



Neil Goldschmidt

COVER STORY

## The 30-Year Secret

A crime, a cover-up and the way it shaped Oregon.

BY NIGEL JAQUISS

When the story of late-20th-century Oregon is written, Neil Goldschmidt will tower over most other public figures. His accomplishments as mayor and governor have stood the test of time.

It is also true, however, that his incomprehensible involvement with an adolescent babysitter changed both of their lives forever and—although few people knew about it—the secret profoundly affected Oregon history. No one can say with certainty how much of the arc of the woman's life was shaped by the man who molested her starting when she was 14. But it is clear that today, on her 43rd birthday, living a thousand miles from her friends and family in Portland, she is a haunted woman.

### The Background

Last Wednesday, May 5, at 12:09 pm, *Willamette Week* emailed Neil Goldschmidt's attorney a letter summarizing the story we were preparing to publish in this week's edition.

The letter outlined allegations that, beginning 29 years ago, when he was Portland's mayor, Goldschmidt had sex with a 14-year-old babysitter on a regular basis over a three-year period. The letter detailed the evidence for these allegations, which had been gathered during a two-month investigation, and included an account of the settlement Goldschmidt had made with the woman in 1994, after having been threatened with a lawsuit by her attorney.

The letter concluded:

"Our investigation has led us to believe the story of your relationship with [woman's name] is true. If you deny the story, we want to give you the opportunity to provide information to us to support your denial."

The next morning, Thursday, May 6, reporter Nigel Jaquiss and editor Mark Zusman were invited to the office of Craig Bachman, a lawyer who represented Goldschmidt. At that meeting, Bachman said Goldschmidt was neither confirming nor denying *WW*'s findings, but asked *WW* not to publish the story, which he characterized as a private matter that occurred almost 30 years ago.

Jeff Foote, the lawyer who represented the woman Goldschmidt abused, also attended the meeting. Foote asked that *WW* not name his client, should the paper decide to publish.

Bachman said Goldschmidt would issue a statement within 24 hours, in which he would announce his resignation from a number of positions, including Oregon's State Board of Higher Education, and a leave of absence from his consulting firm. Bachman said the statement would refer to Goldschmidt's sexual abuse of the 14-year-old girl and the contrition he felt about it.

The meeting ended at about 11:45 am. Less than 15 minutes later, Goldschmidt issued a statement announcing his resignations due to deteriorating health and providing detail about his heart condition. It made no mention of sexual abuse, or of the girl.

At 1:47 pm, *WW* posted on its website a summary of the story it had planned to publish the following Wednesday. Within minutes, the story became the subject of TV and radio reports across the state.

Meanwhile, Goldschmidt had hastily arranged a meeting with editors at *The Oregonian* at the offices of Gard & Gerber, a public-relations firm. Shortly after the meeting ended at 3 pm, rumors that he had made a confession were buzzing through local news outlets.

At 5 pm that day, *WW* posted on its website a story outlining the details of the secret Neil Goldschmidt had kept for nearly 30 years.

Three hours later, *The Oregonian* posted on its website Goldschmidt's admission that he had "an affair" with a "high school student" when he was mayor.

Given Goldschmidt's confession, it no longer seems necessary to publish the evidence *WW* compiled to support the allegations of sexual abuse.

Instead, this week's coverage details how two people's lives were shaped by a crime that began three decades ago, and the lengths to which one of them went to keep it under wraps.

--News Editor John Schrag

The woman, whom *WW* is calling Susan, suffers from physical and psychological ailments that have robbed her of health and happiness. She weighs little more than 100 pounds; she suffers insomnia, nightmares and a recurrence of flashbacks. Her hands shake constantly, despite the anti-convulsive medicine she takes to control seizures she's experienced.

She didn't change overnight from the bright and beautiful girl her childhood friends remember to the woman who eventually served time in a federal penitentiary. It is undeniable, however, that her future was never again so promising as when Goldschmidt first led her into her parents' basement.

The late '70s were a giddy time in Portland. Goldschmidt had put the city on the national map with such projects as Pioneer Courthouse Square, Tom McCall Park and the blocking of a proposed interstate highway that would have cut across Southeast Portland to Mount Hood. Goldschmidt surrounded himself with the best and the brightest aides--including, for a time, Susan's mother.

