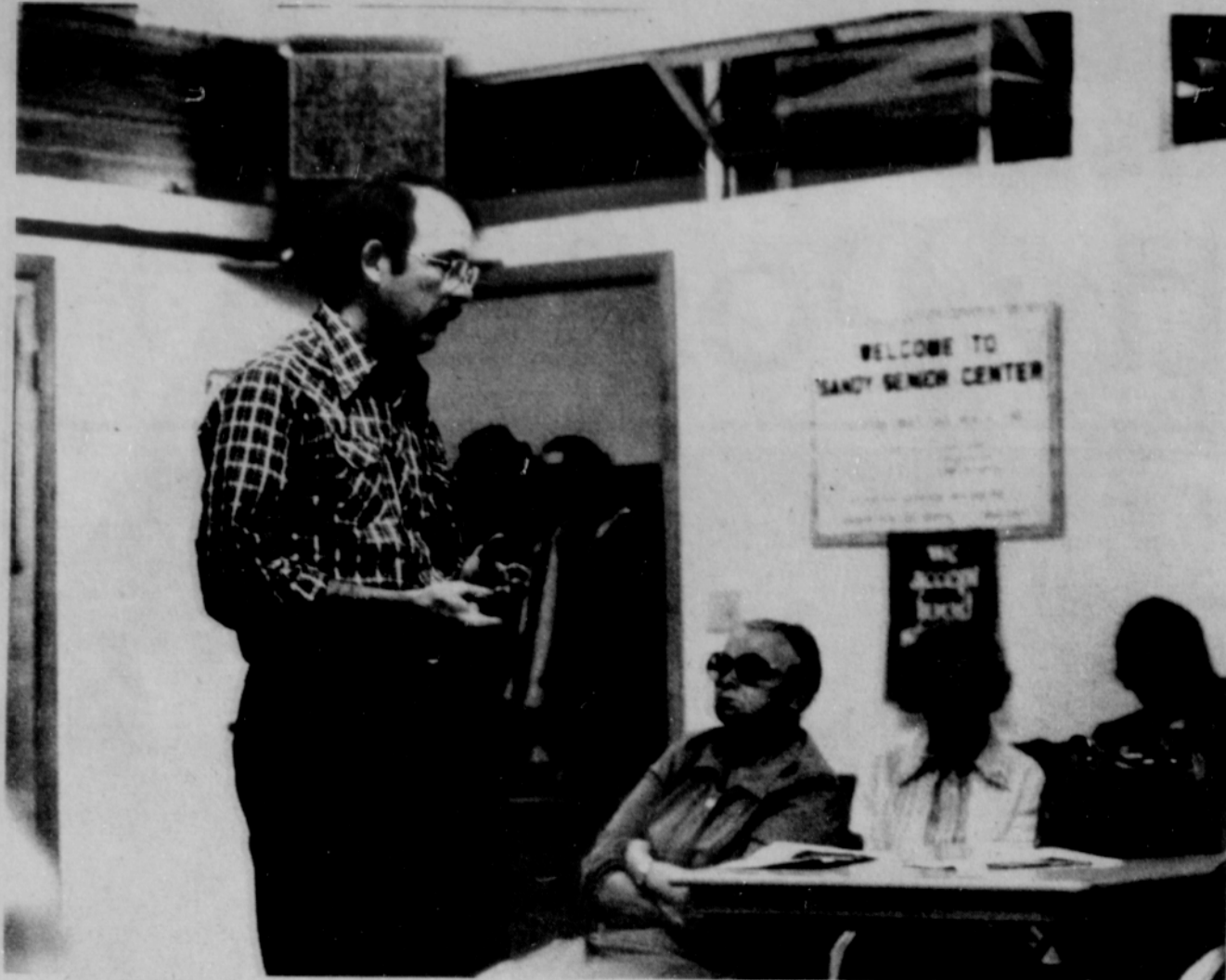




Rep. Wayne Fawbush stopped by the Sandy Community Center this week to answer questions from senior citizens

about tax relief and legislation for the elderly.

Fawbush untangles tax relief maze

by DAN DILLON

The 1979 Oregon Legislature adopted the largest tax relief plan in the state's history. While that benefits all Oregonians, it is especially good news for senior citizens on fixed incomes.

