

The Sandy Post

Editorial & Opinion

Scott Newton, editor

Oregon lottery isn't problem-free

The Oregon lottery is being promoted as a way to build a "stronger economy," and store owners have been ballyhooing its potential for generating foot traffic.

With an estimated 2 million tickets sold the first day — and the public's support (66 percent) of the ballot measure last fall — it is obvious that the people of the state like the idea of a lottery.

We agree that it doesn't hurt for people to spend a certain amount of their income on entertainment, and gambling — whether it is playing the dogs or scratching numbers off a ticket — is a fun and exciting way to do that. It makes, of course, for good conversation and good-natured joking. For example, "When I win the jackpot..."

There are, unfortunately, a few people who cannot handle it. While buying an occasional lottery ticket is a diversion for most people, it is an obsession for some.

According to "Dave" at Gamblers Anonymous, the concept of lottery tickets triggering a gambling problem is not farfetched.

He said one can determine if gambling is a problem in two ways. Neglect of family members and quickly-spent paychecks characterize compulsive gamblers.

For people who do recognize they, or someone in their family, is having a problem, Gamblers Anonymous is listed in the Portland telephone book. Help is available immediately. People from across the state have sought help from the organization.

Commentary

Japanese promises prove to be empty

by BOB PACKWOOD
U.S. senator

In recent weeks, the topic of U.S. trade with Japan has dominated television newscasts, talk shows, headlines and articles in newspapers, and feature stories in magazines.

What touched off the firestorm of protest against the Japanese was not the announcement last month that they would abandon their "voluntary" import quota on Japanese automobiles. Rather it was the growing perception in Congress that while the U.S. market is open to competitive Japanese exports, such as autos, competitive U.S. exporters do not have a fair shot at selling in the Japanese market. What's more, the Japanese appear to be deserting one of the more solid "good faith" agreements to open up their market.

The issue we're now facing is what we should do about the accelerating U.S.-Japan trade deficit that last year reached an unprecedented \$37 billion. In simple terms, that means we bought \$37 billion more of Japanese automobiles, cameras, video recorders and other products than they spent on American products.

According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, from 1975-1977, the U.S.-Japan bilateral trade imbalance averaged \$5 billion; from 1978-1980, \$10 billion, and from 1981-1983, \$17 billion. Even more frightening, the Commerce Department predicts that by 1990, the trade deficit will climb as high as \$87 billion.

There are several reasons for the rapid growth in the trade deficit, including the high value of the dollar, which makes our exports more costly and imports more price competitive. However, the principal reason for the most recent expression of outrage by many of my congressional colleagues and members of the business community is the reluctance on the part of the Japanese government to allow new products into their markets.

The problem of access to Japanese markets is not a new one and past solutions to that problem helped cause the current frustration. In past years, the Japanese have in fact agreed to open their markets to more U.S. products.

However, those American-made products lucky enough to crack the Japanese market are often held hostage by many regulatory, business and cultural barriers that further restrict market penetration. These barriers work against the goals of free trade by making trade with Japan a one-way street.

We allow all manner of Japanese products on our shelves and in our display cases while the Japanese pick and choose among the few American products they are willing to promote. It is this protectionist behavior on the part of Japan — while American goods go unsold — that makes my blood pressure rise.

All of this recent uproar has caused the Congress to take certain specific steps. The Senate Finance Committee has approved a bill that, in a nutshell, asks the President to take retaliatory measures against the Japanese within 90 days if the Japanese fail to open their markets. Current law gives the President authority to retaliate when foreign countries fail to provide U.S. exporters "fair and equitable" market access.

Critics of the legislation claim that it smacks of protectionism, and that we would in effect be putting barriers up around our country by refusing Japanese imports. I am not an advocate of protectionism. I have no objections to importing Japanese automobiles, cameras and other manufactured goods. Last year, primarily because of my firm belief in free trade, I opposed legislation requiring that most automobiles sold in the U.S. be manufactured with a certain percentage of U.S. parts and labor.

All we're asking the Japanese is that they open some of their markets to products in which the United States has a competitive edge, especially the areas of forest products, citrus, beef and tobacco. We want the same treatment given to American-made products in Japan that Japanese products currently enjoy in this country.

I'm tired of Japan's empty promises to "Buy American." The Japanese have strung us out too long — the rubberband has snapped. We want action.

Policy on letters

Letters to the editor should be typed, double-spaced and signed. An address and telephone number should also be provided, although only the name of the letter writer and the city or area he is from will be published.

Letter writers may also wish to include a title or office held if it is appropriate considering the subject matter.

The news deadline of noon, Tuesday is also the deadline for letters to the editor.

Letters should be accurate, free of libelous remarks and in good taste. This newspaper attempts to publish all letters it receives from local residents. We reserve the right to edit letters to conform to style guidelines or for length. A preferred maximum length is 300 words.

Where to write

Senator Steve Starkovich
S-223 State Capitol
Salem, Ore. 97310
378-8810

Representative Bob Shiprack
H-292 State Capitol
Salem, Ore. 97310
378-8784



Personally Speaking

Problems accompany country lifestyle



by Helen Unger

Three years ago I traded a typical three bedroom suburban ranch-style house for a small one with two bedrooms on two and a third acres in the "boonies."

Since then I have asked myself many times why we made such a drastic change.

It all started with a desire to raise our children in the country. We wanted fresh air, a slower lifestyle, to raise our own food and become more self-sufficient. All of which sounds good, but no one told us what we were in for.

