Sandy Post

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Measuring What Students Learn

Students in three selected grades here in Oregon will be tested this week to measure performances in reading, math etc.

We hope the results are better than those on similar tests given recently in San Francisco.

There, nearly one-quarter of all the city's third graders flunked a test which measured their potential for promotion to the fourth grade. To be exact, 22 percent of students failed the reading test, 25 percent the math test.

Students who failed will have another opportunity to take the test in May. In the meantime, they will be given special help in school and guides have been developed for parents to use in working with their children at home.

With similar such dismal scores being reported nationwide, we read with delight President Carter's request for Congressional action on a program to upgrade teaching of the basic skills...reading, writing and arithmetic.

They're the foundation on which children must build the rest of their life.

Tuition Relief Makes Sense

Opponents of the Packwood-Moynihan bill to give education tax credits claim it is a "direct subsidy to those families earning $20,000 or more per year."

They're right. It is. And that's all the more in its favor.

We're rapidly coming to the place where only the rich or the poor will be able to provide college education for their children. The vast middle-class is being shut out by escalating costs.

A recently released study said it would cost the average family $64,000 to rear a child from birth to age 21. That's a 50 percent increase over 1969.

College tuition is the biggest single expense parents must meet. Today, four years at a state school costs $8,000, at a private school perhaps $25,000.

By 1995—when today's babies are ready for college—it'll cost $47,000 for four years at a state school, $82,000 at a private school.

Against such staggering figures, the Packwood-Moynihan credit of $500 per year seems modest enough. At least it's a start.

Not all the opposition, however, is from those who oppose relief for middle-class parents. Constitutional doubles also are being raised; i.e. the credits would indirectly violate the First Amendment (by giving federal aid to sectarian education).

Nevertheless, we feel relief to middle-class parents is long overdue. Very long. We support Packwood-Moynihan wholeheartedly.

The Jarvis Initiative

If you lived in California, you'd probably be getting pretty excited about something called the Jarvis initiative.

It is an effort to cut back on property taxes. It would, if approved in a June 6 election, limit property taxes to 1 percent of market value. If your home were valued at $30,000, for instance, your property taxes could be no more than $300.

It's estimated that the measure would cut $7 billion from state property taxes and would, quite obviously, force a massive overhaul of financing in state and local government.

Attempts have been and are being made to keep the measure off the ballot but thus far, these have been unsuccessful. A Superior Court judge in Sacramento ruled last week that the initiative covered "a single broad subject—taxation" and the people have every right to vote on the matter.

Most people feel their property taxes are too high and in California, at least, they're trying to do something about it.

Schools will be particularly hard hit if the measure passes and all the stops are being pulled in a campaign against Jarvis. The Los Angeles Board of Education, for instance, is sending tentative termination notices to 40,000 teachers, principals and custodians. The board further voted to eliminate, if necessary, 18,400 of the city's 27,000 teaching positions.

Other districts are expected to take similar steps.

The initiative in California is only the latest step in a rising tide of discontent nationwide with property taxes. Drastic as it may seem, the very fury opponents of Jarvis are displaying indicates it has a strong chance of winning.

Recycling Mobile Homes

Speaking critically of mobile homes on CBS' "Sixty Minutes" recently, Andy Rooney asked, "If they're mobile, why don't they go?"

His plaintive question drew a barrage of indignant replies from mobile home dwellers who are quick to point out that such low-cost housing is one answer for those who can't afford a conventional home in today's skyrocketing housing market.

But Oregon Secretary of State Norma Paulus has raised a serious question about where mobile homes go when they've outlived their usefulness.

They don't age graciously. No one, in years to come, is apt to say, "Look at that beautiful, old mobile home."

On a recent country drive we saw three discarded aluminum trailers all on the same property. Each had been cast off like some giant metal turtle shell as the owner moved into a bigger and better one.

Paulus warns the industry to find a way to recycle old mobile homes before government makes the attempt in government's usual manner, slowly and expensively.

Maybe it will come in our lifetime—the biodegradable bungalow. (SN)

"Now I'll tell yuh what I'm uh gonna do for yuh!"

letters to the editor

Pen pals

To the Editor:

I would like to tell you about a national program that matches citizens outside of prison . . . with men, women, and children serving sentences in prisons in nearly every state. The program is called Prison Pen Pals, and it is completing its second successful year of operation in the United States.

This is not a lonely hearts club. It is intended to get ordinary people of all ages and sexes involved with people inside prison who may no longer have family or friends outside to help motivate them towards change.

At the present time, the Prison Pen Pals program in Oregon is desperately in need of more concerned citizens on the outside writing to prisoners. As the local resident representative of Prison Pen Pals at the Oregon State Penitentiary in Salem, I do my best to match local people with Oregon prisoners.

