

Sandy Post

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MHCC levy passage well earned

We would like to commend area voters on Tuesday's passage of the Mt. Hood Community College levy request.

Throughout the past 18 months and five consecutive levy defeats, the college has been forced to tighten its belt and do without. As President Stephen Nicholson said last week, the

college, out of necessity, has become more efficient, sharper, tighter.

We think the college has acted responsibly and has heard the voice of its patrons. The college is a valuable asset to the community and the investment made since its inception should be supported. We're glad the voting public feels the same.

A Do-Nothing Legislature?

The Oregon state legislature has restored Kelpie, a domesticated coyote, to its owners.

It also has made the square dance the official state dance and has decreed that Oregon is the natural habitat of Sasquatch (Big Foot).

What else?

Not very much.

We were talking to a veteran legislator the other day and he said that if asked what had the legislature accomplished, "I'd have to really stop and think."

A lot of things are crying for attention... a comprehensive energy program, property tax relief, school financing, open field burning, etc. But the Legislature thus far just hasn't come to grips with the big issues.

Where does the blame lie? A lot of places, certainly. Heading the list has to be Gov. Bob Straub who simply has not exerted the kind of leadership

necessary to awaken a lethargic legislature.

Leaders in the Senate and House certainly must share the blame. Senate Leader Jason Boe spent most of his time early on an ill-advised school safety-net plan and has barely surfaced since its overwhelming rejection by the voters.

House Speaker Phil Lang lost control of the House and the resultant rule by committee doesn't seem to have worked much better. You also have to blame legislators themselves who have spent an inordinate amount of time doing darn little. Finally, you have to blame the voters who are responsible for the people we have in Salem.

Adjournment now is likely somewhere around July 4 and we'll obviously have the usual mish-mash of 11th hour legislation. It's a heck of a way to run a railroad.

New Policy on Recruiting

Mt. Hood Community College is adopting some pretty stiff rules to govern recruiting.

Board action has limited grant of tuition waivers to the State of Oregon and also decreed that College funds cannot be used for out-of-district travel or entertainment.

This is not to say out-of-state athletes, for instance, will be totally erased from the MHCC roster. Existing commitments will be honored and students who are eligible for federal grants will have freedom of choice.

But the College obviously is making an effort to attract as many in-district

students as possible.

The College plans to give about 180 tuition waivers per year, divided among athletic, academic and extra-curricular areas. MHCC doesn't give scholarships, gives nothing in terms of money; what it is able to do is to offer tuition waivers on the basis of special skills, special need or future promise.

The College board obviously is reacting to persistent criticism of out-district recruiting. We don't know if the rules will run afoul of federal regulations; they might. But at least the board is responding to a pretty clear mandate from the taxpayers.

Open meetings still best

A guest editorial last week in a metropolitan daily newspaper by Sen. Charles Hanlon, D-Cornelius, raised the question of whether open meetings by public bodies are really necessary.

While not directly taking a stance against them, the senator said open meetings have a tendency to drag on endlessly, impede the frank exchange of ideas by public officials and often time give credence to minority views from the public rather than a broader opinion.

Although these may indeed be problems of varying degrees of concern, we still support the open meeting concept as a far preferable procedure.

Point one is that while public hearings do tend to run long (as any reporter covering them can attest), not all open meetings are public hearings. A limit can fairly be placed on testimony and then the elected body can go about its business, but still in open meeting.

Point two is that voters elect public officials who represent them and act in their stead. If an official will act one way in open meeting and another way in private session, then perhaps

what we have is false advertising. Or misrepresentation.

It is the feeling here that a public official should be able to stand up for his convictions in public and give citizens a true picture of the person they elected. An honest and candid reputation still goes a long way these days.

Point three is, yes, public testimony often comes from the same mouths and often represents only a minority viewpoint. But whose fault is that? Certainly not the public officials. But to take away all testimony just because more people do not show up to round out the input is going about things backwards.

If more people do not show up, it is only a further affirmation that elected officials have the mandate to represent the rest of their constituency in their absence.

There are particular items that may still be best discussed in executive session, such as land acquisition where publicity might serve only to jack up prices.

But for the vast majority of cases, we feel an open and honest approach will produce the best results. (BW)



letters to the editor

Chairlift

To the Editor:

I am annoyed by certain special interest groups that call themselves "environmentalists," who point fingers at other groups, such as skiers, and call them "spoilers of the mountain."

In Mr. Gantenbein's column of June 23rd, he was quick to criticize skiers and their lifts. Skiers enjoy the beauty and solitude of the mountains every bit as much as backpackers. However, to do that in the winter months, they need a lift. If you measure each group's importance by the months there is snow and the months backpacking is feasible, you would see how short sighted Mr. Gantenbein must be.

