

## Salem Scene

by Everett E. Cutter

Legislators here, responding to public demand for property tax relief, are tackling the problem as their first order of business.

Some 85 tax-related bills already have been introduced in the 1967 session, and proposed solutions to Oregon's

tax problems are appearing to be almost as numerous as the legislators themselves. While the actual need for local tax cuts may still be a debatable issue for a few, the pressure exerted by some 60,000 petition signers on last year's 1½ per cent limitation measure clearly is being felt.

Sentiment in the Senate runs against new taxes of any kind unless a need is decidedly proved. House members probably would agree that voters should approve in advance

any tax structure changes intended to shift the burden borne by property owners.

The House Taxation Committee is proposing some ideas to lessen costs and confusion in tax elections, such as assuring adequate voter turnouts and limiting and standardizing bond election dates. But it is too early to tell what compromise between the Senate and House—and Gov. Tom McCall's program—might emerge.

Letters concerning property tax relief have been surprisingly scarce, some legislators say, perhaps because their constituents feel something definitely is being done. But some lawmakers here are questioning just how great the relief demand really is back home, and just what their people might consider as alternatives for financing local government.

On the surface, Oregon's property taxes do not appear as frightening as those of other states. Residents of 20 states now pay higher property taxes than Oregonians, who in 1964-65 paid \$50.65 per \$1,000 of personal income. Oregon does rank third in personal income tax rates, but it is one of only eight states without a sales tax.

In relation to neighboring states and the U. S. average, Oregon's property taxes would appear to have held the line. From 1958 to 1964-65, Oregon's property taxes per capita grew 40.7 per cent, compared to the national average of 45.9 per cent.

All Oregon state and local taxes during the same period

experienced an increase in effective rate of only 1.1 per cent, compared to the national increase of 2 per cent and increases of 2.1 per cent in Washington and 2.8 per cent in both Idaho and California.

Still, there are solid arguments to demonstrate that property taxes in Oregon have grown disproportionately large. First, it should be remembered that Oregon's base was larger to begin with than those of our neighboring states. Then examine the growth of Oregon's property taxes in relation to some other factors over the last few years.

Ad valorem property taxes, or taxes placed on value, increased 94.7 per cent from 1955 to 1965, after deducting direct tax relief funds granted in recent years. In the same period, property taxes as a percentage of personal income grew 15.1 per cent. All state taxes as a percentage of personal income grew only 1.2 per cent.

Obviously local taxes have grown out of proportion to state taxes, even with ever-increasing amounts of state aid to local school districts, and this is the problem the 1967 legislature seeks to remedy. Proposals for property tax relief so far range from a state sales tax to a lottery, from a broader-based income tax to higher markups on liquor for school support revenue.

What plan eventually gets to the people for a vote—and when—remains to be seen. Voters may be assured, however, as the percentage

## History

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short fund drive was held. The grounds were landscaped.

The Santiam Memorial community hospital was dedicated on March 29, 1953, and Mrs. Louise Wilt, R.N., hospital superintendent, was commended in the Portland Oregonian for having given the best speech of the day, she having spoken for about 40 seconds. The doors were open for business.

The hospital has more doors now than then, more windows, more beds, more employees, more equipment. There are new names on the staff rosters. It has survived the vagaries of a transient population, the pressures of big-city competition, the savagery of an October windstorm. The work of caring for and healing the sick continues steadily on, a truly perpetual motion, dawn-to-dusk, sun-to-sun, or rather midnight-to-midnight, as a hospital daily census is reckoned. It is an ever-present entity, a haven of reassurance, a living, breathing memorial to the dignity of man.

of tax bills introduced this session soars right along with the recognition of problems, that inequities in Oregon's tax structure are getting close scrutiny in the State House.

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## DETROIT IDANHA

Joyce Dewhurst-Ginny Kniss

The American Legion Auxiliary of Idanha Wednesday had a pot luck luncheon and all proceeds were donated to the March of Dimes. The pot luck items were donated by the Auxiliary members. A total of \$51 was realized.

Detroit High lost a close game Friday night to Falls City 63-61. The winning point was made in the last 30 seconds, Detroit JV won 56-32.

Gordon Brown had the typical fisherman's luck while fishing last week on the Alsea.

Nils Bittner of Consumer Power did his good deed for one of our four-footed friends last week. On the very top of a fir tree in Detroit, perched this small cat that had been there for three days, and Nils to the rescue, climbed up and brought the cat down and 10 feet from the ground, up went the cat and up went Nils. After the second attempt both reached the group safely. Hooray for Nils!!!

Ray Sophy and Harold Champion left in the wee hours Sunday morning to drive to Hampton where they hunted jackrabbits.

Don Lewis of Idanha was taken by Detroit ambulance Friday to Santiam Memorial where surgery was performed for a hernia.

Sunday evening The Cedars of Detroit showed movies to publicize the fact that they will have a shuffleboard elimination Friday, February 3 at

8 p. m. Prizes will be donated to the winners and all proceeds will go to the March of Dimes.

John F. Zabinski, under sheriff of Marion County was a guest speaker in law enforcement at a special meeting of the Detroit City Council Wednesday evening.

Dick Hunnicutt narrowly escaped serious injury when his loaded logging truck went out of control on highway 22 about three miles east of Idanha Monday afternoon. The truck was extensively damaged. Mr. Hunnicutt is a resident of Mill City and is employed by Benton Trucking Co. of Idanha.

A meeting is scheduled in the Detroit School library on February 2 at 7:30 p. m. for the Deanha Pre-school Mothers.

## Oregon Blue Book Contains Wealth of Interesting Data

The Oregon Blue Book is off the press and available to anyone who wishes to purchase it. This year as usual, it is filled with data pertinent to our state. It includes the names of our officials. It also gives a history of Oregon.

It lists the cities and their zip codes, too. There is a copy on display at The Enterprise office for anyone who wishes to examine it.

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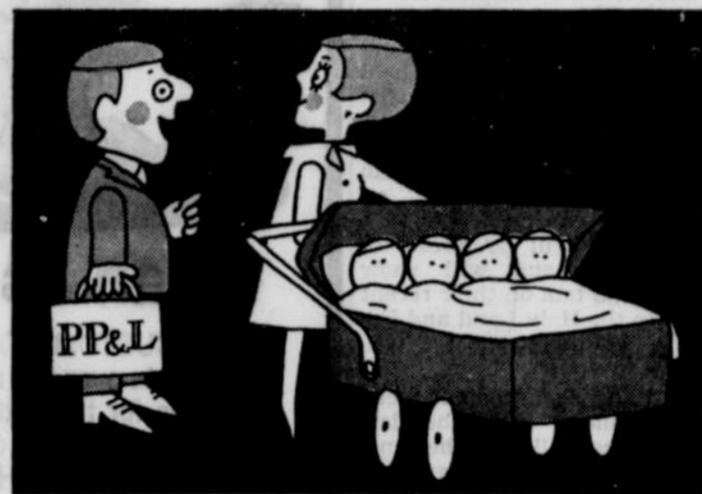


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