

Student wages lonely campaign for Initiative 602



PULLMAN, Wash. (AP) — Katrina Becker has a penchant for arguing, but finds it's of little use when few will listen.

The Washington State University senior is waging a lonely campaign on campus in support of Initiative 602, one of two tax-limitation proposals on the Nov. 2 election ballot.

Becker, a 22-year-old political science major from Wenatchee, is serving as unpaid district coordinator of the Initiative 602 campaign for the Committee to Limit Taxes Now.

"Unfortunately, here I'm having quite a problem finding people who support it," she said.

Students don't understand Initiative 602, Becker said. "If they're going by what they read in the papers, they're probably pretty uninformed because the coverage has been so slanted," she said.

University officials across the state, including WSU President Sam Smith, are predicting dire consequences for higher education with passage of the tax initiatives.

But Becker argues that \$903 million in spending cuts identified by tax reformers would not affect essential services, such as higher education.

"Nowhere in the initiative does it explicitly state that education has to be cut," Becker said.

Initiative 602 would repeal tax and fee increases approved by the Legislature this year. Future growth in state spending would be limited to the increase in the total state personal income.

Fee or tax increases within that limit would require a 60 percent majority in both the House and Senate. Exceeding the limit would require a declaration of emergency by the governor and a 75 percent majority in each house.

College students tend to be liberal in their political outlook, and see the tax initiatives as conservative measures.

"Everybody is calling it a Republican initiative, but it's not. It's a people's initiative," Becker said. "I'm very much an independent. I'm not a Republican at all."

'Unfortunately, here I'm having quite a problem finding people who support it.'

— Katrina Becker, Washington State student

The fifth-year senior, however, has interviewed with the House Republican Caucus and hopes to become an administrative assistant to a state legislator when she graduates in December.

On top of 19 hours of course work this semester, Becker devotes 25-30 hours a week campaigning for the tax-limitation measure. That includes debates with opponents of the measure on campus.

Becker said she's not intimidated walking into a room where opinions are stacked against her: "It makes me want to fight more."

Jury deliberates fate of boy

OREGON CITY (AP) — A jury resumed deliberations this morning in the case of a Lake Oswego teen-ager accused of deliberately running down a 12-year-old girl with his parents' car.

Andrew John Whitaker, 17, is being tried as an adult on a charge of murder.

The jury deliberated for eight hours Monday without reaching a verdict. It began considering the case late Friday afternoon before recessing for the weekend.

Whitaker is accused of intentionally killing Lisa Marie Doell in Lake Oswego last Oct. 21 as she walked to her grandparents' home after school. The girl was struck from behind and thrown into a tree.

Lake Oswego police detective Michael Hammons testified that Whitaker told him he hit the girl on purpose.

"He showed no remorse," Hammons said.

But Whitaker testified that he was in an emotional fog at the time he talked to police. He said he didn't mean to kill the girl.

"At the time, I was focused on emotional things and because of that I wasn't paying any attention," Whitaker said.

"I saw her," he said. "I wasn't thinking; the next thing I knew I hit her."

Whitaker testified that he had talked to a friend about an impulse to rape a girl, that he had been rejected by a girlfriend and that he had written and given to a teacher a poem about a dead opossum.

He said that he didn't stop after hitting the girl because he was scared. He said he characterized the incident to friends as "acting out an impulse," because he felt at fault and was "having trouble sorting through what was going on."

Washington State wins honors for its cheese

PULLMAN, Wash. (AP) — In the hilly Palouse country, Washington State University produces graduates, research and more than a little cheese.

While more than a few awards have been doled out to students and faculty, the school's cheese is drawing attention as well.

Two varieties produced at WSU's creamery were awarded first-place prizes in the American Cheese Society's "Best Cheeses of 1993" competition.

One went to Cougar Gold, a cheddar that's sold through the mail and at Northwest stores starting each fall and running through the holidays. The other winner was WSU's Italian variety, which consists of the creamery's Viking white cheese blended with oregano and sweet basil.

WSU's dairy enterprises are rooted in the school's creation as a land-grant college in 1890, when it was called Washington State College.

"There's always been some cows around so students could learn and research them," said creamery manager Marc Bates. "Lo and behold, this generated some milk."

The creamery was built in Troy Hall in the 1900s, and moved to its own building in April 1992.

The school now produces about 240,000 pounds of cheese a year,

about 75 percent of it Cougar Gold. The other 25 percent includes several white cheeses with herbs and spices.

Cougar Gold owes its unique flavor to a bacteria discovered in the 1940s when WSU's Norman Golding began experiments to figure out how to preserve cheese in cans so it could be sent overseas to the military in World War II. The bacteria was discovered when Golding decided on vacuum-sealing for preservation.

While sales from the creamery allow the facility to break even financially, its focus is to teach students about dairy work, Bates said.

The creamery also creates jobs for students. On some days, student Damon Griffith drives a tanker truck to the campus farm at 5 a.m. to pick up milk produced by WSU's herd of 150 Holstein cows. The herd produces more milk than the creamery uses to make cheese, so the surplus milk is sold to consumers.

"The science of (cheese-making) attracted me to it," said Griffith, who changed his major from mechanical engineering to food science when he found the work creamery interesting. "As a whole, everybody who is working here is dedicated to trying to produce the best and highest quality of product."

Police fire officer in shooting

PORTLAND (AP) — A police officer who fired 23 shots at a man as he ran away from a bus in July has been fired, according to the Portland Police Bureau.

Officer Douglas Erickson chased Gerald C. Gratton Jr., 27, off a Tri-Met bus on July 19, emptied his pistol at him, reloaded, and resumed shooting until Gratton fell, wounded in the elbow and back.

Gratton has since recovered from his wounds.

The bus driver had called police, saying

the Gratton and his brother were drunk and unruly.

Erickson and two other officers confronted Gratton, who had a .45-caliber pistol in the waistband of his pants.

Gratton fled out the back door of the bus, but never pulled his own gun or fired it.

Police Chief Charles Moose found that Erickson violated the bureau's general orders, which allow police to use deadly force only when they believe lives are being threatened.

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