

Arts Tax Flaw Found

Mayor schedules council vote to make changes

The Portland City Council has decided to take action this month to address what they call a significant flaw in the Arts Tax, but that may not be enough for a man who has filed a lawsuit to ban the tax altogether.

Voters approved the \$35 income tax in November with payments due by April 15.

Mayor Charlie Hales wants to repeal the tax for teenagers who live in a household above the poverty line, but may have only "made \$10 last year dog-sitting."

"No one crafting this tax intended this to be the rule. This is just silly. And we need to move right now to address the Law of Unintended Consequences," said

a news release from the mayor's office.

To address the problem, the City Council will consider an emergency ordinance March 27 that will create an income threshold of \$1,000. The change would take effect immediately and would affect Portland residents paying this year's arts tax.

Those who have already paid the tax, and whose income is less than \$1,000, will be refunded, official said.

Lewis and Clark Law School professor and blogger Jack Bogdanski is the first person to file a lawsuit in Oregon Tax Court against the tax.

Filed on March 7, his suit alleges the city's \$35 arts tax violates the state constitutional ban on a head tax or poll tax.

Bogdanski also asks the state to bar the city from ever collecting the arts tax from him personally, and to provide him with "additional relief as the court may deem appropriate."

The Week in Review

No Assault Weapon Ban

Democrats on Tuesday confirmed that a proposed ban on assault weapons will not be included in a package of gun reform legislation yet to be introduced in the Senate, suggesting the measure does not have broad support in Congress.

Show Cancelled for Anti-Gay Rant

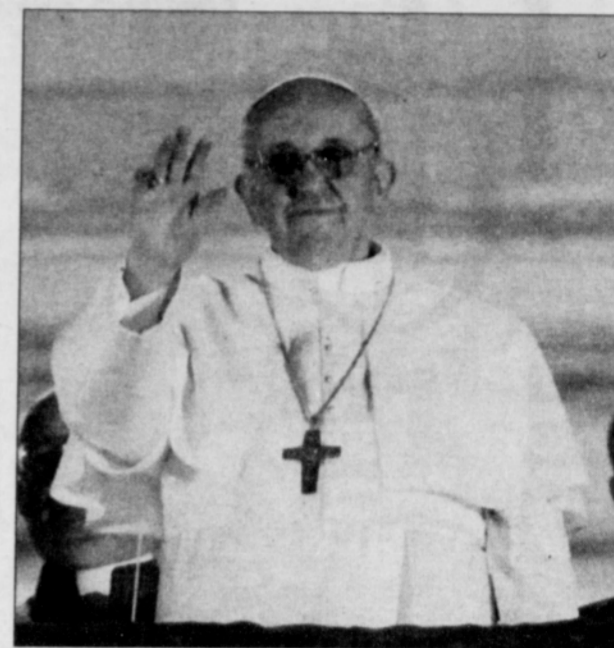
Michelle Shocked, a folk singer who went on an anti-gay rant Sunday night at a concert in San Francisco, will not be headlining a show in Portland. The Alberta Rose Theatre canceled her April 25 concert in northeast Portland and will instead plan a show to benefit gay and lesbian equality.

Wrong Way Driver Drunk

A semi-truck driver was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol and reckless driving after going the wrong way on Interstate 84 and I-205, from Wood Village to Vancouver, early Monday morning. One person was hurt when the truck crashed into her vehicle on the Glenn Jackson Bridge.

Tuition Help Suspended

In response to a call for cuts due to federal sequestration, the Department of Defense has suspended its federal Tuition Assistance program for all military members. The move also affects the Oregon National Guard.



Pope Francis Elected

Jorge Mario Bergoglio of Argentina was elected a surprise choice to be the new leader of the troubled Roman Catholic Church last week, taking the name Francis and becoming the first non-European pontiff in nearly 1,300 years. "Pray for me," the new pope said, in his first public address.

Rally for Postal Service

Postal workers and their community allies rallied to save the postal service at Pioneer Courthouse Square in downtown Portland Sunday. Organizers called on President Obama to oppose all closures, cuts and the delay of mail.

No Change for Jobless

A state report says Oregon's unemployment rate hasn't changed. The monthly report released Tuesday by the state Employment Department said the jobless rate was at 8.4 percent in February, the same as in January.

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