

Editorial and Opinion

New Parents Anonymous Club Worthwhile

Thousands of cases of child abuse or neglect are reported each year nationally, and last year a reported 2,000 children died of inflicted wounds or neglect at home.

Concerned parents in Estacada want to ward off possible child abuse situations by forming a new Parents Anonymous chapter, the first in this area. The response could be overwhelming, although even one family aided by the self-help group would make the project worthwhile.

Currently, the Protective Services arm of the state's Children's Services Division in Clackamas County handles 30-60 abuse reports a month and responds with 35 case workers from offices at Lake Oswego. The government agency deals with 350 foster homes and says it needs more. Under state statute, it deals with cases of physical and economic neglect, as well as physical scars. Not all the scars show, however, and the social workers are too busy now to consider probes into the grey areas of emotional abuse.

Protective Services, however, does receive calls from Sandy, the Hoodland area, Boring, Estacada, and Molalla. A case worker is given the hotline information and fits the report into the priorities of his

current caseload. If the situation sounds critical with immediate danger to the child's life, the case worker gets into a car and drives out this way to counsel with the family in question and make a report for legal disposition.

Three children have died as a result of neglect or abuse in Clackamas County in the last eight years. These were deaths not caused by strangers, but by family members.

The new Parents Anonymous group in Estacada will assist families in dealing with child abuse problems with a personal touch that only a neighbor as confidant can give. We commend the concerned volunteers behind the new area chapter, and urge people interested in joining to contact the state Parents Anonymous office at 238-8819.

Until that time, a listing of emergency hotline numbers seems in order. They are 238-8818 (Parents Anonymous), 653-3140 (Children Services Division), 655-8342 (Juvenile Department) and 655-8218 (sheriff's night line). These phone numbers offer 24-hour reporting service and should be taped to the wall of anyone confronted with child abuse at home or next door. (VB)

Letters Are Welcome, But Follow Guidelines

Hot political issues this fall probably will increase the number of letters to the editor, so The Post takes this opportunity to restate its guidelines on letters.

First, all letters should be in good taste, free of libelous remarks and free of character assassination or reckless, malicious slurs on anyone's character. Stick to the issues and the involvement of persons with these issues.

Will Vote on Tax Measures Be Conclusive?

GOP gubernatorial candidate Vic Atiyeh has lined up in favor of tax limitation Measure 6. Incumbent Bob Straub, a Democrat, has opted for No. 11.

Will the gubernatorial campaign thus become a side bar to the tax limit issue? In other words, if voters favor No. 6 in November, will Atiyeh coast in on its coattails? Ditto Straub if No. 11 prevails?

Not necessarily.

Each candidate is fully aware the measures are tremendously im-

portant, that there could be a decided coattail effect. Yet both think, quite properly, that there are other issues in the campaign. Straub points to Atiyeh's lack of administrative experience. Atiyeh points to the rapidly expanding state budget under Straub, etc.

Neither wants to be cast a one-issue governor. We hope that in the weeks to come, each focuses on some of the other issues. There are plenty.

Too Much Tinkering with Sports Rules?

The National Basketball Association has radically altered the game by introducing a third referee this year.

Whether the move will make for better basketball or, instead, interminable free-throw contests remains to be seen.

It is, however, another instance of tinkering with the rules, something not always successful. Years ago, the free-thinkers radically changed basketball by eliminating the center jump after each basket. That probably was the best thing that ever happened to the game; other changes have been somewhat less successful.

Rule changes also come to mind in other games. Two-platoon football, for instance, hasn't always been with us; now, once again, it is under fire.

Some feel college football has become overly and perhaps unnecessarily sophisticated under two-platoon rules. Costs obviously have risen sharply and the competitive balance unfavorably affected.

Much of the emphasis on two-platoon football has resulted from increasing professional competition. One-platoon football usually isn't as exciting, and colleges have taken to pro-style techniques.

Whatever the merits of two-platoon vs. one-platoon, we hate to see too much tinkering with the rules. Baseball has remained pretty much the same over the years, and we think much of its appeal is in its easily understandable, constant rules.