Goldschmidt, who was married, would sometimes hire Susan to watch his two small children. But, according to a cousin of Susan's and more than a dozen of her friends, he used her for much more than babysitting. He would often take her down to her parents' basement, to hotels and other private spots and have sex with her, the sources say.

In Oregon, if an adult has sex with someone under the age of 16, it is considered rape. (According to law-enforcement officials, however, the statute of limitations for prosecution has long since

passed.)

In 1979, Goldschmidt, who as mayor had won national renown for the development of the downtown bus mall and the city's then-revolutionary light rail, was tapped by President Jimmy Carter to be Secretary of Transportation.

Carter lost his re-election bid the next year, and Goldschmidt, who'd represented indigent clients as a Legal Aid lawyer before entering City Hall, came home to make some money. He took a senior position at Nike.

Susan took a different path.

Once a straight-A student and class president in elementary school, Susan dropped out of high school in her sophomore year, she says. She earned a GED and took some classes at Portland State University in the early '80s but never graduated from college.

On two occasions she went off to New York to study acting but found herself just another pretty face. "I was good at comedy," she recalled in an early-April interview with *WW* near her current home in Nevada. "But I couldn't sing."

In the mid-'80s, Susan occasionally waitressed at downtown restaurants and bars, including Valentino's, in the U.S. Bank building, the Lovejoy Tavern (now the Indian restaurant Swagat) and Pink's. She was part of a hard-partying crowd that frequented nightspots like the Virginia Cafe and the Dakota. Instead of testing what friends describe as a keen intellect with college and a career, Susan rarely worked. Despite intelligence, looks and charm, she was sinking fast. "She had more ability and less confidence than anybody I have ever known," says a boyfriend from that time.

Part of what was holding her back, friends say, was her inability to come to terms with what happened with Goldschmidt. "At times she'd talk about him as though she was bragging," says a female friend. "Other times she'd be incredibly angry and bitter."

In 1986, she moved in with some new roommates in an apartment off Northwest 23rd Avenue. If Goldschmidt was no longer an intimate part of her life, he wasn't altogether forgotten.

Susan spent the afternoon of Dec. 15, 1986, in the Virginia Cafe downtown tossing back brandy and champagne. Later, as she drove her tan '79 VW Rabbit out of the garage below the Galleria, she clipped the rear bumper of a pickup truck. A security guard who witnessed the accident called the police.

"I want to personally make sure you get shit for this," she told Portland police officer Clarence Lankins, according to his report. "Neil Goldschmidt is my best friend."

In 1988, Susan moved to Seattle for a fresh start. She took a job as a clerk in a downtown law firm--a job one source says Goldschmidt arranged for her--and began a paralegal course. Susan told a cousin, who lived nearby, that she was proud of getting a job and finally beginning to get her life together. She was 27.

Susan's happiness proved short-lived. On a December morning in 1988, she went to get an allergy shot. Outside the clinic, according to court records, a stranger abducted her at knifepoint.

He forced her to drive to her apartment, correcting her when she tried to steer toward her cousin's house instead. Inside Susan's apartment, the stranger raped her repeatedly, taunting her for hours and threatening to kill her.

A suspect was soon arrested for the crime. His attorney interviewed Susan, according to court records, and discovered that she had been the victim of "prior sexual assault," when she was 14 to 17 and had undergone counseling.

The court record shows that the accused rapist's attorney wanted to enter Susan's counseling records into evidence. The lawyer argued that Susan's identification of the Seattle rapist was suspect because the counseling records showed that she was confusing--in her dreams--the rapist with the man who abused her as a teenager. "The counseling records...reveal that [Susan] was confusing both situations, e.g., the prior abuse and the...rape, in her dreams."

The judge refused to allow most of the counseling records into evidence. The accused rapist was convicted and sentenced to 636 months in prison. "I have never seen a victim who was so completely psychologically and mentally, emotionally destroyed," said Judge Charles Johnson, who had presided over rape and murder trials for 20 years. "She will never be well again."