I have hiked, skied, etc. on this beautiful mountain for the last 20 years and I believe that each recreational user has a place.

Mr. Gantenbein: Buy yourself a pair of skis. Go to the top. Look out over that beautiful valley and those lakes with the snow covered peaks in the horizon. Then give me a logical answer to why the Sierra Club and other special interest groups have more to say about the mountains use than the skier.

Janice D. Sweitzer
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Sandy, Ore.

Ordeal

To the Editor:

My son graduated June 5 from Sandy High. Like a Bar Mitzvah a graduation is a high point in a young man's life.

Graduation was something of an ordeal. The temperature in three mornings went from 46 to 56 to graduation morning 86 degrees. Still, it was pleasant out on the stadium field amidst the living trees and greenery! What was horrible was the baccalaureate talk by Dr. Sylvester, Dean of Graduate Studies at U of O.

The speech: Man was, as it were, a dead thing covered by several layers of dead skin with five holes in this deadness for communication!

Man's house becomes another layer of deadness around him, also his car and his clothes around him become layers of deadness.

It was amusing then, with a generation gap and the young and old continually criticizing each other clothes and hair, to see the young on prom night go broke renting ruffled shirts and tuxedos (the girls gauzy dresses) while their elders went to restaurants and dinner and dancing in casual clothes!

Period. End of speech!

It got me to wondering first about the theory of the continually revolving atom and what had become of it?

Second, even Indians know better than matter only changes its form, that nothing is lost to God!

Anyone who has gone out in the garden, pulled up a carrot and bit in, could be eating and being nourished by a thing raised in an Indian's dust. Not lost nor dead!

To a Christian, knowing of the indwelling spirit, he knows man is not a dead thing with

holes in him, but a living fountain, possessing the very spirit of God. A continuing!

Anyone who has read Alan Watts knows man is not dead and foreign to the rest of creation, but an integral part of creation. The trees breathe and purify the air, man breathes in that air and takes in Creation! Man is no stranger to the earth, merely leaving his footprints in a foreign way behind him.

Man is God's LIFE! My son and I agree that nothing could be deadlier than Dr. Sylvester's speech: "the sound of wind and hot air, signifying nothing."

My apologies to William Shakespeare for the correlation.

I understand that a few other grads and parents felt the same.

Mrs. P.J. Bernard
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Smoke screen?

To the Editor:

The headlines say, "Outside Athletic Recruiting Ended at MHCC," but literally the news story and the editorial in last week's Post would seem to indicate that recruiting anywhere would be permissible provided there was no use of public funds.

The only real change within the board's proposal of June 15 is that out of state students will no longer be given grants. Actually, to use a sporting

phrase, they're gonna shove that athletic program right down our throats, whatever.

But maybe that's the only way it can be. Admittedly, MHCC has a fine interscholastic program administered very efficiently by a very capable staff. The location of MHCC lies within commuting distance of a population of 1 million people, a fact which should simplify the problems of recruiting and athletic grants.

The success and the quality of MHCC's interscholastic athletic program is such that it attracts high quality athletes, who, actually, cannot be turned away. It's only logical that major college coaches might be referring athletes to MHCC for "schooling."

Furthermore, other schools in the area offer little competition in the form of recruiting, and surprisingly, if the figures in The Post are correct, the price of this quality program is peanuts. But, this program has one tragic weakness which is very obvious from a grass-roots point of view. It cannot involve very many athletic aspirants from within the district.

Soon people might be asking the following question. What can be done to get more participants from within the district into this quality program? Who wants to answer that one without throwing up a smoke screen?

Miles Aubin
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Manning The Post

Cooking improves with years

by Sue Lafky

In the past few weeks, my father has become a minor celebrity in his quiet suburban neighborhood.

The occasion was his debut as the featured cook in a Gresham Outlook recipe feature.

As the article pointed out, Dad's cooking has gone from "primitive to elementary" in the past few years. He started his trek to epicurean heights when my mother died several years ago.

The first few months were difficult for the entire family. My father was one of the first on the block to buy a crock pot. Sometimes the family used to swear that the food would rot before it would cook.

Although I was off at college at the time, I also became acquainted with the familiar aroma of stew during weekends home. We had two choices: beef and chicken.

"My brain used to rot from all that stew," quipped my 12-year-old brother in recalling those days.

Tries at keeping a housekeeper around the house didn't do much to improve the cooking situation.

One of the housekeepers was so lethargic that when she went to sleep, my brother was afraid to wake her up. "I think she's dead," he'd fearfully say to my father. Her cooking was about

as exciting as her sleeping habits.

