

Athletics teach lessons others miss

Local budgeters are casting a wary eye this budgeting season at suggestions of expanded services as they try to mold proposals which will be palatable to money-conscious voters.

The city's budget committee told City Manager Roger Jordan that they expect to prepare a "fiscally tight" budget this year, so the city can stay afloat during the current hard times.

In the Sandy Elementary District, the budget committee has already axed a talented and gifted program and the purchase of a new school bus—both remnants of last year's B budget which was rejected three times by district patrons at the polls.

One last remnant of that B budget is still alive, although the vital signs may already be faltering. A limited athletic program has been suggested for the elementary schools.

It sounds like a good idea.

Rather than returning to the

full-scale program of a season ago, Superintendent Clark Lund has proposed a modest \$26,000 program which recognizes there are other outlets for school-age youngsters, such as the Blue Marlins and the Cascade Soccer Club, allowing the district to fill in the seasonal gaps with his new proposal.

Budget committee members have tabled the suggestion until they have a chance to study the instructional program and services. Sacrificing academics for athletics is not their intent.

Nor does it appear to be the intent of the athletic proposal. A well-rounded education includes more than what is available in the classroom. It includes learning to get along with peers, to accept the good with the bad and to work together for a common goal.

Participation in athletics can teach those subjects as well or better than any book.



'No news is no news' release tells

The busy pace of winter months seems always to take its toll on people. Especially the busy people who push the paper that keeps everything running in the work-a-day world of modern hustle-bustle.

Last year we teased then-incumbent U.S. Rep. Al Ullman for his office sending out a newspaper release that consisted of a blank piece of paper in an

envelope.

Well, it's happened again—only this time the donor was Portland General Electric. A blank piece of paper, labeled "press release," came perfectly addressed to the paper in a business-size envelope.

Hope it was nothing earth-shattering. We'll give them a call after New Years to see if Trojan blew its top or something.

Salem scene:

Everyone's in a budgeting bind

by JACK ZIMMERMAN
Associated Oregon Industries

Before you're tempted to lavish too much sympathy on members of the Oregon Legislature, just remember we're all in the same boat.

Lawmakers are gathering in Salem for a special session beginning Jan. 11 to try to balance state spending with revenue.

Big deal. All of us ordinary Oregonians will be doing the same thing at the same time when the bills for our holiday generosity come rolling in.

And if ever there's a time when we compare what we earn with what we take home, it's during the first pay period of the year. We all have a pretty good idea of what our wages or salaries are. But that's always substantially more than the amount in the pay envelope or on the paycheck.

How come? Taxes, we say. And we scan the pay voucher or check stub for an explanation.

All too often we're disappointed. Few vouchers or check stubs satisfy our curiosity.

For instance, there's the indication something called FICA takes the biggest bite out of what we earn. What's FICA?

It stands for Federal Insurance Contributions Act. And that means Social Security.

For example, a worker earning the federal minimum wage of \$3.35 an hour makes a gross wage of \$134 in a 40-hour week. The Social Security (FICA) deduction is \$8.98. But there's nothing on the stub or voucher explaining that the worker's employer also pays an identical \$8.98 to the federal government for that employee's Social Security benefits.

That's right. Each employer matches dollar-for-dollar every bit we pay the government for our eventual retirement. And it can get expensive.

When the system first became law back in 1937, each worker and employer was taxed \$30 apiece for the whole year. The minimum wage earner and his or her employer now pays that much in little more than three weeks. But you begin to get an idea of the size of the total bill for Social Security when you realize it's up 7.236 percent since 1937!

Incredible. But true. The maximum tax on wage earners and employers in 1982—based on a levy of 6.7 percent of the first \$32,400 of annual wages—is \$2,170.80 for each totalling a whopping \$4,341.60. That's nearly two-thirds of the total annual wage of our minimum wage earner.

It's mind-boggling. Sure everything costs more, food on the table, house payments, the family car and the gas to run it. They're all up. But not 7.236 percent.

The reason that FICA deduction is so large and has increased so tremendously is that Congress has expanded benefits over the years to include widows, dependent children, medical care and other good things. Consequently, the tax has been in-



creased 25 different times.

But the FICA deduction is only the tip of the iceberg. There are also deductions for federal income tax, state income tax and other items on that voucher or check stub. And when they're all subtracted, what's left is take-home pay.

