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The Race for State Superintendent

Will it be Verne Duncan, Fred Heard or Ruth McFarland in the race for State Superintendent of Public Instruction?

After something like a jillion joint appearances, you might think the candidates would sound just alike. But they don't. At least certainly not in their City Club appearance Friday.

Duncan, the incumbent, speaks with growing confidence although obviously nettled by remarks from his foes. Heard is the polished politician, speaking with intimate knowledge of the workings of state government. McFarland is the self-styled "red-haired grandmother with a Ph. d. in genetics." She has a nice sense of humor and probably was the favorite among Friday's audience...at least judging by the applause.

The issues aren't very sharp. All agree that the role of the state superintendent is restricted by legislative enactments; nevertheless the leadership role of the person in the job can't be minimized.

All agree that something must be done to insure that high school grads can read, write and do

mathematical computations. Duncan defends Oregon's competency program, Heard thinks any program which focuses on high school students is years too late. He would require demonstrated competencies no later than the third grade. McFarland says "lack of leadership" has turned the present competency program "into a state of chaos."

All agree that if the choice is between teachers and administrators, teachers should win every time. Some districts now have a higher percentage of administrators supervising teachers than teachers supervising students.

The race will be a close one. Duncan has name familiarity, Heard has legislative experience and the backing of teacher-labor groups, McFarland has a warm, folksy approach plus some very good professional background. If the election were held today, we think Duncan would win. But the election is more than a month away and everything depends upon how effectively each of the candidates campaigns from here on out. It's a good race.

Packwood-Moynihan Becoming Obscured

The matter of tuition tax credits is becoming a real hot potato.

So many variations on the Packwood-Moynihan bill have surfaced that it's difficult to predict what will happen. Even if one of the many measures does get through, it still faces a presidential veto.

The original idea, of course, was to provide middle-class parents some tax relief for costs of sending their children to college. Rich parents can pay for their children, poor parents get government help. The middle-class only gets squeezed.

Hence, credits were proposed ... \$250 per student per year in Packwood-Moynihan.

Objections immediately were raised; feelings cross party lines. Opposition centered on religious grounds (separation of church and state). Support comes from those

who sympathize with middle-class taxpayers.

Obviously, there are side issues, but these two seem the over-riding concerns.

Now, it appears that some sort of compromise will be reached, possibly limiting credits to parents of college students. In other words, eliminating credits for attendance at private elementary and secondary schools.

This would return to the original intent of Packwood-Moynihan and might quiet those who claim a system of tax credits spread through the lower grades would "destroy the nation's public school system."

That sort of an assertion is patently absurd but it is politically potent. Thus a college-credit-only compromise seems likely.

An Idea Whose Time Has Come

We were raised, so to speak, on a sales tax.

When we moved to Oregon (from Washington) in 1960, we thought "Thank goodness, we'll finally get rid of the sales tax."

Several years later, we were active on a committee opposing implementation of a sales tax in Oregon.

We still were unalterably opposed to what we considered a very regressive tax.

But we've changed our mind. Over the years, we've concluded

that a sales tax here in Oregon would be vastly preferable to our continued reliance on property and income taxes.

Oregon's property tax rapidly is becoming confiscatory. There is growing acceptance of the idea of a sales tax, especially if it were dedicated to schools or to property tax relief.

The next legislature will be forced to deal with the problem. We hope they take another, very hard look at the sales tax.

How To Make Money

The State Department of Transportation has its faults, but selling property isn't one of them.

The state acquired a number of Portland properties back in 1972 as a part of the Mt. Hood Freeway corridor. When the freeway was killed a few years later, the state was in the real estate business.

The first of the properties was

put up for auction earlier this week. A house which the state had acquired for \$16,000 was sold for \$38,000...in other words a 137 1/2 percent increase. Or roughly 23 percent per year.

Who needs a gasoline tax? Just turn the state's agents loose to buy more houses!



Portland: Better you should buy der fat, little pig in der pretty sack!

Clackamas County: I wonder what's in that package - - and where it came from?

Washington County: I'm afraid I know the answer to that!

Letters to the editor

To the Editor: I have had many inquiries why a lawyer, who is not a voter or a resident of Clackamas County can file against me for the position of Circuit Judge, especially when he filed for the same position of Circuit Judge for Washington County the last election.

The law makes it quite clear that this is permissible. O.R.S. 3.041 "Qualifications of Circuit Judges: residence." (1) ... (2) Each judge of the Circuit Court shall be a resident of or have his principal office in his judicial district, ...

My opponent has established his office in Lake Oswego, thus satisfying the statutory requirement.

Very truly yours, Dale Jacobs Clackamas County, Circuit Judge

To the Editor: You did an interview on my flower field last fall but no one seems aware that Feb. 25 Doris' Dahlias nearly came to an abrupt stop!

February 25 I was rushed to the Portland Adventist Hospital with blood clots trying to tear themselves into my left lung. This could have been instant death but God needed me here. The pain is indescribable. Seven bottles of Heparin, the blood thinner, were fed intently along with Coumarin, the slower, longer lasting thinner. I spent 11 days as a patient in the hospital and 10 days as an outpatient.

March 18 I was rushed to Gresham Hospital and spent 17 days there as blood clots tore their way into the right lung resulting in pneumonia. There was no strength left to walk or talk.

My main reason for writing is to thank the 150 visitors, the 80 card senders, the 80 phone callers, the food from the Baths, the Baumanns and the Franks. I feel I have been neglected when I could have helped. Thanks for your prayers and concern.

Special thanks to Sandy Baptist Church, Good Shepherd Church and Chapel of the Hills.

