



PHOTO BY TRASK BEDORTHA

# REMEMBERING RICHARD

RICHARD T. HUNT, APRIL 26, 1953 - NOV. 24, 2017

**R**ichard Hunt was very rarely seen without a smile in the *Eugene Weekly* offices or when out on the roads and sidewalks restocking and repairing the paper's little red boxes.

When news of Richard's death the day after Thanksgiving began to circulate through the office, the words "kind," "gentle," "caring" and "humorous" followed closely behind.

Richard always had a bag of dog treats for *EW*'s office dogs. My two large rowdy dogs greeted him as if he were the most amazing thing they'd ever seen, every single time. He laughed at their antics while they leaped on him in transports of doggy joy. One day he saw them coming, darted into my office and climbed into their kennel. Normally a little reluctant, they dashed into the kennel with him, filled with canine glee.

And that was Richard: full of fun and mischief, willing to clamber into a kennel if it made people, and dogs, happy.

Everyone who knew Richard at *EW* has a story like that about him — about his humor, his kindness, his sense of fun.

Before starting as an *EW* distribution driver in July of 2011, Richard was also known as a jewelry vendor at Eugene's Saturday Market. It didn't take long for Richard to make himself invaluable at the paper. He became then-business manager Paula Hoemann's circulation assistant in October 2012, and in November 2016 Richard became the circulation manager, a member of the paper's executive committee and responsible for not only getting the papers out, but also for their pick-up rates and, of course, maintaining those little red boxes.

He took pride in those boxes. When they were damaged or lit on fire, he would take photos before and after. When he put a new

one out on the corner, he would take his loved ones out to see it.

Rather than annoyance, Richard responded to the people who scrawled "anti-American propaganda" on the boxes or lit papers on fire with characteristic good humor. Sure, it's rude to take a couple hundred papers and throw them out because you didn't like something we wrote, but Richard would cheerfully point out that it just made the paper's return rates that week all the better.

But Richard was more than the maintainer of the boxes and circulation guru at *EW*. He wove himself into the fabric of the paper. He would come in the door singing "Cecilia" to our classified manager, and labeled the intern desk "Happy Lucky Intern Land." Whenever a new employee or intern started, he carefully documented the occasion with a photograph, duly printed out and placed on the wall. While he tolerated his computer for the sake of crunching distribution numbers, he preferred

old-school communication on the printed page.

Richard also drew cartoons, and he left his drawings around the office to entertain his fellow staffers. He played small practical jokes. A storyteller, he regaled the writing staff with his quest to encounter Gov. Kate Brown while in Salem dropping off papers during the Legislative session, so we asked him to write up his adventures. On Aug. 25, 2015, we published "My Date With Kate: Or how I influenced the course of Oregon history," his gentle and humorous take on meeting Brown in a deli at the state capital.

Richard's artistic side also came out in music videos and short films. He wrote the script for the short production, "Let's Pretend to Have a Merry Christmas," and filmed it in front of *EW*'s office.

Richard's life partner, Mary Wetherbee, is Oregon Contemporary Theatre's box office manager, and that means, according to OCT's producing artistic director Craig Willis, Richard attended "pretty much everything we performed" and gave Willis his candid evaluations — "always generous in spirit," Willis says, "and a good reflection of what our typical patron was thinking."

And that was true for Richard at *EW* as well. Candid, generous in spirit and, of course, he attended pretty much everything we performed, because he was the person who ensured readers got their *Weekly* every Thursday. Richard, with his kind smile and gentle presence, is sorely missed.

Willis and others at OCT have begun a YouCaring Fundraiser for Wetherbee to help her deal with suddenly losing Richard. It has raised more than \$5,000 in 24 hours. To donate, please go to [youcaring.com/marywetherbee-1025558](http://youcaring.com/marywetherbee-1025558).

— Camilla Mortensen



FUCK YOU BATMAN BY RICHARD HUNT