

Editorial & Opinion

Prime pump or stir kettle?

Oregonians tightening belts seem to be getting down to weighing increased public service needs against spiraling cost of big government. Nowhere is that contrast more focused than in poor Clackamas County.

While the state Legislature struggles to overcome a \$500 million budget deficit, the House has passed a bill whereby the state would finance 43 percent of care benefits to Oregonians who don't qualify for welfare, but can't afford private health insurance. The federal government would pay 57 percent.

Meanwhile, the county public health division with no new staff or budget other than existing authorized general fund monies has launched a new county health referral program for the medically indigent here. That includes those who are unemployed, have low income, don't have medical insurance or aren't eligible for welfare.

That program is a cooperative venture between Clackamas County Medical Society and the county. To be screened by a nurse and referred for care, one simply dials 655-8326. Then individual financial arrangements will be made with a health care provider.

State public health might sound costly, but such costs are nothing new here. Oregonians have seen their state jump in taxation in one

year from 23rd to 14th nationally in state and local tax collections as a percent of personal income.

Locally, some school districts get high marks for holding the line during the recession. Bull Run School, Boring Grade School and Mt. Hood College recently have demonstrated fiscal responsibility in operating within the six-percent limitation to avoid special levies.

Clackamas County in its economic development drive, however, seems to put higher priority on Oregon City redevelopment with county property gains at the end of the rainbow than long overdue improvements along 82nd Avenue. There residents have waited years for proper sewers, streets, lights, sidewalks and drainage from King Road north to the county line.

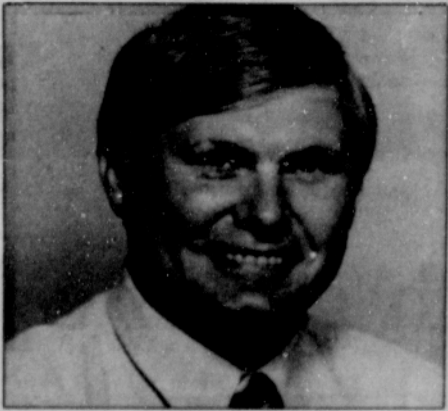
The fundamental question forming regionally seems to be how well bigger government addresses growing social service needs in a tight economy. Perhaps programs such as the county's health referral program that employs the private sector would prove more enterprising and cost-efficient.

Is it time to prime the pump per depression-era big government tactics or time to stir the kettle with private industry? (VB)

Representative's report:

State eyes new health care

by BOB SHIPRACK
State Representative, Dist. 23



The Oregon House of Representatives is proceeding at a brisk pace in reviewing and voting on a multitude of bills submitted this legislative session.

In an attempt to save money and make the session run as efficiently as possible, committees have been consolidating related bills and disposing of those that do not provide important, needed legislation.

Several bills have been passed recently, which I believe will be of interest to you.

One of the most important is House Bill 2805, which would authorize the state to provide health care benefits to approximately 65,000 Oregonians who do not qualify for welfare and cannot afford private health insurance.

When funds are available, the state would finance 43 percent of the program, and the federal government would finance 57 percent.

Another bill passed that would allow owners, whose property was destroyed or damaged, additional time to notify the tax assessor of the occurrence and request a reappraisal.

Current law requires owners to make the request thirty days after the damage occurs. But most people are unaware of that requirement and usually don't consider the tax implications of the damage until they receive their tax statement. HB 2501 was introduced to give people 30 days after the tax statement is mailed to ask that their property be reappraised.

Two bills, heavily debated by legislators, would affect the state's election process.

Presently the names of all candidates running for elective office are rotated in the election ballot.

HB 2503, passed by a narrow margin, requires that the names be rotated only when there are four or more candidates running for an office. If there are more than four, the placement of names will be determined by lot.

This will result in a reduction of election costs to counties and a decrease in the number of ballots spoiled by printing errors.

We decided to postpone indefinitely consideration of HB 2054 that would require voters to register or re-register to vote by 5 p.m. the day before the election, rather than the same day the election occurs.

The Election Committee majority report recommended a voter registration cut-off 11 days before election day. The Election Committee minority report, however, believed that would impose a hardship on citizens who truly wanted to vote, but couldn't because they had moved or changed their name within that 11-day time period. (Oregon constitution requires citizens to immediately notify the Elections Division of an address or name change.)

Not being able to reach a consensus and not wanting the bill rejected, legislators voted to postpone the bill until a future date to allow additional time for review.

If you have any issues you'd like to voice, please don't hesitate to call me. I welcome your input. I can be reached by telephone at 378-8789, or by writing to H292 State Capitol, Salem, Oregon 97310.

