

Letter

City Council's disregard

To the Editor:
My letter is pertaining to the City Council's complete disregard of public wishes. Twice last year, the city budget was defeated, indicating that the people of Heppner did not want a tax increase (on top of property evaluation increases) and did not wish to pay for city excess.
The City Council then skirted the issue by increasing the water and sewer rates in order to cover part of the money lost in the budget defeats. To my mind, this is total disregard of the mandate to cut the budget.
The water and sewer rates are nothing more than "indirect taxes" when these funds are used deliberately to supplement the general fund.
This year on April 4, the budget request was again defeated. This time, because of low voter turnout combined with a seven (7) vote defeat, I understand the council wishes to put up the same request again. I feel the low voter turnout indicates very little publicity on the request and the feeling that a no vote means very little.
Will the council again receive the money they want by the "indirect taxes" of water and sewer rate increases which do not have to be put to a vote?
I also feel very put upon about having to vote 2 times in 3 weeks for 3 separate budget requests—City of Heppner, April 4; Morrow County School, April 19; Blue Mountain Community College, April 19. It appears that these were set so as not to draw a very large vote and also to get in just before the new property tax values arrive.
The people should make their feelings known on these issues.

Thank you,
Ronald C. Jones

Sumner sees SB 430 as possible sleeper

A warning to self employed persons is contained in Senate Bill 430. At the present time sole proprietors, partners and officers of corporations are exempt from workmen's compensation coverage. But the above bill would require coverage and of course premium payments by the above described individuals who work on a job site with the tools of a recognized trade, craft or industrial occupation.
This one could be a sleeper if passed and open up mandatory coverage of the self employed depending on the interpretation of trade, craft and industrial site. If you have any feeling on this one, let me know.
Last week, the Oregon House of Representatives passed House Bill 2040, the Homeowner and Renter Relief Program (HARRP). Because of inflation, program eligibility was extended to those with adjusted gross incomes up to \$20,000. The size of the payments was boosted also.
In addition, the Elderly Rental Assistance program was combined with HARRP under specific instructions to the Department of Revenue that the elderly applicant receive the highest refund available from either program. The minimum age for Elderly Rental Assistance participation was lowered from 65 to 58 years.
The direct relief provided through the HARRP bill, along with the indirect relief from the state's Basic School Support program, provides the most massive taxpayer relief program in the history of Oregon. HB 2040 now is in the Senate Revenue and School Finance Committee for consideration.
Democrats are holding to a promise to keep government in check. The Democratic Caucus recently considered a proposal from the House leadership to slash \$118 million from the Governor's budget. About \$30 million would come from proposed increases in existing programs. The remainder would result from not funding or only partially funding new programs. The feeling is that this is just not the time to get the state involved in a bunch of new programs or to greatly increase the size of state agencies.

suner bill.
This week continues the rigorous committee schedule on the House side. From Monday through Friday of this week more than 100 bills will undergo public hearings or work sessions in the different House committees. Many of the hearings begin at 8 a.m., while others are run in the evenings starting at 7 p.m. It makes a long day, but the heavy scheduling should help us finish up the more than 2,600 measures which already have been introduced in the Senate and House and adjourn within the next 10 to 12 weeks.
If you wish further information about these or other bills, please do not hesitate to contact me, Jack Sumner, at 378-8815 or H276 State Capitol, Salem, Oregon 97310.

Hermiston meet to consider transit plans

A public hearing on the Umatilla-Morrow Transit Project has been scheduled at the Hermiston Civic Recreation Center Thursday, April 14, at 7:30 p.m., for the purpose of considering alternative transit proposals to meet the transportation needs of workers in the region.
Federal Highway Administration funds totaling \$79,130 have been granted, subject to a public hearing and finalizing of the grant application, to assist in providing public transportation services for workers in Northern Morrow and Umatilla Counties.
The principal purpose of the project, developed by the East Central Oregon Association of Counties in conjunction with local industries and agricultural employers, is to provide an employee transit system for daily round trips from residential areas to job sites.

