



Well,  
if you  
ask me...

A Personal Perspective by Janet Hanson

The time limit to apply for the last budget committee position expired and had to be extended because no one applied. The last school board position needing to be filled mid term had but one applicant. The community seating available at the monthly school board meetings is taken by district employees, students and budget committee members for the most part. And yet when the school board acted in a prudent and timely manner on a critical financial situation with ramifications that might have included a temporary closure of District 91, some in the community reacted with threats and outrage and few substantial alternatives.

This school district is facing a potential deficit of over \$150,000 for the school year 2002-2003 with no guarantees we will even receive the balance owed for this school year. This shortfall is due to the serious financial dilemma the State of Oregon is in. 80% of this district expenditures are for personnel. It is reasonable therefore to expect personnel cuts to help meet this substantial sum. Judicious action involves making advance plans in a timely manner for a case scenario with hopes that such actions will not become necessary. Unlike the way many manage their personal funds by using a credit card when cash is in short supply, school districts are not allowed to run in the red.

Over 75 people attended the February school boards special public session to voice their comments and concerns on this financial situation. Many threatened to remove their children from District 91

if these personnel cuts were made. Maximizing financial resources and minimizing the impact on students was the challenge facing the school board. It was a difficult decision to let two teachers go and consolidate the principals and the superintendent positions into one. However, we entrusted the management of this school district to these elected volunteers. Their decisions were based on historic data, current financial projections and confidential information not available to the public. If these cuts are not sufficient to cover the projected shortfall, the board was presented with several suggestions in the 2 1/2 hour long open public forum. Proposals included a pay to play policy, salary freezes, abandonment of district offices, volunteer coaches, community involvement in classrooms and private donations.

All of these suggestions may become necessary. The underlying theme of the evening was that consolidating with School District 9 was not an option. In light of this, a committee may be formed in the community to organize ideas into logical propositions for the board to further consider. 3/4 of the community present unfortunately left before the start of the regular board meeting. Included in that meeting was an update on all the High School clubs and activities, a thank you to the Earl Foundation for the adjustable basket hoops in the elementary gym, a notice of Y-ball games in Butte Falls and the great news that our FBLA students, as a school, placed first at the district competition with 16 out of 24 students qualifying for individual state competition this year. Truly a remarkable feat considering the large schools we competed against. I can't imagine another place our students could excel in such a positive way. Be sure to take the opportunity to congratulate these future business leaders!

**-Friends of Mimi-**  
Your expression of sympathy  
and acts of kindness will  
always be remembered.  
The Family of Mimi Lutz

Thank you, Arlen Ragsdale for  
your donation of time working  
and repairing at the Smith House.  
We appreciate you....

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This class cost \$20.00 for the book material, if you can not afford to pay, please come anyway and learn the process and create a budget for yourself. The class will be held at the Community Hall on Thursday, March 21, 2002 at 7:00 P.M.

Please call Lori Paxton to pre-register at 865-3262/865-3624.

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While she is representing  
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