

EDITORIAL

Revenue policy needs updating; part II

Two weeks ago, this page explored business models utilized by other colleges to raise operating revenues in place of hiking tuition fees. Other viable options do exist for us. Some of these options are simply passive means of lowering operating funds and generating revenue, and are important in maintaining Clackamas' affordable cost and keeping the school on a sound financial basis.

FOR EXAMPLE, a number of concerned citizens have brought to this editorial board's attention the lack of a definitive recycling program at the college.

Although recycling bins are scattered around campus, there is not a comprehensive system of sorting reusable materials from the mounds of trash Clackamas generates on a daily basis.

According to research, an aggressive recycling program instituted on all levels of the school would immediately pay for itself in lesser operating expenses and services.

According to universities and "green" activist Web sites, better than 90 percent of all wastes produced by commercial or educational institutions is simple paper or cardboard. So, the hundreds of plastic and aluminum cans and bottles disposed of every day each have an added price that quickly add up.

Many California and Oregon schools already pay the 5-cent deposit value to help fund recycling activities or pay for other programs that do otherwise go lacking in funds.

The University of Oregon even has an excellent how-to page online that details the step-by-step creation from scratch of a campus recycling program that covers every angle.

The Clackamas ASG would do well to check out [http://Uoregon.edu/~recycle/howto\\_text.htm](http://Uoregon.edu/~recycle/howto_text.htm).

ANOTHER PASSIVE MEANS of saving money is the simple expedient of installing fluorescent lights and automatic timers in every office classroom.

Although many rooms do have them, enough that it becomes an issue.

Information gathered from Consumer Reports and other watchdog groups have consistently shown long-term benefits and savings to both home consumers and commercial users.

With fluorescent lighting using 80 percent less electricity than conventional bulbs and including savings from automatic lights, the cost of installation usually pays for itself in less than a year.

INSTANTLY, with emerging alternative energy sources, the concept of homegrown electricity is gaining more and more common.

Many new buildings in the downtown and area are starting to incorporate solar and wind turbines into their construction, the advantage of lowered costs of heating and air conditioning associated with these technologies.

Secondary benefit comes when more power generated than consumed. Utility companies give energy "credits" to business and residents in excess power is sent onto the local grid.

Only a surprisingly small number of generators are required in order to start seeing a return on the bottom line.

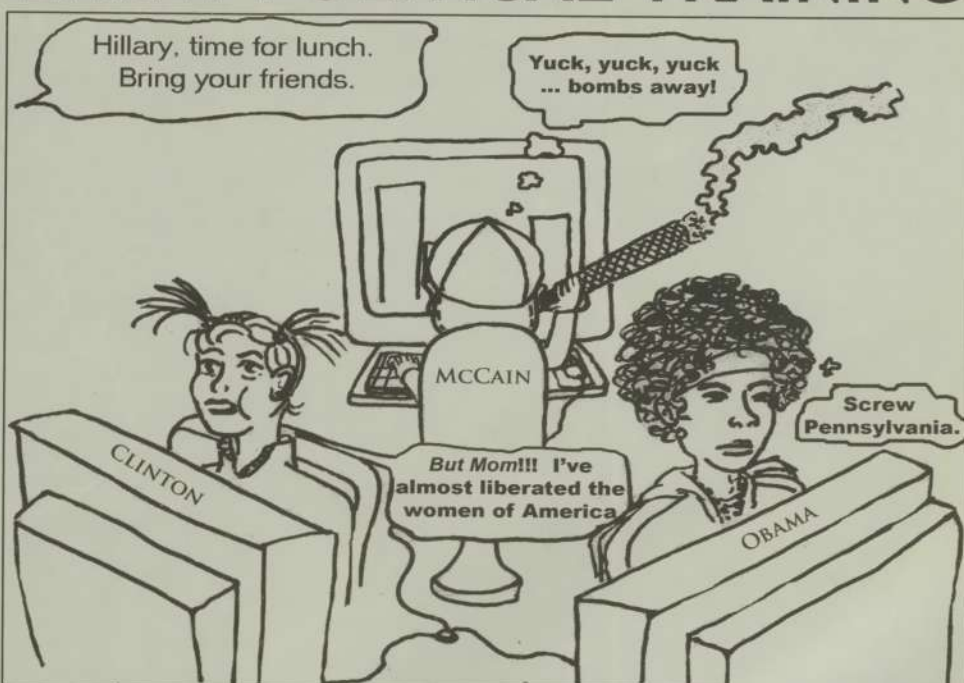
Although a solar/wind generator requires a significant initial investment the school can utilize, the majority of costs are underwritten by government grants, state and local solar rebate programs or tax credits.