Board names fair grounds caretakers

Morrow County Fair Board announced this week that new caretakers are now living on the Morrow County Fairgrounds. Mr. and Mrs. Jack Wallace have been named to the post.
The Fair Board is requesting that anyone or groups wishing to use the facility please call 676-5111.
With summer creeping up rapidly, the board has urged all groups to begin scheduling their planned events now.

Jernstedt eyes legislative indecision

Work accomplished by the regular daily Senate sessions is moving at a very slow pace, primarily because bills are not being acted upon fast enough in committees. While committees appear to be working hard, they just don't seem to be making many decisions. In my opinion, a large percentage of the bills under consideration should be tabled and forgotten.
Governor Straub has asked the federal government to declare 21 Oregon counties drought disaster areas. Six of the 21 are in my nine-county senatorial district and several of the others are neighboring counties, so I am well aware of the problems they face.

Identifying the problems is easier than solving them. I was sorry to see one proposed attempt at relief, cloud seeding, fail to pass the Senate. It might not work, but if it brought any additional moisture to any part of the state this year, it would have been worth the try.

I have commented previously on SB 461, which would allow a judge to issue an administrative inspection warrant to a public officer for investigation and inspection if there was a probable cause to believe that a state or local law was being broken. I believe this bill is a fishing license for every state agency with regulatory functions. And just about every state agency has some regulatory function, plus a list of all-purpose rules.

Every session of the legislature is cursed with some very bad bills, but at least we now have the use of some tools which have the capability of exposing some of them. One such tool is a computer system which has the text of all bills introduced this session in data storage banks. With a bill such

as SB 461 around, I began to wonder if there might be more like it. So I asked the computer to look through more

than 2,600 bills introduced so far this session, searching for the phrases "administrative

inspection warrants" and "enter private property." I found that at this writing there are

at least five bills which include this language and authorize state agencies to find some excuse to come on your property.

SB 249 gives the Director of

the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) the right to enter private property, without the owner's permission, to control oil supplies which might enter a body of water. Members of the Senate were so concerned about this measure that we managed to

defeat it, but unfortunately it was reconsidered the next day and passed. I hope it will be defeated in the House.

SB 250 gives the DEQ authority to investigate possible solid waste and noise violations.

SB 904 includes administrative inspection warrants as part of a major bill on drug control.

HB 2158 maintains the private property entry rights for various environmental quality agencies as they are merged into a single Department of Resource Management.

I also found ten laws already in existence giving various persons and agencies the right to come on your property and do something. This is a dangerous situation at best. Who

knows how many additional statutes or measures authorize this kind of action, but do not use those exact phrases?

So even though some of the bills that we are asked to consider have little if any merit, at least we have some powerful research tools to discover some of the flaws prior to considering the measures.

Elk's Calendar

Thursday, April 14
Regular Lodge
8 p.m.
Kitty

Friday, April 15
Dinner
Live Music

Saturday, April 16
Dinner
Live Music

Tuesday, April 19
Senior Citizens
4:30 p.m.

Wednesday, April 20
Senior Citizens
4:30 p.m.
Pinochle 7:30

Thursday, April 21
Regular Lodge
8 p.m.
Kitty

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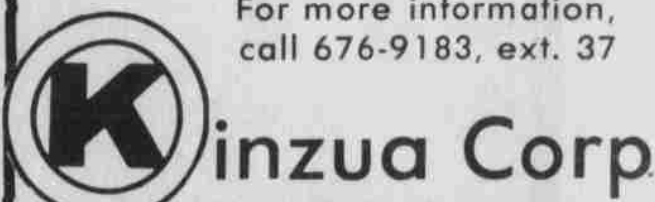
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● S-green 2 x 4 special farm grade stud. Mixed specie-92" long \$50 per unit (240 pieces)

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Sold by unit only Sale starts April, 18, ends May 6. (8 am - 3 pm M-F)

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