At the time Susan was raped, Goldschmidt was finishing his second year as the governor of Oregon.

He had made progress on key projects, such as reforming the state's workers'-compensation system and recruiting many of the high-tech giants who today make up Oregon's Silicon Forest. But Goldschmidt knew he would face a strong challenge in the 1990 election from then-Attorney General (and now University of Oregon President) David Frohnmayer, a Republican.

While that battle took shape in 1989, the defense and the prosecution were battling in a Seattle court over how much of Susan's counseling files--and perhaps the identity of her abuser--should be introduced into the record.

If Goldschmidt's name--or even a more precise description--were in the counseling records, he could have been finished politically. On Aug. 9, 1989, Susan's rapist was convicted and the bulk of the counseling records remained under seal per the judge's order. But in October, the defense appealed the verdict--arguing that the counseling records should have been fully introduced. If the Washington Court of Appeals agreed with the defense attorney, the risk of exposure for Goldschmidt remained great.

As the appellate court in Olympia prepared to consider this procedural question, 150 miles south in Salem reporters and pundits puzzled over Gov. Goldschmidt's reluctance to announce his intentions for a second gubernatorial term. Part of Goldschmidt's hesitancy may be traced to Frohnmayer's August campaign kickoff event, when the AG's campaign manager, Donna Zajonc, said, "I gotta believe the best family will win." (Zajonc says she was unaware that Goldschmidt was hiding a damning secret. "I absolutely did not know and have always regretted that quote," Zajonc says today.)

On Feb. 7, 1990, Goldschmidt, then only 49, said he was walking away from public life. "His announcement left Democrats shocked and his campaign workers tearful on Wednesday," *The Oregonian* wrote.

The media attributed the decision to the impending breakup of Goldschmidt's marriage and, to a lesser degree, his frustration at his dealings with the Legislature.

Until now, Goldschmidt's untimely retirement from the governor's office has remained one of the great mysteries of Oregon politics. "It was a stunning and unexpected political vanishing act," the *Portland Tribune's* Don Hamilton wrote in a 2001 profile of Goldschmidt.

In September 1992, halfway through Barbara Roberts' first term as Oregon governor, the

Washington appeals court denied the defense motion to introduce Susan's counseling records into evidence.

Immediately after the 1988 rape, Susan returned to Portland. She began more counseling and was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress syndrome.

Unable to work, she received a \$400-per-month disability stipend. Public records show that Judge Johnson's fears about her future were well-founded. Susan turned heavily to alcohol and cocaine. She was arrested nine times between 1991 and 1994. In 1992, she violated probation after a cocaine bust and spent five months in Pleasanton federal prison in California.

On the streets of Portland, she was a menace to herself and others, according to police reports. Perhaps the lowest points came when she was arrested on consecutive days for hit-and-runs (nobody was injured). On another occasion, David Petty, the man who was with her during both hit-and-runs, punched her and left her lying in a pool of blood near the Arlington Club.

Goldschmidt, meanwhile, was enjoying life as Oregon's most prominent public citizen. His first major act after leaving office was to establish the Oregon Children's Foundation, which runs the highly regarded literacy program Start Marking a Reader Today.

But eventually, the two paths that veered apart after leaving that basement in the late '70s crossed again.

In 1994, nearly 20 years after Goldschmidt first had sex with her, Susan decided to hire a lawyer.

"In cases where girls have been abused, they often don't come forward until their 30s or 40s," says David Slader, a Portland lawyer who has brought sex-abuse cases against the Catholic Church.

Two sources say Susan was also emboldened by the coverage of the sexual-harassment claims against Oregon Sen. Bob Packwood and the willingness of his accusers to tell their stories.

A friend referred Susan to Jeff Foote, a highly regarded plaintiff's lawyer. Foote agreed to take her case.

Meanwhile, Portland lawyer Doreen Margolin (wife of lawyer and bestselling crime novelist Phillip Margolin) was appointed by a Washington County judge to be Susan's conservator. (A conservator is similar to a guardian.) Susan's parents were living in Rome then, and according to the application, Susan was "unable to manage her property effectively without assistance."

More important, she was expecting soon to be getting a large sum of money from Goldschmidt.