The minimum wage earner's weekly take-home amounts to \$112.79, after the \$8.98 Social Security deduction, \$6.70 for federal income tax, \$5.00 for state income tax (assuming married status with two exemptions) and a 53-cent contribution to the Workers' Compensation system's special reserve fund.

But we mentioned employers match the Social Security payment of each worker. Are there other hidden fringes paid by employers that don't show up on the voucher or stub?

You bet there are. The minimum wage earner's boss also pays \$3.89 a week to the state and 81 cents to the federal government so the worker can draw unemployment pay in case he worker loses his job through no fault of his own. Most workers think they pay into that fund. But they don't.

Our hypothetical worker's boss also pays 43 cents a week for the Workers' Comp special reserve fund—plus an average of \$6.34 to pay the premium on compulsory workers' compensation insurance. And that covers medical and rehabilitation costs if the worker gets hurt on the job.

So while the worker we're talking about has a total of \$21.21 taken out of his weekly pay for Social Security, income taxes and the like, his employer pays another \$20.45 to provide government-mandated benefits few workers really understand. And only \$9.51 of the employer's contribution goes toward paying the fringe benefits—the rest, \$11.70, is the workers' income tax obligation to state and federal governments.

If you add the worker's takehome pay and employer-paid benefit payments, it would raise the total to \$133.24—only 76 cents short of the worker's original \$134 weekly pay.

Knowing all of this isn't going to help the worker pay those bills coming in after the holidays. Not directly, that is. But those fringes the boss pays for Workers' Comp, Unemployment Comp and Social Security will help guarantee payment of some in the future. This is something everyone who works for a living should know about.

Maybe it wouldn't hurt the Legislature to consider our solution for balancing spending and revenue.

The Innocent Bystander:

Honestly, can car dealer deal truth?

The government wants to force our used car dealers to tell us customers of any defects they might know of in the vehicles they're trying to sell us.

The National Automobile Dealers Association has therefore given our congressmen more than \$500,000 according to a Ralph Nader report, so that the issue may be debated on its merits.

And rightly so. This is certainly no time to interject honesty into the used car business. The nation is in the grips of a growing shortage of used cars, what with fewer and fewer new cars getting used. In fact, some authorities gloomily predict the country could run out of used cars by mid-1983. Indeed, the Japanese are believed already tooling up to manufacture and export used cars in order to profit from our expected needs.

More importantly, the used car business is no place for honesty. If our used car dealers are forced to go on an honesty spree, they would immediately destroy the whole used car mystique.



by ART HOPPE

For buying a used car is much like getting married. There is the initial approach, the first stirrings of desire, the blind taking of the plunge into the unknown, the euphoria of the honeymoon, and then the long, slow, gradual adjustment to personality quirks and—yes, let's face it—defects. What saves the institution of marriage and the used car business is that the defects are revealed one by one over a period of time, affording us the chance to accept and deal with each before the next one comes along. What, heaven forbid, if they were disclosed all at once?

"Well, yes, I would like to marry you. But in all honesty I must tell you I can't sleep with

the closet door open, I floss after every meal and I own 63 albums of Hawaiian music—my all-time favorite being Don Ho singing 'Tiny Bubbles.'"

Nothing could be more destructive to the giddy spirit of romance—nothing, that is, but an honest used car dealer.

"I'm delighted you've fallen in love with that little 1972 three-door Lemon sedan, sir. But before I accept your check, honesty and the federal government compel me to inform you there is an inch-long scratch on the right rear fender."

"Yes, Honest Al, I was going to mention that myself."

"The scratch, sir?"

"No, the fender. How long has it been missing?"

"Since the right rear door hit it on the freeway interchange. And lucky it fell off too, or the previous owner might never have dropped the anchor in time."

"Anchor? Is that another defect, Honest Al?"

"No, the anchor is in perfect condition. The brakes may or may not need a little adjusting,

however, wherever they may be."

"You didn't mention the engine, Honest Al."

"No."

"Did you plan to?"

"I can't wait. It gets six miles to the gallon, leaks a quart of oil a day and overheats going up driveways?"

"Long, winding driveways?"

"No, driveways in sidewalks."

"I can't tell you what a pleasure it is, Honest Al, not doing business with an honest man."