From other editors:

"Born-again" tax-cutters

Proposition 13 was only the beginning. That's the message public officials across the U.S. are hearing repeatedly and, apparently, are beginning to take seriously. Certainly the tax-cutting, "slash-government-spending" movement was the predominant concern of the nation's governors meeting recently in Boston.

And it should have come as no surprise that the strongest warning about Proposition 13's potential impact came from none other than California's own self-proclaimed "born again" tax cutter, Gov. Brown. He told the governors that failure to respond to the "tidal wave" of taxpayer unrest could sweep the U.S. into a "second great American revolution" that could jeopardize the Constitution.

Giving his warning added effect, no doubt, was the recent visit to Boston and other cities of Howard Jarvis, attempting to organize a nationwide American Tax Reduction Movement—that would eliminate federal taxes on capital gains, cut federal

spending by 20 percent, reduce federal income taxes by 20 percent, and balance the federal budget in four years.

The understandable concern of the governors is that states will be caught in the squeeze between federal cutbacks and local tax reductions, and as Governor Dukakis of Massachusetts put it, that "Washington budget-cutting fever will thrust burdens on the states that we can't possibly handle."

The real challenge of Proposition 13 for federal and local officials alike is to make the maximum, efficient use of public resources, and not to sacrifice essential services nor unduly penalize the needy—the poor and elderly—in the process.

At the federal level, for instance, Gov. Brown properly called for a change in federal revenue-sharing policies that currently "reward big-spending states" and punish those, such as California, that have cut local spending. The governors also were on

target in urging an end to wasteful duplication in federal programs and calling for streamlining of administrative procedures and a reduction in paper work that costs \$5 billion annually.

But more states, too, should respond to Proposition 13, as have New Jersey, Colorado, Michigan, and Tennessee, by placing limitations on state spending. New Jersey, in particular, offers an example of how property taxes can be cut. New Jersey limited local spending as well and recently instituted a statewide income tax that has allowed the state to give property owners sizable rebates.

Governor Brown estimated that if California's Proposition 13 and an upcoming \$1 billion state income tax cut were extended nationwide, it would reduce taxes by \$80 billion. Such potential savings have mouth-watering appeal but would obviously need to be enacted with the greatest of care.

—Christian Science Monitor

Letters to the editor

On forests

To the editor:

The Sept. 7 Post included a story on the editorial page on RARE II, the process whereby the Forest Service will recommend designation of National Forest lands. The article leaned rather strongly toward use of the areas for timber and minerals.

The writer, Jack Zimmerman, is an employee of Associated Oregon Industries, a strong lobby for industry. It seems only fair that some points be presented for a Wilderness designation of the roadless RARE II lands. These areas include forests, meadows, bare rocky peaks, mountain stream beds and, of course, a wide variety of plant and animal life.

Conservationists were not pleased with the Forest Service Environmental Impact Statement which came out last June. There was a lack of benefit-cost assessments. The RARE II lands are by definition roadless. To be commercially exploited timber harvest roads would have to be built. Most RARE II lands are in higher elevations where road construction and maintenance are very expensive.

Conservationist organizations have computed that the same amount of money put into road building in RARE II lands to exploit them would produce less timber than a program of precommercial thinning in the 11 million acres of forest already exploited and provided with roads. This has been a plea of the Forest Service for years but they have not been allocated funds sufficient to more intensively manage for timber production.

OSPRIG (Oregon Student Public Interest Research Group) has made a study showing that it is smarter economically to spend funds available on precommercial thinning rather than to build new roads in RARE II lands and to provide the extra fire protection required by logging.

The Forest Service is

under pressure to allow more timber cutting. This is not an unusual circumstance. Our natural resources have always been under attack of the "Let me get mine now and don't worry about tomorrow" ethic. This is what is killing our salmon and steelhead runs. This is what happened to the buffalo and to the once vast forests of Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota and to our once great reserves of iron ore. These were irreversible actions. Giving Wilderness status to RARE II lands is a reversible action. We could later exploit them if our situation was really critical.

We must not forget that National Forest lands belong to all the people of our country. The more we help hang on to their beauty and wilderness the more people from all over the United States will want to come and experience them and we will profit from their coming. The devastation of clearcuts has no attraction to a tourist.

