

Oregon vehicle sales plummet during 1980

Statistics released by the Oregon Motor Vehicle Division last week confirm that 1980 was not a good year for vehicle sales in the state.

Oregon's 1980 vehicle registrations dropped more than three percent from 1979's 2.5 million mark.

A total of 2.44 million vehicles carried Oregon license plates in 1980.

There was a drop of nearly 20 percent in the number of new vehicle titles issued in 1980. DMV issued 185,208 new titles.

New to Oregon titles, a reflection of new residents and out of state vehicles coming to Oregon, also dropped, from 112,893 to 105,813.

Passenger cars and travel trailers appear hardest hit by the drop in new titles. Passenger cars accounted for more than 1.9 million registrations, down four percent from 1979. Camper registration also dropped.

Registrations which showed an increase in 1980 were buses, trucks, farm vehicles, light and heavy trailers, for rent trailers, motor homes and motorcycles.

Only three counties, Deschutes, Jefferson and Morrow, showed increases

in vehicle registrations. Oregon's other 33 counties were down.

Although total registration was down in Oregon, registration revenue totaled more than \$42 million, an increase of 53 percent from 1979.

The revenue came from fees collected on 1.7 million new and renewed registrations. Since Oregon's two-year registration took effect in 1974, even-numbered years such as 1980 produced more money in renewal fees than odd-numbered years.

The breakdown for Clackamas County vehicles is as follows:

Passenger, 177,483; buses, 66; trucks, 4,976; farm vehicles, 2,017; heavy trailers, 2,636; light trailers, 5,306; for rent vehicles, 65; motorcycles, 7,641; travel trailers, 7,821; campers, 4,579; motor homes, 2,669; snowmobiles, 325; exempt (vehicles owned by local government agencies and other political subdivisions excluding the state), 1,941; total, 217,525.

Clackamas County ranks third in Oregon behind Multnomah and Lane Counties in total registration.

Tax preparers should be selected carefully

The choice of a paid tax preparer for federal and state tax returns is an important one, and should be done carefully and wisely, according to the Internal Revenue Service.

Oregon law makes the job a little easier than it would be in other states, however, due to its licensing and regulatory authority where tax preparers are concerned.

Every tax preparer who is paid for his services must be licensed in the state of Oregon. The requirements for licensing include minimum educational requirements and the successful completion of a standard examination. Persons who accept money for the preparation of tax returns, whether they are in business or one's next door neighbor, must meet these requirements.

According to IRS, most tax preparers are honest and do not deliberately attempt to prepare fraudulent returns. However, a few misuse the responsibility. Preparers who promise a refund, claim a special relationship with IRS, or boast of ways to beat the tax system should be avoided.

The IRS also advises taxpayers not to sign a blank return, one which is partially completed or one prepared in pencil. These could be altered by the preparer.

Preparers should be asked to sign the return in the taxpayer's presence, and give his or her identification number, as required by law. The taxpayer must be given a copy of the completed return.

Another thing to look for in a tax preparer, IRS advises, is year-round availability. In addition, responsible preparers will return the taxpayer's records upon request. To avoid future surprises, it is also a good idea for the taxpayer to get a rough estimate of the fee.

The choice of a preparer is particularly important because the taxpayer, not the preparer, is responsible for the accuracy of the return. If items of income, deductions, or credits are misrepresented on the return, causing an increase in tax, it is the taxpayer who is liable for the tax plus any interest and penalties that might be due.

Group names March planned pethood month

The Oregon Humane Society has designated March as Planned Pethood Month.

The society is trying to decrease the number of unwanted animals turned in to local shelters.

March was chosen because cats tend to conceive in the early spring and give birth to their litters in the summer.

"There have been times in the summer when more than 100 kittens have been received in one day alone," noted humane society director Gene R. Burgess.

However, several low cost spay/neuter clinics have recently opened in the Portland metropolitan area

and birth control is now more easily attainable for pet owners.

The humane society received more than 9,200 dogs in 1980 and found homes for 71 percent of them. It received nearly 11,600 cats and found homes for 38 percent. The animals were turned in by owners who no longer desired them.

Strays, on the other hand, are handled by county animal control agencies.

