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Council sends gasoline tax to voters

Residents of the city of Sandy will vote on a 2-cent per-gallon gasoline tax in mail-in balloting that ends June 30.

The measure would raise about \$94,000 a year, City Manager Tom Reber said. The Sandy City Council voted unanimously Monday to put the measure on the ballot. The council has long had a goal of upgrading streets, and council members say a "user fee" is the fairest method of raising the necessary money.

Carl Leathers, owner of Leathers Oil Co., spoke in opposition to the measure at the

council meeting Monday. Referring to a proposed statewide fuel tax, Leathers said, "Between (Gov. Neil) Goldschmidt and Tom, we're going to pay a lot of gasoline taxes in this state."

Leathers said he was "amazed" that the city would bring the issue up again. A gas tax was rejected by the City Council in 1983 following a public hearing on the issue.

"I don't know why you're picking on the gasoline business. Why not have a 1 or 2 percent tax on all businesses?"

"You're going to kill the gasoline dealers

here. Maybe you don't believe it, but I do," Leathers said.

City Councilor Jim Duff said the council considered a serial levy to pay for street improvements.

"Which is the fairer tax?" Duff asked. "As a councilor that's what I have to look at and I think we've been told what people think about adding it to the property tax."

Mayor Deane Wesselink said some of the streets in Sandy are "atrocious."

"If (Sandy residents) don't want to repair them, we'll have to go along," he said.

The tax would be collected from fuel distributors, but it probably would be passed along to consumers at the pumps.

The City Council originally had intended to hold a public hearing on the gas tax and could have enacted it without sending it to voters.

But members of the budget committee balked at the idea and questioned the priorities in the council's budget.

In a budget committee hearing April 16, a compromise was worked out whereby \$38,941 was taken from senior citizen programs and

\$17,794 from recreation programs. That money then was placed in the street fund.

Budget committee members also recommended putting the gasoline tax to a vote of the people, and City Council members agreed to do so.

City councilors said Monday night that they had received numerous complaints about cuts in the senior center program. The council could choose to override the budget committee's decision to cut senior and recreation programs, Reber said.

Sandy will benefit from anniversary

Communities will be showcased at Timberline Lodge's celebration

Communities near Mount Hood, such as Sandy, will have a stake in Timberline Lodge's 50th anniversary celebration.

The resort and ski area is planning to give communities around the mountain an opportunity to participate in activities at the lodge and set up booths with information about the communities, said Bill Conerly, public relations coordinator for the lodge.

Conerly said it will be a good opportunity for communities such as Sandy and Hoodland — two of five or more that will be participating — to make presentations.

About a million people visit the lodge each year.

"All we've got to have is sunshine and we'll have a ton of visitors for Sandy people to greet face to face," Conerly said.

Sandy will be one of the first communities to participate so that the Mountain Festival can be showcased.

Sandy's weekend will be June 27 and 28. The Hoodland area's will be Aug. 8 and 9. Hood River, Cascade Locks and other communities also will be given a chance to participate.

Although plans are tentative, Conerly hopes to design commemorative "passports" to allow residents free chair lift rides and access to a community party where birthday cake will be served.

Conerly said communities will be able to develop their own plans for the party and he hopes they'll take advantage of the opportunity.

"We want them to participate in the birthday celebration," Conerly said. "We're all in this together, from the guy who's pumping gas to the

person who has relatives visiting from South Dakota and takes them up to the lodge.

"This is our way of saying thanks."

A number of activities are planned in September, including a re-enactment of the dedication program by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Gov. Neil Goldschmidt and Portland Mayor Bud Clark are expected to attend.

'All we've got to have is sunshine and we'll have a ton of visitors for Sandy people to greet face to face.'

— Bill Conerly

A re-enactment of the Roosevelt's motorcade in Portland will be held, and a Roosevelt look-alike contest also is on the drawing board.

On Sept. 26, a birthday bash is being planned to serve 1,000 people.

Among the many other plans include a Forest Service Day, a Friends of Timberline Day and lectures by a Columbia University instructor who specializes in Works Progress Administration history.

Timberline Lodge was built in 1936-37 by the WPA. It has been leased since 1955 from the Forest Service by Richard L. Kohnstamm.

City to make business pitch with Wall Street Journal ad

The Sandy City Council voted 6-0 Monday to purchase a classified advertisement in the Wall Street Journal seeking a few good companies that can "cut the mustard" in Sandy.

The cost will be \$642 and will come out of the economic development fund.

Mort Spence, city councilor, called it a "refreshing idea."

"I think it's worth trying," he said. Brad Pickering, city councilor, said "I think we have to try something."

The ad will read: "We are looking for a few good companies. Can your company cut the mustard? For more information, call Tom Reber, city manager, (503) 668-5533, Sandy, Oregon, located halfway between Portland and Mt. Hood."



Walter Aepli was hired one sunny day in 1949 as he played his accordion outside Timberline Lodge.

