

The Sandy Post

# Editorial & Opinion

Scott Newton, editor  
Karinda Hedlund, advertising representative

## Sandy High budget funds lean program

One encouraging sign about the 1987-88 budget is the bottom line. The general fund budget is \$6,000 less than a year ago. The high school will be operating in '87-88 on the second year of a two-year levy. Therefore funding is assured.

It is interesting to note that the general fund is going down while transportation costs, insurance, water and sewage rates and the cost of textbooks continue to climb.

Another encouraging sign was the method the staff and budget committee followed in determining what the budget would look like.

Each department head was required to prepare a budget at 85 percent of the average of the two previous years' budgets. Most departments did not meet state curriculum requirements at that level of funding.

The departments then submitted proposals, first of all, for bringing their departments up to state standards. Additional programs were justified on a case-by-case basis. Out of 93 packages presented to the budget committee, only 65 were approved.

Some of the things that were not funded were important, such as some building maintenance projects, reference books and a detention study hall.

Some programs, of course, had only a minimal chance of approval. One was a proposal for a marching band. Though many people in the community would like to have a marching band, the chance of finding money for such a new program was slim at best.

But such debate is exactly what the budget hearing should be about. The budget process is not about paperclips and textbooks, but about the direction of programs.

The bad news about the budget is that some programs were losers. In this case, performing arts and athletics and activities were not funded beyond the 85 percent cutoff.

The drama program has had excellent success. We have to be concerned about a 15 percent cutback. Likewise, we believe athletics and activities are part of the learning process, and Sandy High School students need those activities.

A concern of the administration is a contingency fund that is dangerously low. In 1986-87, a \$30,000 contingency fund was wiped out by one unexpected bill for a special education program.

The district budgeted \$155,000 this year, but contingency is expected to be the area where pay increases are taken out for classified staff members and teachers. Both groups are presently negotiating contracts.

People may urge the board of directors to play hardball when it comes to negotiating the salaries of teachers, but the other side is that Sandy High School must be competitive with other schools in the area or we will lose our good teachers.

Another heartening sign is the elimination of a misunderstood item known as "unappropriated cash balance." The concept behind unappropriated cash balance is to have money to spend during the summer before tax revenues are collected in the fall.

Despite the fact that there is nothing dishonest in having an "unappropriated cash balance," the public sees it as a way to hide cash.

The money from unappropriated cash balance — \$163,000 — went a long way toward balancing the budget. In the future, the district is simply going to have to try to end up with enough money in July to get through till November, or borrow money.

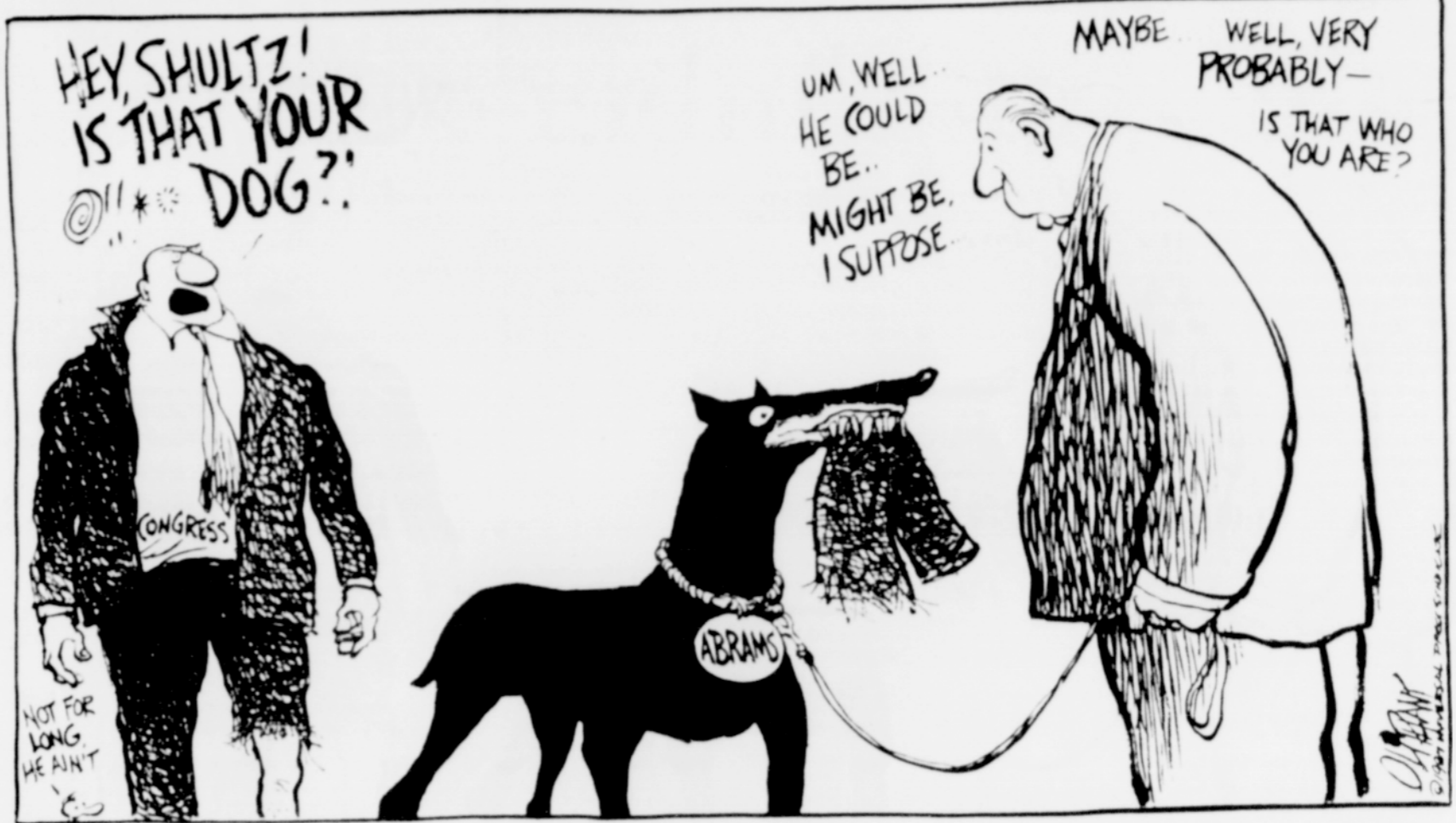
The district also cut \$60,000 in capital appropriations. This is another area of concern. The district cannot cut capital expenditures forever.

