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**LETTERS IN THE EDITOR'S MAILBAG: Wednesday's paper**

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**School trouble deeper than money**

I've noticed the ruckus over school funding. I had been a teacher in a one-room Amish school in Pennsylvania.

The general public occasionally requested that we allow outsiders to attend as students. Between test scores and the extra work those students from the "world's" people required, it became apparent that the Amish school was academically advanced in comparison to the public school. The Amish children displayed a greater degree of common sense and behaved decidedly better than the students from the public school. This demonstrated a major advantage in the quality of education offered in this old-fashioned Amish school.

But my real point is simple. Our school budget, including my salary, was no more than \$100 a week for the entire school. Is a money shortage the real cause of poor education? Could it be deeper than that?

**STUART BANISTER**

*Eugene*

**Surprising insights volunteered**

Yes, folks, the city income tax has been voted down. The hyperbole from the folks who supported the tax has been very educational.

Andrew Ross let me know that I voted against the tax because I live in a luxurious home in the Cal Young area or on the edge of town. I also want to push school children to a life of crime leading to prison. Imagine my surprise to realize those things about myself.

Ron Duber was more succinct: I am cheap, short-sighted and sad. I have never met Duber but thank him for bringing those flaws to my attention.

Tim Baxter knows that I am not only "anti-tax" but that I am also "anti-school," because you cannot be one without being the other. I guess since I don't rub shoulders with the education elitists in the city, I can't possibly have an opinion about adequate school funding.

Finally, as Patricia Christgau so painfully pointed out, I am just not as great as I pretend to be because I failed to understand the "desperately bold, imaginative move" of a public agency asking if it could reach deeper into my pocket because it cannot make ends meet.

I voted no because I think the Eugene School District, like most public agencies, does not do a good job of managing the funds it currently receives. My vote does not hinder in any way the opportunity for those yes voters to get out their checkbooks and donate to the district.

**BILL LUCAS**

*Eugene*

**Financial education is useful**

I was quite heartened to read in the May 22 business section that there is a renewed interest in Oregon in

education in personal financial matters in our schools. Far too many graduates leave school with no education in these topics, which will, without exception, impact them in many ways throughout their lives.

I was lucky enough to have taken an elective course in this in high school in the mid-1960s and it has proved useful over all my life. In fact it, and college courses in business, have proved far more relevant to running one's life than the mandatory courses in algebra and geometry that are perennial academic requirements.

## **JOHN QUILTER**

*Eugene*

### **Obama's speech was on target**

I'm grateful that President Obama advocated for a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in his recent speech on the Middle East. As a rabbi who loves Israel, I support his vision: a peace agreement guaranteeing Israel as a Jewish homeland, Palestine as a Palestinian homeland, and final boundaries to be negotiated based upon the 1967 borders with mutually agreed land swaps.

His speech was profoundly pro-Israel. Obama upheld Israel's right to defend itself and condemned efforts to delegitimize Israel's existence. He proposed a demilitarized Palestine, discouraged a unilateral September U.N. vote on Palestinian statehood, and denounced Hamas.

Yet certain public figures have been distorting Obama's words by claiming that he said Israel's final borders should be the actual 1967 lines. Anyone checking the speech can see that he advocated negotiations that begin with the 1967 borders as a basis for talks and conclude with land swaps modifying those borders. This is the same framework that previous Israeli prime ministers have agreed to, as well as the past two U.S. administrations.

Apparently saying the number "1967" opened Obama up to a barrage of misleading attacks. Nevertheless, I hope he'll continue his brave stand for peace, which so many Jewish Americans and Israelis, including top military and political officials, support.

Without a two-state solution, Israel can't survive as a Jewish, democratic state. We need Obama to be strong in his convictions and politically skillful to work for this vision. With these comments I speak solely for myself, not for my congregation.

## **RABBI MAURICE HARRIS**

### **Temple Beth Israel**

*Eugene*

### **Bashing Solomon is unfair**

I am sick and tired of reading letters to the editor that continue to bash Jennifer Solomon for her involvement in the defeat of the proposed city income tax to benefit Eugene schools. Solomon has given countless hours of her time as a city councilor for the betterment of Eugene.

Fortunately, the majority (two-thirds) of citizens saw this proposed tax as an unfair tax in that it excluded too many people (i.e. Public Employees Retirement System retirees and those outside city limits) and that there was no guaranteed sunset clause on the tax.

## **DENNIS CASADY**

*Eugene*

### **Fred Meyer: Everyone benefits**

I have lived in Eugene for more than 50 years and have watched this no-growth attitude persist. Now the city of Eugene and the Eugene School District have a chance to have added jobs, income and property

taxes all in one bundle. Everyone will benefit from the Fred Meyer complex on the Civic Stadium site.

Eugene, let's move forward, not backwards.

## **DON SAVOIE**

*Eugene*

### **False prophesy brought meaning**

Judgment Day 2011? Believe it or not, it held some useful lessons.

As Harold Camping's followers have discovered, our belief in or about something, no matter how strongly held, is not what makes it true. While some things are uniquely true for each of us, there is a truth outside ourselves. Truth cannot simply be forged by someone who claims reality to be a certain way. Surely, it was a lesson hard learned.

A well-informed approach to anyone's instruction should establish the qualifications of the teacher. The Bible itself, the text which Camping mishandled, warns not only against "false teachers," as we've heard in the media, but that teachers should "study to show themselves approved," that they will be held to a higher standard regarding the impact their teaching might have on people's lives.

The pervasiveness of Camping's premonitory, its daunting implications and the sincerity of its adherents did in fact give the world pause. Anyone who paid attention to it potentially discovered something about the state of his or her own soul. True, many simply got a good laugh out of it, but there was also a collective sigh of relief when the time had passed. Some were admittedly nervous, even quietly terrified, and others bemoaned their unfulfilled hopes and dreams. Still other folks saw it as an opportunity to change their ways.

The truth is, even this particularly misguided message holds the possibility of redemption.

## **BILL ODEGAARD**

*Springfield*

### **Explaining the quiet big day**

Re the rapture/apocalypse forecast for May 21:

Maybe it did occur after all.

It's just that nobody made the cut.

## **KEN MOLLY**

*Eugene*

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