

Mosquito...

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could vote. Perhaps this helps explain issue number two: why bother verifying someone's identity?

Fourth, there is no confidentiality of vote. The principle of voter confidentiality is as old as the vote itself. Two thousand years ago, a Greek would not write his name on the black or white stone he used to cast his vote; but with this process your neighbors, bosses, employees, elected officials, and pastors got to see exactly how you voted.

Fifth, The District included a 12 page campaign piece, complete with pictures of mosquitoes one thousand times their natural size, in the envelope with the ballot; no contrary opinion was permitted to be included. Offensive behavior like that usually only occurs in countries like Hugo Chavez's Venezuela. If the District were to follow election law, both sides would be given equal space to make a case for their differing positions.

Sixth, There was no warning of an election. Election law dictates that sample ballots be mailed out a minimum number of days prior to an election. This allows voters time to investigate the issues, and informs them that a ballot will be arriving shortly. The District sent out ballots, with no previous communication that the ballots would be arriving.

Seventh, perhaps the most disturbing part of the process is that a majority vote is not needed for the measure to succeed. As long as "majority protest" does not exist, the District can proceed as if the measure had won. If a ballot recipient did not vote or did not mail in a ballot it was counted as a "yes" vote for the Mosquito District. Many did not understand that. Typically, a 2/3 vote is required to raise taxes. Some taxes can be raised with a smaller majority of 55%. It would be understandable if a measure could win with only 50% plus one vote, but to be able to raise taxes with just a tie vote strikes at the heart of the democratic process.

Lastly, a vote is not necessarily counted as one vote. The paid consultant of the District camp up with a formula for deciding who's vote is worth how much. Not all votes were counted with equal weight. As blindly obedient citizens, should we trust that arbitrary formula created by the paid consulting firm was not in any way crafted to assure the measure's passage.

If you want to see the vote formula you'll have to drive to the Lincoln office of the Mosquito District. The Board has refused repeated requests to make the formula available on their website, by fax, or email.

Why did the District choose to use this process rather than a regular election? Once again, the government's insatiable appetite for more money has trumped respect for the democratic process. It happens in Venezuela, and it happens in Placer County.

— Ben Mazy

Like A Taxpayer...

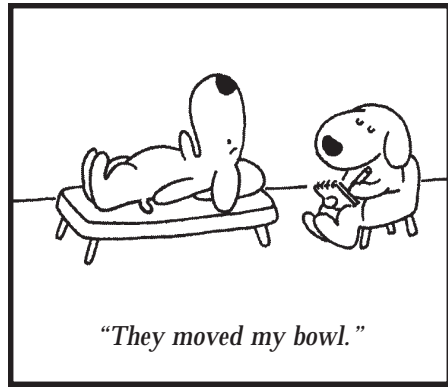
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repayment, or landscaping and lighting districts, that before passage of Proposition 218 could be imposed without a vote. However, some taxes, masquerading as fees, can and still are being enacted. Recently, the Placer County Board of Supervisors passed two new taxes, one to fight car theft and one to utilize fingerprinting to fight crime, as if these are new County functions. These taxes will together cost taxpayers \$1.00 for each car and \$2.00 for each truck. These will cost much less than the 15% increase in sales tax advocated by the Placer County Transportation Commission. At least special sales tax increases will require voter approval, until our politicians think of a way to circumvent current limitations.

Viewers of British comedy series "Mr. Minister" and "Mr. Prime Minister" feel right at home watching Placer County politics. Unfortunately, Placer County political action is a live reality show. The devotion that the supervisors give to the bureaucrats who constitute "staff" was shown by acceding to the "Compaction Doctrine" which mandates that each level in the bureaucracy includes an arbitrary salary differential so that managers are rewarded by longevity, not productivity. At the time this policy was effected, managers who were not going to leave before their imminent retirement received unwarranted increases that not only cost the taxpayers at that time, but will be paid for by taxpayers yet unborn if the retirees live long enough. This overpayment of managers continues unabated as bureaucrats compensation spirals without any measure of true worth that is inherent in private industry. Just last month the Placer county Water District announced a salary increase of 20% for the General Manager, following a similar increase in water rates. Perhaps that was the criterion.

