

# March levy to determine funding for area libraries

By Cynthia Whitfield  
Of the Emerald

Lane County voters will determine funding for county libraries and Lane Community College on the March 26 ballot when they decide whether or not to pass two county-wide tax levies.

The Eugene Public Library says it will use its share of a proposed \$510,000 county-wide serial levy to help cover the costs of rural bookmobile service, Sunday library hours and an inter-library computer system if the measure passes the election.

Funds from the levy will go to five city libraries and two library districts. The proposed property tax for the library levy is estimated to be 7.5 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value, or \$3.75 annually for the owner of a \$50,000 home.

"Each city will get a rebate from the serial levy and use it to supplement what that particular city already has," explains Sandy Carrick, Eugene head of adult services. "For Eugene, that means the bookmobile service, Sunday hours, and money for the Lane County Council of Librarians to build a cooperative automation project between the libraries."

Smaller libraries may have other priorities, such as expanding book collections and keeping or extending regular hours," says Carrick. For example, if the measure fails, the Springfield Public Library will be forced to cut its hours from 40 to 34 hours a week.

In addition, if the measure is not passed, rural bookmobile services will be discontinued, and residents in those areas seeking library service will have to travel to the libraries and pay non-resident fees. Service to nursing homes will also be terminated.

Levy funds to be allocated to the libraries are estimated at \$184,000 to Eugene, \$65,800 to Springfield, \$19,000 to the Siuslaw Library District at Florence, \$12,400 to the Fern Ridge Community Library, \$8,400 to Cottage Grove, \$4,800 to Junction City and \$3,400 to Oakridge.

Remaining funds, about \$152,000, will be used to continue biweekly bookmobile service to 18 locations. In addition, the Lane County Council of Librarians is slated to receive \$40,000 for the cooperative library system.

The cooperative system will allow all libraries to list their materials into the Eugene Public Library computer system, says Carrick.

"This will be a public access computer system. If a book is not available in one library, the computer will show where it is available, which will allow us to implement inter-library loans," Carrick says.

Carrick says the library is also used "heavily" by both Lane Community College and University students, because LCC's library is not open on weekends, and University students "like to use us because we're smaller and easier to use," Carrick says.

"I'm hoping the levy will pass. It's important to the economy. A lot of businesses depend on the public library for information — school children

do also. In my opinion, a city is only as strong as its information services," Carrick says.

If passed, the levy measure will allow county residents to keep their money in their own communities, so that county residents don't pay for city service, and city residents don't pay for rural bookmobile service, says Beth de la Fuente, manager of the county bookmobile program.

A new Lane Community College serial levy will also be on the ballot in the March 26 election. LCC is asking for a \$1.53 million three-year serial levy, or about \$510,000 each year in property taxes. If passed, the college will receive an estimated \$444,000 a year for the next three years, allowing for uncollected taxes. The money will be used for operating expenses and the repair of aging campus buildings, as well as other projects.

The cost to taxpayers is estimated at 7 cents per \$1000 of assessed value in the first year. Second and third year taxes will depend on whether the assessed value increases or decreases but should remain at about the same rate. For a \$60,000 homeowner, the first-year cost would result in an additional \$4.20 in taxes, or \$12.60 over the next three years, says William Berry, LCC vice president for administrative services.

Other LCC projects include expanding college links with business and industry, developing a more comprehensive system for providing students with information and services, and extending the outreach of television courses with the installation of a new transmitter in southern Lane County.

LCC hasn't had a successful tax measure passed since November 1980, in spite of five subsequent trips to the election polls. College administrators say passage of the three-year serial levy would eliminate a "great deal of uncertainty" in the budget planning process.

Including the proceeds estimated from the serial levy, the 1985-86 LCC budget would see an increase of just under 3 percent, "not all due to the passage of a serial levy," Berry says. There will also be some increase in state support and the current tax base will be up by 6 percent. The serial levy adds about 1.7 percent to the 1985-86 budget.

Berry says the college is seeking a three-year levy because the project items "need more than one year's financing to put in place."

LCC is also looking for a board member to represent eastern Lane County's Zone 3 position. Incumbent Charlene Curry is running unopposed on the ballot. Curry has served on the board for three consecutive terms beginning in 1978 and says she is running again because she believes her experience will be valuable in choosing a new college president to replace the retiring Eldon Schafer.

Lane County voters wishing to obtain an absentee ballot for the March 26 election can do so by contacting the Lane County Elections Division at 135 E. Sixth Ave., Eugene, OR, 97401 or calling the elections division at 687-4234 for further information.


## Corrections

In a March 15 story on the tentatively settled Oregon Public Employees Union contract, the Oregon Daily Emerald incorrectly reported that union members may get an 8 percent pay increase beginning in July. The increase, which will affect about 1,000 state employees

within the bargaining unit, would actually be only 5 percent in July 1985, followed by a 3 percent increase July 1986.

The Emerald apologizes for any inconvenience this may have caused.

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