

Washington: Taxes for Oregon shoppers?

BEND (AP) — Washington state voters are considering ending the sales tax exemption their neighbors in Oregon currently enjoy.

The Bulletin of Bend reports that the Washington initiative would get rid of the tax exemption that allows residents from states without sales tax, such as Oregon, to skirt paying one in Washington.

If Washington's Initiative 1464 passes in November, Oregon residents will go from paying no sales taxes on common retail goods in Washington to paying a combined 8.89 percent for state and local sales taxes. Big purchases such as cars and boats would still be tax-free.

Since Oregon and Washington are neighbors, many Washington residents hop the border to purchase basic goods. Washington's Department of Revenue estimates the state lost around \$247 million in tax revenue in 2013-14 when its residents

dipped across the border and shopped in Idaho, with lower sales taxes, or Oregon.

"It's an odd exemption," said Peter McCollum, campaign manager for the initiative. "Washington's tax code needs to be updated, and this is going to help clean up politics in Washington."

The proposal aims to set up publicly funded elections for the state. The initiative would rework the laws governing campaigns and lobbyists in Washington and would give voters \$50 vouchers to give legislative candidates who agree to abide by stricter campaign finance limits.

"The goal is to push candidates to put more of a focus on reaching out to their constituents by shifting away from the focus on big donors by lowering the contribution limits," McCollum said.

The proposed change would also affect residents of Montana, New Hampshire, Delaware, Alaska and Canadian provinces.

FAIRE: Event was packed with shoppers from across region

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artists, gathered around the Lebenzon Paintbrushes booth where you could test the custom hand-crafted natural or synthetic fiber paintbrushes with bamboo handles on special cloth.

"Our brushes are designed to be used for a variety of applications such as ink, acrylic, oils and watercolor," said brush designer Tracy Lebenzon. "We are using high-quality calligraphy practice cloth as a demonstration of how each brush could work for you. The paper turns dark where you apply water with the brushes."

Each brush was unique and varied in size and length and you could find natural brushes made from goat, elk, moose, ox or even deer hair.

Musical entertainment on the Fir Street Park stage enhanced everyone's shopping experience, with Moon Mountain Ramblers performing on Saturday and native Hawaiian singer Bill Keale from Bend on Sunday.

Lots of little folks stopped their parents to gawk at the hand-crafted wooden animal-shaped step stools named "Zools" over at Pop-pop's Children's Furniture Company. And all of the chairs and rocking chairs are also designed with creative zoo-animal handles. It was a father-and-daughter team from Ashland, and Kate Meltzer Levin was on hand to tell *The Nugget* how their kids' furniture business began.

"My dad is the one who hand crafts the furniture, and I cover the business end of everything," Levin said. "It all started after I had a child. It was hard to find really cute table and chairs made out of wood for toddlers. So after Dad retired from being a general contractor we decided to partner up, with him hand-crafting the furniture. All my kids call him pop-pop, so the name stuck for the business."

There were samples for your taste buds from lavender-infused toffee to homemade spicy dips. There were samples of unique scented lotions that softened your skin and handcrafted soaps that smelled like everything you love about fall.

There were also samples for your pooch, and a ton of dogs and their pet parents browsed through The Doggie Bakery from Bend over at Michael Banks' booth. There were cookies, cakes, chews, and chicken-breast and beef-liver jerky made just for your furry friend.

The all-natural, preservative-free gourmet doggie treats looked and smelled almost good enough for human consumption!

"This is all about the dogs," Banks said. "My wife, Traci, and I started The Dog Bakery 10 years ago because

we had dogs that couldn't eat anything. They had food allergies and were getting sick, so we started making our own food and treats for our dogs. We took our great-grandmothers' recipes and converted them to dog-friendly and we've been in the business ever since."

Sisters Harvest Faire event coordinator Jeri Buckmann was busy making the rounds to make sure all the vendors and guests were happy all weekend.

"The Sisters Harvest Faire is a huge economic boost for Sisters," Buckmann said. "It was a very successful event for lots of people, not only at the faire but throughout downtown. There were large crowds, people with smiles and of course great weather. I want to thank Nicole (Abbenhuis) at the City of Sisters for the prep work and the businesses on Main Avenue that allowed the closure on Friday for set-up. I love producing this event and bringing as many people to Sisters as possible. In walking through town on Saturday, Sisters was busy. Even with food vendors at the event, Sisters restaurants saw steady business. This was the second year being held on Main Avenue with very positive comments from the public."

Ruling sets up big timber lawsuit by counties


PORTLAND (AP) — A Linn County Circuit Court judge's ruling clears the way for 15 Oregon counties and dozens of taxing districts to move ahead with a class-action lawsuit seeking \$1.4 billion over logging harvests on state-managed lands.

The Oregonian reports that Judge Daniel Murphy's decision certifying a class consisting of the counties and some 130 districts means a lawsuit filed in March can proceed to trial early next year.

The suit alleges the state has for decades placed conservation goals ahead of sustainable harvest levels on state-managed timberlands. The counties allege that the state's own figures show they

have been deprived of at least \$1.4 billion needed to fund basic services.

The counties and taxing districts involved all rely on logging money derived from harvests on state lands.



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