"Don't worry, sir, we can fix it."

"You mean you can repair that car?"

"No, I mean we can give Congress another half a million dollars."

And they certainly should. No penny should be spared in the unending struggle against honesty. Honest used car dealers! The next thing you know, there'll be a demand for honest congressmen—instead of a demand for the kind we have now.

Personally speaking:

He's wrestling with women's rights

In the back of my mind, in my fondest of dreams, I'm back in college and on a wrestling team.

I may be growing out of that, however. Especially after a recent dream.

It started out well enough. I'm in the locker room on an unidentified college campus, sitting on a bench waiting for weigh-in and shooting the breeze with my teammates.

I'm nervous, but also excited. It's the first match of the season, and we're all anxious to get a taste of victory.

And then our coach comes in, laughing. "Well guys, things are going to be a little different tonight," he said.

"Smalltown College has a woman on the team. She's a 126 pounder."

Well, being a 126 pounder, I was on the receiving end of the razzing right away, but then the coach quieted everyone down.

"She wrestled freestyle in Europe," he said, "and I get the impression she's pretty good. Anyway, since everyone has to weigh-in in front of the coaches and the referee, well, I guess you know what I'm saying."

The weigh-in was definitely different. Everyone stood around nervously, wrapped in towels, as we waited for the Smalltown College wrestlers to enter the neutral locker room.

They also came in draped in towels. All eyes, at one time or another, got around to focusing in on one stunning brunette.

"Let's have the 118 pounders," the referee called out, trying to sound business-like.

The rules call for wrestlers to weigh-in in the nude, and Alan,



by SCOTT NEWTON

our 118 pounder, was the first to drop a towel and hop on the scales.

Anyway, the weigh-in was handled pretty well, although I don't think I'll go into much more detail.

After that our team went out to eat spaghetti. It was five hours till the match would begin.

After being teased for an hour, one of the wrestlers asked, "Are you having a hard time getting psyched up?"

"I am having a hard time," I admitted. "Usually I think about how much I hate the guy, how ugly he is, and what painful holds I'll be able to use on him."

"So how do you work up a good hate for someone you want to ask out?"

To make matters worse, by match-time word of the female wrestler had spread all over

town. The gymnasium was packed, and I was going to be center stage.

As we warmed up guys with television cameras began showing up, and photographers started finding places to sit in front of the scorer's table.

At 7:30 we lined up for the introduction. Catcalls and hoots filled the gymnasium as Marcia and I ran to the middle of the mat to shake hands.

I looked in her eyes, out there in front of all those people, and she smiled at me. For a moment, it made me feel good, the way one feels when a girl smiles at you on the street.

But then I got serious. "I'll break her neck," I whispered to myself as I went through the motions of single-leg takedowns on the mat behind our bench. "I'll make her wish she'd never heard of wrestling."

Alan won his match, and I took off my warm-ups and headed to the center of the mat. I had forgotten about the crowd, and the cameras, but I was distracted by how well Marcia filled her singlet.

We shook hands, and this time Marcia had a determined look on her face, and the match began.

She went for a takedown right away, and although I countered it, I realized right away I was on the mat with one quick young lady.

I got inside, had her arm pulled down tight, and was ready to throw her with a fireman's carry. But, in the split second when I

was supposed to put my arm between her legs and make the throw, I hesitated.

She countered and got away. "Don't hesitate. Get after it," I heard my coach scream.

She didn't give me any second chances, either. And, just as the period was coming to a close she grabbed my ankle and tripped me, scoring two points.

The crowd roared, and laughed.

I started the second period in the down position, and got an escape right away. Neither one of us scored a takedown the rest of the period, so I was down 2-1.

I was confident by now, though. She would be down, and I knew I was stronger than her, and could dominate the third period, with a good chance of pinning her. That would help me save face.

She moved quickly at the sound of the referee's whistle, but I grabbed an ankle and an arm and kept control. Then I hooked an arm, and cupped my other hand around her chin, and began pulling her back. I put my chin in her shoulder, just for good measure.

And then the telephone in my apartment rang, waking me from my nap.

Now I believe in equal rights, so maybe it's just as well I didn't get a chance to finish my dream.

Still, it forced me to realize that change is inevitable. Even the once all-male world of wrestling is changing.