

The Sandy Post

Editorial & Opinion

Scott Newton, editor
Kimberly Nelson, advertising representative

Bashings are fun, but not productive

"Board bashing" may give people a sense of satisfaction, a feeling that they are getting even with "the government," but in fact it is an unproductive exercise.

People in Sandy have been in rare form more than a couple of times the past few years. The target is always a group of unpaid, dedicated board or city council members.

One classic board bashing was held in August 1982 when the Sandy High School board was faced with the prospect of delimiting programs to "A" and "B" ballots. One of the suggestions to come out of that meeting was that volunteers could work as bus drivers.

The largest "board basher" was probably the November 1985 meeting of the Sandy Elementary District board. Voters had just closed the schools and the board had to determine a dollar amount to put on the emergency levy request.

One of the suggestions to come out of that meeting was that volunteers could fix the schools' roofs.

It is amazing that there are such simple solutions to school funding problems.

Some board members rise to the occasion during board bashings. During a meeting in the summer of 1984, people who live along Bluff Road faced the prospect of increased taxes through a local improvement district to improve the road.

Dick Harrison, city councilor, changed the direction of the council with his now infamous quote. To vote against the project, backed by \$450,000 in federal funds, would be to vote for potholes on Bluff Road, he said.

Some board members actually seemed to get a kick out of board bashings. Much of the work done by governmental bodies is tedious, while board bashings have a carnival air.

But the work of boards, councils and budget committees is important and for that reason citizens should participate when decisions affect them.

Compared to other board bashings, Monday night's City Council meeting was a mere tremor — the topic of discussion was A-frame signs.

But one Sandy businessman's inference that the Sandy City Council is anti-business was unfair. Four of the City Council members have extensive business experience. Two of them have businesses outside the city limits, but to assert that they are not concerned with the Sandy business climate is a fallacy; their livelihoods are tied to it.

Two of the City Council members are employed by local school districts. To infer that those members don't care about the business climate is also unfair, especially since those two in particular have put in thousands of hours working for the city's benefit.

Interestingly enough, most board members have extremely thick skin.

The best way to contribute to public discussions is to do exactly what good board members do — prepare for the meeting.

Paid officials will take the time to explain the history of important, upcoming issues. The same reading material that is available to board members is also available to the public. (The exception, of course, is in matters of personnel, or of legal significance.)

While board bashing is fun, it is the voice of common sense that usually carries the day.

It is heartening enough to make a person believe in the democratic process.

Tax reconnection is revenue neutral

by GOV. NEIL GOLDSCHMIDT
Special for The Post

Now that April 15th has come and gone, I'm pleased to be able to share some good news with you about your taxes. Recently the House Revenue Committee, under the chairmanship of Rep. Carl Hosticka of Eugene, unanimously passed a measure that changes Oregon's income tax system to conform to the new federal income tax code. For the sake of simplicity alone, it's good public policy.

But more importantly, the measure does not create any new tax windfall for the state. Reconnecting the federal and state tax codes without any changes in the tax rates would result in an extra \$150 million in revenue this year or \$300 million for the biennium. Both during and after the campaign, I said that this money should go back to taxpayers rather than be used to increase state revenue.

As a major part of the 60-Day Agenda, I asked legislative leaders to agree that any reconnection be revenue-neutral. We promised we would not have our hand in taxpayers' pockets, and the Revenue Committee kept that promise.

Under this measure, the money will be returned to taxpayers through lower tax rates.

To achieve revenue neutral status, the upper tax rate of 10 percent was dropped to 8.95 percent. This will send a positive message to business as well as to individuals. Corporate rates also drop, from the current 7.5 percent to a rate of 6.6 percent. The impact on corporate rates is also

revenue-neutral. Some 654,000 Oregonians will pay slightly less state taxes under the measure, while only 242,000 would pay slightly more. Most taxpayers earning under \$40,000 per family would pay less, and taxpayers in the \$40,000 to \$50,000 bracket would be equally split.

The measure is up for a vote in the House and then moves on to the Senate.

One principle of the Oregon Comeback is that the government should make do with what it has. That's why the reconnection is revenue-neutral.

But government should also get what it is due.

So while I'm on the subject of taxes, I want to bring you up to date on our revenue enforcement plan.

It's estimated that at least \$25 million is slipping through the state government's fingers because it lacks the tools to effectively enforce our tax laws. An OSU study in the early 1980s indicated that perhaps 20 percent of taxpayers are cheating, and the number is growing.

That's why we have proposed legislation to turn that trend around.

I have asked the Legislature to beef up our enforcement capabilities and give delinquent taxpayers a chance to pay back taxes and interest without penalty. The result will be an estimated \$36 million in additional revenue due to the state government.

The Senate recently passed this "carrot and stick" approach to revenue enforcement by a wide margin, and the House is expected to give it prompt attention.



Car trips improve with age

Never say never, they say.

I can remember it as if it was yesterday. The car limping into the driveway. The doors flying open. Kids and debris spilling out onto the gravel. Dirty clothes. Gum-glued comic books. Stinky shoes and stale Coke cups avalanching out of the back seat.

"I will never," I said then, "go on an automobile trip again. If we can't afford to fly, we'll just stay home."

There were good reasons for that kind of parental pronouncement. Like the time No. Two Kid, who maintained a steadfast silence up to the age of 2, climbed into the back seat and for the next 1,000 miles yelled every word he knew into his father's ear.