Monday Rep. Wayne Fawbush, D-Hood River, stopped at the Sandy Senior Center to explain the benefits for senior citizens and sort out the confusions created by the new relief system.

The confusion stems from the old single-aspect program. That was the Homeowner and Renter Property Tax Refund Program (HAARP).

The new package is two-fold. It includes increased benefits from HAARP and also provides an additional 30 percent reduction in

property taxes excluding bonded indebtedness paid from Oregon's General Fund.

Voters, Fawbush said, have the opportunity to control the amount paid on bonds with their ballot. As a result, the average reduction is approximately 25 percent statewide.

Paying the money back is also a two-fold proposition. "It's not as easy to give all that money back as you would think," he said. "You don't just write out a check.

The first payment, mailed in October, is the HAARP refund check. The second installment comes with the property tax bill. On that notice is a statement that the state has paid the 30 percent reduction before billing.

Those two payments will

have paid 100 percent of the property tax bill for senior citizens with an income under \$8,000 per year, Fawbush said.

The new tax relief program sets limits on state spending by drawing up excess money and giving it back to the people, Fawbush said. If local municipalities, whose property taxes are not affected, want to make more money they will have to raise levies and ask the voters for the approval.

That is the step Clackamas County would have to take to help itself bail out of its apparent financial difficulties.

Fawbush cited another tax program of benefit to senior citizens. For several years Oregon has had a property tax deferral program for

retirees. That means that a retiree who owns his home may elect to defer property taxes until the home is sold.

"Quite frankly, it's the best deal around," he said. Retirees may borrow money at six percent on the loan which is covered by the increased valuation of the home — an average of 17 percent annually in Oregon.

"You will receive much more back when you sell, than it's worth today," he said.

The program can also double the benefits of the HAARP plan because homeowners continue to be eligible for the HAARP payments even though they do not pay property taxes at the time. That, he said, is a "double whammy."

Legislation for homebound seniors set

Sen. Bob Packwood, R-Ore., renewed his efforts to improve home health care for the elderly this week. The Packwood bill, which was introduced in the Senate Monday, would expand homemaker-home health aide services, and reform laws which require an individual to be "homebound" to be eligible for home health services.

With the population of seniors growing rapidly, Packwood argued that home health care has proved to be a highly effective way to meet many of the elderly's medical needs. "Not only does home health care help seniors remain more independent in the comfort of their own homes, but it also reduced health costs by cutting back on hospitalization and nursing home stays," Packwood said.

"If the home health program, however, is going to be tailored to the needs of the elderly in their communities, as it should be, some of its provisions need to be more flexible," Packwood

added.

Under present law, the Medicare program allows home health aides to provide only limited "homemaker" services, such as light housekeeping or meal preparation. The Packwood bill would eliminate the restriction on homemaker services, which should make the delivery of services to seniors more efficient. Expanding homemaker services would also help increase the ability of senior to remain in their own homes and, in turn, cut down on long and expensive hospital stays or nursing home care.

The second provision would permit seniors to receive home health services in adult day care centers. These centers care for seniors who, in general, are unable to care for themselves and whose families are unable to provide for them during the day. Many states and communities have set up such facilities.

While home health services were originally intended to be provided only in the home, adult day care

centers are basically an extension of the home and should be a place where seniors can receive these medical visits. The bill, therefore, would allow seniors receiving home health care to receive such services in adult day care settings.

"From both a humanitarian and an economic standpoint our health care programs should encourage keeping the home and family intact. Home health care does this very well," said Packwood. To underscore the economy of home health care, Senator Packwood cited a recent study by the Health Care Financing Administration. "It has been estimated that a year of home health care services based upon a 1975 average of \$428 per year for those 65 years of age costs approximately half the monthly bill for a nursing home (averaging \$800 per month.)

"Finally, the provisions I've introduced, along with others that have already been accepted by the

Committee, will move us closer to developing a comprehensive, community-based long-term health care system. The maze of existing Federal programs designed to prevent early institutionalization emphasizes how important a goal this is."

