

# MajQa!

That's Klingon for "well done!"



**M**ultnomah County made the headlines twice last month: once for passing a county income tax to support schools, and once for considering whether to hire an interpreter for mental patients who only speak Klingon (one of the imaginary languages from the TV series *Star Trek*).

The story about the Klingon interpreter was unfair. In fact, the Multnomah County commissioners quickly dismissed the idea of hiring a Klingon interpreter, and they never spent a nickel for this purpose. Here in Oregon, our scarce funding for mental health barely allows us to treat all the deserving human patients, let alone the Klingons. While the Multnomah commissioners' refusal to pay for a Klingon interpreter may have set back interplanetary diplomacy, I agree with their decision.

What's amazing to me is that the Klingon controversy hit the newspapers just days before Multnomah County voted on a proposed county income tax. Talk about bad timing! As one Multnomah official recalled, some voters were holding a ballot in one hand and the newspaper story about the Klingon interpreter in the other hand. Yet the Multnomah County income tax passed by a margin of 56 to 44 percent. Good thing Klingons can't vote!

The Lane County Board of Commissioners wanted to hear more about the experience of our counterparts in Multnomah County, so we invited some of them down to visit with us at a public meeting last Tuesday. The officials who stopped by were an impressive group: John Ball, the chief operating officer for Multnomah County, is a former Lane County commissioner and a great guy; Diane Linn, chair of the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners, is a charismatic and energetic progressive (Lars Larson gave her the nickname "Diane Downs," so she must be doing something right!)

**T**he Multnomah officials explained why they proposed a county income tax. They had seen Measure 28 pass in Multnomah County last January, only to fail statewide. They had heard the outcry from the local community about the budget cuts that Measure 28 would have averted. They saw that Portland's schools were ridiculed in "Doonesbury" and in *The New York Times*. They ultimately decided that Multnomah voters deserved a chance to choose their own funding level for schools and human services, even if the rest of the state might be content with drastic cuts. While a county income tax was unprecedented, the Multnomah officials weren't afraid "to boldly go where no one has gone before" (actually, they didn't say that last part).

After this meeting, several people asked me whether Lane County should try to pass a local income tax. I can see both the pros and cons. On the one hand, our schools and human services are woefully underfunded, and our county's approval of Measure 28 suggests the possibility that a local income tax measure might also pass. On the other hand, only 50.4 percent of Lane County voters approved Measure 28. Last fall, county voters rejected all six of the revenue measures that the county proposed. We'll need to be extremely cautious as we consider whether to emulate the Multnomah strategy. Meanwhile, Benton County, the only other county to approve Measure 28, has just placed a local revenue measure on the ballot.

**I**want to close this column with a suitable tribute to our friends from Multnomah County who were so kind to visit us last Tuesday. Let me say, with deepest gratitude, Heghlu' meH QaQ jajvam. (Oops, I misread my Klingon dictionary. I just wrote, "Today is a good day to die.") Let me try again: Hhab SoSIT' Quch. (No, wait, that means, "Your mother has a smooth forehead.") I can't seem to find a Klingon word for "thanks." Oh well, what does Multnomah County care? If they're too cheap to pay for a Klingon interpreter, they'll have to settle for a salutation translated from the Vulcan language: "Live long and prosper."

*Tom Lininger, an inveterate Trekkie, finds time between reruns to serve as the county commissioner for the East Lane District.*

Despite these facts, this common feminist viewpoint completely ignores the millions of girls annually who are denied access to any rights and all choices.

If all humans are valuable because we possess rights that are intrinsic to humanity regardless of sex, race, ability or dependency, then none of these attributes give one human more rights than another. If they do, then we are all in danger of exploitation by anyone older, smarter or manlier.

The same outrage that accompanies femicide makes "menicide" wrong also. It is someone stronger, bigger, and more powerful denying another the basic human

rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness because they're in the way.

"No matter what the motive, love of ease, or a desire to save from suffering the unborn innocent, the woman is awfully guilty who commits the deed." — Susan B. Anthony

*Faith Adair  
Springfield*

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**BEWARE OF THE PET STORE!**

**What you can do**

- **Never, ever buy a puppy, or any animal,** from a pet store. Tempting as it may be to "save" pathetic pet shop puppies, the money you spend just perpetuates the cycle of suffering.
- **Urge pet stores to sell only supplies,** not living animals. Ask them to team up with the local shelter and display shelter animals who are up for adoption. Until they do, let them know you will purchase supplies ONLY from stores that don't sell animals.
- **Save a life.** If you have the time and resources to care for a dog or cat, adopt a homeless animal from the shelter. Millions of healthy, friendly animals are killed in shelters every year for lack of good homes.

**If you buy, a pound puppy will die.**

**Puppies are dying!**

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