"The appointment of a conservator is necessary because [Susan] is filing a personal injury lawsuit in relation to her claim for injuries sustained from 1975-1978," Margolin wrote.

The lawsuit, which would have placed Goldschmidt's sexual abuse in the public record, was never filed.

Instead, within three months, Goldschmidt and his attorneys had agreed to pay Susan a settlement of approximately \$250,000. After attorneys' fees, she received \$30,000 in cash and an annuity that pays her \$1,500 per month for 10 years, beginning in March 1995. In addition, she will also receive lump-sum payments of \$50,000 in 2005, 2010 and 2015, according to Foote.

The money came with one large string attached: Payment of the annuity was "contingent on confidentiality agreement," according to court records. That agreement binds Susan, her family and all of the others involved in the settlement.

After the settlement, Susan moved to Nevada, where she got married and, she says, worked occasionally as a waitress, at the restaurant Spago.

Goldschmidt, meanwhile, carved out a career as this state's most influential power broker, taking on clients as varied as Bechtel, PacifiCorp and Weyerhaeuser. He prospered from lucrative retainers and friendships with powerful people, advising lumber barons Peter Stott and Aaron Jones, plus a host of other corporate leaders.

In 1999, his friend Irving Levin sold a credit company to Household Finance, making Goldschmidt's stake worth \$8 million. The former mayor represented developer Tom Moyer in Moyer's attempt to extend the Park Blocks greenway and was part of a partnership that bought the Woodlark Building in 2002 for \$4.2 million.

The network Goldschmidt built while in office has added to his power. His former staffers run numerous organizations, including the Portland Development Commission, the gas utility NW Natural and the state itself--Goldschmidt rescued current Gov. Ted Kulongoski from Oregon's political graveyard in 1986 and has been his mentor ever since.

With Susan and Goldschmidt separated by 1,100 miles, their secret might have remained buried forever had Goldschmidt not boldly returned to the public stage.

In November 2003, he led a highly visible and successful campaign opposing the public purchase of Portland General Electric. Two weeks after the campaign concluded, Goldschmidt announced that he was heading a group that itself would buy PGE with backing from the Texas Pacific Group, a private investment firm.

In February 2004, *WW* began reporting on Goldschmidt's consulting firm, Goldschmidt Imeson Carter, and the extraordinary degree of influence it exercised in the gray space between business and politics. During the reporting, *WW* kept encountering whispers about Goldschmidt's past. Most involved affairs with adult women, but a few sources said there was also a young girl.

Public-records searches identified court documents in Washington County and Seattle that described his sexual abuse of Susan in great detail, without actually naming Goldschmidt. In late March, *WW* began to talk to people, eventually speaking with more than a dozen who told a remarkably consistent story about what happened from 1975 through 1978.

On April 7, two *WW* reporters interviewed Susan in Nevada.

She arrived at a meeting at a sports bar near her home with a *Wall Street Journal* under her arm--she says she's been a faithful reader of the paper since fifth grade--and a copy of a library book, *Tomorrow's God*, by Neale Donald Walsch, author of the bestselling *Conversations with God*.

Before the interview, Susan, a slight, deeply tanned woman with wavy, shoulder-length brown hair, spoke fondly about her Dalmatians, Zoe and Harley, and her love of horseback riding with her stepdaughter. She mentioned that she had recently finished a paralegal course and hoped to find work in that field.

When the interview began, Susan produced a tape recorder and said she was concerned about being misquoted. When reporters showed her court documents and summarized interviews with people who said she had told them about Goldschmidt, the tone of the interview changed. Susan's

hands shook so badly she could barely light her Winston cigarette.

Susan acknowledged having been abused in her teens and alluded to earlier molestation by a family member (whom a cousin, in an interview with the Eugene *Register-Guard* last week, identified as her grandfather). But Susan repeatedly denied that Goldschmidt was the man who began abusing her when she was 14.

Instead, she sang the former governor's praises and mentioned how she appreciated his giving her the novel *Cry, the Beloved Country* when she was a teenager.

At the end of a 50-minute interview, Susan said she would consider a request to provide documents that would prove that the man who abused her as a teenager was someone other than Goldschmidt.

