The Sandy Post

Editorial & Opinion

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Wine-tasting parties can be costly

Want to impress friends this Christmas with some really fine wines?

Guide Publishing Company of California prints a little newsletter on liquor and wine for the connoisseur.

Auction prices of fine wines sold from private cellars in London this year tell what it may cost to really impress your guests.

One bottle of 1845 Roulet-Cognac would cost you $145. Sip slowly. Or maybe you'd prefer the savings of buying by the dozen. You could purchase a dozen bottles of 1970 Romanti Conti for $1,200. Cheap at half the price.

Or for real savings try 1964 Don Perignon for just $600 for a dozen bottles. If your guests don't mind the cheaper labels, try 1961 CH Mouton Rothchild for $360 per dozen bottles. After all, they might be artfully deceived, with CH Mouton Rothchild bottled two years earlier fetching $1,170 per dozen bottles.

To really shoot the works impress friends this Christmas with 1955 CH Mouton Rothchild, a bargain for $2,812 per dozen bottles.

The wine connoisseur's tipsheet even contains descriptions of various years of Lafite Rothchild. The 1962 bottles, for instance, are "medium full colour, tawny edge. Bouquet slightly burnt, concentrated. Very well balanced, but losing its charm."

The 1955 bottles are "medium colour, tawny edge, thinning out. 'Violets' bouquet, verging on volatile. Balanced, mature, starting to dry out, but elegant."

And the 1949 bottles are rated "good colour, concentrated look of old wines. Light, feminine bouquet. Well balanced, drying out, but perfect with a meal."

We're given no price for the 1949 vintage, but told "there are probably very few of our subscribers wealthy enough to be interested." (VB)

Highway deathstrip stalks drinkers

While Christmas parties can be fun, restraint should be used in driving home — particularly in the Sandy-Hoodland area where so many needless wrecks have taken their toll on Highway 26.

The local incident of drinking drivers is spreading like a deadly plague. In 1978, eight persons died in five such accidents in our area. So far in 1979, the number has ballooned to 15 local accidents involving drinking in which 20 persons were killed.

The death strip is that little ribbon of highway between the Boring interchange and Rhododendron. State police link the bottle to the recent rash of vehicle accidents that make that strip the most dangerous stretch of road in the state.

To curb the problem, state policemen have increased patrols on local Highway 26. Many patrolmen have donated free time to show their concern.

The special task force is paying off. In the first weekend alone, state police cited 23 drinking drivers between the Boring interchange and Rhododendron. Apparently word has traveled fast, too, because DWI citations have dropped to an average of one per day.

Lt. Jim Westerberg of the state police says that even one DWI per day is too many and above state average. So the dragnet will continue on Highway 26 during the Christmas holidays.

Hopefully drivers here will show special restraint during the holidays. Last year there were no local accidents due to drinking during Christmas. Let's hope 1979 drivers fare so well. (VB)

The Innocent Bystander:

American dream only for Iranians

by Art Hoppe

There's nothing more heart-warming than to see a wholesome young couple get married, buy a little nest and settle down to a long and happy life together. That's the American way.

I wish you could have been there when Fred and Felicia Frisbee, fresh back from their honeymoon, bounced into the offices of Acme Realty Co. They were greeted by the president, himself, George Acme.

"What can I do for you young people today?" said Acme, beaming.

"We want to buy a house," said Felicia.

"Wonderful, wonderful," said Acme, rubbing his hands. "What sort of house do you have now?"

Fred and Felicia looked at each other. "We don't have a house," said Fred.

"Oh," said Acme. "Are you by any chance from Saudi Arabia, Iran or any other nation of the OPEC persuasion?"

"No, we're Americans," said Fred proudly.

"That's a shame," said Acme, opening the door. "Well, drop in again sometime."

"JUST A MINUTE," said Felicia angrily. "Do you mean you don't have any houses for sale?"

"Of course, I do," said Acme. "Here's a photo of a cozy little Junior One Bedroom for only $79,999.99. As you can see, the bedroom is cleverly separated from the living room by the dining room table."

"Gosh, that's a lot of money," said Fred dubiously. "But I suppose we could take out a mortgage."

"You sure could," agreed Acme. "Money's tight, but if you have an A-one credit rating, I might be able to get you an 80 percent loan.

