

Recreation district worth pursuing

A new recreation district for the Sandy area is an idea worth pursuing, despite problems pointed out to the City Council Monday evening.

The council held an open forum in an attempt to solicit suggestions, but instead council members listened as people complained because the city did not have a solid plan of action.

The numbers alone are enough to discourage backers of a recreation district. The city sent out 75 notices to business owners, school organizations and program participants, but only 21 people showed up.

Still, we know there are people who are interested in forming the district, and we hope they will stick with the process just a little longer.

Gaining approval of a tax base to support a recreational district would be the biggest stumbling block, but it is not an impossible dream.

For starters, backers of the recreation district should reduce the scope of the proposal. Including all residents of the Sandy Union High School District is too ambitious.

Forming a district the size of the Sandy Elementary District or the Sandy Fire District makes more sense. Those are probably the people most likely to participate in local recreation and senior citizen programs.

Almost completely ignored in the discussion Monday night were senior citizen programs, which could be included in the district. Some of those programs help keep people in their homes. Senior citizens receive medical attention, help with their taxes, nutritional meals and a host of other services that most voters probably would agree are worthwhile.

There also may be more support for a limited number of recreational programs than some people expect.

We hope that the city — despite limited financial resources and a growing demand for services — will always find a way to adequately finance senior center programs.

But, with half the participants living outside the city limits, the most equitable way to finance the senior center and recreational programs might be through formation of a new recreation district.

Letters

Support helped create memorial

As the chairman of the Veterans Memorial Committee, I would like to thank all of the people in our general area who have been of such great assistance to us in establishing the Veterans Memorial Fund.

It has been very heartening to receive all of the assistance from the city of Sandy, the business people of Sandy and the people of the Sandy area in general, including those people in Hoodland, Estacada, Eagle Creek and the surrounding areas.

The exciting thing for all of us is that our veterans memorial statue is now up and honoring those veterans who have done so much for our country.

Once again, I would like to thank everyone for their support and help with the project.

Bruce Cook, veterans memorial committee

3876 Proctor Blvd.
Sandy

Businesses add to Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving was a particularly meaningful day for older members of our community this year due to the graciousness of several local merchants.

Our deepest appreciation is extended to Suburban Ford for sponsoring the annual dinner at the Sandy Senior Center for the third consecutive year.

We are also grateful to the Robinson family and Sandy Insurance Agency for providing a free turkey dinner for seniors at Charbons Restaurant as well.

The generosity of these Sandy area businesses made it possible for people who would have otherwise been alone to celebrate the spirit of the holiday with good food and friends.

Sandra Potter Marquardt
Director of community services

Where to write

State Representative Bob Shiprack, D-Dist. 23, 22610 Forest Park Rd., Beavercreek, Ore., 97004. 631-3817. Or: State Capitol, Room H288, Salem, Ore., 97310. 1-800-332-2313.

State Senator Bob Kintigh, D-Dist. 14, 38865 E. Cedar Flat Road, Springfield, 97478. 746-1842. Or: State Capitol, Room S310, Salem, Ore., 97310. 1-800-327-7389.

