

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Reader disagrees with 47J article

To the Editor:

After reading in the *Freedom* the article, "47J budget faces drastic funding cuts," I just had to write this letter. The article gave me the impression that if the school district doesn't get some more money it will practically shut down. It went so far as to say that "budget cuts removing all supplies including pencils, paper, heat, lights, water, all equipment items, and all bus transportation would fall \$100,000 short of meeting this deficit. Two alternatives would remain, drastic reductions in school programs and staff or reduction of the school year by several months." Now, I question if these things will really happen if they don't get an additional \$456,195, (to be voted on in a special election on June 30.) This situation reminds me of the time when I was living in California and Proposition 13 was presented to the voters. Property taxes there were sky high. I mean SKY HIGH! At that time my father's house was appraised at \$65,000 even though he originally purchased it for \$15,000. To a lot of people this was great, but not to him. He had no intention of ever selling his house because he had lived there for so many years. But the point is that his taxes were just over a thousand dollars. He was working, so he could afford the taxes. I was delivering mail in the San Fernando Valley around the time of the election and got to know many elderly people on my route. Those who owned their homes said that they could barely afford to pay their taxes as they were on a limited income, and there was no property tax relief. This is why Proposition 13 came about. It got to the point that taxes were so high that people were forced out of their homes because they couldn't pay the taxes. And don't think that it can't happen here too.

Each year the politicians, government workers, and the school districts want more and more of your tax dollar. If they don't get it, they say (as did opponents of Proposition 13), their services would be drastically cut back or shut down. I believe that these messages of doom are mostly scare tactics to get more money. In California when Proposition 13 passed the schools didn't shut down as predicted. Some will say that it's not fair to compare Vernonia with California, that they're two different situations. The fact is that taxes are rising so fast that we'll need a Proposition 13 if we, the voters, don't put a hold on them while we have a chance.

Why don't you voters test the school board. Don't give them any more money. See if they can live within their own budget. Don't you live within your budget? Haven't you had to cut back because of inflation? Why shouldn't they also live within their means? As it stands now many Vernonians pay over \$600 a year in property taxes. The state legislators are talking about reducing property tax relief. What will this mean to the many elderly in this town, who don't have children in school, to pay more taxes? So what if the kids have to bring their own pencils to school? So what if there will be a few less basketball games? I know many who sit in cold homes because of the high price of electric heat. It's the economy and we are all suffering one way or another. I'm not against the schools. I'm against excessive taxation. I urge the voters of Vernonia to go to the polls on June 30 and vote No on the proposed levy. And oh yes, we do have a lower tax base than some other Columbia County districts, but should we keep up with the Jones's?

Roberta Williams
Vernonia, Oregon

Ladies golf

Eight women played golf Tuesday night. Each was allowed her choice of three clubs for nine holes. Ruth Nogle and Edna Hailey tied for first place. Vesta King was the runner up.



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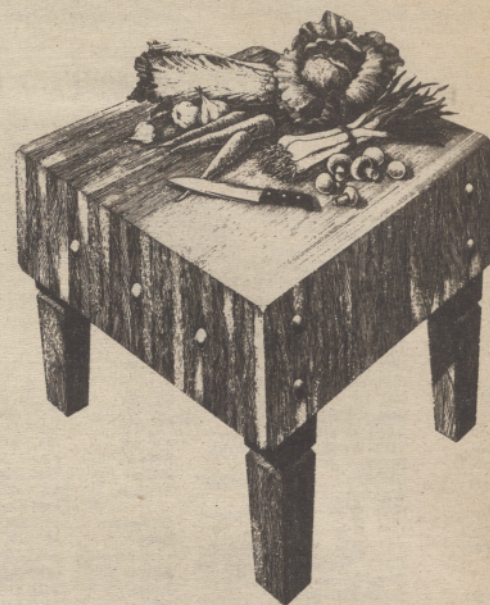
Peaches 79¢ lb.

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