One housekeeper was an alcoholic — she lasted one afternoon. Another housekeeper, a former fry cook for a logging camp in British Columbia, seemed to cook with the philosophy that food was only as good as it was greasy.

Finally, my father and brother gave up on housekeepers and started to fend for themselves. Things did improve, but still, the woman's touch was missing from the house.

Immediately after finishing at my studies at the University of Oregon, I spent a year as a field adviser for an organization and travelled to college campuses on the East Coast.

When my job was over, I flew back to Oregon and was reunited with my family. My father and brother had planned a homecoming dinner for me.

The menu included steak, salad and baked potato — a welcome relief from stew. Progress had been made.

The steak was on the plate, the potato was ready to be buttered—but I only saw a head of lettuce in the middle of the table when the meal was about to commence.

"What is that," I asked, pointing to the large head of lettuce.

County comments

Legislator's alibis ring through land

by Bill Sanderson

Well, well, well!

There is some hope that the current Oregon legislative session will soon be over, and the song of the legislator's alibis are already abroad in the land.

The failure of this session to accomplish much of anything except as it was practically done for them by a handful of professional lobbyists will be casually explained away by the grand gesture, the rueful shrug and the wry grimace.

From these typical reactions we will be expected to deduce that (1) our representatives and senators, as individuals, each tried very hard and very conscientiously to "get something accomplished" but that "THEY" just wouldn't cooperate, "THEY" wouldn't bring up my bill, "THEY" wouldn't support me, "THEY" let us down, "THEY" bottled up our cause and "THEY" caused all of our trouble!

Now there is an alibi that not only makes sense, it also offers a ready solution for our legislative problems. Just see to it that "THEY" are not re-elected to do the same thing next time. ALL OF THEM.

The sad probability is, of course, that we here in Oregon face a continued and an even more sickening spectacle of failure in our legislative processes. There may be a rather large number of reasons for this dismal view, but in my opinion three are of prime importance.

The first is the presently lost concept of a "citizen legislature" in which responsible citizens of various occupations, various economic levels and different political beliefs are willing to fuse those differences into a single goal: the overall welfare of all of the people of the state. Since this was the original aim of our state constitution the advent of a lot of limber-legged, double-tongued, professional politicians as legislators prohibits most of the hoped for advantages of having responsible part-time citizen legislators.

The second most important barrier to effective, fair and efficient legislative practices in Oregon (in my opinion) has been the growing and successful challenges and power grabs by the entrenched bureaucracy of the administrative state.

There can be no doubt but that this situation came about as a result of a long line of weak, ineffectual and self-centered legislative assemblies, but its present gross hold upon the private and personal as well as the public affairs of

the citizens of this state is a fact, not a fantasy. Given the kind of legislators in the future that we seem to have now, it will get worse, not better.

Any kind of tyranny, whether it be Hitler's, Idi Amin's or ours, depends upon an elite corp of untouchables or a bloated herd of sacred cows, according to how you think about such things.

The process is easy to start and hard to stop. When any citizen cannot get "at" the powers that oppress him through the democratic processes at the poll he must hold someone personally and politically responsible.

The third reason for this rather dismal view of our future is closely tied to, and indeed is one of the best symptoms that point to the preceding conditions. It is the use and the abuse of the use of the professional lobbyist.

Every year or so, and especially after some grubby indication that the practice is full of pitfalls politically inspired editors, office-holders and lobbyist employers extol the advantages of the system, the honesty of those who practice it, and say nothing about its obvious abuses.

They do not note that some of the worst lobbying done is the hidden, power-laden influence of the state bureaucracy itself. They do not explain that our citizen legislature is itself a grand lobby for the electorate, all of it, rich and poor alike — those with simple needs as well as those with complicated problems of advantages and profitable preferences. Special-interest lobbying specialists to explain them notwithstanding, the state legislature has got a damn sight more to do than listen to or study the bottom-line effect of proper legislation on every influential employer of a paid lobbyist. The bottom line is the welfare of the state!

But beyond that the elected representatives at the state legislature must be able to spot - and stop - the inside lobbying of the powerful state boards and commissions and committees that exercise their tremendous authorities outside of the control of the voter.

The governor who continues to thus fill the power vacuums created by weak and ineffectual legislatures is a lobbyist and his appointees will continue that effort.

Hark! The song of the legislator's alibi is already changing! Now the harsh cry of the Gill-i-ga-loo bird sounds a discordant note as, flying backwards as usual, he screams, "What th' H-I does any one who lives at a place called 'Vinegar Hill' know about politics?" And that's a good question.

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