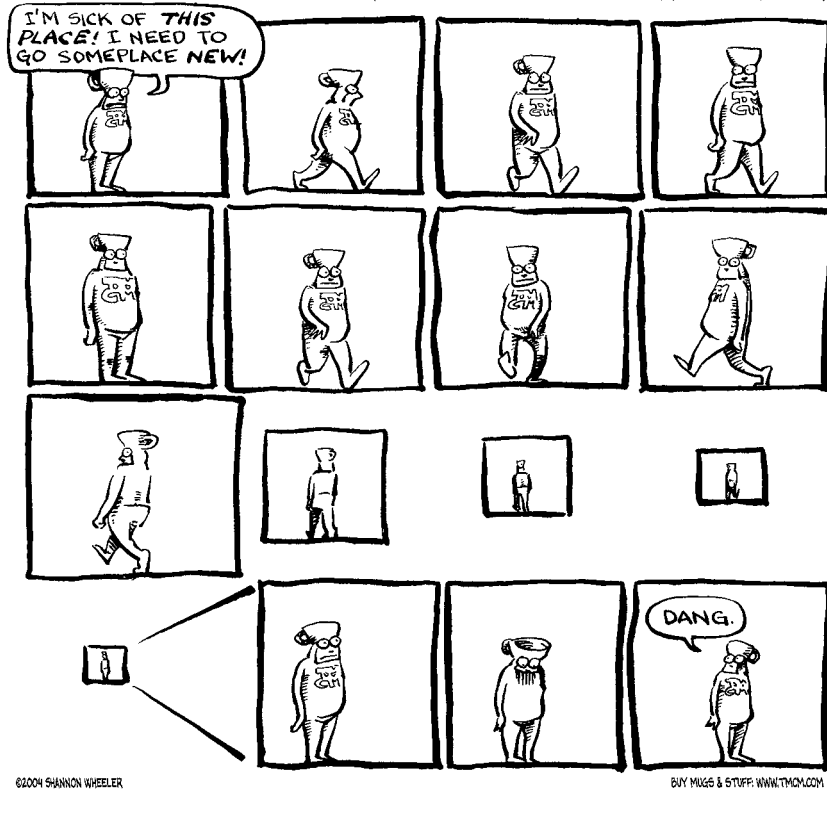
UNWRITTEN POLICY

A couple of days ago I went to the *R-G* to submit my wedding application and photo to be run in the Sunday family wedding section. I met with Managing Editor Dave Baker as he wanted to discuss with me why they could not publish the announcement. You see, we are two women that just received our "legal" marriage certificate from Multnomah County last Friday.

Mr. Baker stated that even though he was in favor of publishing the announcement, the Publishing Editor Tony Baker was not. He said that since Lane County has not started offering marriage licenses and that there is an appeal process in the works at a higher court, he felt that the *R-G* could not approve the publication according to an unwritten policy. He stated that if Lane County decided to provide the licenses, the *R-G* would feel more obligated. I discussed with him that there are many things that are legal going through the courts but that hasn't stopped the *R-G* from publishing the news. I have lived in this area for over 35 years and thought that the *R-G* was a voice for all the people of this community. I guess not.

Mr. Baker said that there are several people that have called to stop their subscription to the paper over the articles on the gay marriages that took place a couple of weeks ago. I said that there are many things in the paper that people don't agree with but it is a person's choice on what to read or not read. My partner, Mary Scott, and I have been together for 13 years. This is not a step we took lightly. I am very proud of the love and partnership that we have shared over

TOO MUCH COFFEE MAN BY SHANNON WHEELER



the years.

I am very disappointed in the *R-G* for not publishing the same-sex marriages in their wedding section. I feel they are not supporting the legality of our marriage right now. My hands are tied on making them publish our announcement short of taking out a paid ad. This paper is sure not a voice of all the people.

*Paula Guthrie
Eugene*

NATHANSON DOUBLESPEAK

I was surprised to hear Nancy Nathanson at a Southeast Neighbors Candidates Forum say that she supports a performance audit to uncover inefficiencies in city government. "Surprised" is putting it mildly since Nathanson voted against putting the performance auditor question on the ballot.

