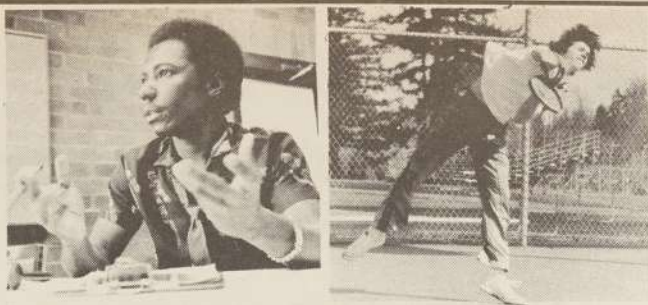


An in-depth look at the current ASG president  
Page 6



Raquetees jump off to quick start  
Page 7

# the PRINT

Clackamas Community College

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## Residents reject March levy vote College to try tax base

By Shelley Ball  
Of The Print

Just over two weeks ago, Clackamas Community College's \$26 million three-year serial levy was defeated for the second time in four months by a vote of 12,655 to 9,488.

Since then the College has regrouped its efforts, and during a special Board of Education meeting on March 30, the Board voted 4-1 to place a tax base on the ballot of the May 15 primary election.

The amount of the proposed tax base is \$8,282,018. Since a tax base measure can only appear on the ballots of general and primary elections during even-numbered years, College President John Hakanson said the Board decided to take advantage of the opportunity.

Although the College has in the past tried to win a tax base (this time will be the College's sixth) and has failed to do so every time, Hakanson said he hopes the voters will realize at this point in time that a tax base, unlike a one or three-year levy, will place a definite limitation on the rate of increase for taxes.

"It (tax base) is quite a commitment for the College to make. The Board recognized this, and decided to put one (measure) up it could live with for awhile," he said.

Hakanson explained that in requesting money through a one or three-year levy the Board can bring before the voters any amount that it feels is sufficient for the College's needs. Should the \$8.2 million tax base pass, however, the College would be locked into receiving that same amount year after year.

A tax base does allow up to a six percent increase in funds each year to cover for the cost of inflation, but Hakanson said the College would not be able to propose more than that amount without bringing it before the voters.

"It (tax base) is a long commitment by the institution and the people, and it is a limitation, because they (the voters) know that taxes won't go beyond the six percent increase," he said.

The passage of a tax base for the College would insure it of a steady source of funding, and the six percent limitation

on raising taxes may appeal to the voters. A tax base would also help to reduce the cost of bringing money measures before the voters.

But while the six percent limitation has been provided to cover the cost of inflation, it is entirely possible that inflation will run more than six percent. This means that the College may eventually have to request additional money in the form of either a one-year, or three-year serial levy or a whole new tax base.

Hakanson explained, however, that the College's tax base proposal specifically states on the ballot that the College will stay within the six percent increase for 3 to 4 years, before possibly requesting more money through a levy or different tax base proposal.

Low voter turnout has been cited as a factor in the defeat of the College's three-year serial levy. Hakanson added that the voters may have taken one look at the levy's \$26 million proposal and "thought it was a lot." Hakanson also said the Board decided on the tax base amount of \$8.2 million



College President Dr. John Hakanson

because they felt this was enough to keep the College operating as it is right now. "We're not talking about adding a whole bunch of new programs," he said.

Despite the fact that the College has not been able to pass a tax base in the past, the fact that many school districts have gone to a tax base over

the past 3 or 4 years is one aspect Hakanson said may help get the College's proposal passed.

For those who may have been worried about the future of summer school, Hakanson explained that the levy failure has not had an effect, due to the numerous budget cuts that were made during November and December.

## Council brainstorms for election campaign

A "high visibility, low-energy campaign" is the new election strategy that will be used as Clackamas Community College prepares to go before the voters once more on May 15 with a proposed tax base, Student Activities Director Debbie Baker said.

Two days after the College's levy failed, Baker met with members of the Associated Student Govern-

ment at their March 29 meeting to discuss what had happened at the President's Council Meeting on March 28. Assistant Dean of Student Aid and Support Services Lee Fawcett was also present at the ASG meeting. During the meeting he thanked the students on the ASG for the work they did in promoting the levy election. Fawcett said he was very "appreciative of

their efforts."

Baker herself said the ASG did an excellent job, and it was because of the amount of work it accomplished that the new election strategy is stressing a low-energy approach.

"I haven't seen a student group put out as much work in 10 years as this group has," she said.

Baker explained the new

election strategy would focus on less physical activities, such as door-to-door promoting, to a more visual approach. In addition to the usual posters on campus and the blackboard writing campaign, Baker said there were ideas of newspaper advertising, more lawn signs and sending out of information through the mail announcing the College's election proposal.

Other ideas included a telephone survey to establish a positive voter list, and the development of a speaker's bureau. Baker said the idea behind a more visual approach, besides giving those who worked hard before a chance to rest, is to "make everybody in the county aware that we're (College) having an election."

