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Retired couple spends summers in a tower, watching for fire

Lookout: Reporting fires has become a seven-year job

ASHLAND (AP) — Ken Struck knows what it means when he feels the hair stand up on the back of his neck. Like a deer in the forest, he has honed his senses to detect the slightest signal of potential danger.

A wisp of sulphur in the air may be enough to tell him: Fire is on the way.

Ken Struck spent 25 years of his life as a firefighter. Now retired, he and his wife, Colleen, spend their summer days on an Oregon Department of Forestry fire lookout station at Soda Mountain east of Ashland.

From the lookout, the Strucks can see nearly 100 miles. They started watching for fires from their cozy perch in 1987.

Their tools include maps, binoculars, ears and noses.

The latter two are especially helpful for sensing thunderstorms. A lightning strike to dry grass acts like a match.

So the Strucks pay close attention to the color and movement of clouds, listen for the crackling of nearby antennae, and stay keen to the pungent scent of sulphur. All of them mean lighting is in the air.

About three summers ago, Ken Struck said he was roused from his sleep by a

thunder clap. He immediately took his place on the glass-logged stool at the lookout station.

"When the lightning would go off, I had my hands over my eyes, and it was like looking into an arc welder," he said. "After it passed by, I picked up about five snags on fire."

This summer, however, Colleen Struck said most of the fires they have spotted were human-caused.



MICHAEL SHINDLER/Emerald

John Kitzhaber (left) examines the handwork of Ely Newton, 7, (lower left) and Forrest Barlow, 11, (right) while Vic Newman (center) explains the Native American-type wood carving they are making.

Kitzhaber: Reallocate lottery funds

Schools: Education should receive more money in the next few years

By Meg Dedolph
Oregon Daily Emerald

John Kitzhaber, Democratic candidate for governor, proposes using lottery money as a short-term resource to fund Oregon's public schools.

During his Monday morning visit to a summer enrichment program at Churchill High School, he said this plan to help students from kindergarten through high school would require the introduction of a new constitutional amendment.

Under the state constitution, lottery money is now primarily dedicated to economic development.

The amount of lottery money spent on existing programs would not change; rather, the money for public schools would come from the projected increase in lottery revenue during the next two years.

During the 1993-1995 biennium, the lottery raised between \$320 and \$340 million for the state. The lottery's earnings for the 1995-1997 biennium are estimated to be \$600 million.

Once currently funded programs receive their money, the difference between the two figures, somewhere between \$200 and \$300 million, is the money that Kitzhaber proposes using for education.

"We should use new lottery dollars as a bridging system to pay for schools over the next two years," Kitzhaber said. "I do not support the use of lot-

tery dollars as permanent funding for schools."

He said he was unwilling to recommend lottery money as a permanent source of money for schools, because he did not consider it a dependable source of revenue.

During his Monday morning visit, where he watched a group of first through third graders carve Haida totem poles from alder wood, Kitzhaber said Oregonians were concerned about education, especially public education.

"Public education has an impact on shaping the state's future," he said. "The thought of short-changing these kids is unacceptable."

From 1993 to 1995, nearly \$20 million was allocated for students in kindergarten through high school. The Department of Higher Education received about \$31 million, and the Office of Community College Services received nearly \$75 million.

Kitzhaber said the period from 1995 to 1997 would be easier to understand because the changes as a result of Measure 5 would be entirely in place.

"Measure 5 has been a big unknown," he said. "But now we're dealing with a known quantity. We know what our revenue is and can make decisions on how to fund these services."

He said individual cities and counties should have more control on how much money is allotted for schools. For example, if a city decided more money needed to be spent on its schools, the city and the residents should have the authority to adjust the property tax rate accordingly.

INTERNATIONAL

Argentina bombing injures at least 100

Explosion: At least 22 killed in the bombing of a building occupied primarily by Jewish groups

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP) — A seven-story building housing two Jewish groups was destroyed by an explosion Monday, killing at least 22 people and injuring at least 100 in what Argentina's president called an attack by "beasts and savages."

Rescue workers scrambled over mangled steel and masonry, believing that dozens more could be trapped in the rubble. An estimated 100 people worked in the building, also used by researchers studying government files on Nazi war criminals who entered Argentina after World War II.

Jewish groups reported that more than 40 people survived the 9:55 a.m. blast. At least four people, including a young boy whose cries were heard by rescuers, were pulled out alive Monday afternoon.

The cause of the explosion was not known, but authorities ruled out an accident. Buildings on the rest of the block were heavily damaged and cars parked near the building were destroyed.

Between 100 and 120 people were injured, said presidential spokesman Raul Burzaco.

Turn to BOMBING, Page 4

Consumer group charges Mexican food high in fat, salt

Food: A full day's allowance of fat and calories in one meal

WASHINGTON (AP) — Toss the tacos, bypass that burrito and just say "no" to the refried beans, guacamole, sour cream and tortilla chips.

Ask for the fat-free salsa instead.

The consumer group that attacked the fat in movie popcorn and in Italian and Chinese meals now warns that most Mexican dishes in restaurants will saddle you with up to a full day's worth of fat and sodium, and more than 1,000 calories.

But unlike Chinese and Italian food, the Center for Science in the Public Interest said, it found few ways consumers could improve the nutritional value of Mexican restaurant food.

"Mexican food is not seen as health food," Michael Jacobson, the executive director, acknowledged at a news conference Monday, "but I think the numbers will shock anybody who has had any concern about health."

"Seeing that you're using up three-fourths of your fat intake just on the side dishes is utterly shocking. It's completely unnecessary," he said.

Herman Cain, president of the National Restaurant Association, said the study "feeds the nation's paranoia about the food system" and "may be far worse than serving the nation an extra gram of fat from time to time."

"In fact, there is nothing wrong with Mexican restaurant food for customers concerned about nutrition if they make the

Turn to MEXICAN, Page 5