Photo by Scott Newton

Two of Timberline's institutions retire

by SCOTT NEWTON
Staff writer

It appeared for a moment that the ceremonial last ride up Pucci chair lift would be canceled because of engine trouble.

But when the chair carrying the guest of honor stalled in front of a smoking engine room, Steve Haug, mountain manager at Timberline Lodge, waved his wand over the chair lift and it miraculously started moving again.

Richard L. Kohnstamm, area operator, and Walter Aepli, maintenance supervisor, were able to complete their ride.

The staged breakdown of the Pucci chair lift was a fitting tribute to Aepli, who is retiring after working at Timberline for more than 35 years — longer than anyone else currently working at the resort and ski area.

Kohnstamm called him a "resourceful individual" who was always solving electrical and mechanical problems.

It also was appropriate that Aepli's final ceremonial ride was taken on the Pucci lift. The lift, which has been at Timberline almost as long as Aepli, will be replaced next year with a high capacity triple-seat chair lift. It has logged more than 46,000 hours of service since it was installed in November 1955.

Aepli, who was hired in 1949 on a sunny day as he played the accordion outside the lodge, first worked as a lift operator and musician, playing

in the Blue Ox Room. He was in charge of the hotel and the lifts from 1957 until 1972, when his job was changed to maintenance supervisor of the lodge.

Over the years, however, he probably never saw a maintenance problem similar to the one that slowed his final ride on April 25. The lift stalled a few times on the way up and then stopped in front of the engine room near the top, where employees had set off smoke bombs. Kohnstamm and Aepli admitted to having been fooled at first.

"I was convinced for a little while," Aepli said. "We really didn't think it was funny. As we got closer I could see people behind the engine room laughing and smiling and I knew it was a joke."

"The only thing I can say is that I'm going to get even with them one of these days." But he did not sound the least bit threatening.

Aepli worked at Ski Bowl for three years in the 1950s, but joined back up with Timberline Lodge two years after Kohnstamm became the area operator in 1955.

Aepli, like many Swiss people during World War II, was anxious to travel after the country's borders were opened following the war. He visited two friends in Corvallis and eventually ended up skiing at Timberline Lodge. Following more travels, Aepli moved to the United States.

He now is a U.S. citizen. He met his wife of 35 years, Mary Patricia, in 1951 when she was

working "for a summer" at the lodge. They make their home on Henry Creek near Rhododendron and have two grown daughters and three grandchildren.

Although Aepli retires at the end of this month, he will continue working part time. At least some of his extra time will go into his hobby — singing and playing the accordion.

Aepli even played at his retirement party, which was held in the Blue Ox Room.

"A guy told me he shouldn't have to play at his own party," said Bill Conerly, public relations coordinator. "I said, 'Shoot, how are you going to stop him.'"

"I had to play," Aepli said. "I didn't want it to be a dull party."

Aepli is a member of Helvetia Alpenglühn, a Swiss choral group in Portland with strong ties to other clubs on the West Coast. Each year, Aepli organizes Swiss Weekend, which can draw from 400 to 500 participants.

Aepli was reluctant to talk about his accomplishments at the lodge, but he admitted that maintaining a building at the 6,000-foot level held some unique challenges.

One appeal of the job for Aepli was talking to visitors from around the world, and he pointed out that he first visited Timberline Lodge as a tourist.

Aepli said he enjoyed his work and likes the people of Oregon. "I never had any regrets," he said.

Drama students challenged by 'My Fair Lady'

by SCOTT NEWTON
Staff writer

In an attempt to understand what it takes for Sandy High School to present "My Fair Lady," imagine mixing 75 students, seven sets on two revolving platforms, cockney and British accents and more than 100 early-1900 costumes.

"I love it," said Russ Benton, who plays the lead. "It's different than anything I've ever done."

Benton, a junior who made a clean sweep of the Mount Hood Conference Acting Competition in the fall, has been winning leading roles since his freshman year.

But the role of Higgins, the linguist who teaches a cockney flower girl to say "the rain in Spain falls mainly in the plain," may be his most challenging to date because he has to sing as well as act.

"My Fair Lady" will make Benton a "double threat" in college, said Chris Harris, drama instructor. A double threat can act and sing, Harris explained. A triple threat can act, sing and dance.

The musical will showcase a combination of Sandy High School's veteran actors along with a slew of newcomers, which adds to the challenge.

Denyse DeBoer, who plays opposite Benton, has the advantage of four years of drama training and four years of vocal music.

Steve Christman, who teamed with Benton to win the Mount Hood Conference duet-acting title, plays Pickering, the linguist who baits Higgins.

Higgins and Pickering have a bet as to whether Higgins can pass Eliza Doolittle off as royalty. In the early 1900s in London, a sort of caste system existed based on whether one spoke cockney or British English.

The musical is based on a play by George Bernard Shaw and Harris said he thinks it shows. "Unlike most musicals, it is well written," he said.

There is a love interest between Higgins and Eliza, but it is subtle. The primary hint is the song "I Could Have Danced All Night," which



Photo by Mike Bailor

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The costumes in "My Fair Lady" range from dressy to working class.