

The INDEPENDENT

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Opinion

Addiction or crime, it's a sad situation

Bruce Hugo has spent many years in public service. Five times, voters in Oregon's Representative District 1 sent him to Salem as their representative and he almost certainly could have gone a sixth time had he stood for re-election.

Instead, he ran for Columbia County Commissioner and won. Now, though his term isn't over, both he and the voters have lost something very valuable—trust.

Whether Hugo's misuse of his county credit card resulted from an addiction to gambling, as he claims, or whether it resulted from an arrogant attitude that he is above the law, as his detractors claim, is quite unimportant. What is important is that this whole episode be put to rest as soon as possible.

Hugo will undoubtedly face a recall election if he refuses to resign. That would both demean his record of public service and polarize the county's voters.

When an elected official has lost the trust of the people who elected him, it can't be regained by staying in office. With knowledge of Hugo's contributions to public life, we regretfully urge him to resign.

Blum and Dailey for 47J; Statton in Banks

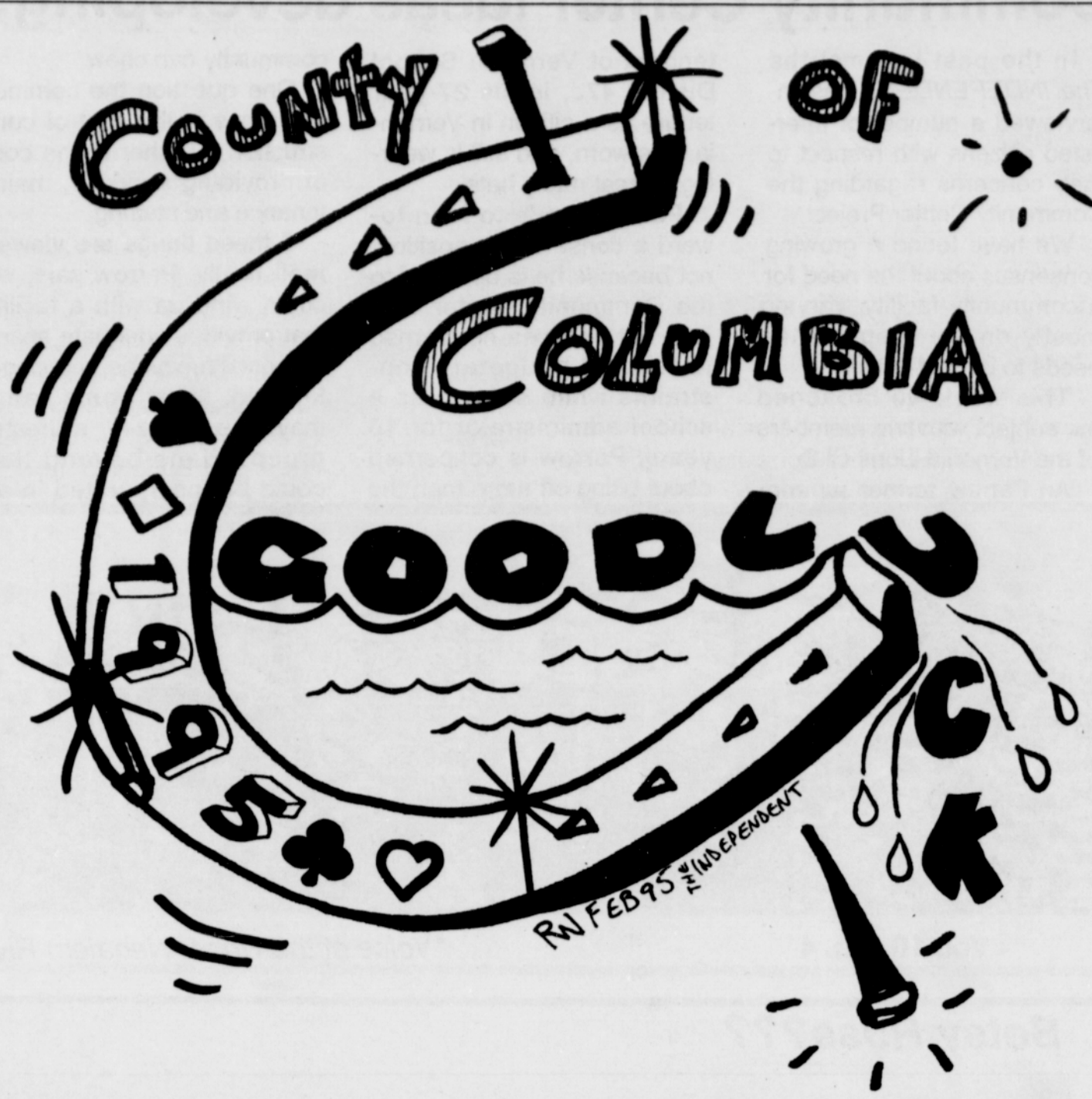
Area residents have been fortunate to have enough candidates for school board positions that they actually have choices. In too many districts, vacancies are filled by appointment because there is so little interest in what happens to children's education.