Some of these suggestions are new, radical or unheard of by most people. They are all tried and tested ideas that have been proven time and again.

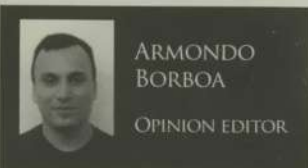
Clackamas is known to be a leader in innovative education.

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# EARLY POLITICAL TRAINING



Armondo Borboa and Kayla Berge Clackamas Print



ARMONDO BORBOA  
OPINION EDITOR

Especially in election years, a popular American pastime seems to be watching public figures becoming increasingly out of touch with reality.

The only challenge to the viewer at home is wondering which individuals will stick their foot in their mouth next.

Personally, I always bet on the guy whose lips are moving.

In the real world

\$300 million for an Alaskan bridge to nowhere is clearly stupid and a waste of money, yet some politicians figured it was a great idea.

Sending out a \$600 government tax rebate check per person to kick-start the economy is clearly just picking our pockets and handing us back a tip.

Millions of taxpayer dollars are spent to encourage the use of ethanol fuels to reduce dependency on foreign oil.

Too bad ethanol directly leads to higher food prices and an increase in greenhouse gasses. The list goes on and on.

But then again, spending time on planet Earth with the rest of us is apparently not something politicians do on a regular basis.

If the Hillary show has demonstrated nothing else this year, it has at least shown the amazing difference between our reality — a normal airport-landing in Bosnia — and the way politicians tell it — a combat drop under sniper fire.

Not that the other guys in this three-legged race are any better.

But at least McCain really did get the crap beat out of him in a Vietnam prison for five years; there is no doubt about that hap-

pening whatsoever. Go, John.

So why don't most politicians get it?

To paraphrase Arnold the Gubernator when he was running for office in California, "Most of these guys have no idea what it is like to sign on the front of a check."

What the Terminator was trying to say actually does contain a fair bit of wisdom.

Most public figures we see on the evening news, with their 30-second sound bites and "talking points," have no clue what it takes to run a successful and profitable company, something many private citizens do every day.

Most of them have no idea what makes an economy work or how to keep the unions happy while keeping a business in the black.

Most of them have no clue what motivates a workforce to create new ideas or technologies.

What to do

Although a very broad generalization, a large majority of so-called "career politicians" are lawyers who passed the bar exam and then only held down a job long enough to run for public office.

Funny enough, the only careers considered more despicable than politics are attorneys and news reporters.

So what is a possible solution?

We could require our elected officials to first successfully prove themselves in the boardroom before they can attempt to run our economy.

But then again, self-made millionaires Mitt Romney and Ross Perot both spent plenty of their own dollars and still didn't win their respective races.

Personally, I like the idea of requiring anybody holding public office to first qualify on strategic population simulator programs.

Think of this as playing "SimCity" or "Civilization" in expert mode.

To even qualify to run for office, they would have to not only keep an approval rating better than 70 percent, but also stay within a budget, deal with natural disasters

and cope with the occasional Godzilla attack. This idea isn't as far-fetched or silly as it might seem at first.

After all, modern fighter pilots spend literally hundreds of hours jacked into simulators before they ever go up in a real bird.

Same thing goes for Wall Street stock market traders. They spend countless hours and days going over charts, graphs, economic models and real-time reports before they ever input their first real buy order.

Doctors, lawyers and military officers have historically always been considered professionals, and they all have stringent requirements that must be met in order to be allowed into their ranks.

We require proper training and licensing before we allow people to be trusted with our money or our safety.

Why should we trust our society's well-being to anything less?

Cyber-nerds to the rescue

With modern technology growing smarter and smarter each day, simulator games are becoming as close to the real thing as you can get without actually being there.

Anybody who has ever played a strategic sim game knows what happens when you raise the tax base without increasing your resources first — common knowledge to any gamer, but apparently a totally foreign concept to our elected officials.

Your population gets unhappy and soon goes somewhere else to live.

The same concept is true for projects and public works that do not serve the needs of your population.

You blow all your gold, you get no bonuses and again, the people leave.

If teenage gamers can master archaic concepts like budgeting, resource management, population expansion, supply and demand, forms of government and military strategy all by sitting on their butts playing video games, then anybody can do it.

Is it too much to ask for people who are playing with our real lives and tax dollars to do the same?

Clackamas Print

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