

Kitty Piercy introduces her new campaign manager, Mary Van Noy, at the office opening



TED TAYLOR

Several challenges face Piercy in November, she says, including trying to match the big checks coming into Torrey's campaign from developers and industry, and reaching out to Democrats to "vote down the line" for progressive candidates. A lot of young Obama voters in the primary, for example, skipped over local races on the ballot.

"We all want to see positive things happen at the national level," she said, "but we don't want to see the opposite happen here at home."

Helping out with Piercy's campaign will be Mary Van Noy, her new campaign

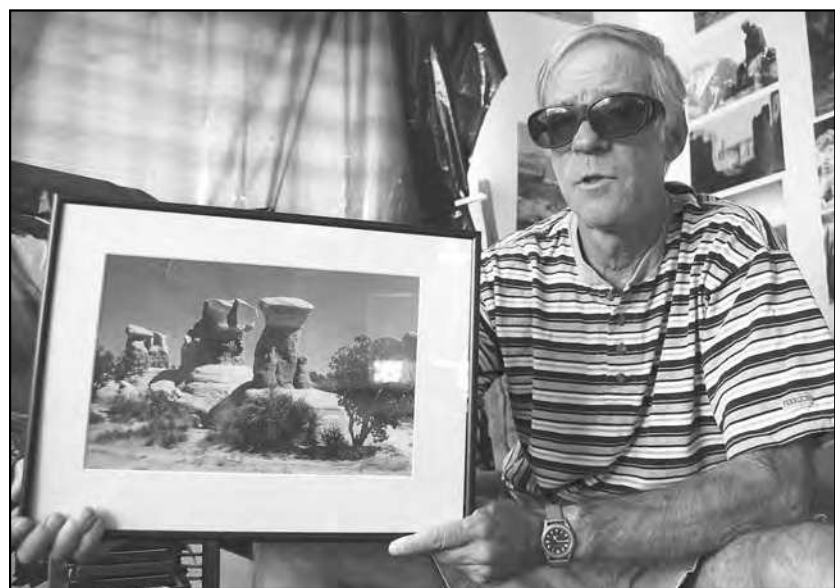
manager, and Mark Weiner, a veteran Portland political consultant. — *TJT*

CHARTER LANGUAGE CHANGED

Wording of the charter amendment on external review of complaints involving police employees has been revised by the City Council and city attorney this week, and certified Aug. 4. The new wording will appear as below on the November bal-

Happening people

BY PAUL NEEVEL



RICHARD STEVENSON

While he was a student at Orinda High School in the San Francisco Bay Area, Richard Stevenson did darkroom work for his father, a commercial photographer. He later abandoned photography for many years while working in home construction and teaching mountaineering skills. "I had a guide service on Mount Shasta," he says. "I taught cross-country skiing, ice climbing and snow camping." When his father died of a heart attack shortly after moving to Eugene in the 1970s, Stevenson moved north to be close to his mom. The undiagnosed congenital high blood pressure that had claimed his dad began to destroy his optic nerve just as he was getting serious about photography. "We were Christian Scientists," he explains. "I have 20 percent vision in my right eye and can see only peripherally in the left." Stevenson nonetheless continues to take pictures with an autofocus camera, especially on yearly visits with an old friend to southern Utah. His scenic photographs of the Four Corners area will be on display at the Winestyles shop in September and October and at Allann Brothers in November and December.

• **Trust was the issue** when the police auditor position and the Civilian Review Board were set up. Trust continues to erode when Police Chief Lehner decides that he alone can determine when and which civilian-initiated cases go to the auditor. In "sensitive" cases, the ordinance provides for confidentiality. As he has done in the past, Lehner delayed giving the auditor further information, thus limiting her ability to effectively monitor the case. What is he hiding?

The key point here is we, as a community, cannot allow our police chief to talk his way out of this mess, and that appears to be what's happening. The end result would be weakened independent police review. City Manager Jon Ruiz is not blaming Lehner for violating the law, but instead is calling for "additional procedures and agreements to address this type of unusual circumstance." And even Mayor Piercy is talking about "areas of differing opinion between the police chief and auditor," and "issues that need to be resolved." Well, the issue is the police chief knowingly and secretly violated the law, and he got caught. Period. The city manager's defense of Lehner this week points out the need to keep our auditor independent from city bureaucracy.

We hear an ad-hoc group of community leaders will be addressing the City Council at 7:30 pm Monday, Aug. 11 calling for action: The council must direct the city manager to reprimand or otherwise make the police chief accountable for his illegal actions; and if he's not willing to do that, then both the manager and chief need to be disciplined. And the council must order the city manager to make certain that shielding of personnel records from investigation not be allowed in current negotiations with the police union.

The group is also expected to voice support for the auditor and the Citizen Review Board. We were lucky to hire Cris Beamud for the first two years of our program. She has no political agenda, no axe to grind, and she is a real professional, leaving here soon for Atlanta. How about thoroughly picking Beamud's brain before she leaves?

• **Delta leaving?** We hope this rumor is wrong. It comes from a staffer inside the Eugene airport who says Delta service probably will be pulling out of here within the next six months. That would be the end of the Salt Lake City and some East Coast connections. Hopefully, local persuaders can avert this one.

• We've long appreciated the technical skill and artistry of **R-G photographers**, but a Chris Pietsch photo that ran July 30 looked like a big ad for the anti-police auditor gang. The photo, in color and above the fold in the City/Region section, showed Scott Thomas holding a sign saying "A Million Dollars For Police Review While Criminals Run Loose." Nothing in the short caption corrects the misleading message. The actual budget of the auditor is \$379,000 a year, and the cost of *not* having effective independent police review during the Magaña/Lara police sex scandals has been estimated at \$5 million in settlements plus likely monumental city attorney defense fees.



• **For those who love statistics** and jumping to conclusions about them, here are a few from the new Media Audit study, an independent annual spring survey subscribed to by *EW* and other local media. Media Audit surveyed 720 households and calculates we have about 89,600 readers in Lane County alone, a big jump over last year. The average age of our readers is getting younger at 39.6, and 62 percent of our readers have some college or a college degree. Average household income of our readers is \$57,648 – higher than the average. You guessed it, dear readers: You are better educated, more prosperous and better looking than most other local media consumers ("better looking" is based on our personal observations of readers who walk in our doors).

Does this extensive survey tell us much about the **local economy**? Well, the average household income determined by the survey has barely grown over the past year, from \$55,120 to \$55,826; so it's curious that *more* readers this year say they are planning to buy a home in the next two years. On the other hand, our readers report they are attending fewer rock concerts and joining fewer health clubs and buying fewer items of women's clothing. No surprise Internet usage is up and more people are planning to upgrade their personal computer hardware and software. About 2 percent fewer readers are planning ocean cruises than last year, but 10 percent more are planning to take college courses. Priorities appear to be changing in a tightening economy and job market. So join the crowd and cruise on down to LCC for some adult ed.

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