For information on how to obtain low cost spay or neuter operations for cats and dogs, call the Animal Health Services at 667-6963 or the Oregon Humane Society at 285-0641.

CCC tries levy again

Clackamas Community College will ask district voters to approve a levy rate of \$1.14 per \$1,000 true cash value for a three-year operations levy.

The election will be March 31.

The college's current levy, at a \$1.60 rate, expires June 30. Voters have already defeated two proposed three-year levies Feb. 17 for both operations and construction which amounted to a combined rate of \$1.49. The CCC

board has decided to retain the original operations levy amount of \$1.14 and forego any request for construction funding until a later date.

"If we do not pass an operations levy by May 19, the college will be forced to close its summer school," said CCC president John Hakanson. "We face a very critical situation since the college will be without a local funding base after June 30."

Local couple celebrates 35th

Mr. and Mrs. Leo Burgess of Brightwood were honored recently by their family on the couple's 35th wedding anniversary.

A champagne dinner at their daughter's Cannon

Beach home highlighted the occasion.

The Burgessses, who have six grandchildren, were married 35 years ago, on Feb. 24, in Portland.

But only she can see him

Mischievous leprechaun inhabits the garage

Shamus O'Toole is a leprechaun and he lives in my garage.

Odd, you say? A bit touched in the head? Those are thoughts others have had when I tell them my tale but, nevertheless, Shamus is for real.

My great-grandmother came from the old sod roughly 150 years ago, with all her worldly possessions tucked neatly into a steamer trunk. The trunk was never refinished to its original luster like so many have been. In fact, it hadn't even been opened for more than 50 years.

The trunk had been wedged under the eaves of the attic in my parent's home collecting dust for 40 years, then it was transported to our garage and buried under cardboard and saddles for another 11 years.

But last year I became interested in tracing down a few roots from the Irish side and the trunk came to mind.

The lock had rusted shut over the years and the hinges moaned agonizingly when the dome lid finally separated from the lower half. The contents didn't excite me at first glance. There were mostly old clothes, picture frames, a moth-eaten blanket and some books.

I went through the trunk carefully, not expecting to find any big treasure, but hoping childishly for some little surprise.

The last item I picked out of the trunk was a cigar box, its label half torn off. It had metal corners and a tiny metal hasp that locked over a staple, much like a jewelry box. The hasp was held tightly in place by a

small horseshoe nail. I shook the box, listening for some sort of a rattle, but all I heard was an unmistakable sneeze.

Then, from within the dusty old box, came a gruff, little voice demanding that I either open the box or put it back in the trunk. The voice also threatened me saying that if I wanted two noses where my ears were now, I should shake the box one more time.



Margaret Schmale's

Bits
and pieces

I knew right away that nobody was going to believe me when I told this story. I figured I had nothing more to lose. I had obviously already lost it. I opened the box.

There he sat, a pixie of a man in forest green togs and matching tam. He sat cross-legged on a cushion of old lace handkerchiefs clutching a gnarled walking stick in one hand. He shook the stick at me, sneezed again, then

cursed someone or something in Gaelic.

When he was more composed, he introduced himself as Shamus O'Toole, Leprechaun, Esq. He was 347 years old and it had been his misfortune to be a part of my mother's family for over half his life.

It seems that he was tricked into the box around the turn of the 17th century. Only during the month of March could he be seen and released. The box had been opened before, but since the timing was wrong, the contents appeared to be no more than some old, rotten hankies.

Shamus only surfaces during the first half of March to celebrate St. Patrick's Day, like any good Irishman, then retires for the remainder of the year to his cigar box. He doesn't let moss grow under his feet when he's awake, though. Every day he pulls a new shenanigan on me.

Just me, nobody else can see him. Talk about the luck of the Irish, I guess I have it.

The water in the toilet bowl turned green overnight, a sure sign that Shamus is up to his tricks. All the condiments in my kitchen that were white are now green to me. The sugar, flour, salt and soda are all green.

My family thinks I'm a little strange most of the time, so I don't talk about Shamus much.

The girls had mis-sorted the laundry again, putting a green shirt in with the whites, but I thought Shamus had tinted the laundry green. I was surprised when my husband picked up an item and said, "Don't tell me, this in Ireland would be an Erin Go Bragh."

I guess there's a little Shamus in everybody.

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