

The Sandy Post

Editorial & Opinion

Scott Newton, editor
Kimberly Nelson, advertising representativeBase hard sell
on performance

A lot of people are feeling anger and/or guilt over the closure of schools, but the campaign to get voters to approve the Sandy Elementary District's levy on Dec. 3 would be better served with rational thought rather than by appealing to people's emotions.

Some people are angry because they feel a sense of betrayal, while others wish they would have done more, and thus feel guilty. Some may regret not having voted; 56 percent did not make the trip to the polls.

The 35-vote margin shows the importance of participation in our democratic system, and that is the most important lesson we can learn from this fiasco. It is important to learn the issues and to vote, and not just in school elections.

There are times when only a few votes make a difference.

Some people worked hard for passage of the Nov. 5 levy. Members of parent-teacher groups made hundreds of telephone calls and covered spacious neighborhoods on foot. Information on the issues was available and, in the final analysis, the majority voted no.

There are probably 1,304 reasons why people voted no, but a prevalent one was as a protest for high property taxes. This is a problem for the state of Oregon, and not just residents of Sandy.

Other reasons include the perception — whether valid or not — that local schools could educate students for less. Others are unhappy about the district's reassignment of administrators. Some believe that the board of directors could have kept sports and made cuts elsewhere. The list goes on and on.

The basis of good public relations is responsible performance. Based on performance, we believe more people were happy with the district than were dissatisfied.

We don't believe there are people voting no because they don't believe in education, only people who can't afford their taxes, and thus our plea to make this a rational campaign, not an emotional one.

Those of us who will be supporting the Dec. 3 levy need to channel our anger into political activism — which is not a dirty word — and work just a little harder to convince people we do have a good school system, one that deserves to be in operation.



Personally speaking

Gardeners suffer in the off season

by JUDE RAMSAY JENSEN

You won't find it listed in any journal of the American Medical Association. It has no entry in any diagnostic tome or medical dictionary. Although its limitation is not regional, it is a specific malady, affecting a select few of the population in every state where wintertime curtails outdoor gardening activities.

Its symptoms are easily recognizable, ranging from mild to severe: staring out of doors at the garden site, sometimes conjoined with visions of what the garden will look like next year; an irrefragable urge to unshovel tools from storage and DIG, TRENCH or SCRATCH in the soil; the frantic scribblings of plans on paper to incorporate everything in the known botanical world into the landscape; a well-defined restlessness, coupled with the desire to run screaming from the confines of the house to get DIRT on your hands.

It is called Catalogue Fever. Some of us try to alleviate the symptoms by moving our gardening activities indoors, but it's just not the same. There are no winds to ruffle the hair, no birdsong to delight the ear, no smell of sweet, rich earth to sustain

the sensory experience of gardening in the open. A few of us, harking back to our more primitive ancestries, have even been known to invoke sun dance rites to hasten the season and ease the symptoms of this wretched affliction. It is usually all for naught.

There is only one known cure, and it rests in the hands of the United States Postal Service. But be warned! The cure is almost as painful as the malady itself.

Those afflicted with Catalogue Fever find its onslaught begins in mid- to late-November, timed, not coincidentally, with the first releases from the seed companies, and continues, without respite, until the final catalogue arrives sometime in March.

While the malady runs its course, they find themselves watching the clock, waiting for mail time. As the hands sweep 'round the clock face, anxiety builds, tension mounts. When the golden hour arrives, they scurry to the mailbox, anticipating the silver lining of their storm-clouded mood.

The hand reaches into the mailbox, delightedly removes a seed catalogue, a nursery catalogue, and surreptitiously, its owner hikes back to the house bearing the treasured,

long-awaited catalogue under her/his arm. Ensnared in their most comfortable chair, a favorite brew (tea, coffee or something more spirited) close at hand, a notepad and pen resting nearby, the afflicted slowly opens the pages of the wishbook and, stopping only on occasion to wipe drool from the chin, begins making plans.

Check marks appear beside numerous entries, most of them illustrated in soul-wrenching photographs of perfect flowers, luscious-looking vegetables, and stately trees described in the detailed catalogue blurbs. From cover to cover, margins are violated as more X's appear. The dreams expand as the list on the notepad grows impossibly long and expensive. The patience of awaiting the arrival of spring to initiate those dreams grows thinner and thinner.

Then, when the last page is turned, the notepad filled, prudence takes over as the totalled price of all those seed packets hits home, and the budget-conscious side of the nature urges one to wait, to stay the hand from writing that check... just yet. Practicality reigns as the afflicted,

now past the raging peak of the fever, realizes that there are not enough spaces in the garden to house all those representative check marks. So the list is divided into three: The Needs; The Should-Haves; and The I-Don't-Need-But-Can't-Live-Withouts.

Before you know it, half the day has elapsed in fits of dreaming, in bouts of planning and foresight. The dishes and laundry are still stacked. The floors and windows still require attention. The mundane world beckons and, with a sigh, the afflicted gardener stares longingly out the window one last time and drains the dregs of cold coffee from the cup at hand.

Gathering up the papers and catalogue, sequestering them safely in a drawer to await the right moment to fill in that blank and endorse that check, the gardener finds some comfort in the knowledge that there will be another catalogue in the mail, maybe tomorrow, maybe next week, with perhaps better prices or more interesting varieties; some small measure of consolation in the watchphrase droning in the mind... "Patience is the gardener's best virtue."

Letters to the editor

Taxpayers, board
need new guidelines

The system isn't working and only a few people seem concerned. I refer to closure of the elementary school Nov. 8, leaving our children out of school and teachers unemployed.