Salem scene:

20-year tax battle rages

by JACK ZIMMERMAN
Associated Oregon Industries

A number of the '63-session's members are still involved in state government, including Gov. Vic Atiyeh, who was a member of the House of Representatives then. Furthermore, Atiyeh played lead roles in comparative events then and now.

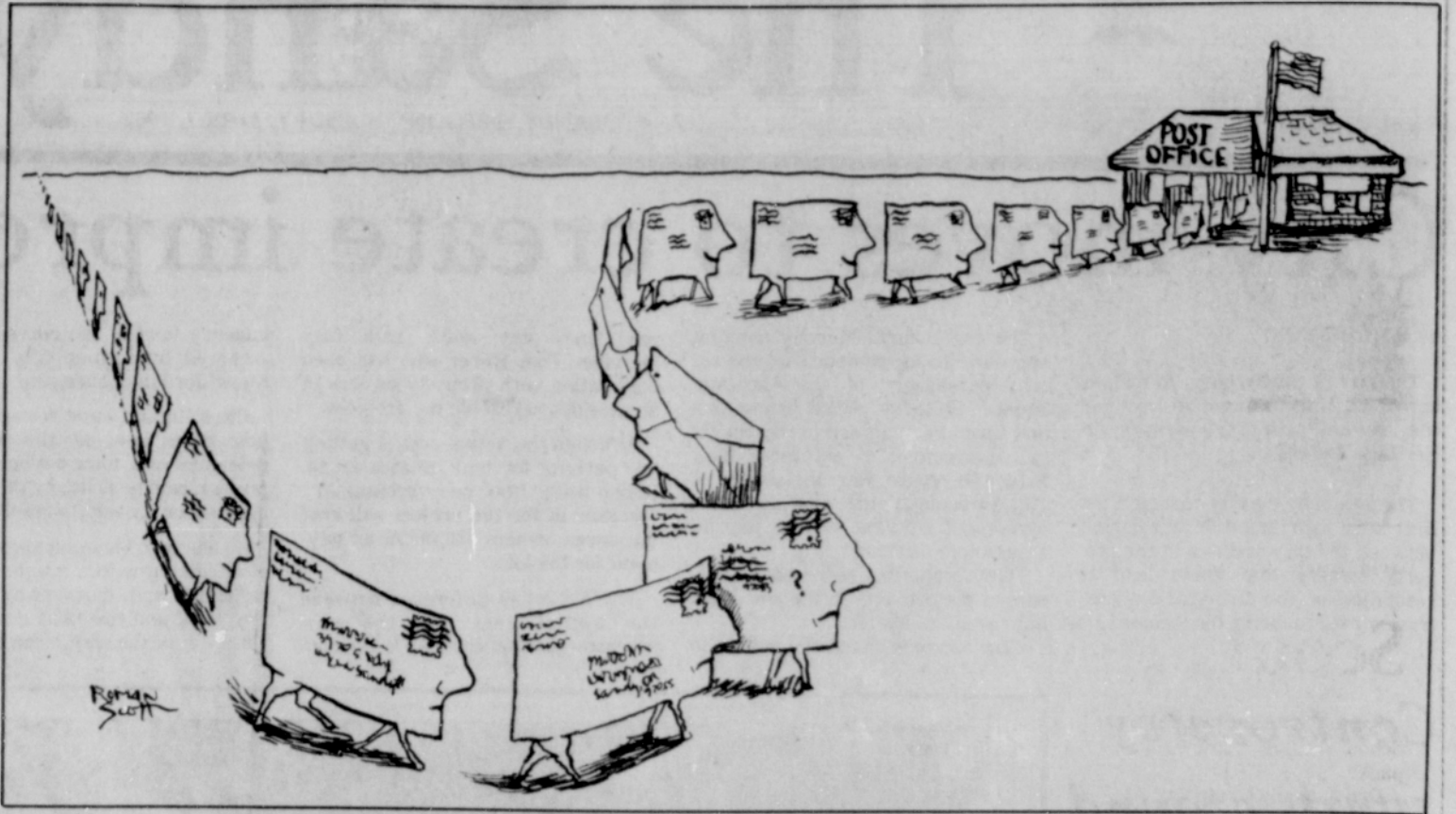
By way of scene-setting, Oregon had a Republican Governor in 1963. He was now U.S. Senator Mark Hatfield. The state also had a GOP Secretary of State, Howell Appling, and GOP Treasurer, Howard Belton. Three of five of our highest elective offices were held by Republicans but the Legislature was controlled by Democrats.