Not all non-politician taxpayers are taxpayers. Some politicians are truly taxpayers. Actually, most politicians probably think like taxpayers before being elected to their first term of elected office. Those who continue to think like taxpayers commonly serve a single term in a local office and do not seek re-election.

— Dan Sokol



Ant Swarms...

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hidden objects in a building, armed with simple instructions and ways to share information. By individually pursuing basic tasks and minimizing redundancies, such as avoiding rooms that other robots had already searched.

A number of companies are utilizing swarm theory and intelligence to master complex issues or problems by forming a team of members from various backgrounds to work together on a typical problem-solving project. A small team of 6 to 8 members combining various skills and knowledge advance suggested answers to the issue before them. It works.

— Wally Reemelin

Pork Sharing...

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of this issue as we continue our research.

— Wally Reemelin

Excerpts, Walter Williams, *The Freeman*



Car Taxes...

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At the March 20 vote by Supervisors on the vehicle taxes, a question was raised, "Did the commercial tax of \$2.00 annually apply to pickup trucks?" The response from a proponent was that pickups would be taxed the same as autos, or \$1.00 per year. The League contacted the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) in Sacramento to confirm this issue. DMV Registration Manager, Mike Chockle, stated that "all commercially registered vehicles would be levied the \$2.00 fee for each of the two taxes imposed at time of license renewal each year." Almost all pickups have a commercial license.

Therefore, an owner of a car and a pickup, or truck, will pay a license renewal fee addition of \$4.00 per pickup and \$2.00 per car for a total new tax of \$6.00 each year. This same amount of auto fee was enacted by then Governor Gray Davis and became a key issue driving his recall by California voters.

The third vehicle tax proposed by Sheriff Bonner, to cover disposal of abandoned vehicles, was postponed by the Supervisors, so it is still out there ready to be reconsidered.

Placer residents will begin to feel the bite of these new taxes when they receive a DMV statement for license renewal, unless the Supervisors decide to revisit this tax issue.

— Wally Reemelin

"There are risks and costs to a program of action, but they are far less than the long-range risks and costs of comfortable inaction."

~ John F. Kennedy

ELECTED OFFICIALS

President George W. Bush (R): The White House, Washington, D.C. 20500. Phone (202) 456-1111, Fax 456-2461.

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger (R): Governor's Office, The Capitol, Sacramento, CA 95814. Phone (916) 445-2841, Fax 445-4633.

U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer (D): Hart Senate Office Building, Room 112, Washington, D.C., 20510-0505. Phone (415) 403-0100, Email: senator@boxer.senate.gov.

U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein (D): Hart Senate Office Building, Room 331, Washington, D.C., 20510-0505. Phone (415) 393-0707, Email: senator@feinstein.senate.gov.

U.S. Representative John Doolittle (R): U.S. House of Representatives, 2410 Rayburn House Office Building #2410, Washington, D.C. 20515-0504, (202) 225-2511, Fax (202) 225-5444, www.house.gov/doolittle.

State Senator Dave Cox (R): District 1, State Capitol Room 2054, (916) 445-5788, 2140 Professional Drive, Suite 140, Roseville, CA 95661, (916) 783-8232.

State Senator Sam Aanestad (R): District 4, State Capitol Room 2054, (916) 445-3353, 200 Providence Road, Suite 108, Nevada City, CA 95959, (530) 470-1846

Assemblyman Rick Keene (R): District 3, State Capitol Room 6027, 1550 Humboldt Road, Suite 4, Chico, CA 95928, (530) 895-4217.

Assemblyman Ted Gaines (R): District 4, State Capitol Room 4162, (916) 319-2004, 3300 Douglas Blvd., Suite 430, Roseville, CA 95661. Phone (916) 774-4430.

Assemblyman Roger Niello (R): District 5, State Capitol Room 2016, (916) 319-2005, 4811 Chippendale Drive, Suite 501, Sacramento, CA 95841, (916) 349-1995

Placer County Supervisors: 175 Fulweiler Avenue, Auburn, CA 95603. Phone (530) 889-4010, Email: bos@placer.ca.gov.

District 1: Rocky Rockholm
District 2: Robert Weygant
District 3: Jim Holmes
District 4: Kirk Uhler
District 5: Bruce Kranz