Doris Johnson 58945 E. Highway 26 Sandy

To the Editor: The Boring PTA would like to extend their thanks to the area's businesses and individuals who donated prizes and supplies. Your contributions helped make our carnival a success.

Thank You, Diane Pettingill PTA Secretary

Lake Oswego attorney sees need for change, seeks seat

A Lake Oswego lawyer with 14 years experience in private practice has set his sights on the Clackamas County District Court's Position No. 2.

And he'd like to see some changes. "The system is plainly not doing the job," said Vince Robeson, who is seeking the position currently held by Judge Robert Mulvey.

Robeson cites the jury system as an example of ways in which the county legal network is self-defeating. "You excuse the better part of the people who are qualified because they can't afford to give up the time," Robeson said.

Instead of the current system, in which jurors serve up to three months, Robeson suggested that jurors be on for only one case or a few days, so that more people are able to serve.

Robeson also feels that holding court only during daytime hours is unfair to users of the court. "It's wrong to make a guy leave his business so he can appeal a traffic ticket he feels he shouldn't have gotten," he said. "People

have a right to be able to use the court."

While not describing himself as a hard-line law-and-order advocate, Robeson does feel that the county jails are failing in their primary task—deterring crime—due to lenient penalties and jail conditions.

"The threat of jail is a deterrent," he said. "Jail should not be a pleasant place."

Robeson believes allowing prisoners to mingle gives them a chance to "learn a new trade" from other prisoners as well as allowing them an opportunity to engage in extortion, rape and other activities.

Robeson said he thinks first offenders should be given a reasonable second chance but that any following criminal activity should be dealt with firmly.

"As long as people think they will have to go to a certain point before they get a jail term you're not going to have a good deterrent."

Clackamas County District Court Number Two sees about 28,000 cases a year ranging from civil matters to criminal cases.

Robeson finds the great

variety and number of cases attractive.

"This is the court where you get to be with the people more than any other," he said. "That's the part that appeals to me." Educated at Southern Oregon University and Portland State University, Robeson received his law degree from the Northwestern College of Law.

He has been involved in various civic activities such as land planning, school budgets and city charter work.

The incumbent in the county's position two seat, Robert Mulvey, has served two six-year terms on the court. In recent years he has come under fire from lawyers for his actions on the bench.

Along with Robeson, Clackamas County Senior Deputy District Attorney Robert D. Burns is seeking Mulvey's seat.

Other candidates include Avedovich Meyer and Jean Franklin.

The position is non-partisan, with a primary election set for May 23. If no candidate holds a clear majority after the primary a run-off will be held.

County comment Debate continues

by Bill Sanderson
 Recently we have spoken about the certainty of death and taxes as examples of the things that are inevitable in this life.

Today we will comment briefly upon a third circumstance even more predictable.

An editorial in the Sunday Oregonian urges voters to vote "yes" for an "elected," regional government, meaning, of course, the passage of Ballot Measure No. 6.

In spite of its long-time and obvious support of regionalism, the Oregonian's arguments in favor of the so-called "merger" of Columbia Region Association of governments into the Metropolitan Service District and providing for the further merging of Tri-Met and the Metropolitan Boundary Commission appear specious and labored.

For one thing the editorial labels the present system as "fragmented" and "appointed," and yet of the hundreds of jobs, job-holders and officials who will be blanketed into the new "government," not one was elected to his position.

While admitting that a "regional" government will "probably" cost more, the Oregonian editorial rationalizes that the increase in costs "will depend on he services the people want."

They conveniently forget that many of the present unasked-for and unwanted services will be ploughed into the new government willy-nilly whether or not the people want them.

In the same vein, the

editorial attempts to refute the claims made by some that a new Metropolitan Service District would add another layer of government by stating "but that's not true"—a surprisingly naive conclusion. Practically all voters can count!

Commenting on the cost of the proposal the Oregonian noted, "Existing revenue sources of MSD and CRAG would be continued" as would be the levies of other organized districts that might be incorporated by the regional government.

CRAG would be allowed to continue its present assessment on local governments of 48 cents per capita per year, raised to a new limit of 51 cents and to be eliminated by June 30, 1981. The new regional government would also be authorized to propose an income tax of up to 1 percent to pay for "regional services."

But perhaps the most surprising thing about the expected support by the Oregonian of Measure No. 6 as a "better coordinated, elected government" was the statement that "it represents much hard work by the 65-member Tri-County Local Government Committee." Right there one is forced to ask, loud and clear, "and just who does the 65 member Tri-County Local Government Committee represent?"

Good Reader, ask yourself that question, and if you don't know the answer, ask the Oregonian. Don't just buy a pig in a poke—especially one on which all of the choice cuts have been sold or promised.

Refunds due Oct.

Oregonians who filed 1977 Homeowner and Renter Property Tax Refund claims are reminded that refund checks will be mailed in October.

In past years, property tax refunds were combined with income tax refunds and mailed in one check. The 1977 Oregon Legislature separated the property tax relief and the income tax programs. Now, income tax refunds are mailed within a few weeks after taxpayers file their returns. Property tax refunds will be sent by separate check in October, shortly before 1978-79 property taxes are due.

To begin the new schedule for property tax refunds, the legislature provided money for a second refund check

last year. Anyone who filed a 1976 HARRP claim and received a refund early in 1977 automatically got a second refund of the same amount in October of 1977. The refund could be used by homeowners to help pay due in November.

Funds for the property tax relief program come from the state general fund, which is composed primarily of income tax revenue. Last year over one-half million Oregonians received homeowner or renter property tax refunds totalling more than \$75 million. Eligibility requirements were changed this year and the revenue department expects even more taxpayers to qualify for the program.

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