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

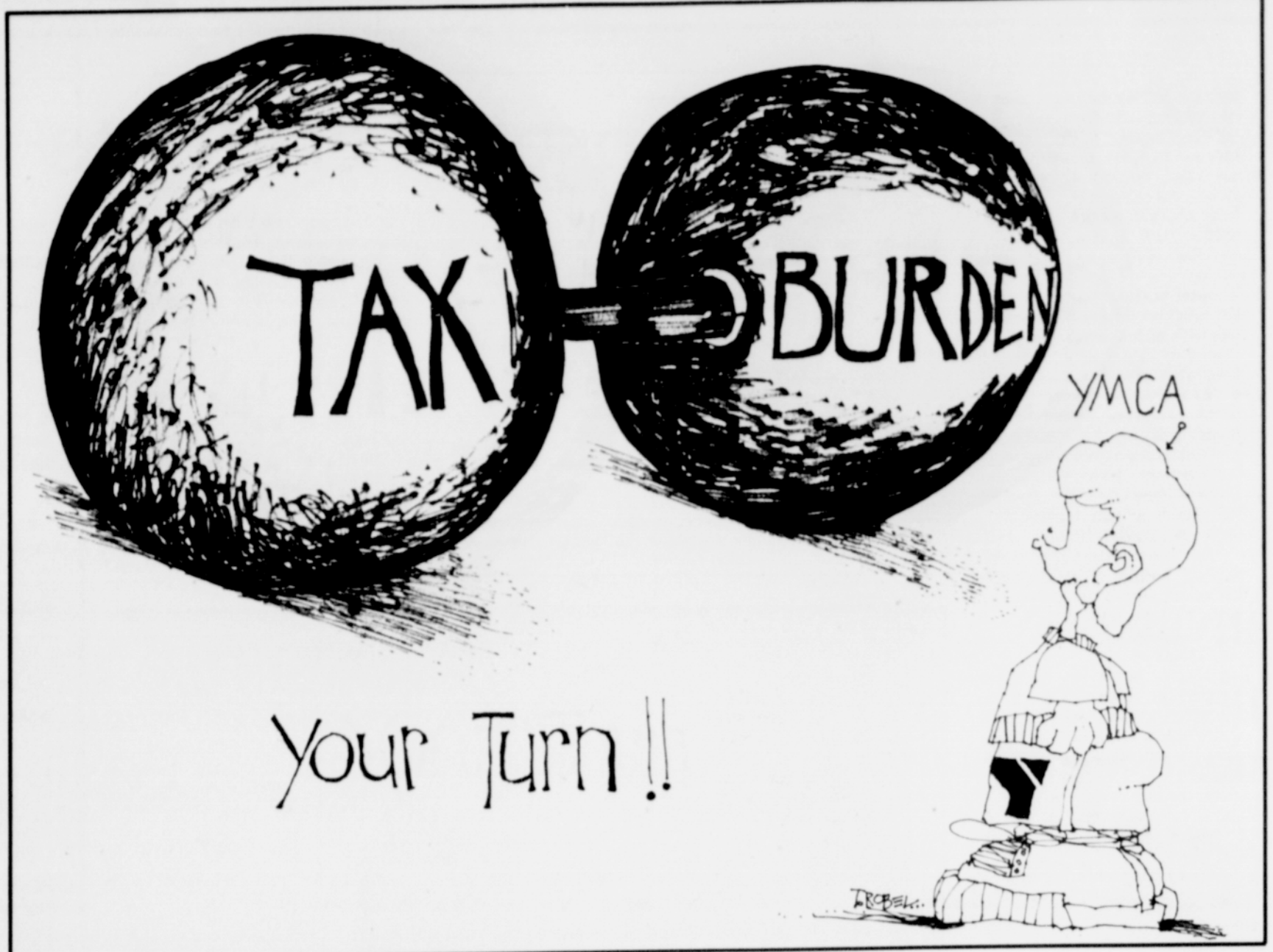
Sen. Bob Packwood, R-Oregon, 259

Russell Building, Washington, D.C., 20510. 202-224-5244. Portland office phone 221-3370.

Rep. Denny Smith, R-5th Dist., 1213 Longworth Building, Washington, D.C., 20515. 202-225-5711. Salem office phone (toll free) 1-800-452-7889.

Legislative access in Oregon: 1-800-327-7389. One may call this number and ask to be connected to any state legislator's office.

Oregon Legislative status number: 1-800-332-2313. One may call this number to learn the status of bills pending in the Oregon Legislature.



Louie meets her match and likes it

The dog who lives at our house was not pleased.

You might remember Louie, a fat, black sausage of a dog who runs from bunny rabbits and believes that a dog-eating monster hides in our dishwasher. Louie — who won't walk on white floors and who cried for a week when No. 1 Kid's dog came to visit.

Well, Louie has a streak of pit bull in her. Last week the humans in Louie's house came home gurgling and cooing over a black and white fur ball that proved to be a kitten. Maybe the cutest kitten that ever pussy-footed after catnip. A black kitten with a white skunk stripe down her forehead. The kind of stripe that always inspired lust in Pepe Le Pew, the lecherous cartoon skunk who loved a cat.

But lust is not what came to Louie's mind when the new kitten, prancing on pink and white feet, poked a white-whiskered nose into Louie's Gravy Train. Louie growled, a noise that surprised her as much as it surprised us. And then she snapped, earning a chorus of "bad dogs" and generating



Sharon Nesbit

renewed kitten cooing.

So, like a fat, old maiden aunt who disapproves of children but is too well-brought-up to say so, Louie retreated to her rug, aimed her nose between her paws, cast a mournful eye on her dish, and sulked.

The kitten's mother is called "Soda Pop" so we named this, the runt of her litter, Nehi. She is all fizz. The runt, Hubby said, needed someone to take care of her. But this miniature feline — ricocheting off the kitchen

cupboards, engaging battle with a vicious strand of red yarn, playing tiger in a house plant and panther on the stairs — doesn't need any help. A blurred black shadow, she can skitter under the stereo before you can say "scat."

