



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION

ing to a letter to the Eugene City Council from Citizens for Public Accountability (CPA), a local public interest group.

The letter was sent to the mayor and council last week in anticipation of this week's council action (see news story this week). Following the council decision, Jan Wostmann of CPA's Steering Committee said CPA stands by the letter.

"Amending such a proposal will not render it acceptable," reads the letter. "For instance the proposal might be amended to include only those convicted. But many low-income people, and the working poor, accept conviction on lesser crimes when accused of more serious crimes because they only have access to public defenders, whose services are increasingly limited for lack of funding."

The letter says the homeless and youth will be "typical targets of this ordinance" and its application will "push these folks back into the residential neighborhoods, where there is even less security for local residents."

CPA says the potential for abuse of such an ordinance is "obvious," and adds, "Historically, this kind of ordinance is often applied to those who express their political preferences through public demonstrations."

"We are opposed to the municipal government forming a shadow legal system, in which people can be punished, with

exclusion, on the basis accusations outside established criminal standards," reads the letter. "Even if the proposal is limited to those convicted, it would still create punishments beyond those already assigned in our existing laws."

EAT IS BACK, LOVES TORREY

An email communiqué recently from "anarchists residing in the Eugene/Springfield area" endorses Jim Torrey in his bid to become mayor again.

"We hold that a Torrey regime would be sufficiently brutal and unresponsive to drive hordes of otherwise apathetic citizens to our cause," reads the statement. "To this end we have resurrected Eugene Anarchists for Torrey (EAT)." The group was active in the 2000 elections and hung out at Torrey's campaign table at the Fairgrounds election night, eating his carrot sticks and chips. A video of a 1999 EAT press conference can be found on youtube.com by searching for PictureEugene and EAT.

The anarchists say they are seeking to "replace the vertically organized, representative structures that dominate our society with horizontal, directly democratic ones. To achieve this requires a massive, popular rejection of the existing political and economic system. We hope

- The **exclusion zone** downtown passed at the Eugene City Council this week and may not survive legal challenges and may not have any effect at all on downtown (see our news story this week). Other cities have found much more effective and constitutionally sound ways of dealing with their downtown scoff-laws. So why is our council taking such an idiotic action that has failed in other cities? We suspect the motivation is political. Right-wingers such as Councilor Mike Clark want to put Mayor Kitty Piercy and others in a bind by forcing them to vote on a no-win issue. Anyone who opposes the "preconviction zone" can be labeled by conservatives as weak on crime. Anyone who favors the zone can be labeled by progressives as pandering to conservatives who don't care about the Constitution. Piercy avoided being a tie-breaker on this 5-3 split, but it's not too late for her to speak out for what's right. The mayor's proposal was far better than the Clark-Ortiz measure that passed.

Meanwhile, some of our city and county residents are taking a more creative approach independent of the city. They are making a point of spending more time downtown. Individuals and small groups of residents are now purposefully wandering around the city center, checking out the excellent shops, restaurants, galleries and coffee shops. It's good exercise, and it's a good way to support downtown businesses. Bugged by panhandlers? Stop and chat for a while. Some smiles and friendly words can ease the tension.

- The **November charter amendment** strengthening Eugene's police auditor system has some auditor supporters worried that it could backfire. If voters nix the measure, it could encourage the police union, mayoral candidate Jim Torrey and others who are seeking to sabotage police accountability and transparency. The threat is real. If Torrey is elected, we can expect him to do everything in his power to defund or otherwise diminish the auditor system. But pulling the plug on the charter amendment is a bad idea. Independent review of complaints against officers is already under heavy attack and requires an even stronger defense. What's needed here is vocal support for the auditor system and charter amendment, and public outcry against the police chief and city manager for allowing and even condoning direct violation of city laws regarding independent review. We have yet to hear any compelling justification for the chief hiding from the auditor a confidential complaint against an officer, and we doubt that we ever will. Our police have historically hidden their misdeeds and errors behind a wall of silence and obfuscation.

This latest fiasco is just one more example of why we need not only independent police oversight but also an independent performance auditor. The cops are always claiming they can't respond because they lack resources, but is the EPD really understaffed and underfunded? Is the organization management top-heavy? Are there problems with middle management supervision of patrol officers? Why are only half of EPD's 170 sworn officers on patrol? Are our cops getting adequate training in conflict resolution? An independent auditor would look objectively at these issues and others, which in turn would make our city manager's job a lot easier and help restore public confidence in our police force.

- **What happens if the WG project** favored by the city for the half block across from the library falls through, and second-choice Opus abandons its plans for student housing downtown? How about a combination police headquarters and city park? We hear the idea is being kicked around among councilors and city staff with generally favorable response. The city already owns the land. Cops belong in the city center, either near or attached to City Hall. Windows full of officers and dispatchers overlooking both the library and the park would discourage criminal activity day and night. Police video cameras could be installed along Broadway and other nearby trouble spots so officers in the headquarters could respond quickly on foot. And Eugene would get its downtown park.

- Need a **different perspective** after hearing all the down talk about downtown Eugene? Take a tour through WestTown on 8th next to the WOW Hall. We did that last week and it reaffirmed our faith in local folks who buckle down and actually do the right things. WestTown is 102 units of affordable housing, warmly designed, with lots of light and quality finishes, and including nine live/work units on the street level. About 30 units already are rented. The rest will be filled right away, adding several hundred people to the downtown community. As the Metropolitan Affordable Housing Corp. puts it, the residents include "working families and individuals, seniors, single parents or people completing drug and alcohol programs ... these are the people in our community who are working two, or even three jobs and still cannot afford the basics of living."

This is Metro's seventh project, and the next, Prairie View, is already on the drawing boards for west Eugene. Jean Tate founded Metro in 1992, joined by Rick Larson, current president of the board. Other board members: Susan Ban, Jody Miller, Jim Plummer, Barb Bellamy, Kirsten Cooper, Philip Farrington, Mandy Jones, Eric Messner, Elizabeth Nichols and Tenisha Te'o. Emeritus board members still active: Tate, Mike Coughlin, Gerry Gaydos and Matt Powell.

- **McKenzie-Willamette** Medical center is looking for a new site, and rumors have the hospital eyeballing Glenwood more than downtown Eugene. Back in May, Eugene city officials were talking to the Springfield hospital about the 12th and Willamette site downtown, an excellent location close to the city center. The medical chairs game continues, thanks to PeaceHealth's move to Springfield. Meanwhile, who's to blame for Glenwood becoming part of Springfield instead of Eugene? This short-sighted action happened on Mayor Torrey's watch

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

Happening people

BY PAUL NEEVEL

DR. PAMELA WIBLE

"The average physician has empathy burn-out after 10 patients," says Dr. Pamela Wible, citing a recent study. "But a family doctor sees 28 patients per day on average." Wible moved to Eugene in 1996, after med school in Galveston and a residency in Tucson. She worked as a family doctor in several offices in Eugene and Seattle. "I never kept a job more than two years," she says. "I was frustrated by assembly-line medicine." So, early in 2005, with the aid of a blurb in *EW*, Wible held town-hall meetings on how communities could design their own health care. "It was my experiment in democracy," she says. "I got 100 pages of testimony. It became my business plan."

Wible now works three half-days a week in a tiny, one-person office, yet because of low overhead, she earns as much as she did working full-time at a large clinic. Patients get an hour of undivided attention and pay according to their ability. Wible uses her extra time to write and speak to medical groups. "I hear white male doctors call out, 'Hallelujah!'" she says. "It goes over like a gospel revival." Learn more at idealmedicalpractice.org