Despite area-wide slump

Sandy housing starts stable

While the metropolitan Portland area slides through a slump in housing starts, Sandy continues to show improvement.

A building industry land and development report, part of a program by the Home Builders Association of Metropolitan Portland, said the number of single and multiple family housing unit starts were down during September compared with one year ago.

"We weren't down at all," according to Tom Day, Sandy building official. In September 1978, the building department issued permits

for four new single-family residences and four duplexes.

This year the department issued two more single-family residence permits and an equal number for duplexes during September. This resulted in a valuation of \$725,679.

According to the Builders' report, the biggest drops in housing starts occurred in Multnomah and Clackamas Counties, where single family starts were down nearly 40 percent over 1978. With the prime lending rate at 14.5 percent in September, it appears that starts will

continue to decrease over the next few months, the report said. Economists are predicting that housing will drop 15 percent in 1979, with an additional 10 percent drop in 1980.

While the local housing picture was down in comparison to last year, nearly 500 new single-family units were constructed within the five-county area around Portland.

The ripple effect on the local economy of those 500 homes is encouraging for the local job markets. For each housing unit built, nearly two workers will be employed for

a full year in construction, manufacturing and other housing-related industries.

For 500 homes, that means 925 full-time jobs directly employed by the construction industry for one year. Wages for workers on the 500 homes will gross close to \$5 million, which goes directly back into the local economy.

During October, housing starts were up in Sandy, but the total valuation dropped. Permits were issued for 11 new homes and the total valuation handled by the building department was \$518,285.

Keeping posted:

Cemetery clean-up slated Saturday

Thursday, Nov. 8

The Community Action Center Board of Directors meet at 8 p.m.

Rebekah Lodge meets at the I.O.O.F. Hall at 8 p.m.

The Golden Age Club holds its semimonthly potluck at noon at the Sandy Senior Center.

The Cottrell School Board meets at 8 p.m. in the East Building.

Friday, Nov. 9

The Sandy Union High School Choral Department will hold a square dance from 8 p.m. to midnight in the school commons.

Saturday, Nov. 10

The semi-annual clean-up

for Cliffside Cemetery is scheduled. Bull Run volunteers are wanted. The event is "bring your own tools." It doesn't start at any particular time and will run all day.

Tuesday, Nov. 13

Eastern Star meets at Masonic Hall at 8 p.m.

Sandy Chamber of Commerce meets at noon at TJ's Restaurant.

Wednesday, Nov. 14

Firwood Neighbors Board of Directors meets about the comprehensive plan at 7:30 p.m. at Firwood School. This is the fifth meeting in a series

of eight on the subject.

Sandy Area Merchants meet 7 a.m. at TJ's Restaurant.

The Sandy TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) Club meets at 9 a.m. at the Community Action Center; and at 6:45

p.m. in the community room at the Independent Bank of Sandy. For more information on the morning club, call Shirley Reed at 668-5338. For more information on the evening club, call Ginny Rada at 668-7348.

Fall Flea Market!

New & Used Items—Handicrafts

Jewelry—Baked Goods

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November 9th & 10th

Sandy Senior Center

Concessions Available

9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Auto accident kills graduate of Sandy High

A 20-year-old Portland man died Saturday when the car he was driving left U.S. Highway 26 and rolled over.

Vernon Wesley Bath, a 1977 graduate of Sandy Union High School, was pronounced dead at the scene. The accident occurred approximately three miles east of Sandy near McCabe Road, according to Oregon State Police.

The accident occurred at approximately 3:30 a.m.

Bath had been living in Portland where he was employed.

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Ski fashion show slated

A pre-ski tea and fashion show for Multnomah Ski Bowl Ladies Day ski program is scheduled for Nov. 14-15.

Fashions will be shown by Howell's Uptown Sports Centre and Meadowlark Ski Shop. The Westside Tea will be Wednesday at 1 p.m.

(For further information phone 222-2032.)

The Eastside Tea will be Thursday, Nov. 15 at the Meadowlark Ski Shop, 1155 NE Hogan Rd., Gresham, at 1 p.m.

(For further information phone 665-1713.)

Champagne and hors d'oeuvres will be served and the coming sessions events discussed.

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