There will be a Prison Pen Pal Bulletin mailed free to any person who cares to receive one. It sets forth the rules and guidelines on how to write to prisoners and lists hundreds of prisoners who wish to receive mail.

No outside citizen's addresses are listed. It is up to the citizen to select and write the inmate first from the bulletin.

If you desire to receive a Prison Pen Pal Bulletin or would enjoy corresponding with an Oregon prisoner, please write to the below address, outlining briefly any preferences, if any that you may feel are important. A few brief details about yourself would be very helpful. I shall be glad to assist you in selecting an inmate just for you.

After becoming involved with this program, you will know how very valuable it is to the men and women behind bars. Every ounce of energy expended is well worth it. Your support and participation shall be openly welcomed.

Claren Koke McBain
Box 37440
2605 State St.
Salem, Ore., 97310

Clean-up

To the Editor:

On behalf of our neighbors on Marsh Road, we would like to thank the Bull Run Anglers Group for cleaning up our street last Wednesday.

The BRAGS, a 4-H fishing-club, decided to clean up after the steelhead. Fishermen dump their garbage along the Sandy River and our road. Thanks again.

Mrs. Cendy Peetz
1333 S.E. Marsh Road
Sandy, Or

Opinion

Meadows proposal misplaced

Editor's note: This is a copy of an article which will appear in a publication of 1000 Friends of Oregon.

by Rep. Wayne Fawbush
D-District 56

Oregon's Land Conservation and Development Commission will soon be asked to decide whether LCDC's "exceptions procedure" may be used as a massive loophole that could eventually undermine the whole structure of land use planning in Oregon.

The appeal is originating from a group of concerned citizens in Hood River County but the outcome will have a direct impact on the mountain community in Clackamas County on the south side of Mt. Hood.

The issue revolves around a Hood River County Commission decision to allow a 450 unit resort complex to be built in a forestry zone adjacent to a farming community on the north slope of Mt. Hood.

Last spring a county wide vote in Hood River favored no development on the north side of the mountain by a vote of 54.5 percent to 41.5 percent (with 4 percent preferring neither). The commissioners, as a result of the vote, adopted the Mt. Hood Interagency Plan which embodied the goal expressed in the popular vote.

The Interagency Plan calls for farm and forestry activity on the north side of the mountain and recreational development on the south side along the Highway 26 corridor where such development already exists.

Two months after the commissioners adopted the above plan they turned around and, over objections of the county planning commission, allowed a change in the county plan so the development could proceed. This could be the largest resort development of its kind in Oregon.

The appeal to LCDC will not only have a direct impact on the integrity of the Mt. Hood Plan, but the outcome is of state-wide importance because of the critical role of LCDC's "exception procedure" and because this will be the first time LCDC has interpreted how local officials should apply the exceptions rule to specific developments.

In 1973, the Oregon Supreme Court's landmark Fasano opinion established that zone changes must be in accord with the comprehensive plan. Local plans, however, could still be changed and in 1977 the Supreme Court ruled in South of Sunnyside that a change in comprehensive plan must comply with LCDC's goals. This is where the exceptions procedures comes in.

Flexibility is an important part of Oregon's land use laws and in those situations where proposed plan changes do not comply with the relevant state wide goals a local body can take exception to the goals. The exceptions procedure is not an, "If you want to, go ahead and do it" situation. A clear and compelling need must be established before a state wide goal can be by-passed.

In this case, the proposed resort can not comply with the agricutural lands goal and the forest lands goal so the county took exception. The basis of the appeal by the Hood River citizens group is that the exception to those two important state wide goals is improper.

One of standards that must be met when taking an exception is that "alternative locations within the area" can not be used for the proposed development. I feel that the term "area" applies to both sides of the mountain, not just the Hood River side. In fact, the Mt. Hood Plan provides that, "additional overnight or resort housing accommodations will be encouraged at Government Camp, Welches and Timberline."

The reasons for encouraging this kind of development on the Clackamas County side of the mountain is obvious. These locations are closer to Portland and closer to skiing sites. The proposed development is 17 miles from Mt. Hood Meadows while Government Camp is only 10 miles.

U.S. Highway 26 is a high volume arterial, sewer facilities are planned, and there is no conflict with economically valuable agricultural uses or forestry practices on the Clackamas side.

Since June 1973, Hood River and Clackamas Counties have worked with six state and federal agencies with responsibility to manage Mt. Hood—one of Oregon's most important resources. This was the very plan that the Hood River County Commissioners accepted last summer.