Superintendent Kent Heaton is trying to promote understanding of the budget. It is, of course, to his advantage to develop credibility with the public.

"What we hope is that people believe us when we say, 'Ouch,'" Heaton said.

It is our opinion that the district is running a tight ship. The 1987-88 year will be a lean one. The district may be able to stick with its no-growth budget for even another year.

And though there should be some concerns for the future, right now most taxpayers should take the district's "hang tough" approach as a good sign.



## Letters to the editor

### Levy increase is too high

What's going on? The May 28 Sandy Post reported the Sandy Elementary District levy will be on the mail-in election that will be held June 30. Last week representatives of the Affordable Education Association contacted the elementary school requesting a copy of this year's (CAT) achievement test results. Our request was declined because "the test results appeared to have errors and are being rerun, and won't be available until after June 30."

It is quite a coincidence the test results won't be available until after the election. Could it be the '86-87 test results show even less impressive efforts and results than the previous year's test scores?

We see two problems with the proposed levy. First, the tax rate per \$1,000 of assessed property value will increase from \$7.90 to \$10.30, an increase of approximately 25 percent. Who can afford a 25 percent tax increase?

Secondly, we take strong exception to the \$35,000 per teacher cost. Everyone praises the private kindergarten school for the fine job they do, and we agree, yet the private school teachers probably earn less

than \$12,000 per year. Why do we need a \$35,000 teacher to do a \$12,000 job?

One positive point about all this is the new safety net regulation passed last month. This legislation prohibits school closures because levies fail. In other words, if voters vote down levies, schools must use the same tax base as last year and keep the school doors open.

Lloyd A. Cummins  
executive secretary  
Affordable Education Association

### Post 'lied' with statistics

Congratulations must go out to the City Council for keeping the Sandy Senior Center funding at current levels. Except for the Sandy Mountain Festival, there is very little in this town that offers a true sense of community.

The community/senior center serves Sandy well in this regard.

As a former city of Sandy community services assistant director, I must say that the Sandy Post performed a disservice by "lying with statistics" in reporting the salaries of the senior center director and recreation director.

Just three years ago, my salary

with the city was a munificent \$12,000. Sure, there was dental and medical coverage and a public employment retirement fund, but those "fringe benefits" were hardly what you call salary.

My salary, just like anyone's, should be calculated by what the take home monthly check reads and, in my case, it was \$800 per month.

Currently, the recreation director's salary has risen above the poverty level, but still represents one of the lowest in the field.

A similar position in Clark County, Wash., pays \$28,000 a year — base salary. The Sandy recreation director's salary of \$17,000 is by no means exorbitant and is, frankly, barely average. The citizens of Sandy are getting a great bargain for this price.

The same is true for the senior center director, who has been at her position for 10 years, received numerous awards for her accomplishments and has volunteered countless hours to serve all ages of our community.

Mr. Ronald Stone, who wrote last week in The Post, is light-years off base in every aspect of his letter. In terms of the senior trips alone, ask any senior what the director does during these trips. Ask me, who was privileged to accompany 20 seniors on a train to Seattle to visit an historical Chinese exhibit. It was hardly a vacation.

I coordinated luggage, bus schedules, meals, itinerary, medicine needs, and made sure everyone was accounted for and enjoyed themselves.

Instead of my usual eight-hour work day, I worked 16 hours and was on call the other eight.

Neither Amtrak or the inexpensive motel we stayed in charged a higher price to the group because of me. Why doesn't Mr. Stone go on the next outing and he can be in charge of carrying everyone's luggage.