I won't go into the move, except to say we moved 65 rabbits without a magician. After we got ourselves, kids, chickens, rabbits and cats transplanted, came to the real fun: reducing our household goods from 1,500 square feet to 600 square feet. Our new home didn't have much storage so we indiscriminately put things into boxes and stored them on shelves in the garage.

That solved the storage problem — until we needed something. After buying the third bottle brush (each was dutifully returned to somewhere in the garage), I finally spent a day organizing the boxes.

That finished, I looked around and discovered a dozen more problems to take its place. However, it was such a beautiful day, I decided to ignore everything and, book in hand, I went in search of a lawn chair.

Looking around the yard for a shady spot I realized I had been so immersed in the storage problem I had ignored the outside. The front yard was done in "early puppy" and reminded me of a mine field from World War II. I shrugged and headed for the back only to find it was done in "backhoe." A beautiful sea of hard-

packed clay was decorated with brush piles. It resembled the aftermath of Mt. St. Helen's. So that's where all the dirt had been coming from! Have you ever tried to remove dried red clay from the tiny holes in the soles on tennis shoes? Discouragement began to rear its ugly head. But we had over two acres, surely somewhere there was a spot to sit!

Sighing deeply I headed for the woods. But after countless years of debris falling to the forest floor there weren't many level places. When I did find a suitable place it was only to discover there was no breeze to move the heavy air and soon I was being mauled by a horde of insects.

Well, if I couldn't read, then I should at least do something constructive. Since we live on a gravel road one job I can usually count on needing to be done is dusting. I checked the top of the piano. It didn't have anything growing there (my

usual indication of needing a dust job), but someone had written, "Test dirt — do not remove." A gentle hint? I thought about writing "okay" and leaving it, but changed my mind.

While dusting I noticed that our platoon of spiders had been busy. Halfway through my "web-removal campaign" I heard a commotion outside. Four of our turkeys had escaped from their pen. Well, I'm learning to be a farmer, so I went outside to put them back.

Sounds so easy! After chasing them for about 10 minutes, I finally caught one! I picked him up and started for the pen. That's when I learned there is a right way and wrong way to pick up a 15-pound turkey. The correct way is to pin the wings to its body. Otherwise, you too will find out what it feels like to be beaten about the head and shoulders with flapping wings. I made sure the next one's wings were securely pinned to his body!

The last one captured, I sat on the front step to cool off and enjoy the quietness of the country. Wrong! Who said the country is quiet? I'd like to have a chat with him. That day you could hear the buzz of a chainsaw, kids screaming at the top of their lungs, dogs barking, a goat bleating, our rooster crowing, and his harem cackling. The same person who believes the country is always quiet is responsible for the propaganda that roosters only crow at dawn. To take over at night, we have a symphony of frogs, crickets and an unknown bird that calls forlornly.

I decided the only solitude I was likely to get would be in my newly-installed tub. The freshly plastered walls brought to mind the fiasco of installing this luxury item.

Our house didn't have a tub when we moved in, so after eight months with no bath — don't worry, I did take a shower or two in that time — we started to work putting in a tub. I found this lovely tub at a second hand store — a bargain at only \$15. I paid for it and made arrangements for my husband to pick it up the next day. That night, I told Tom about this beautiful big tub I found "...and it was made by 'Crane,' which everyone knows is a good manufacturer," I said.

The next day, Tom took the station wagon to pick it up. When he returned home the first thing he said was, "I know why it's called a Crane — it takes one to move it!" It seems my magnificent bargain was cast iron and in the words of my husband, "...weighs about 600 pounds."

When they put it in the back of the wagon, it dug two grooves down the metal floor. How did we get it out of the car? Well, we managed to put one end on the ground and then drove out from under it.

Getting it in the bathroom was a real trip. We had to take out the door, door frame and six inches of wall.

As the water ran I looked in the mirror. My face was streaked with dirt and a turkey feather clung to my disheveled hair. I flicked it into the waste basket and didn't even bat an eye at the mouse as he ran back into his corner.

The screen door slammed and my son brought in a 10-foot garter snake. (Okay, okay, would you believe 10 inches?) Having shown me this treasure he was back outside calling to his sister at a decibel level that would have made DEQ cringe.

Life in the woods — I wonder if it prolongs your life?

Letter to the editor

Meetings are a sham; public has no voice

I believe the letter April 25 concerning Sandy High budget committee meetings deserves a reply. The writer was shocked to see only a handful of people at the meeting, and I agree. Why don't people participate? I know several people who would attend but feel the meetings are a sham.

My Webster dictionary defines budget as "a financial statement of estimated income and expenses for a period of time." Please note it is not part, or half, but the total financial statement. At Sandy High the budget committee reviews only a small part of the budget — approximately 30 percent, the other 70 percent is untouchable.

For example, on page 8 of the budget document 1985-86, you will note salaries at \$2.3 million and employee benefits \$873,517, for a total of \$3.2 million. These amounts are

known as untouchables. If you subtract the \$3.2 million from the total budget (page 9) of \$4.9 million you will find the budget committee is working with only \$1.7 million.

Now subtract from the \$1.7 million fixed costs such as insurance, heat, books, maintenance, etc., and the budget committee is working with approximately \$900,000, a small fraction of the total budget.

I have personally attended every board meeting and budget meeting since last fall (except April 22) and often feel my time is not productive. It appears to me the taxpayers (including myself) have neglected school board meetings so long we have lost control except for our right to vote down tax levies, and that privilege will be lost if the proposed sales tax is approved.

John King
Sandy