Hiring an auditor was a major recommendation of the Charter Review Committee, but Nathanson wasn't even will-

natural resistance BY MARY O'BRIEN

Vibrant Democracy

Attitude and openness are keys to effective leadership.

One of the most memorable books I ever read is Italian journalist Oriana Fallaci's *Interview with History*, published in 1976. Each chapter is an interview with a different political leader, each of which was lured by Fallaci into revealing how they viewed themselves as leaders. The result is stunning, because most (e.g., Ayotollah Khomeini, Henry Kissinger, the Shah of Iran, and Indira Ghandi) show themselves to be frighteningly arrogant, delusional and contemptuous of the populace they lead. Two exceptions emerge: Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir, and West German Chancellor Willy Brandt. Both Meir and Brandt see themselves as merely temporary servants (albeit with positive contributions to offer) within a standing office of their respective democracies.

Brandt once expressed admiration for a particular man of ancient Greece, who, when asked by his community to serve as mayor, said he would only do so if he could first leave the town for seven years. If, upon his return, the community was still functioning well without him, he would be willing to serve as its mayor.

This points to the primary deciding factor for me when I cast my vote or campaign for a particular candidate: *Will the candidate strengthen the means of community self-governance?*

At the national level, I look at the Bush administration and see systematic dismantling of democratic processes: government websites are being gutted of information, procedures for environmental review are being eliminated, consideration of alternatives is being prohibited, civil courts are being bypassed, public documents are being held secret. It wouldn't matter to me if this was in the service of a left-wing or right-wing ideology: it is a crippling of democratic process, and Mr. Bush must not be allowed another four years to destroy our nation's public, civil government.

Bush wouldn't dream of leaving this country for seven years before returning to see if the country still wanted him as President.

In my own community, I look at the mayoral race, and see two women running for office. My first memory of Nancy Nathanson is when, as a city councilor, she supported having no public hearings on Hyundai coming to West Eugene's wetlands. My second is



when she said she had not known of Hyundai coming to town prior to the city announcing that Hyundai was a "done deal," and it later turned out she had been at a meeting with Hyundai previous to the "done deal" announcement. My third is when the City Council voted 4-4 on whether, in exchange for their \$47 million tax exemption, Hyundai should reciprocate by joining into a five-point agreement with our community: reveal the toxics they would be using, fund a community monitoring process of their toxics use, utilize the most worker-protective technologies available, provide secure family wages, and return their tax break if they did not remain in town for six years. Nathanson voted against the proposed agreement, and Mayor Ruth Bascom broke the tie, voting like Nathanson. In nine subsequent years, Nathanson's voting record and City Council minutes are remarkably consistent with these memories.

My first memory of Kitty Piercy was 22 years ago, when I was volunteering with a pro-choice advocacy group of which she was the leader. I was struck by how she facilitated the group's meetings, encouraged equal participation, and followed through on commitments. Prior to coming to Eugene, I had advocated primarily through protest marches and letters to elected officials. From Kitty, I learned much more about being an active citizen.

Later, this mentor became Rep. Piercy, and I watched how she worked with fellow state legislators in the same highly collaborative manner. Whenever I would lobby Piercy on a piece of legislation, I knew I had to bring evidence that my position represented a public, not just private interest, good. She would never simply say, "Oh, sure, Mary, if you're for (or against) it, so am I." Instead, she would listen politely and conclude the meeting by saying she would first need to see what those who felt differently had to say. Sometimes I would receive a follow-up call from her office, asking for my response to arguments they had heard that were contrary to mine. Not surprisingly, during her last term in the Legislature, Rep. Piercy was minority leader of the House, working effectively with the governor, Senate, and majority House leadership.

In short, there's a good reason for Piercy's mayoral campaign slogan, "Kitty Piercy: A Mayor for All Eugene." It's about respecting the processes of vibrant, public democracy.

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