Today four of those five offices are again occupied by GOPs and Democrat majorities rule both legislative chambers. In 1963 the Senate split was identical to the 21-9 majority Demos enjoy today. The 1963 House was more closely divided—31 Democrats and 29 Republicans—compared to the 36 Democrats and 24 Republicans currently seated in the lower chamber.

When that '63 session convened, it faced a potential deficit for the ensuing biennium, the same type of problem current lawmakers are struggling to overcome. Gov. Hatfield was proposing increased taxes to balance the budget—as has Gov. Atiyeh this session.

Hatfield's proposed tax boosts didn't set well with the '63 Demo majority, especially in the Senate, where Pres. Ben Musa from The Dalles held sway. House Speaker then was Clarence Barton of Coquille. The feuding and disagreements between Senate president, House speaker and governor are reminiscent of events currently transpiring between holders of those positions.

So in 1963, Oregon faced a budgetary shortfall and the GOP Governor proposed to satisfy it by raising taxes—same as this year. The 52nd Assembly struggled 141 days, then the longest session on record, to achieve a compromise tax boost settlement. It was referred by initiative and defeated at a special election in October of that year.



Letters to the editor:

Water voters not warned?

Note water vote

In the last three months the citizens and students of the Mount Hood area have been the victims of a group of youthful vandals. The Welches School was defaced twice. Outraged by this destruction, a group of citizens joined together to offer a reward and to help patrol the school grounds at night. Unfortunately, on March 29, we were victimized again. The vandals this time were not youths, but rather voting-age residents who defaced not a school but the integrity of our polling booths.

The current battle on the mountain revolves around the issue of private versus public water, and it involves the right of the citizens to participate in the decisions that will affect them.

For the last three special service district elections, the board of the Mt. Hood Loop Water District has failed to notify the residents that the elections were taking place. Because of this failure to fulfill their duty, no names could appear on the ballot.

Five concerned citizens—Shirley Dueber, Marilyn Leslie, Harold Cox, Bob Brown, and Karla Estes—attempted to wage a write-in campaign to preserve the people's right to have public, not private water.

Then an opposing slate of "pro-private water" people arose, and it was these names which were illegally and unethically written in-

to the election books in five out of six polling booths. Because of this unfair advantage, three of their four candidates were elected.

A complaint has been filed with the Secretary of State, Clackamas County Elections Department and Senator Steve Starkovich's office.

How do we instill the values of justice, honesty and fair-play in our young, when the adults say that it is wrong to deface a school, but that it is not wrong to deface the electoral process?

We may not be a city yet, but some people are already calling us "little Chicago."

Carolyn T. Smith
Welches

SUHS levy high

When you go to the polls to vote for the budget for the high school this year for 1983 and 1984, please remember we are now paying approximately \$5,000 per student in a public school which is more than the amount which a private school would charge per student for the year.

I see no reason why we should appropriate any more money for the operation of Sandy Union High when we did in the year 1981/1982. The economic conditions do not allow the ordinary taxpayer who may be out of a job, on welfare or on unemployment insurance, perhaps not able to pay his taxes at the present time, goodness knows, we need no more

financial burden placed on us.

Thank you.
Fred W. Dalziel
Corbett

Elect Hoard

This past school year I have had the pleasure of working with a dynamic lady, Debra Hoard. Under her leadership and concern for the school the Sandy Elementary Parents-Teachers Club was very active and productive.

This year the club has earned funds enough to purchase new stage curtains, so the students could use their own stage for programs, and a new copy machine to replace an outdated ditto machine. Debra gets things done!

Besides the fund-raisers, Debra has held several assemblies for the students and always has been available. She is responsible and reliable.

Debra is running for Position 4 of the Sandy Elementary School Board. The board has five positions and makes decisions for Firwood, Sandy Elementary and Kelso Grade Schools.

Four of the positions are held by Firwood parents. One of these four is Position 4. These people make decisions concerning our children and I can't think of a better representative for Sandy Elementary than Debra Hoard.

Gail Van Daam
PTC Secretary
Sandy Elementary

Nix nuke dump

One hundred forty gallons a minute of radiotoxic water has been draining into a sand trench at Hanford, Washington for the last four years—or the last ten years—depending on which Hanford UNC Nuclear Industries spokesperson you believe.

That leak was repaired last February—or will be this coming April or May—again, depending on which Hanford official you choose to believe.

The lethal water "may be going into the ground, but we are not sure," one spokesperson said.

Another said the repair work they did last February allowed them to confirm none of the water had leaked into the ground.

One of the officials said "no uncontrollable radioactive water reaches the nearby Columbia River."

I wonder what Hanford officials believe "uncontrollable radioactive water" is? I also wonder how such a leak could go on for four years while Hanford officials were doing no more than "keeping an eye on it," according to UNC Nuclear Industries spokesperson Karen Scotti.