She later declined to provide such proof.

By the end of April, *WW* had enough documentation to publish its story. It also learned that *Tribune* columnist Phil Stanford had interviewed Susan in February and confirmed a portion of the story.

On May 3, Rabbi Emanuel Rose, the leader of Congregation Beth Israel, where Goldschmidt worships, called *WW* Publisher Richard Meeker, whose family belongs to the temple.

Meeker agreed in advance not to disclose the details of their conversation. Rose did not return *WW*'s telephone calls.

On May 5, Goldschmidt refused the last of many interview requests.

On May 6, he confessed.

In retrospect, it appears that for more than six weeks Goldschmidt was not only aware of *WW*'s investigation but resigned to exposure of his secret.

During the two-month investigation, this paper talked to Goldschmidt only once. That occurred on April 5, after Goldschmidt called *WW*, inviting Meeker and Editor Mark Zusman to lunch.

In his message, Goldschmidt said, "I really have no agenda. I'm in the news a lot, you guys are interested in a lot of things, and I just think it would be fun."

The April 5 lunch was held at Carafe, a downtown restaurant that serves wine from Goldschmidt's vineyard in Dundee. Goldschmidt's business partner, Tom Imeson, also attended.

At the time, *WW* was not ready to confront Goldschmidt with its findings. And Goldschmidt never referred to Susan during the lunch.

Instead, Goldschmidt talked about higher ed, the development along the South Waterfront and the job that Gov. Ted Kulongoski was doing.

As they parted after lunch, Goldschmidt pulled Zusman aside, grabbed his hand and said, "Go get 'em."

*Several people assisted in the research and reporting of this story, including WW News Editor John*

*Schrag, Arts & Culture Editor Ellen Fagg, reporter Nick Budnick and Seattle Weekly reporter Philip Dawdy.*

## **How Gov. Goldschmidt Aided One Man Who Knew**

BY NIGEL JAQUISS

One of the many unanswered questions about Neil Goldschmidt's sexual abuse of a 14-year-old girl is how he kept it a secret for 29 years.

*Willamette Week's* two-month investigation found that although many friends of the victim knew about the crime, few of Goldschmidt's aides, as mayor or as governor, did.

One individual who knew--and who provided a good deal of help to Goldschmidt--was a private investigator named Robert K. Burtchaell.

Three decades ago, Burtchaell was an original investor in *WW* and worked as the paper's marketing manager. (*WW* has been sold twice since then and has been owned since 1983 by Editor Mark Zusman and Publisher Richard Meeker.)

According to court documents, Goldschmidt stopped having sex with Susan in 1978. Sometime afterwards, several sources say, Goldschmidt asked Burtchaell to help, in the words of one source, "handle" her. Another person close to Susan characterized Burtchaell as "an intermediary between [Susan] and Neil" who "helped her contain her anger at him and helped her with her escalating problems."

Those problems were evident in 1986 when Susan moved into a shared apartment off Northwest 23rd Avenue. One of her new roommates believed that Susan had stolen her credit card and run up \$1,000 in charges, mostly at Meier & Frank.

The roommate, in an April interview with *WW*, said she had threatened to press charges if Susan didn't pay the bill. Not long afterward, she told *WW*, she got a phone call from a man who said he would pay the debt. He said his name was Bob Burtchaell.

About the same time, Burtchaell repeatedly called a male friend of Susan's, who says Burtchaell was trying to help find an approach that would get Susan moving in the right direction.

"Burtchaell's job was to keep her from Neil," says a third source. "If she had problems, she should bring them to Bob." If Susan called Goldschmidt, Burtchaell returned the call, the source says. If Susan met Goldschmidt, Burtchaell was in the room.

According to people close to Susan, Burtchaell remained the primary intermediary between her and Goldschmidt up until Susan obtained a financial settlement from Goldschmidt in 1994.

Burtchaell's career is difficult to categorize. After leaving *WW*, he counseled people experiencing alcohol problems and invested in real estate before becoming a private eye.

During the late 1980s, at the same time Burtchaell was entrusted with handling Susan, he was experiencing financial problems.