I believe the elementary schools closed because the pipeline of communication between the school board and the taxpayers failed. Voters rejected the levy three times. Yet the school board sent the same levy back for yet another vote. Yes, I know the levy was reduced over \$100,000, but what kind of a reduction is that compared to a \$5 million budget?

I understand the procedure is for the school board to agree on a budget, calculate the levy, then send it to the taxpayers for approval — a vote. If voters agree, the levy passes. If taxpayers disagree, the levy fails, indicating the levy is too high. When a levy fails the school board, acting on direction from the voters, are supposed to reduce the levy and put it out

for a second vote. Obviously the procedure isn't working.

Based on our recent experience, it appears there is a communication problem between the taxpayer-voter and the school board. To remedy this problem can't guidelines be established such as a NO vote signals a \$500,000 reduction, or 10 percent, and a second NO vote a 20 percent reduction?

Now that government subsidies are dwindling, the levy process will be with us for a long time to come. I think we should take steps now to see that the Nov. 8 fiasco isn't repeated. Get out the vote, and over-taxed people should get their message to the school board. School boards are responsible to we the people and not necessarily the request of school administration.

We purpose to pinpoint some of the waste we see now within the system.
C.B. Koenig
Sandy

Children cheated

One thing parents around the world have in common is a fear that their children might some day become the victim of a crime. Well, a crime has not been committed but all the same, our children in this district have become innocent victims in a protest against something they have absolutely no power or control over.

Our children have been cheated out of an uninterrupted education and believe me, they are not the only ones who will suffer for it! I urge every one of you, as well as my own family,

to become familiar and knowledgeable with every one of our legislators, their opinions and beliefs, their abilities and ideas in providing a better tax system.

If they aren't willing to listen, maybe we should take our frustrations out on them instead of the innocent. This is something we will not forget and will be a long time getting over!

Kris Davis
PTC president
Sandy Elementary

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 of the letter.

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 area 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

Representative Bob Shiprack
22610 S. Forest Park Rd.
Beavercreek, Ore., 97004

Senator Steve Starkovich
52 Willamette Green
Canby, Ore., 97013

Personally speaking

Sharing a home can improve a person

by JOY WOOD

Just in case you don't know, or haven't noticed, I thought I'd tell you that I am a whole new person these days.

In the last six months, since my daughter and her husband and their three sons have been living with me, I have changed. It's like a complete metamorphosis has occurred.

I can now write phone messages legibly with a crayon, in place of the pen that I always used to have lying on the phone table. And I know that in a hurry, when I'm to take a message on the phone, that I can always pretty quickly find a stub of a crayon under one of the chairs in the living room. The color doesn't matter, either, as long as it just isn't the same color as the envelope, or whatever I find to put the note on. If I look around I can usually find some junk mail stashed somewhere.

The volume of my voice has increased at least 10 fold. Shouting to get above the volume of the TV, and children conversing, or wrestling, and/or downright fighting, is very

good exercise for your breathing.

My nerves have improved also. I don't even flinch any more when the clock falls off the wall or the front door is slammed. Nor scream when kittens climb up my pantyhose while I'm standing at the sink (The 11 cats and kittens that they moved in with are now down to four). And pictures and lamp shades look sort of interesting hanging as they do at odd angles. I don't even need to talk to my plants anymore. They have had lots of stimulation in the hubbub. And they seemed to have survived and thrived in spite of being knocked over, and down, and repotted now and then. Of course, I lost a few, but no matter.

As far as education goes, I now know what Go-Bots, Transformers and Big Foots are. And the Popeye cartoons are much better than they used to be when my children were small. You can get a pretty fair education about all these things on Channel 12 from 6 to 9 a.m.

In addition to their three boys, my daughter has been baby-sitting another daughter's three children, ages 2, 4 and 6. And I have been busying them to kindergarten three days a week. I feel that I have developed

nerves of steel, and learned all over again to admire school papers where six apples are colored red and four flowers are yellow, and so forth. And the new stickers teachers use these days! It's enough to make you want to go back to school yourself!

My son-in-law and I hardly speak at all these days, but he's very good about helping to get the wood in, and with the housework, when he gets home from work at night. I think we both have been too set in our ways. We've both had to give a lot in order to share the same house. When he has offended me he has brought me a rose and a card of apology. And when I feel that I've gone too far, I try to fix it by baking bread and some cinnamon rolls or a pie.

Their new house will be finished and they will be in it by Thanksgiving. We are planning a housewarming party for them. All the rest of the family, as many as can make it, are coming to help them celebrate. They will bring gifts for the new house, and we will have an old-fashioned housewarming. And I am going to celebrate a new-fashioned "house cooling!"

I dearly love my children, but I will be so happy to see them in their own

house. I really realized it this morning when I got up. I had gone to bed with my brand new 100 percent nylon rain hat on. I guess I had put it on when one of the children had been playing with it, and I had just bought it to wear to Sabbath school and church. I wanted to really thank the Lord for his blessings that we have all survived this melee. If that's the right word for it. Interim? Togetherness?

Maybe sharing is the best word. Although I'll admit I was selfish about my toothbrush when the baby tried to use it.

As far as damage goes, only two screens and one window need replacing. That's not bad, even for a normal house full of people.

And, oh, I can't find the scissors, or the hammer, but they should be showing up any time now, somewhere or other. They were lost when they came to stay with me, anyway.

One thing I have come to understand at last is why my mother used to hide her tools and treasures under her bed! As soon as they get moved, I've got to get under my bed and maybe I'll find those scissors, or at least the hammer!