The community senior center is a tremendous asset to the people of Sandy. I hope this letter and the action of the council put this issue to rest.

Bill Knight-Weiler  
Sandy

### Sandy Post letter policy

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.

## Few things worse than a stupid slogan

Oregon, I hear, is looking for a Mr. Good Phrase for its license plates.

Being an Idaho ("Famous Potatoes") native, let me warn Oregon officials to take care. Nothing is more embarrassing than a stupid state phrase.

I suppose, however, that a stupid state phrase sells oodles of license plate frames. It sure did in my case.

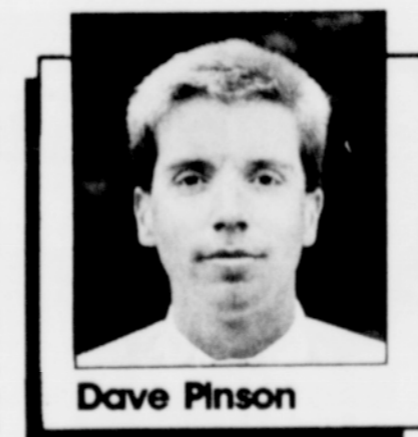
Picture this: Here I am, cruising down a wide smooth avenue in the saucy Buick just around dusk one night doing my daily leering. In the far lane a sporty Datsun pulls up with two smiling blondes.

The driver calls out "Hey, nice car!"

"Thanks." I yell back, sounding sophisticated.

"But you know what?" she yells. I shrug and shake my head.

"Your license plates stink, man. Who cares about spuds?" she yells and speeds away.



Shunned and guilty as charged, I immediately turn down a side street and look for an auto parts store. "Famous Potatoes," huh? You can have 'em.

Oregon, though, is a special place and so must have a special phrase. Let's explore the possibilities.

For instance, Oregon carries a cer-

tain notoriety for being a rainy place. Let's work with that. "Rain State" is an idea. So is "Partly Cloudy."

Somewhat, though, I don't believe "Wet Hair State" will get nominated. Nor, I'll bet, will "Slug State."

Judy Garland once sang a song about a rainbow and if the state of Kansas isn't using "Over The Rainbow" as a state phrase, it should be. On the other hand, as Oregon receives lots of rain, maybe the Oregon license plates should read "Under The Rainbow." I like that one.

A few years back Oregon was a rage because a state official told tourist-type folks they were welcome to visit but don't stay. How would it look to have "Please Leave" on the plates? We'd have "Oregon" on top and "Please Leave" on the bottom. Nope, bad idea. People would stop in just to see what it looks like and then stay.

Texas is celebrating its 150th anniversary. But do you think Texas folks could simply say "150th Anniversary"? Nope, those Texans wrote "Sesquicentennial" on their license plates.

I wonder about putting a word on a plate that nobody can pronounce or understand. Oh, those Texans.

Oregon could take a hint from that idea. How about "129 Years and Holding"? And each year you could pick up a little sticker to paste over the old year. Naw, because you know if that happened, someone would forget and have 129 or 130 when it should be "131 Years and Holding."

Oh well, I don't know. Who's to say what would make a Mr. Good Phrase? Maybe folks have more to worry about than what their stupid license plates have to say.

It could be that "Oregon" clean and simple like that says it all. Then again, maybe it doesn't. I'll bet, however, it comes awfully close.

by Adam Kraft

### Bobcats



### Yesteryear in Sandy

## 1917 fire causes \$17,000 in losses

A fire at Sandy late Saturday night was another of those affairs which cause great loss because of a lack of fire-fighting equipment.

Concerning the fire the following has been sent to the Outlook: The alarm was given shortly before 12 o'clock on Saturday night. It destroyed the store of the Sandy Mercantile company and damaged the bank and post office buildings, entailing a loss of between \$7,000 and \$8,000.

The fire was started by an overheated stove in the hardware store of George A. Gluckner, spread rapidly through the building and in a few minutes adjoining structures were in flames.

At 1 o'clock, however, the blaze was under control.

By the heroic efforts of a bucket brigade, organized by the women, the hotel was saved. The town is without an organized fire company and has no water system. Every man, woman and child was aroused

by the fire and all assisted in fighting the flames.

Cartridges in the hardware store exploded when the fire reached them, giving much the effect of a machine-gun in action.

The telephone exchange was moved from the burning store building into the street and other goods were saved by the efforts of volunteers, who took everything that could be moved into the street.

Among the women who joined in the fire fighting were Mrs. P.T. Shelley, Miss Kate Junker, Miss Mary Junker, Mrs. Laundree, Mrs. A.L. Deaton, Mrs. M.A. Deaton, Mrs. R.E. Esson, Miss Frances Meinig, Miss Gertrude Meinig, Miss Ruth Revenue, Mrs. R.E. Bonnett, Mrs. George Wolfe and Mrs. Jack Scalls.

Refreshments were served to the fire fighters by the Esson drug store. All of the buildings were insured.

This story was taken from the April 3, 1917, edition of the Gresham Outlook.