In January 1988, court records show, he borrowed \$241,000 from U.S. Bank. The loan was due in 90 days, but Burtchaell failed to pay it back on time.

A company that Burtchaell was part of had bought land along the east bank of the Willamette River near the Sellwood Bridge in 1986 for \$125,000. Burtchaell also leased an adjacent moorage for 25 houseboats called Watery Lane from the Division of State Lands, which owns all the river bottoms in Oregon.

In February 1988, according to correspondence *WW* obtained from the state archives, Burtchaell wrote to then-Gov. Goldschmidt about the moorage.

"I need your advice!" Burtchaell wrote. "I felt that a letter to you would help me find a direction to follow."

Burtchaell outlined his problem: His lease on the moorage was set to expire in 1995, and the state, having determined that there were too many houseboats on that part of the Willamette, had determined in 1984 that it would not renew Burtchaell's lease.

Goldschmidt was in a position to help. As governor, he was one of three members of the state land board, along with the secretary of state and the state treasurer.

Burtchaell wanted a 30-year lease extension. Members of the Sellwood Harbor Condominium Association, whose views included the houseboat moorage, strongly opposed his request. Many of them said they had bought their units in the belief that the houseboat moorage would disappear when Burtchaell's lease ended in 1995.

State lands staff evaluated Burtchaell's request for a lease extension and found it without merit, according to their report. Gail Achterman, a lawyer employed by the state to advise Goldschmidt on land issues, concurred with the staff opinion. "I do not think renewal in 1995 would be justified," she stated in a handwritten note to Goldschmidt on April 7, 1988.

But Goldschmidt pushed hard on Burtchaell's behalf. Buried in the state archives is a handwritten note to Achterman, in which he takes issue with her advice. "I have reviewed the material and now have discussed it with Bob Burtchaell," he wrote back to Achterman. "Unless I am missing facts, I reach a different conclusion.... Please schedule a meeting with Bob Burtchaell. From this point on please act on my behalf in this case."

Achterman reversed her initial opinion and prepped Goldschmidt for a meeting of the land board at which he would recommend a lease extension for Burtchaell.

In a July 27, 1988, memo, Achterman advised Goldschmidt that there would be strong opposition at the land-board meeting, so he should just push for an extension of the lease but not discuss specifics. "Bob needs it done now, but he agrees it should be a ministerial staff matter," Achterman wrote. "This approach should keep discussion of the appropriate lease term out of the meeting and out of any subsequent contested case hearing."

Goldschmidt's support for the lease extension was welcome news for Burtchaell, who was by then in default on his U.S. Bank loan.

After a protracted process, Goldschmidt triumphed over the objections of Treasurer Tony Meeker (no relation to *WW*'s publisher) and Secretary of State Barbara Roberts, and Burtchaell got what he wanted. In January 1989, the land board agreed to reconsider the earlier ruling forbidding the extension of his lease.

In May 1990, Burtchaell's company sold its property and the lease on the state lands to the Sellwood Harbor Condominium Association for \$350,000, which was \$225,000 more than it had paid for the land four years earlier.

Both Burtchaell and Goldschmidt declined to be interviewed for this story.

In 1993, just a year before Susan threatened to sue Goldschmidt, *Oregonian* columnist Steve Duin interviewed the former governor. Duin asked whether Goldschmidt felt guilty about having walked away from his political career. Goldschmidt answered by recounting a conversation he'd recently had while "smoking cigars with a friend named Bob Burtchaell" in a Palm Springs hot tub.

Burtchaell, he said, had told him, "'All God has in mind for you is that you get up and do the best you can every day. And God will take care of the rest.' And [Burtchaell]'s absolutely right. Guilt hasn't bothered me since."

