

Editorial & Opinion

Scott Newton, editor
Kimberly Nelson, advertising representative

Tax proposal is risky business

Tri-Met is riding a crest of public support that can largely be laid at the tracks of its successful light rail transit system.

But before Tri-Met implements a proposed change in its payroll tax, which provides for 60 percent of its revenue, the transit system should recall the days when the public attitudes were not nearly so positive.

A change in Tri-Met's payroll tax — which is a 0.6 percent assessment against payrolls paid by businesses operating within the transit district — has been suggested. The change would reduce the payroll tax to 0.3 percent and establish a 0.3 percent income tax for those residents of the transit district.

For one, Tri-Met General Manager James E. Cowen has never been a proponent of payroll taxes — in fact, he has publicly offered outspoken opposition to the tax.

But altering Tri-Met's payroll tax to a mixed payroll/income tax might be likened to attempting to change horses in midstream or, at the very least, trying to ride two horses across the stream when one will do just fine. Why ask for trouble?

Cowen was recently quoted as saying his agency serves a population area with more than 1 million people, and added that he region has 750,000 experts on mass transit.

A switch to a small income tax would accentuate the attention and potential criticism those 750,000 experts give Tri-Met. At least for the majority of Portland-area residents, the taxing authority of Tri-Met is a mystery and as a result is not on their list of transit complaints. That taxing anonymity would be removed once the line "Tri-Met Tax" started appearing on individual taxpayers' income tax forms.

Of course, the issue is more focused in Sandy. Many people were shocked when former State Senator Steve Starkovich pointed out the high cost of Tri-Met to the community. Bob Kintigh, who currently serves District 14 in the senate, is carrying on the battle.

Most people in Sandy would like out of the Tri-Met taxing district completely. Kintigh says that Tri-Met collects \$1,800,000 in taxes from the area and provides about \$800,000 worth of service.

Kintigh believes the service could be provided for much less than \$800,000.

Regardless of the outcome of Kintigh's efforts, the income tax should be scrapped.



Louie the dog may not be that dumb

People laugh at my dog. I began to figure out why the other day when I heard my pooch screaming and yelping. She was running for dear life across the yard, being chased by a bunny rabbit.

It was a brown and white bunny about half Louie's size. Louie is my dog. The rabbit's name is Freckles. He lives next door. So far as I know, he is not a vicious bunny rabbit.

Now right here, we're going to have to straighten something out. There are many of you out there who think that all animals are noble. Some are noble, sure. Lassie always was. But I believe animals are just like people — a splendid mix of the goofy, the pleasant, the bland, the eccentric and the dumb. Louie falls into the latter category. She is a nice dog, but she is a klutz.

She will not, for instance, walk past the dishwasher. If Louie wants to get to her favorite footstool in the family room, she has no choice but to walk past the appliance. But Louie once heard the dishwasher make a strange noise and she is convinced that dishwashers eat dogs for dinner. So she will only scurry past if she is



Sharon Nesbit

faced with a greater menace, a human hustling her along shouting encouragement and/or threats. If we forget to herd our dog to the family room, she sits on the far side of the dishwasher and whines pathetically.

Louie's paranoia leads her to believe that waxed floors are hazardous to canines, so she circumnavigates polished linoleum by hopping from rug to rug. It complicates the furniture arrangement because you can never have your rugs more than a dog hop apart.

Occasionally she can be coerced to step out onto the shiny surface of the tile floor in pursuit of a peanut. But when she does, she behaves — as my grandmother would say — like a pig on ice.

And the other thing Louie does strangely is that she smiles. It's a grin, really. She peels back her lips and gives people this toothy grin, wheezing and snorting and wagging her tail. It causes some people to think she is rabid or at least slightly mad.

None of this would matter so much if Louie didn't look like a dog nerd. She is a round, black sausage perched on skinny little legs. She has a tiny head, the better to contain her tiny brain, and a ridiculous fluffy tail that plumes over her back like a messy fountain. We had her neutered right away because we knew we didn't want any more like her.

To give you some idea, the young man, Terry, who comes to our house with No. One Kid and who wants to make a good impression on us, even he laughs at our dog. Worse, he is a lawyer, so he impugns and maligns our dog.

The best we can say in defense of Louie is that she is harmless and appears to be devoted to us, smiling each time we return to the house. But it gets tedious beating up bunny rabbits in her behalf.

We would never mistreat Louie. She gets our broccoli and steak scraps and she is, in fact, too fat. But occasionally Hubby and I pine for a real dog. A dog that barks when strangers come instead of smiling at them. A dog that will not shy away from a dandelion puff.

Naturally, Louie is a flop as a watch dog. Fortunately, Hubby is big and mean and has sharp teeth. And he is home most of the time to keep an eye on the house and protect the dog.

When you think about it, Louie may not be as dumb as she seems. Do you know any other creature that has managed to convince two perfectly bright human beings to defend it, give it police escorts past a bully of a dishwasher, arrange furniture for its convenience, feed and medicate it and take it to the vet and the dog beauty parlor for no recompense other than an ugly smile?

Letters to the editor

People do read Cummins' letters

For a long time (years), I wondered if anyone noticed the low caliber of education that was received in Welches and the Sandy High School District.

When my children were involved, the PTA and meetings were attended by myself and the children's dad. I was appalled when my two children kept losing interest in school.

I realize now, years later, that this is going on with many other children in this community also. Now, as adults, neither one of my children read any books ever, mostly because they don't read well.

I have asked both of them to look back on their education and give me some input. They do not have any positive things to say about the schools or teachers that were role models and very instrumental to the learning process.

I have read with much interest Mr. Cummins' articles and in answer to Pamela York's question, "Does anyone read his letters?" the answer is yes.