Or when No. One Kid lost her baby tooth in the back seat before she had a chance to redeem it with the Tooth Fairy. Or the hundred times I threw myself over the front seat to separate the snarling, biting pair and drew a line down the middle of the back seat to create a demilitarized zone.

The way it worked out, by the time



Sharon Nesbit

the kids got big enough to be good company on automobile trips, they didn't want to go with us anymore.

So, tentatively at first, Hubby and I struck out alone on a road trip. What a revelation. It turned out that it was not the drive that drove us crazy, but the kids.

The backseat, once a jumbled mass of funny papers, hamburger wrappers and crayons, is now a rolling closet. It is also stocked with

magazines and puzzle books and a sack of lemon drops. Hubby and I get about 30 miles to a lemon drop.

Last week we took a road trip to Nevada. We sailed across the desert south of Burns at speeds we were ashamed to admit. No children in the back seat with eyes glued to the speedometer.

Over the years we have learned to calibrate our bathroom stops. No more hunting for a bush in the middle of a desert.

We fill the miles with long silences or punctuate them with discussions of roadside restaurants that serve the best hash browns. I read Hubby the Sunday funnies as we roll along. He complains when I do that at home; in the car it is OK.

We gaze out the window at hills purpled in sage brush or meadows carpeted in green and say dumb things like "ooh" and "ahhhh." And no kid in the back seat says, "I don't see what's so great about that."

And we take our collection of tapes — everything from Strauss to Sinatra — and hum and tap our way down the freeway. No one in the back seat

holds his hands over his ears and groans.

The other good part about traveling without kids is taking naps, though it works better if both parties don't nap at the same time. We take turns tipping the seat back and snoozing without guilt.

And we read bumper stickers and complain about people who feel it is necessary to let everyone know that they (heart) their Schnauzers. Or we laugh at the fellow whose bumper sticker warns: "Caution, I drive naked."

And no one in the back seat says, "What's so funny about that?"

When we get home, of course, the stuff spills out of the back seat. Funny papers and tourist brochures glued together with lemon drops. Pens and papers and stinky shoes. But it is our mess and we will clean it up gladly, already planning the next trip.

We call the kids and tell them we are home, what we did and how much we liked our trip and we get the distinct impression that they are glad they didn't go. And so are we.

Letters to the editor

Statue presents wrong image

I am writing about the planned erection of a bronze statue of a serviceman carrying an M-16. I am concerned by the image such a statue would present, especially as a memorial to those who have died in the service of their country.

The romantic and sentimental notion of the innocent, solitary serviceman, charging off into unknown danger to protect us, is a laudable one. However, it is a narrow, inaccurate representation. I find it difficult to connect such an image with the real pain and suffering of people who were literally blasted apart by the violence of war. It is a hypnotic offering to the imagined glories of battle, an old image, one of limited scope that leads to the unthinking perpetuation of war.

To be honestly representative, a memorial sculpture would have to portray disfigured, contorted, dead bodies — for that is what the memorial exists for, those who died. An homage to death, not life.

Such a sculpture would have the advantage of discouraging participation in this demoralizing activity —

war — without first realizing what the result of this involvement might be. The idea would undoubtedly be rejected by any City Council in the United States as unpatriotic and of dubious esthetics. I doubt that Sandy would want to present this image as its own.

But what of the planned statue? Is this the image the city wants to greet people with? Does this best represent the hopes and aspirations of the people of Sandy?

To honor correctly those who died, an effort should be taken to insure a memorial appropriate to the sacrifice involved. This may include a garden or perhaps a sculpture symbolizing the hope for the end of war. More in the spirit of peace. (The United Nations has a statue of swords being beaten into plowshares. I'm sure that Sandy would opt for a creative solution.)

I am not questioning the sincerity of the VFW or any other group. Having served in Vietnam myself, I understand the desire to pay tribute to those who died. However, I would hope the Sandy City Council could take the farsighted view and stand on its integrity to choose or allow an image more suitable to the consciousness of 1987.

"Let us not waste the lives of those that have died. Let us instead insure that none shall follow blindly, unthinking in pursuit of glories unfulfilled."

Peace.
Joseph Cotter
Eagle Creek

Self-fulfilling prophesy feared

I have a son who is a senior and a daughter who is a junior at Sandy High. I sat down with them and asked them to seriously consider how many teachers they have had that they would rate as poor, good, and exceptional.

My daughter rated one teacher as poor, four as exceptional, and the rest as good. My son rated two as poor, five as exceptional and the rest as good.

The exceptional teachers were distinguished by their ability to communicate knowledge, to inspire, to maintain order, and by their personal dedication. I think Sandy High is blessed with many fine teachers.

I went to a private high school and could only think of two teachers that I would consider exceptional. My wife and I feel that our children have gotten a good education at Sandy. I don't know why there is so much "bad-mouthing" of the schools in the Sandy area.

Our experience with Sandy High doesn't correlate with the opinions of those who say the school is no good. The district has lost a number of good teachers, and I am told that others are actively seeking employment elsewhere.

I do know that selling a home in this district is tough, due to our reputation of not supporting the schools. Constructive criticism is essential, but hateful condemnation is destructive. The "bad-mouthing" have persuaded some to believe the myth that Sandy schools are no good.

I fear that a "self-fulfilling prophesy" is in the works and may result in the school system becoming second rate, in time. It's hard to imagine what could be gained by that!

P.S. Hopefully the AEA will use the same formula everyone else uses to compare Sandy to other districts. Thanks, Connie Whitlock, for exposing their "error."

Bill Kruger
Boring

by Adam Kraft

Bobcats