**Editor's note:** *Last Sunday, The Oregonian published a piece by Burtchaell titled "No one benefits from learning Goldschmidt's secret" in its Opinion section. Burtchaell, who described himself as an entrepreneur and a friend of Goldschmidt, criticized Willamette Week for publishing the evidence of sex abuse on its website last week prior to Goldschmidt's public confession. "This is not a story about an adult man having sex with a young girl," he wrote. "It's really about a man redeeming himself...."*

### **That's Incredible**

#### **An internal memo reveals how *The Oregonian* missed the Goldschmidt story.**

**Editor's Note:** *This is a memo that was sent to Oregonian reporters Friday, May 6, the day after Neil Goldschmidt resigned from several posts upon learning that WW was about to publish evidence that, when mayor, he had sexually abused a 14-year-old girl. That story, posted on WW's website Thursday afternoon, was covered by all the local TV and radio stations Thursday night. On Friday, after The Oregonian published its story about Goldschmidt's "affair" as well as the "confession" he prepared for the paper, key managers and staffers met to recap the previous day's events. This memo, which was sent to WW by more than one source, summarizes that meeting. It is reprinted, unedited, in its entirety. It was written by Kay Balmer, a senior manager who oversees the paper's suburban bureaus. The people named in the memo include reporter Brent Walth, columnist Steve Duin, assistant crime editor Kathleen Glanville and Steve Engelberg, who manages investigative projects. "JoLene" is features editor Jolene Krawczak. "Sandy" refers to editor Sandra Mims Rowe. "Peter" is executive editor Peter Bhatia.*

First, a big thanks to WEST for jumping in on the story about the material witness in the Madrid bombing. Much of the extraordinary detail came from West reporters who were out the door working on this the minute it broke.

Today's meeting, as you might imagine, centered on a discussion of Goldschmidt. I'll try to give you some of the highlights.

-- We had gotten a tip about it sometime last winter. This was something that Brent Walth had tried to nail down years earlier when he was at Willamette Week and couldn't get. We began pursuing the rumors last winter, but didn't get too far. For one thing, the woman at times would confirm what had happened and then at other times deny it. Brent was on a plane to Nevada yesterday to talk to the woman when the story broke.

Willamette Week got a copy of the conservatorship somehow and told Goldschmidt they were going with a story. Goldschmidt called us and wanted to tell us, in Sandy's word, because we are the only credible news outlet.

-- Steve Duin felt strongly that our coverage today was too reverential. We are dealing with a child molester. He made a very impassioned plea for doing the who knew what when story -- lots of

people became rich riding Goldschmidt's coat tails -- and why they kept it secret. He suggested that readers might think we'd learned nothing from Packwood and that we are hands off people in power.

-- Kathleen Glanville talked about the mixture of emotions she felt. Goldschmidt had been so important, so admired and had had such a profound effect on the city and the state. And, now, to learn that he's a child molester.

-- Steve Engleberg said that in hindsight he wished that they'd put 48 reporters on the story the day they got the tip. Someone -- I don't remember if it was Steve, Sandy or Peter -- said that this tip came in about the same time that two other similar tips concerning public officials came in. It was pursued, just not with the urgency that Steve now wishes we had put into it.

-- JoLene was concerned that so much of the discussion took place behind closed doors. Kathleen Blythe complained that researchers are too often kept in the dark about why they're looking at someone and the why could help them do their job and make them think about taking different reserach routes. ... Steve responded that they'd been asked to keep this very quiet by the initial source, who felt very vulnerable, and that they didn't want everyone to know that Goldschmidt was coming to us because we didn't want other media to pounce on that. He, again in hindsight, said he wished that he'd let more people in on what was going on.

-- Lots more talk about the stories that need to be done:

How this has ruined the woman's life.

Who knew what when and the people who enabled.

Status of all the projects he's involved in and how this will affect them.

The man and his secret

and on, and on.

This is not an all inclusive report -- I didn't think to take notes -- but it's the highlights, I think.

--Kay

### **Months? Or Years?**

The one discrepancy between the story that *Willamette Week* published on its website last Thursday and the confession Neil Goldschmidt offered later that day has to do with the length of the sexual relationship between Goldschmidt and Susan.

Court documents, both in Seattle and in Washington County, say the sexual abuse occurred from 1975 to 1978. Goldschmidt, however, says the "affair" lasted less than one year. *WW* checked with Jeff Foote, the lawyer who negotiated a settlement with Goldschmidt on Susan's behalf. "Our records indicated that the abuse started when she was 14 and ended when she was 17," he says. "It happened, and it happened over a sustained period of time." --*NJ*

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ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED 5/12/2004

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