We may express our thoughts on RARE II lands to USFS Pacific Northwest Region, P.O. Box 3623, Portland, 97208. W. Pete Sulzbach

Memories

To the Editor:

Old timers seem to respond to memories of Alder Creek and I have a few which go back more than 60 years. Prospectors once panned for gold in Alder Creek. The yield was never great but was enough to entice persons to pursue it as a hobby.

Alder Creek is a swift flowing stream with many sharp bends where the current is broken. It has worn away the terrain to bed rock and left many pot holes where gold carried by the stream was deposited. From this source, gold was often dug out in the shape of small nuggets.

I also recall a flume which ran from a logging operation far up the Sandy River. It went on a mile beyond Alder Creek and crossed the Sandy River to a mill.

A walkway was built alongside the flume and was a pleasant stroll for those who had summer homesites in

the area. The flume was in operation as late as 1926.

I suppose when it was torn down some of the lumber was salvaged to build the many recreational homesites which suddenly sprang up along the Sandy River.

In those days a building permit was not needed. Just off the highway on Alder Creek was a small water wheel which generated electricity for summer homes by turning the generator salvaged from an early Dodge touring car. It worked quite well until some obstruction clogged the narrow flume carrying water to the wheel and the lights went out.

It was a roccoco age when I guess one might have had more fun. I think the taxes on summer home sites was about \$14 a year.

Jake Stockley
Brightwood

Blood drive

To the Editor:

The Red Cross Bloodmobile will be at Sandy High School next Tuesday, Oct. 3, from 1:30 to 5:30 p.m.

A blood donation can be vital especially if you are on the receiving end. And statistically speaking, the chances of you having to need a blood transfusion aren't as far-fetched as you might wish.

Fifteen years ago, Portland-area hospitals did one open heart surgery per week. Eight years ago they had increased to 30 per week and had arrived at a plateau. With a new surgical technique called the coronary bypass, the surgeries increased to 80 per month. Now, open heart surgeries are over 110 per month.

Two recent patients are Bob Beeher of Dodge Park and Dave Workinger of Dover. Both men can now lead active and full lives. Blood donors are special people. The balance between supply, demand and human life depends on blood donors. How about you?

Your concern can be a vital thing.

Stan Bowman
Sandy High teacher & Red Cross coordinator

Salem Scene:

Shoplifting costly

People concerned about a crime that costs Oregonians \$75 million each year gathered in Portland recently to study the situation.

The gathering was unique because it involved victims of this particular crime, police charged with apprehending perpetrators, prosecutors, judges and those attempting prevention through rehabilitation.

The crime is shoplifting, most often classified as petty

theft. But there's nothing petty about its magnitude. Nationwide it costs retail merchants \$6.5 billion and it's a crime that has increased a staggering 35 per cent in the last five years. It has burgeoned to the point where merchants now figure one of every ten persons entering their stores do so with the intent to steal.

The recent Portland meeting was conceived and conducted by the Oregon Retail Council and the office of the Multnomah County District Attorney. For five years, the Retail Council has been supporting a statewide campaign to slow the rising tide of shoplifting through public education. The ongoing campaign is called STEM, an acronym for Shoplifters Take Everybody's Money.

The Portland meeting was a frank attempt to enlist law enforcement agencies involved in arrest, prosecution, sentencing and rehabilitating a growing number of petty thieves.

Attending the day-long affair were city and county police officials, district and circuit court judges, representatives of juvenile court, probation services and youth community service centers. They exchanged information with the district attorney's office and representatives of large and small retail businesses, detailing problems each has in combatting what is largely considered a legal misdemeanor in Oregon.

Technically, most shoplifting consists of stealing merchandise valued at less than \$200.

Technically, most shoplifting consists of stealing merchandise valued at less than \$200. The law calls such crimes theft in the second degree—a class-A misdemeanor punishable by fines of up to \$1,000 and imprisonment for not longer than a year.

