

THE MAYOR'S RACE

The Republican race for the presidential nomination has been compared to a clown car with its circus of candidates. No one expected Donald Trump to be more than a joke. Now he might seriously get the nomination.

The Eugene mayoral race might also lend itself to clown car comparisons, with its plethora of candidates. Thus far two candidates have stood out the most: Lucy Vinis, because she reflects Eugene's concern for social issues and the environment, and Mike Clark, because his votes show he does not.

The race also includes a couple more candidates who care deeply about the city and its people: Former EWEB commissioner Bob Cassidy and feisty Scott Landfield of

Tsunami Books. Landfield's passion and Cassidy's clear concern for issues — such as what will happen to the EWEB riverfront property and the fate of Kesey Square — help deepen the debate.

Candidates such as Stefan Strek are more puzzling. Strek forgot about his interview with *EW*, and his public appearances have not clarified just why he's in the race. A final potential candidate, Ken Johnson, entered the race but then did not complete his candidate filing.

Still, contested races are great for democracy. We need choices in our leadership. *EW* hopes that Eugene residents vote for a candidate who seeks to make this city better for everyone and our environment.

Don't let a loser win. — *Camilla Mortensen*

PROGRESSIVE VALUES

Lucy Vinis has a liberal track record BY AMY SCHNEIDER

Five candidates for mayor of Eugene — four men and one woman — lined the stage at First Christian Church March 3. When asked if they believed in human-caused climate change, candidate Lucy Vinis' answer stood out from the rest: "I don't think it's a matter of belief," she responded. Take a look at the facts, Vinis said: They show that human activity has caused climate change.

Vinis, who worked at housing nonprofit ShelterCare as developmental director before retiring and deciding to run for mayor, was the first to file as a candidate last September. She has limited political experience, but she says her background in working for environmental and humanitarian nonprofits has helped hone her skills in bringing people together, a strategy she says she would use as mayor to find solutions to Eugene's problems.

Current Mayor Kitty Piercy has endorsed Vinis, and it's hard not to draw comparisons between the two leaders. But, in contrast to the other candidates for mayor in this year's election, Vinis stands out in a number of ways.

Her campaign is tidily pieced together, replete with clear platforms and a functional website. Of the candidates running for mayor, Vinis appears the most prepared. She says she sees communication and openness as key components of being mayor.

"The role of the mayor is to bring people together to keep the conversation going in a constructive way," Vinis says.

She'd like to see more transparency in Eugene's government, she says, and she envisions the city using its website more effectively to publish a monthly update on the state of the city. Vinis says this kind of outreach could make it easier for the public to access city processes and track deadlines for decisions that otherwise get lost in the grind of city government.

The mayoral race is nonpartisan, but that doesn't mean political affiliations are swept under the rug. Vinis lands solidly in the progressive realm, and she says she's been a Democrat all her life — in fact, her campaign slogan is "Lucy Vinis, the progressive for mayor." With every statement and Facebook post, she carefully defines herself as the sort of person who represents Eugene's liberal values, and she has received the endorsements of Eugene City Councilors Chris Pryor, Claire Syrett, Alan Zelenka and Betty Taylor.

Vinis doesn't have a background in politics, and she doesn't pitch herself as a smooth political operator. She's a



LUCY VINIS
PHOTO BY TODD COOPER