The unwary who descend the stairs barefooted and fail to spot the winged ears and pea-soup eyes peering from ambush will find their toes attacked.

And Nehi comes with five formidable weapons — four pincushion feet and a set of teeth sharp enough pierce leather, or toes.

Like Louie, we have had to resort to defending our turf from the small presence. Batting her out of our dishes. Shooting her away from our bed.

Crossed or upset, Nehi gives a new meaning to the word caterwauling with a series of shrieks and yowls that will curl toenails.

Just when it seems there is more kitten than two adults and a dog can stand, the tiny tyrant clambers up a leg, sprawls in a lap, goes limp as a noodle and sleeps as hard as she lives. A silken length of fur with a

spring coiled inside.

Louie watched with ill-concealed resentment. Judging that a dog must have her day, her dish and her footstool, we quit bad-dogging her when she snapped at the kitten over questions of turf.

And then on Sunday, seven days after the cat first infested her domain, Louie bowed to the inevitable. She hauled her round body stiffly off her rug, stepped over to the kitten's favorite toy, a crumpled ball of aluminum foil, picked it up in her mouth and tossed it in the kitten's direction. Nehi, a quick study if there ever was one, recognized the friendly overture and shot after ball. Looking faintly pleased, Louie nudged the tiny cat with her nose and Nehi responded by rolling over on her back and latching gently on to the dog's muzzle with all four feet.

Before the episode was over, the pair — fat old dog and lithe little cat — had wrestled and twisted across the kitchen. The kitten feinted and backstepped right into Louie's dog dish. Louie smiled.

The dog who lives at our house is pleased.

Holiday vigil warmed by smiles, coins

I am a ringer of bells.

My bells ring from Thanksgiving until Christmas Eve. I stand guard at my street corner or store entrance. I come in all shapes, colors and sizes. My face may be different every day. I might be a man or a woman.

My bells are rattled by many hands.

Weather is no concern. In rain, snow, in snowy rain and in sunshine, I guard the doorways. Me, my little black pot and my bell.

Most passers-by tend to ignore me, as if I'm an alien being. Eye contact is never made. Seldom are sidewalks examined so closely as they are during the holiday season.

I, too, count the cracks. For there are moments during the day when the sidewalks are empty, the stores are quiet and the bustle of traffic is stilled as cars are parked at home or at work. At these moments, I calm my bell and watch birds fluff through the chilly holiday sky. At these moments, I count my blessings.

My home is warm, I remember,



Dave Pinson

and I'll have a hot mug of coffee or chocolate when my shift is over. My bed is warm and I can almost feel my pillows.

My wife or husband likely is cooking dinner about now. The kids are talking about school, or the news is on as my mate eats a lonely meal while I serve at my post.

Soon, the evening shoppers are out pounding the streets and clogging the

stores to fill their bags of obligation. I begin to ring my bell and try to smile more. Christmas is just days away and the black pot is low.

I might hold a door open or wish someone a happy season. Many return the wish or thank me for the helping hand. Few contribute to my cause.

I beat my bell harder as the evening shopping rush reaches its peak. I rattle my bell like a hungry Holstein cow. I want to wake these people out of their shopping stupor. Ding. Ding. Ding. Harder I beat.

Look at me. Ding. I'm just a person. Ding. Just a bell-ringer. Ding. Wake up. I march up and down the sidewalk. Ding. Ding. Ding.

Then I stop. I decide that I cannot irritate these people into giving. It's just not the Christmas way. Be charitable, I think. You can't force people. I rattle less loudly. Soon I quit ringing altogether and stand and watch the shoppers walk by my post.

I experiment. I glaze my eyes and lean against the wall. The bell is hanging out of my pocket, its clapper

lolling like a lion's tongue.

I act indifferent. Perhaps, tainted. Shoppers glance my way now, safe in knowing I won't or can't look back. Some look and frown at my appearance. Some shake their heads out of pity for my state.

Inside, I smile at their attention. Several coins clang to the bottom of my pot and an old lady smiles at me. "Merry Christmas," she says and walks down the crowded sidewalk. A goofy grin creeps across my cheeks and I laugh.

"And a merry Christmas to you, ma'am," I holler and begin ringing my bell again. Not a pounding clap, but more of a joyful ringing.

A man in an overcoat tosses a folded bill in the pot and I thank him. He nods and walks inside the store.

I am happy now. I am a ringer of bells. I stand in the cold winter wind not for my own good, but for the good of others. I don't have to do this, you know. I do it because I want to, because I want to help others. And I hope you do, too.

Bobcats



Adam Kraft

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