

2004 PNLHA conference will look at the Pacific Northwest's labor tradition and its relevance to contemporary times. The conference will also cover contemporary issues related to the world of work, labor unions and employment relations.

Conference topics include healthcare reform, child labor in the West Africa chocolate industry and much more, as well as musical and theatrical performances and an art exhibition.

The conference is co-sponsored by the Eugene-Springfield Solidarity Network, the UO Graduate Teaching Fellows Federation, the UO History Department, the Lane County Labor Council, and SEIU 503, Local 085. For more information on the conference, contact Bob Bussel at 346-2784.

ULTIMATE FRISBEE TEAM GOES NATIONAL

The student-run South Eugene High School ultimate frisbee team is challenging the nation May 22 and 23 at the 2004 Ultimate Frisbee High School National Championships in Corvallis.

Taking place at the Crystal Lake Sports Complex, the championship is the top tournament of the year for high school ultimate teams in the U. S. and Canada. Sixteen men's high school teams and 12 women's high school and club teams will come together in a display of athleticism, spirit, and of course, flying plastic.

The Amherst Regional HS Hurricanes (Amherst, MA) will be defending their men's championship title and the Amherst Regional HS women will be looking for their sixth straight championship.

After winning the Oregon State Championships, South Eugene High School, without the aid of coach or captain, won a bid to participate in this elite congregation of young disc-throwers.

See May 22 Corvallis Events this issue for more information. —Ben Fogelson

CORRECTIONS/ CLARIFICATIONS

• In last week's WVFF insert, the photo of band Moksha was incorrectly identified as Samba Ja. Moksha will perform at 3 pm, Saturday May 22 on the Amphitheatre Stage.

• Iris Bicksler took the lovely photos of the Eugene slam poets for last week's story.

•EARLY AD DEADLINES:

The May 31 Memorial Day holiday means early ad deadlines for the June 3 issue. For display ads, it's 5 pm Thursday, May 27, and for classifieds, it's 5 pm Friday, May 28. Questions? 484-0519.



Betty Taylor, Bonny Bettman, Andrea Ortiz and Kitty Piercy celebrate May 18.

Kitty Wins

People power defeats developers in mayor, council races.

BY ALAN PITTMAN

Eugene elected the first progressive mayor in the city's history May 18, defeating development interests after one of the hardest fought and closest mayoral contests the city has ever seen.

Mayor-elect Kitty Piercy won 51.4 percent of the vote, enough to avoid a November run-off against Nancy Nathanson, who trailed with 46 percent, in unofficial final results. Nathanson was backed by big campaign contributions from development interests but Piercy prevailed with small donations and volunteer time from more than 600 active supporters.

Piercy campaigned on a pledge of being a mayor for all Eugene and after the vote promised to continue that theme of "trying to find ways for us to move forward together."

Piercy said one way of moving forward is for the city to move beyond the West Eugene Parkway. "The Parkway divided the community right up the middle and it's stuck," Piercy said, referring to opposition to destroying protected wetlands from the Bureau of Land Management. "That one is never going to pass muster with the feds," she said. "It's time for us to look for another solution" that will respect natural areas and address traffic needs.

Piercy also said she will work for a new housing code for renters, protecting the city's Toxics Right to Know ordinance and on her economic plan for the city.

Newly elected councilor Andrea Ortiz could help Piercy with her progressive agenda. Ortiz won a 59 percent vote to defeat incumbent councilor Scott Meisner. With Ortiz, the council may split 4-4 on many issues with Piercy breaking ties in favor of progressives on environmental and urban sprawl issues.

Progressive councilors Bonny Bettman and Betty Taylor also won re-election handily.

"I'm really excited," said Ortiz, and added she'll have a "huge learning curve" as a new city councilor but learned through her campaign what people in her ward want. "They want people who are willing to listen to them and have a conversation," she said.

Ortiz thanked her campaign manager Michael Carrigan for his work. Carrigan said Ortiz won because she and her volunteers worked harder than incumbent Scott Meisner to win support. It's almost unheard of for a Eugene council incumbent to lose re-election, but Carrigan said the results prove "a challenger that works really hard can win. My faith in American Democracy has been strengthened."

Incumbent Scott Meisner attributed his defeat by Ortiz to unpopular council votes he took and voters wanting change rather than re-electing a councilor to a rare third term. Meisner said he feels satisfied that he helped accomplish his main goal as a councilor – building a new library – and added, "I'm fine with this."

Taylor said she won re-election despite being heavily outspent because the intelligent voters in her South Eugene ward support what she supports. "People care about the environment and workers rights and human rights," she said.

"I'm honored to have such strong support," said Bettman of her re-election with 67 percent support. "I ran a positive campaign focused solely on my values and my record."

Taylor said the potential for a progressive majority vote on the council could be a big change for local government long dominated by development interests. "It totally changes the balance. It isn't automatically a Chamber of Commerce organization," Taylor said.

"I don't know that Kitty or Andrea are a shoe-in on any particular vote," Bettman said. But she added that she's optimistic that the council can now work together on positive changes for the community. "I'm excited for the future of Eugene," she said.

Councilor David Kelly attributed Piercy, Ortiz, Bettman and Taylor's victories to a new political activism on the left in Eugene. "The change was because more progressive folks got organized and got involved," Kelly said. "There was a breadth of volunteer activity that I haven't seen before. Something clicked."

SLANT

• Tuesday's election results sent a strong message to the city – and country. Decided victories by progressive mayoral candidate Kitty Piercy, City Council incumbents Bonny Bettman and Betty Taylor, and newcomer Andrea Ortiz, who ousted comfy Scott Meisner, prove Eugene is ready to head in a new direction. With this election, citizens have voiced their desire to protect the environment, to create sustainable jobs and to keep power where it belongs – in the hands of the people.

That populist message also resounded within the presidential race. Although Kerry soundly defeated Kucinich, Kucinich's strong showing – roughly 16 percent as we went to press Wednesday – is a loud enough note to be heard nationwide. We give kudos to Kucinich for sticking to his principles and echoing Oregonians' cries for healthcare for all, protection of the environment, and last but not least, our fervent desire to get out of Iraq and begin creating a lasting peace in this world.

We also extend our gratitude to the winners and the losers in this election who've dedicated so many days, months and years to public service and to the many volunteers who labored so diligently for their candidates.

• Clay Myers came to Eugene last week like the political warrior he once was to announce his exit from the Republican party. He met with President Frohnmayer at the UO and spoke to a gathering of old friends at the Wayne Morse ranch.

Quoting Morse, he said the party left him. After more than 50 years as a Republican, he switched to Independent registration and is now an "ardent Democrat," working for the election of John Kerry. He says more than 50 of his Republican friends are doing the same. Some prominent Eugene R's confirmed that switch at the Morse party.

Myers became a national leader of the Young Republicans during and after his years at the UO in the late '40s. After Governor Tom McCall appointed him secretary of state, he won two terms on his own. He also served as state treasurer, but Vic Atiyeh beat him in a run for the nomination for governor.

Myers doubts that moderate Republicans like Atiyeh, Norma Paulus, Frohnmayer and himself could be elected in Oregon today. Is this party, which he says has abandoned its principles, salvageable? Myers says, "Yes, in our grandchildren's time."

SLANT includes short opinion pieces, observations and rumor-chasing notes compiled by the EW staff. Heard any good rumors lately? Contact Ted Taylor at 484-0519, editor@eugeneweekly.com