From a practical standpoint, few shoplifters pay fines or go to prison—at least not those convicted under the theft-two statute. Seventy-five percent are amateurs, half the amateurs are teenagers and 65 percent of all teenage amateur shoplifters are female.

Retailers at the meeting expressed concern at the relatively small number of convicted shoplifters who receive harsh sentences. Judges explained their need to maintain neutrality in search of justice and staggering case-loads that prevent a higher level of personal attention.

Police also pointed to caseload problems involving rising numbers of all types of crime and the necessity of concentrating on major offenses, often at the expense of minor crime activity. Portland police cited as many as 500,000 calls for help in a single year, when the force is physically geared to handle less than half that number. They also urged merchants to prosecute once arrests are made, explaining that arrests without action are useless from their point of view.

Impetus for this activity may be provided by shoplifting victims who were only incidentally represented at the meeting. They are the million or so wage-earning Oregonians, who pay up to \$75 a year more for the goods they buy just to cover the costs of what petty thieves steal.

From other editors:

No road markers

Gil Bellamy, the administrator of the Oregon Traffic Safety Commission, seems to be inclined a little toward the morbid side. Maybe it's his job that makes him so inclined.

He thinks that in Oregon we're a little too quick about cleaning up after fatal auto accidents. Some time ago a car racing along on the freeway near The Dalles got out of control, became airborne and impaled itself on a tree.

"They went to work as fast as they could and torched that car off that tree," Bellamy says. "They should have left it, at least for a month, to let people know how fragile cars and human bodies are." (The driver had been thrown clear and killed in that accident.)

"I could have seen leaving that car there and putting signs up that said, this is what 100 miles an hour does," Bellamy says.

He's not likely to persuade anyone to leave the wreckage of fatal accidents on the scene for educational purposes. So he's proposing what he considers the next best thing but what is really a pretty dubious scheme.

His idea is to use little highway markers—similar to mileposts—to denote spots on roads and highways where people have been killed in accidents. As designed by a Salem public relations firm, the markers would feature a stylized symbol for mankind, which happens to look just like the symbol on many men's room doors.

The five-member traffic safety panel has not yet acted on the proposal, which in any case would also require approval of whichever agency has charge of roads where the signs would be placed—the state Highway Division in the case of state highways and county commissioners in the case of county roads.

Bellamy is convinced that the markers would make motorists drive more safely,

especially in places where several of the signs would mark the sites of more than one traffic fatality.

He thinks it would be a good idea to try the scheme in selected counties to demonstrate that it would reduce average speeds. Linn County might be a good place to try it, he says, because the county's traffic death toll is higher than its population would indicate.

Bellamy acknowledges that some motorists might be bothered by the macabre signs. He draws this analogy: "People got tired of the Vietnam war when they actually saw the body bags on TV." And he thinks people would pay more attention to traffic safety if they were reminded of fatalities.

If the whole state were to be blanketed with the signs, Bellamy would need about 700 a year. Traffic deaths in Oregon last year numbered 672, up from 638 the year before. The highest-ever annual total was 737 in 1972. Bellamy says traffic deaths this year are running 4½ percent ahead of last year and could surpass 700.

Traffic deaths are said to be the No. 1 cause of death among Oregon residents under 45 years of age, and Bellamy's zeal in trying to slow the carnage is understandable and praiseworthy.

But there's considerable doubt that little white markers with men's room symbols on them will do much good. Some people might indeed be bothered by the signs. More importantly, the signs might make some drivers so nervous that they would detract from traffic safety rather than contributing to it.

More consistent law enforcement of speed limits, better-designed roads, and tougher licensing requirements over the long run probably would do more to reduce traffic deaths than any number of highway markers.

—Albany Democrat-Herald



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Published weekly Thursdays by The Outlook Publishing Co., Box 68,
Sandy, Oregon 97055. Second class postage paid at Sandy, Oregon.

668-5548

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

In Multnomah and Clackamas Counties, per year	\$7.00	In Northwest and Pacific Coast States outside Oregon per year	\$9.00
Service men, any address	\$7.00	Outside Northwest and Pacific Coast states, per year	\$11.00
In Oregon, outside Multnomah and Clackamas Counties, per year	\$8.00		

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