"Then you'd only have to put down $16,000 or so, plus closing costs. Can you take that much out of your bank?"

"Only with a gun," said Felicia gloomily.

"Don't worry, honey, we'll get it somewhere," said Fred. "Don't forget, I'm making more than $1,000 a month."

"That's good," said Acme. "The payments on your $64,000 30-year loan at 14 percent come to $758.32 a month. What with taxes and insurance, your take-home pay should just about cover your housing costs."

"What about eating?" asked Felicia.

"And that's another saving," said Acme, "you won't be needing that dining room table."

"OH, WHAT are we going to do?" cried Felicia, who by now was near tears.

"Obviously, you must go out and buy a house," said Acme. "Then you can come back and see me. I'll sell your house for you and you can use the proceeds to buy a house."

"But if we had a house," said Fred, "we wouldn't need a house."

Acme frowned. "I don't think you understand, young man. No American who doesn't own a house can afford to buy a house these days."

"Death to the shah!" shouted Fred.

"I beg your pardon?" asked Acme.

"I think I'll take the easy way out," said Fred, "and become an Iranian."

Letters to the editor:

Taxpayer rebellion urged

Taxpayers mad

Almost every day we read of property owners being told they can't build or use their land, constitutional rights notwithstanding.

An article by Harry Bodine in the Oregonian November 27 outlines the problem of various counties with property owners building on their land and infuriates our members.

Mad Oregon Property Owners, Inc., is a statewide organization. There are more than one million land owners in Oregon.

No way are we going to stand aside and allow this take-over of our property and constitutional rights.

There is going to be a big change in the membership of both houses of the legislature, and we have the votes to clean house.

Roy E. Durham, President
Mad Oregon Property Owners, Inc.
Rt. 1 Willamina, Ore.

'Reform needed'

Attention taxpayers. Would you be interested in helping me with a couple of projects?

The first is HJR 23, The Liberty Amendment. This amendment would give the government three years to unload its 700 corporations and 11,000 businesses which compete with the private sector, return to the states and private sector all other activities unconstitutionally usurped by the feds, and return to the States all federal lands, parks and forests which do not qualify for government ownership under Article 1, Section 8, Clause 16.

After reducing the cost of government more than half and removing unconstitutional restrictions on private business, the Liberty Amendment would repeal the federal income tax (16th Amendment), since it would no longer be needed.

It would repeal the federal inheritance tax and gift tax and increase the take-home pay of every wage earner by at least 20 percent.

It would turn business loose to give the U.S. a higher level of employment and prosperity, terminate the financing of foreign aid and UN enterprises not authorized by the constitution and put the constitution back in full force again.

The second is official petitions asking the Senate not to ratify SALT II. Under SALT I, the Russians cheated many times and can be expected to do the same under SALT II.

If you would like to help in either or both of these endeavors, please phone or write me. I will furnish you with petitions to get signatures. I will send them in or furnish you with the envelope to send them to the proper person.

I feel we do not have much time, and Mr. Carter is twisting arms to get SALT ratified. So I hope you will help me try to save our nation.

We truly are in the greatest danger we have ever known. Thank you.

Ann Lucas
Rt. 1, Box 78
Estacada

LETTERS POLICY

Letters to the editor must be signed, typed with double spacing, within 200 words in length and in good taste. The Post reserves the right to edit letter within standard guidelines. We attempt to publish all letters we receive.

Lesson to be learned for 1920's

The problems that face us today are different but no less dangerous than those that confronted the nation, the world, in the late 1920s. The worldwide population explosion, coupled with dwindling supplies of essential raw materials—most notably oil—pose new economic dilemmas for which the lessons of the '30s offer no ready answers. The pump-priming that helped us climb out of the Great Depression is not so easy to apply when inflation persists in the face of recession.

But when we reread the history of the era just prior to the great crash, there are some parallels we cannot afford to ignore today. The '20s was a time of unprecendented prosperity when Americans cast aside their customary caution and began to live beyond their means. We have been on a similar binge of conspicuous, credit card consumption ever since the end of World War II.

There were numerous warnings of what was to come, signs were blithely ignored, just as today most Americans still refuse to recognize signals of a growing energy crunch.

