

## Lane County could use transfer tax

Four years ago, Lane County received nearly \$17 million in timber revenue. Revenue from timber is forecasted to be nearly \$5 million less than that next year. A real estate transfer tax has been proposed to make up for this loss and will appear on Tuesday's ballot as Measure 20-18.

Over the last three years, Lane County has been slimming down and cutting back. The number of county employees has been trimmed from 1,800 in 1980 to 1,300 today. There's been an attempt to salvage public safety jobs, though, because they are the No. 1 priority in the county and must remain so.

If the cutting continues, the ramifications will be felt throughout the county. Crime is increasing, not decreasing. The need for human services is increasing, not decreasing. The cost of these services is increasing, not decreasing. And the money in the general fund to pay for the increases is decreasing.

If the real estate transfer tax passes, the money would be funneled into the general fund, which would pay for services such as the jail, health clinics, criminal prosecution and many other law enforcement agencies. If the tax does not pass, cuts will be made and the county will surely feel them. In the next two years, 80 jobs could be cut if the tax doesn't pass.

The tax would affect only those people who buy or sell property and it would cost only about one-third of 1 percent — .35 percent — for buyers or sellers, depending on whether the tax is figured in before or after the sale. A \$90,000 house would be taxed \$315. For the majority of homeowners, however, buying and selling houses is not an everyday, or even yearly, affair.

The tax also would reflect the actual selling price rather than the appraised price. If real estate value dropped below the appraised value, the tax would take the drop into account.

The tax does not just affect homeowners, either. Much of property bought and sold is commercial — in fact, nearly 40 percent of the tax would result from the transfer of commercial and industrial property. As for renters, the cost would be difficult to pass on in the form of increased rent to them because the tax would be figured into the total cost of the structure pending a sale. Homeowners who sell their property this year certainly wouldn't have to pay the tax next year.

Property changes hands by everyone. There are no benefits for the rich compared to the poor or vice versa; the tax would be relative to the price of the property and that's it.

Yes, it is a tax and no one wants another one, but the alternatives are worse. One alternative is a property tax that everyone would pay each year, the majority of which would fall on homeowners. Another possible tax is one on public utilities, which taxpayers would pay each month.

Only what Lane County needs the most is left to be cut. If Measure 20-18 passes, these services will remain.



## LETTERS

### Progressive-ski

Since withdrawing my name from the District 40 race for state representative, many people have asked me why I withdrew and why I am supporting Floyd Prozanski. The answer is plain and without political mystique. After attending various forums, campaign events and walking door to door, it is apparent to me that District 40 needs progressive leadership in Salem.

Although Mike Sherlock has a good record as a lobbyist for gas station owners and petroleum-related issues, his interests and expertise leave much to be desired as a candidate for State Representative. In plain terms, his reach for public office exceeds his grasp of the issues that concern the majority of voters in District 40. On the other hand, we can send someone to Salem who has demonstrated leadership in the areas that affect us most.

Many of us are concerned about Oregon's commitment to funding higher education, environmental stewardship and our tradition of tolerance and human dignity. We have worked together to make our community thrive. I am confident Floyd will represent our interests and serve us well as state representative. His list of endorsements is personable and covers a broad spectrum of issues, much like his service to the community.

If Oregon is to continue its progressive tradition, we must elect leaders who demonstrate commitment in these areas.

Together, we can solve the problems that we confront in our community and our state. Together, we can elect Democratic nominee Floyd Prozanski for state representative on Tuesday.

**Don Stull**  
Eugene

### Strong record

In the *Emerald's* candidate profile article of May 13, which did an otherwise fine job of describing my positions on a number of issues, a serious error was printed. It was incorrectly reported that I was in favor of the continued cutting of old growth forests. Nothing could be

further from the truth! It was a simple mistake, but I feel obligated to make sure the record is corrected.

I have a strong record as an environmentalist and have been endorsed by the League of Conservation Voters, as well as environmental activists such as Art Farley and Doug Norlen. My credentials including being chairman of the BRING Recycling Board, as well as having served on a Bureau of Land Management Timber Sale Advisory Board. While sitting on that board a few years ago, I strongly advocated for the preservation, not the destruction, of our old-growth forests.

I am opposed to cutting any of our ancient and old-growth forests. I am opposed to any clear-cutting of any of our forests. I do support selective cutting and believe that harvested forests should retain multi-level canopies. I support wide streambed buffer zones that will protect our fish and our water.

Oregon's most valuable treasure is its environment, and if elected to represent District 40 in the Oregon Legislature, I will work tirelessly to see that our children, and our children's children, can still cherish our natural forests, streams, and wildlife.

**Floyd Prozanski**  
Democratic Candidate  
House District 40

### Rescue BRING

Twenty-three years of BRING Recycling will end without your support!

The Glenwood Central Receiving Station (dump) contract — BRING's financial cornerstone — may be awarded to the Weyerhaeuser Corporation. Without that contract to support our nonprofit operations, the eight BRING drop sites will close, the human voice answering your questions will cease, the thousands of hours of court-ordered community service may be lost and the innovation and independence of a community based nonprofit organization dedicated to reduction, reuse and recycling since the days of Richard Nixon will end.

Please call the county commissioners before Wednesday

and ask them to support BRING. Only they can save BRING.

**Leslie Weinstein**  
Member, Board of Directors  
BRING Recycling

### Tolerance

I want to correct a mistake on the cover of your May 9 issue. You featured two photos of the EMU Courtyard exhibition by the Power Team. The smaller of the two photos was actually Barry Handley, a 6-foot-7-inch, 325-pound member of the Power Team.

Why didn't you have an article written to accompany these photos? University students need to know that this event was sponsored by the campus ministry of Chi Alpha, in cooperation with Lighthouse Temple's college ministry, Lost and Found! This EMU Courtyard gathering was the second largest this year at the University! The crowd was estimated to be twice the number that gathered a few weeks earlier for the "Gay Pride Rally," yet that event got much more coverage!

The crowd was cheering very responsively, though your photo caption appears to suggest that the jeers were equal to the cheers — which is far from accurate reporting. As a journalistic effort, the *Emerald* should set aside its prejudicial view in favor of accurate reporting. We will all be better for it!

In an era of "tolerance" and "diversity" it appears that some may not be "tolerant" enough to show a supportive crowd (of both Christian and non-Christian people) cheering on the Power Team. Perhaps some are not "diverse" enough to report people publicly professing their faith in Jesus Christ and drawing one of the biggest crowds on campus this year! The question remains: how "tolerant" and "diverse" is the *Emerald*? Can the *Emerald* actually report events accurately and fairly and in context? Or perhaps our "tolerance" and "diversity" is limited to only those we choose to include! Journalistic integrity and fairness is all we ask for ... and all we need!

**Brian O'Neill**  
College Pastor  
Lighthouse Temple

## Oregon Daily Emerald

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