On the 47J ballot for Pos. 1, Kris Crowston's approach to education seems somewhat inadequate during this period of mandated change. Michael Kretschmer seems solid but, at this time, works such long days it's doubtful he could handle much more. Michelle Blum brings a background in law enforcement, combined with first-hand knowledge of the difficulties facing a single mother. In addition, she has administrative experience and the ability to analyze situations and seek the right solutions.

There is no reason to replace Don Dailey in Pos. 3. With one term nearly complete, he has become an effective board member since running afoul of the teachers association early in his term. Don Skinner is equally qualified but, at this time, Dailey is the better choice. John Allison has much to offer but has never even been to a school board meeting. He needs to do some home work before he goes any further.

Anne Statton is just about the only choice in Banks, not simply because she is qualified, but because her opponent refuses to even discuss why she should replace Statton. If a candidate refuses to discuss his or her philosophy about a subject as important as education, it is unreasonable to expect voter support.

The U.S. Supreme Court will hear the arguments in Acton v. 47J on March 28th.



The Josi Report

By Rep. Tim Josi
Oregon Representative, District 2

The legislature has been in session for a month and the reality of the state's financial situation is becoming very apparent. As a member of the House State and School Finance Committee, I am charged with the task of earmarking existing revenues from state income taxes for programs such as education and the crime package mandated by voters in November.

Because of the continuing effects of Measure 5, which passed in November of 1990, the state is making substantial cuts in governmental programs. The Governor's budget, therefore, is a "zero sum budget". If we need more money for a program, it is subtracted from other areas in the budget. Funds to implement the crime package will be derived from revenues normally allocated to other state agencies. Recently it was discovered that an additional ten million dollars will be needed for corrections because of an increasing number of inmates being housed in Oregon's criminal justice system.

The governor's top priority is public education. For this reason his budget, for Kindergarten-12th Grade, provides the same funding level received in the last biennium plus an additional eight million dollars. This extra revenue for schools comes at the expense of other state programs which will experience real cuts—in addition to the cuts they have already realized in the past two bienniums.

It is important to understand that Measure 5 shifted the primary source of funding for education from local jurisdictions to the state. Pri-

or to the passage of Measure 5, seventy-percent of school funding was provided from local property taxes and thirty-percent came from state income taxes. The state is meeting this additional fiscal burden with no additional tax resources. Also, now that the funding sources are reversed, the state must face federal constitutional mandates which require that all students have the same quality education. We have made substantial progress toward equity in the past few years; in 1993 we were at 52 percent equity, now we are at 63 percent. To achieve total equity in the next three years would take an additional \$242 million this next biennium. The problem is that while we increase the funding levels for the lower spending districts the higher spending schools receive no new revenues to adjust for inflation. This has been going on for four years now. How long can we continue to flat-fund the higher spending districts, without doing irreparable harm to their schools?

The additional eight million dollars in the governor's budget is to be used to equalize funding levels for all school districts. Many of us fear that this is not enough.

Add to this equation a call by Legislative leadership for a tax cut. For some this may add up to good politics but, to me, it equates to bad public policy. In two years we should take a serious look at an income tax cut, providing the economy continues to grow, but not now.

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Letters to the Editor

"Believer" unable to utilize science

To the Editor:

In response to the letter from Larry Christiansen, *The INDEPENDENT*, Feb. 8, 1995:

I pointed to a logical fallacy in Mr. Christiansen's previous letter (ad hominem, i.e., attacking the messenger rather

than the message) only to have him dispose of my comment as "environmentalist drive". Obviously, we have a communication problem here. Apparently, Mr. Christiansen does not understand my criticism since he responded with another example of the same fallacy. Name-calling does not have a place in formal arguments and rarely is it persua-

sive.

I have carefully re-read Mr. Christiansen's letter and I have an observation that I would like to share.

Mr. Christiansen evidently, is what is referred to in psychology as a "believer". That is, a person who holds deep beliefs that are not necessarily reached through objectivity

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