The Times Record
(Brunswick, Maine)

Salem scene:

Timber tax reduces property tax

by JACK ZIMMERMAN
Assoc. Oregon Industries

Most Oregonians understand the economic significance of the state's forest products industry.

They comprehend jobs, payroll and the products used to construct the homes in which they live.

But something relatively few residents of this state consider is the property tax relief provided homeowners by virtue of Oregon's productive forests.

On an annual basis, the manufacture of forest products means employment for some 90,000 workers in this state collecting a payroll in excess of $1.2 billion. And on the same yearly standard, productive forests provide another quarter of a billion dollars in property tax relief for homeowners throughout Oregon.

That's the subject of a recent study by Jim Carbone, forest taxation director for Associated Oregon Industries in Salem.

Carbone's study was prompted by a newspaper editorial calling attention to the fact homeowners in Lane County's Marcola area received "whopping" tax bill reductions this year, mainly because of exceptionally large timber severance tax collections offsetting property taxes. The reductions, according to the editorial, were even greater than those provided by the state's new property tax relief program.

The AOI timber tax specialist believes this substantial side benefit derived from productive, working forests is commonly overlooked when people analyze the importance of Oregon forests.

"One can easily see the prosperity and employment created by a healthy forest economy," he said. "But hidden to many is the fact our commercial forests are a major source of property tax relief for Oregon homeowners."

Legislative Report from the State Capital
EXCLUSIVE to Oregon's Weekly Newspapers from Associated Oregon Industries.

Carbone went on to explain the state's 25 million acres of commercial forest lands generate nearly $250 million of tax offset annually. This money from timber and land taxes and state and federal-shared forest revenues is used as a direct offset to the costs of running state and community services — costs which otherwise would be paid by homeowners and other property taxpayers.

The majority of private forest landowners are taxed both on the land and on their crop, Carbone explained. This differs from agricultural land which only pays land tax. Under the Western Oregon severance tax law, woodland owners pay an annual tax based on the value of the land. In addition, they pay a tax at time of harvest amounting to 6½ percent of harvest value.

These revenues are distributed back to the various taxing districts on the basis of assessed forest land value and annual harvest in each area.

Eastern Oregon's forest tax system is similar and small woodland owners in Western Oregon have the option of paying a larger annual tax, based on land productivity, instead of paying the final harvest tax.

State and federal forest lands produce revenues for Oregonians based on harvest level.

Revenue from harvests in state forests are paid to counties or the Common School Fund. The two most significant federally controlled revenue producers involve harvests on National Forest and Oregon & California (O&C) lands.

National Forests are administered by the U.S. Forest Service and include about 11.5 million acres of commercial forest land. Thirty-one counties in which these forests are located receive 25 percent of harvest revenues. The Bureau of Land Management manages O&C lands in 18 counties and distributes 50 percent of those timber revenues back to the counties involved.

Carbone's report indicates that although all Oregonians derive some economic benefit from the working forests, the degree of tax relief varies widely among counties and taxing districts depending on the amount of forest land, type of ownership and level of harvest in each.

One method of looking at the tax relief is to determine the reduction in tax rate produced by timber offsets.

Statewide, that reduction averages approximately $5.34 per thousand dollars of assessed value. In other words, according to Carbone, the average owner of a $50,000 home in Oregon is paying about $267 less property tax each year — thanks to the working forests.

In some highly timbered areas the largest part of a district's budget is paid for by timber offsets. Tax rates in Sweet Home School Dist. 55 would be more than $11 per thousand higher without receipts from the forest products industry.

Redmond Dist. 2J has an offset of only two cents per thousand from private lands. But Deschutes County is 70 percent federal land and another 75 cents per thousand accrues from federal revenues.

In Polk County's Dallas Dist. 2 the offset is 92 cents per thousand from private lands. And Marcola's Dist. 79J had a total timber tax offset equal to one third of its entire tax levy in 1978!

As Carbone concluded in his study, it is obvious that a healthy forest economy is a major factor in the ability of homeowners and Oregonians generally to afford the public services they desire.

"Good forest management in Oregon enables us to eat our cake and have it, too," he said. "We get lower property tax rates and more services for fewer tax dollars all at the same time."

(NOTE: Jack Zimmerman writes a column for Associated Oregon Industries, a lobbying group. His opinions are not necessarily those of this newspapers.)