UNC Nuclear Industries contracts to run the N-Reactor at Hanford. The N-Reactor can produce either electricity or weapons-grade plutonium, the most lethal element known to human beings and one that takes hundreds of centuries before it is no longer deadly.

And Hanford is one of the two sites considered the most likely to be tabbed as permanent nuclear waste disposal sites in the United States.

The whole nuclear business at Hanford sends chills down my spine.

Spent fuel rods from the N-Reactor are now stored in a storage basin composed of a number of huge concrete tanks. The N-Reactor's storage tank is the one that leaked somewhere between 250 and 300 million gallons of radiotoxic water over the past four years.

This is the same N-Reactor that is now being readied for renewed plutonium production at Hanford. The renewed plutonium production results from the defense posture of the current federal administration which calls for a large build up of nuclear weapons.

And Hanford is one of the two sites considered the most likely to be tabbed as permanent nuclear waste disposal sites in the United States.

That's why I'm a co-sponsor of Senate Bill 270 that will establish a committee of Oregon legislators and private citizens to study the impact of renewed plutonium production at Hanford.

I intend to use the senate hearings on that bill to begin a public review of the safety standards applied at Hanford and the health and environmental dangers imminent in that renewed production.

Ruth McFarland
State Senator
Boring

Personally speaking:

Some cats best locked under house

Some people in Brightwood think our only life's battle at Timberline Rim involves water. Either they fear we'll get too much, should it flood again, or not enough if the old pump gives out once more.

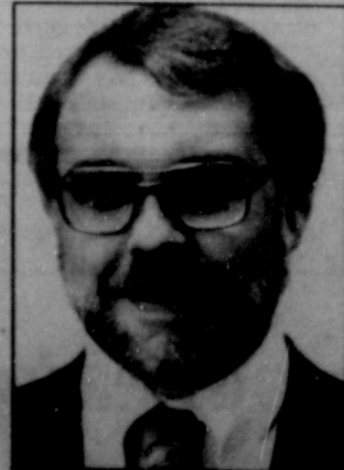
On my street, however, the only clear and present danger is cats.

Perhaps, I should say, just one cat. The calico grandma feline, that cleaned up on neighborhood dogs that wandered our way, has gone into hiding. Even my big black tom cat and a hefty Siamese tom faded after recent "cat wars." Only one cat rules the roost now.

The whole nightmare began last winter, when I boarded up a hole in the side of the house where I crawled to fix water pipes. I feared frozen pipes while away a week, but a new fear entered when I returned.

I was alerted to a strange animal sound coming from under the house. When I pulled the boards away, a huge snarl of angry hisses forced past me.

It huddled a safe distance in the



by VON BRASCHLER

woods out back and demanded food as some sort of war reparations for his accidental imprisonment. Guess a beast would get hungry, surviving a good share of its short cat life on whatever bugs it could pounce on in the dark under my house.

So I'd put out a little dish of milk with cat crunchies to soothe his savage breast. Only that wasn't enough. Soon he wanted

all the food from my cats on the porch, too. Then he dove into the local dog dishes.

No one argued. If anyone or anything tried getting close to him, he'd snarl and back up in that universal arched-back effect, symbolic of freedom-loving cats: "Tread not on me! Hiss..."

Now if Mount Hood blew, sending mud-flow down our river in back, we'd have a LITTLE warning. If the river flooded as it did here a short generation ago, we'd have a little warning, then, too.

(I mean, any fool here can walk the area and see foundations, pipes and fence from the recent flood that destroyed a previous civilization. Any fool can note how many of the houses here sit inside the 200-year and even 100-year flood plane, plotted on a mud-flow with a dry stream bed running through some of the neighborhood.)

There's even a little warning when the development's old pump gives out and hits us with the reverse effect of no water. I mean, it's happened before.

(Although a new pump at the Rim now will help lessen this scare.)

Cruel nature and mechanical system failures at least give us a LITTLE time to prepare for disaster. Not so with a crazed wild cat.

Egore, as the monstrous ball of fur was tabbed by watchful neighbor kids, struck with switch-blade claws at anything that got in his path. Cooped under my house unmercifully, he apparently had no mercy for any creature—man nor beast—that threatened his freedom.

Soon he took over the shaded tree stump where my sloppy black tom and his retarded sleepy sister used to start their daily races to the top of the 100-foot cedar tree out front. Soon even the neighborhood dogs paid Egore homage by walking around his bubble of influence.

So the pecking order hereabouts has been redefined and observed by all. We all give that cat lots of freedom.

Only now Egore wants to come into my house to prowl. I'm afraid to let him in.