



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Of 'death and taxes'

I have lived in Cottage Grove since 1997. In that time, I have seen my property taxes increase 102.2 percent, an average of 6.61 percent per year. With the proposed "Harrison Elementary Bond," I have computed they will rise approximately 9.1 percent this year and for the length of the obligation. As time goes on, there are certain to be further increases to fund public projects. It's really nice to have a brand-spanking new school for the kids. However, one may wonder how the young, struggling families will be able to afford the continually upward-spiraling property tax burden. A linear increase is yielding to an asymptotic to the y-axis increase, which is devastating to those who just purchased their first home.

They have "added" the "old" CGHS bond into this new bond, making it difficult to completely understand exactly how much additional money will be required per thousand of assessed value. Perhaps it would be prudent to pay off existing obligations (bonds) instead of "kicking the can down the road," increasing the duration of the obligation. If the measure fails, it will be due to the poorly structured and confusing language contained therein. An ethical and efficient way to accomplish a large and expensive project of this nature is to fund it separately from all else with a clear cost-analysis and EXACT increase in dollars per thousand of assessed value. We taxpayers are confused enough as it is.

Greg Vaughan
Cottage Grove

Chamber backs bond measure

The Cottage Grove Chamber of Commerce asks that you join us in voting YES on Ballot Measure 20-240. Replacing the current Harrison School is a win for kids and Cottage Grove.

The current facility was built in the 1940s and doesn't have the electrical system necessary to support modern teaching tools. Computers and other electrical presentation devices are difficult to use when there are only one or two electrical outlets in a classroom. For our school children to receive the education they need to prosper as adults, we need to make sure they are exposed to and use modern technology.

The Harrison facility was not built to house the number of kids attending Harrison currently. The school bond will also provide for necessary safety upgrades to all school facilities. These safety upgrades will make our schools more secure and ensure that when kids are in school, they can focus on learning.

The bond will also help remodel the School District swim pool. Without a doubt, having the pool has prevented kids from drowning in our local lakes and rivers. Every student in our school district is provided swim lessons and learns basic self-rescue skills during their time as an elementary and middle-school student. The pool is also a community resource for users of all ages, offering many diverse programs.

The time is right to pass the bond, as the State of Oregon may provide millions of dollars in matching funds. These matching funds will mean our tax dollars will go even further

in making our schools safer. If we pass the bond, the new bond will include the current bond for the construction of the high school. This means no new taxes for South Lane taxpayers; we will just continue to pay the same rate as the current bond for additional years. A yes vote is a win for all South Lane residents.

Joe Raade
2016 President
Cottage Grove Chamber of Commerce

Measure much needed

On May 17, South Lane School District voters will be asked to approve Bond Measure 20-240 to pay for replacing Harrison Elementary School and updating school facilities throughout the district.

In addition to replacing the school, the primary goals of the bond measure are to improve safety and security at each district school, update the technology used for student learning and safety and extend the life of school facilities, including the swimming pool.

Harrison, built in 1948, was designed for 125 students but currently has an enrollment near 450 students. The new Harrison will be built for 600-plus students and include adequate parking and outdoor play space that the current site cannot accommodate.

The district wide safety and security needs are especially important. Law enforcement officials have determined a number of issues that need to be addressed to better protect our students and staff. All schools in South Lane would have their fire and security systems updated with Bond Measure 20-240.

Replacing leaky roofs, upgrading plumbing and electrical systems and replacing outdated heating and ventilation systems, along with much needed renovations to the pool, will extend our investment in our schools and in our children.

The bond combines the remaining debt for CGHS and the new bond into one amount. The new combined levy rate is estimated to be \$1.90 per thousand of assessed property value. Also, with the passage of the bond, South Lane School District will be eligible for \$4 million additional funding from the state.

Many members of our community have invested time and personal financial contributions in this effort to educate district voters on the merits of our much-needed bond measure. Please join me and vote "yes" on Bond Measure 20-240 on May 17.

Judy Cunningham
Cottage Grove

Bond ratings?

If it is not too much to ask, then why does not the school board of district 45J provide the voters of the bond ratings from Moody's, Fitch and Standard and Poors the ratings on this proposed \$39.5 million bond issue? It is a real hassle to create accounts for each one. Just go ahead and try.

I want ratings. No ratings = NO on 20-240! It is that simple. Are these good bonds or are they junk bonds?

Charles Ames
Cottage Grove



Encourage kids to explore imagination in the garden

BY KYM POKORNY
OSU Extension Service

When grubby little hands grip your pant leg as you head for the garden, put them in the soil and they may dig up a lifetime of learning and pleasure.

"One of the keys to getting kids interested in gardening is to get them engaged," said Joy Jones, Oregon State University Extension Service master gardener coordinator in Tillamook County. "Let them explore what catches their attention, especially small children."

Stimulating a child's imagination can be as simple as filling a dishpan with dirt, passing them a hand lens and letting them delve into the world that lives underground, she said. If it's gross, so much the better.

"They love that," she said with a laugh.