Their decision, being contrary to the plan, does not explain why the need for resort facilities at Mt. Hood can not be satisfied in the manner provided by the Mt. Hood Interagency Plan. If resort development is allowed to spread all the way around the mountain, everyone will lose.

Hood River will lose forest land and face mounting pressure on valuable agricultural land.

Clackamas County and the mountain community will lose because development will not come into the area where services are being planned and the costs levied on existing businesses.

And, the state as a whole will lose because Oregon's land use program depends on the integrity of local comprehensive plans. If LCDC interprets the exceptions procedure so that local officials can change the plan on a whim, then all the progress in the land use law in Oregon in the last five years will be down the drain.

Hopefully that will not be the case and the Land Conservation and Development Commission will agree with us and find that the exception procedures must be taken seriously by local planning units. If they do, their action will strengthen one of the basic tenents of our land use law in Oregon which is, "use land for its highest and best possible application."

If we stick to that principle, we will all benefit in the long run because we will be maximizing a limited resource—land.

County comment

Taxpayers lose

by Bill Sanderson

Clackamas County newspapers last week carried a news release from the Housing and Community Development office (more properly and probably from the Department of Human Resources) regarding plans to spend $6.9 million dollars in federal funds during the next three years.

The article invited citizens to express their opinions at a Thursday, March 2, public hearing on a community development plan to upgrade neighborhoods and meet the needs of low and moderate income persons.

At the same time an Associated Press release from Washington, D.C. described a draft of a White House proposal for a new urban policy that would provide states with as much as $1.5 billion a year so that states could have a bigger role in assisting ailing cities.

The draft proposals, if adopted, will have some long-reaching and vital effects upon the entire revenue-sharing concept.

Most important changes would be in just who dispenses the tremendous financial offerings at the state or local levels, and the criteria which might make the recipient eligible to receive such financial aid.

Stripped of all of the camouflage and verbal disguises, including the classic political shibboleths used to indicate the worthiness of the various programs by which the federal government attempts to justify the collection of taxes it does not need, both programs are essentially raw and brutal rip-offs in an already beaten and staggering fiscal economy.

For those who have wondered why our American dollar fares so badly among the world's money markets, consider the following.

An American dollar, already stripped down to less than half its 1965 value by national inflation, goes to Washington as federally collected income tax, less the cost of collection, which is the cost of running one of the biggest of the federal bureaucracies.

Our dollar then becomes a part of a congressional appropriation for a new federal housing program, a move that will require perhaps as much as one half of the money appropriated to carry out the program.

Eventually, approximately half of the already halved dollar gets into the program, only to find that at the local level interest rates and escalating building costs halves it once more.

In the meantime, assessments and appraisals have gone up by another 50 percent reducing our dollar (by now down to a net value of 12.5 cents) down to a real value to the project for which it is intended to .0625 cents.

According to some economists, the only real gain has been the employment of a small army of non-productive bureaucrats who might have otherwise have been on direct welfare (or earning an honest living at some more productive job.)

The worst of all of this is that the poor taxpayer who paid the dollar in taxes in the first place just **MIGHT** happen to be the same person trying to buy a house through the program we have just described.

If **he** could have put his dollar into the direct purchase of a house instead of into a tax supported but inefficient program, he just **might** have had it made by the time his wasted dollar begins to buy him anything through the program.

No, there is no mystery about the world's evaluation of what they (or we) can buy for a dollar. The only mystery about it is why we put up with it.

Keeping posted

Dinner planned

SATURDAY, MARCH 4

Mt. Hood Lions Club members will dish up spaghetti and homemade sausage to raise money for a heart machine for the Hoodland Fire Department. The dinner will begin at 6 p.m. and games will follow dinner. An estimated $6,000 will be needed to purchase the machine.

MONDAY, MARCH 6

The Sandy City Council will meet at 7:30 p.m. in the city council chambers.

Among the agenda items are a resolution approving the formation of a sewer local improvement district for the Tickle Creek area, an appeal by developer Bill Trimble on a denial on a conditional use permit on a subdivision at the corner of Sandy Heights and Bluff Road, discussion of the city's immmediate growth boundaries, an ordinance establishing a recreation commission, approval of liquor permits and a resolution supporting the annexation of the Benshoof property south of Sandy near Market Road.

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The board of the Sandy Area Chamber of Commerce will meet at 7 a.m. to discuss budget plans. The session will be held at TJ's Restaurant.

TUESDAY, MARCH 7

The Sandy Area Chamber of Commerce will hear Dale Nicholls, head of Pioneer Real Estate, at its noon meeting at TJ's Restaurant.

Home robbed

Earl Harland Olsen of Seattle reported $500 in goods, including a $125 sleeping bag and an $80 cassette recorder, stolen from his summer home in Welches.