I read them and also many other people do with much interest. I admit it must be rather uncomfortable to local members of the NEA when a small town person is so correct in his statements.

P.S. "Ultra liberal militant" fits perfect, I might add.

Marie Richfield
Rhododendron

Family expresses its appreciation

We would like to express our thanks and appreciation to our many wonderful friends and relatives for all their prayers, moral support and endless hours spent with us at the hospital during Ken's illness.

Also, thank you for all of the beautiful flowers and cards and for the food and donations that were sent to us at the time of his death.

Just knowing that you cared and shared our feelings has been a comfort to us.

The family of Ken Burdick
Joyce, Jeffrey, Jamey, Justin
Jennifer and Kurt Swails
Sandy

Business owners say thanks

We would like to express our appreciation to all of the wonderful folks who stopped by for our grand opening. Your enthusiasm and friendliness has greatly encouraged us and we look forward to a long and enjoyable venture in Sandy.

Starting a new business is a very exciting, sometimes trying, adventure, but you have made all the hard work and long hours of preparation worth it. Thanks again!

Wally and Julie Morriss
Gene and Dolly Pratt
Sandy Mountain Traders

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. Letters should be 300 words long.

Where to write

State Representative Bob Shiprack, D-Dist. 23, 22610 Forest Park Rd., Beaver Creek, Ore., 97004. 631-3817.

State Senator Bob Kintigh, D-Dist. 14, 38865 E. Cedar Flat Road, Springfield, 97478. 746-1842.

Sen. Mark Hatfield, R-Oregon, 711 Hart Building, Washington, D.C., 20510. 202-224-3753. Portland office phone 221-3386.

Sen. Bob Packwood, R-Oregon, 259 Russell Building, Washington, D.C., 20510. 202-224-5244. Portland office phone 221-3370.

Wedding's true meaning is cornball

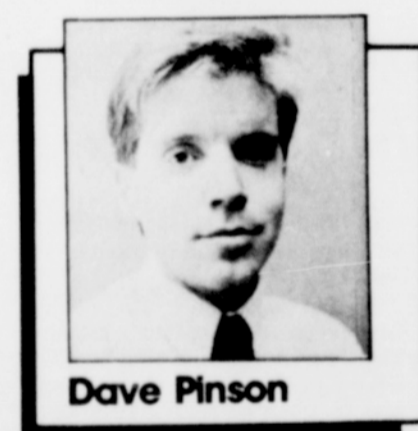
In the cop novel "The Choirboys" there's a character nicknamed Whaddayamean Dean. He's called that mostly because when he drinks alcohol he asks over and over "Whaddaya mean? Whaddaya mean?"

I feel the same about weddings. Whenever I attend or participate in a wedding, I wonder what it all means.

Sure, weddings mean flowers, tuxedos, bridesmaids, churches, presents, suits, ties, nylons, preachers, ministers, prayers, hopes, dreams and good intentions. I've wondered for many years, however, what it all means — the whole thing, the broad spectrum, the big picture, the bottom line. In other words, when you get married, whaddaya mean?

I recently stood up for my little brother, Tom, who decided many months ago that he wanted to marry his girlfriend, Janet. I'll admit, my bachelor attitude half-heartedly tried to talk him out of it. But, as I said, it was a half-hearted try; the boy was serious.

So I gave in to the inevitable. With pleasure, mind you. I doubt Tom could make a better choice than



Dave Pinson

Janet, who's blonde and loves the color pink. Tom and Janet go together like a matched set of salt and pepper shakers. She, the salt shaker, is neat and clean and manages the taste of things; he, the pepper mill, has a layer of seasoning dust on his top and sports a spicy past.

So anyway, when Tom asked me to be his best man I thought sure, why not? I'll get to wear a pink tuxedo.

I've been involved in a couple of weddings. This time I was the groomsman in charge. I carried the ring, rode roughshod over three

rapscallious ushers and generally made a nuisance of myself. I figured I'd have a good time and enjoy myself. And so I did. But, I wasn't prepared for what I got.

The wedding started out well. The wedding march was smoothly handled by all. Father Andy had his microphone warmed and raring to go and so we began.

"We do," said the parents of Janet and Tom. That was a highlight, the parents hit their cue. So far so good.

Then Father Andy went into his wedding blah, blah, blah about love and honor. Meanwhile, Janet's little tiny ring, stuck on my pinky, was quickly getting soaked with sweat. Great, I thought, I'm going to squirt that ring clear back to the holy water bowl when I hand it over. I hit upon a plan to place the little devil in the palm of my hand and let Father Andy have the responsibility.

Father Andy was still talking when one of Janet's pretty sisters swallowed the Sahara Desert. Cough, cough, cough. I thought, why doesn't someone get the girl some water? Cough, cough, cough. Are weddings so sacred that Carrie has to lose a lung before help arrives? Cough,

cough, cough. I watched Janet and saw her set her jaw and muscle her way through Carrie's lung rearrangement. I decided if she could do it, so could I and my anger faded.

It was about time for the ring trading and I followed my plan and didn't squirt the ring across the altar. Still trying to shake off the embarrassment I felt for Carrie, I then witnessed the true meaning of a wedding.

As corny as it sounds, and this sounds Grand Canyon corny, Tom and Janet almost brought me to tears during the ring portion of their wedding. Janet looked at Tom and Tom looked at Janet and you couldn't cut that moment with a Mack truck. At last I witnessed what weddings mean. Janet loves Tom and Tom loves Janet. Wow.

Anyway, the wedding ended and we all clapped our hands and they rushed down the aisle to form the receiving line. I escorted the lead bridesmaid out and those malcontent ushers followed suit. I overheard one of the boys say to Carrie: "Nice cough."

by Adam Kraft

Bobcats