When teaching kids about gardening, Jones watches them blossom.

"We started a summer day camp about 20 years ago when there were kids interested in gardening, but no one was interested in being a 4-H club leader," said Jones, who is also the county 4-H youth program leader. "Some of those

kids went on to careers in horticulture."

Projects vary, but a favorite is starting a miniature salad garden in a cedar box they build themselves. The kids plant fast-growing greens and perhaps onions and short carrot varieties, which are ready to harvest just in time to enter in the August county fair.

Dish gardens are popular, too. Jones said to think of a theme and go for it. One year she used blue bowls with seashells, whitewashed sand and succulents to make an ocean-themed mini-landscape. This year they'll make a forest with dinosaurs.

"The kids have things they've made that they're proud of and can take care of and share with other people," she said. "And it's not overwhelming."

The benefits of teaching children to garden are well documented. If they learn to grow their own fruits and vegetables, they're far more likely to eat them. And it gets them outside away from their phones.

"I read recently that working in the soil releases a feel-good hormone," Jones said. "Getting kids out working in the soil, unplugged for a while, feeling and looking and being curious is really important."

Jones' tips for gardening with kids:

Start small. Don't give children too many choices or they'll get overwhelmed. Do a vegetable container or small garden plot. Allocate it just for them.

Opt for fast-growing plants. Kids tend to have a short attention span, so have them plant carrots, onions, radishes and lettuce, which germinate and grow quickly. Slow-growers like corn, peppers or tomatoes will frustrate them.

Don't be free labor. Teach kids how to garden and they'll be empowered to do it themselves.

Get scientific. Soak a couple of different kinds of seeds overnight. Place between napkins and let them start to germinate. Have kids draw pictures of what they see.

Plan for success. Plant vegetables or other plants in the right conditions and water correctly so they stay healthy and kids aren't disappointed. For containers, use a drip pan to catch water so soil doesn't dry out as quickly. Don't plant too many seeds in a pot or there won't be enough room for plants to grow.

Don't be in a rush. If kids want to look at worms, let them look at worms.

Berries and their flavonoids protect the heart

BY JOEL FUHRMAN, MD
For the Sentinel

Berries are one of my favorite super foods – the second B in G-BOMBS (my list of super foods: greens, beans,

onions, mushrooms, berries seeds) – rich in fiber and phytochemicals and low in calories. Blueberries, raspberries, strawberries and blackberries are vibrantly colored with antioxidant phytochemicals, and they

are some of the highest antioxidant foods in existence. The deep red, blue and purple pigments of berries



are produced by flavonoid antioxidant molecules called anthocyanins, which are concentrated in the skins of the fruits. Flavonoids, including anthocyanins, are not merely antioxidants; they are thought to have a number of additional beneficial effects in the body that are unrelated to their antioxidant capacity. As such, several studies have shown that high flavonoid intake is associated with considerable risk reductions (up to 45 percent) for coronary heart disease.

Recent research highlights the cardioprotective properties of berries. A 2011 study

investigated berry consumption in relation to risk for elevated blood pressure. Compared to eating no blueberries, just one serving per week decreased the risk of hypertension by 10 percent. New findings published in January 2013 from the Nurses' Health Study support these results with data in younger women (age 25-42 at the start) who were followed for 18 years. In these women, three or more weekly servings of blueberries or strawberries was linked to a 34 percent reduced risk of heart attack compared to lower intake of berries.

How do berries and their colorful anthocyanins protect the heart and blood vessels? Studies using berries or berry phytochemicals in human participants or on human cells have uncovered some of the possible protective actions of berries on the cardiovascular system. Berry flavonoids seem

to act in several different ways to maintain heart health. In human subjects, researchers found that berries mitigated oxidative stress, decreased oxidation of LDL (which helps to prevent the production of atherosclerotic plaque), increased blood antioxidant capacity, and in some cases improved lipid levels, blood pressure or blood glucose. Higher anthocyanin and berry intake is associated with reduced C-reactive protein (CRP), suggesting that berries may curb inflammation; additional studies have confirmed that berries have anti-inflammatory properties. Berry phytochemicals also may enhance nitric oxide production in the blood vessels, which helps to properly regulate blood pressure.

Why not amplify these benefits by eating berries every day? If observational studies showed a 10 percent decrease in hypertension risk for one serving of

blueberries per week and a 34 percent reduced risk of heart attack from three servings of berries per week, imagine the protection that is possible when you eat berries every day! Even during winter, we can get our daily dose of anthocyanins from frozen berries. Also remember that in addition to promoting heart health, berries also have anti-cancer effects and provide protection against diabetes and dementia.

Dr. Fuhrman is a #1 New York Times best-selling author and a board certified family physician specializing in lifestyle and nutritional medicine. Visit his informative website at DrFuhrman.com. Submit your questions and comments about this column directly to news-questions@drfuhrman.com.

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Personal attacks and name calling in response to letters are uncalled for and unnecessary.

If you would like to submit an opinion piece, Another View must be no longer than 600 words.

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