

Basalt council OKs property tax refunds

Checks will be cut for property tax overcharges

Scott Condon
The Aspen Times

The Basalt Town Council voted 4-2 on Tuesday night to voluntarily issue refund checks to property owners for tax overcharges.

Council members Katie Schwoerer, Ryan Slack and Jennifer Riffle supported the refund with Mayor Jacque Whitsitt.

Councilmen Auden Schendler and Bill Infante voted against the measure because they wanted to ask voters if the refunds should be issued.

Councilman Gary Tennenbaum is traveling and wasn't present for the meeting.

"I think we're struggling with two different forces trying to do the right thing here," Schendler said. "I do think the vote option is good."

Infante said the town government would take on substantial debt providing the refunds, so voters should decide if that's the proper path. He said voters should be provided with all pertinent information and allowed to settle the issue.

"Every penny collected was for the public good and the benefit of Basalt," Infante said. "I don't see any downside to letting voters decide"

Basalt's top administrators discovered while working on the 2019 budget last fall that the town government had raised its property tax mill levy 10 times since 2006 in violation of the Taxpayers Bill of Right amendment to the Colorado Constitution. TABOR prohibits tax increases without a citizen vote.

Basalt voters approved a town ballot question in 1994 that eased some of the TABOR restrictions, but didn't allow new taxes without a vote, according to the town's consultants.

TABOR says that governments that have violated the tax limits are liable for refunds for four years. Basalt estimates it must pay back \$1.89 million in overcharges for 2016 to '19.

That will result in a refund of \$990 for a house with an actual value of \$1 million and a refund of \$3,990 for commercial property valued at \$1 million.

The town government must also re-establish its property tax mill levy. A question will be placed on the November ballot asking voters to approve a mill levy. The exact wording of that question must be settled in August.

Riffle said getting that question approved is her foremost concern. She suggested that putting a question

BASALT, A10



FREDERIC DE FAVERNEY/COURTESY PHOTO

French-Algerian choreographer Hervé Koubi is bringing his imaginative show to Aspen for one night only tonight.

A single 'Barbarian' evening with Compagnie Hervé Koubi

Shannon Asher
Special to The Aspen Times

Imagine 13 male dancers whirling around a stage in outbursts of cartwheels, somersaults, forward flips, back flips and headspins dressed in Swarovski-inspired headgear to music by Wagner, Mozart and Faure.

French-Algerian choreographer Hervé Koubi, founder of Compagnie Hervé Koubi, brings this imaginative work to Aspen for a one-night-only production Wednesday of "The Barbarian Nights, or The First Dawns of the World," which had its world premiere at the Cannes Dance Festival in November 2015. The local performance is hosted by Aspen Santa Fe Ballet.

Despite the company's past four seasons of extensive touring, including a total of about 70 performances annually in both Europe and all over North America, Koubi took an interesting path to get to where he is today.

Commonly, one's heritage is known early on in life. Koubi, however, didn't discover that he was Algerian until age 25. Exploring his roots led to the desire to merge cultures and to the creation of "The Barbarian Nights, or The First Dawns of the World."

"I chose to bring my flair to what I feel is the most beautiful: the mixture of cultures and religions that help me draw the foundations of a common geography on which we stand today," Koubi said.

As a work based on the origin of the Mediterranean culture, it represents the ancestral fear of strangers and the organic desire to resist people who are different.

"The piece takes root from the awe-inspiring and unavoidable story of our Mediterranean basin," Koubi explained. "I think it is necessary for everyone to believe in a universal culture which is at once shared, mixed and linked in order to wish for an inevitably common future. ... My name is Hervé and I am very proud to hold that name; it's such a French name. I am also very happy to have been raised in a pluricultural vision that gave me wider horizons to explore."

After traveling to North Africa and auditioning more than 250 people, Koubi selected 13 men who had street dance backgrounds. The search for dancers of Algerian descent was inspired by Koubi's quest in search of his own identity.

KOUBI, A7

DOG of THE WEEK

Angel

Meet Angel! This sweet girl has the perfect name! She is still a puppy at 1 year old, 45 pounds, good with other dogs and kids. Just a love! Looks like a shepherd mix. If you would like to meet Angel go to luckydayrescue.org and fill out an adoption application.



LUCKY DAY ANIMAL RESCUE OF COLORADO

www.luckydayrescue.org



Come out tonight, **Wednesday July 24th @ 9pm** to meet Trey Zoeller, founder of Jefferson's Bourbon and America's most inventive whiskey maker. Trey blends whiskey like no other and finds creative ways to blend, cask, and age it; such as sending barrels on ships for voyages around the world to pick up complex flavors not found anywhere else. Trey will be answering questions as well as sampling many of his amazing products.

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FREDERIQUE CALLOCH/COURTESY PHOTO

Compagnie Hervé Koubi will produce "The Barbarian Nights" for one evening, hosted by Aspen Santa Fe Ballet.

KOUBI

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"The dancers I met overseas have a hip-hop background, more specialized in acrobatics," Koubi said. "I decided to mix their dance skills with my approach to dance. I am very interested in the quality of the movement, the combination of moves, the way dancers are committed to a project and how their bodies can be an extension of their thoughts and of my idea."

The movement can speak in ways that other media cannot, he found.

"Dance can also help to create a universal culture seeing as how dance is a body language and body is the common thing that all human beings share," Koubi said.

While he studied dance at

University of Aix-en-Provence, he earned a diploma in 2002 as a pharmaceutical doctor.

"My parents wanted me to have a good diploma," he explained. "I wanted to dance but I also wanted my parents to be proud of me. I studied and became a doctor to please them, but I couldn't stand to be in a pharmacy selling pills. The appeal of dance has been too strong for me to resist."

After deciding to focus exclusively on his dance career, Koubi has been the associate choreographer at the Pole National Supérieur de Danse in France and has been awarded the French medal of Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres in July 2015. Hopefully his parents aren't too upset with him.

"Dance is my medium," Koubi said. "I use it as a way of expression to talk

IF YOU GO ...

What: Compagnie Hervé Koubi, presented by Aspen Santa Fe Ballet

Where: Aspen District Theatre

When: Today, 8 p.m.

How much: \$36 to \$94

Tickets: Wheeler Opera House box office; aspenshowtix.com

about all the former civilizations, like an ode to those who were here before us. I want to make an ode to the one who, above wars, speaks of unity, to the one who gathers all, to the one who turns their backs to identity claims, to the one who takes the best of everyone and whom, throughout its history, honors man as their anthem. I use dance to develop the relationship we may have with the unknown, with the so-called barbarian."

An Aspen
Laugh
Festival
favorite
returns!



MITCH FATEL

THU, JUL 25 & FRI, JUL 26 | 8:00 PM

Is that a sparkle in his eye or is he just confused? With his innocence and friendly demeanor, Mitch quickly engages the audience and then catches them off guard with a mixture of mischievous dialog and off color comments.

Admission is free on a first-come, first served-basis, but there are a limited number of reserved tables available for purchase. Tables of 4 can be reserved in advance, and include a bottle of wine from the bar, and a food platter from Aspen Public House.



Check out the full Sunset
Sessions lineup and reserve
your table online today!

970.920.5770 | wheeleroperahouse.com



ASPEN

Willoughby Way View Property

Beds 5 | Baths 5 | \$22,750,000

Located above the Roaring Fork River on 1.3 acres along sought-after Willoughby Way, this Montecito-style home exudes style and grace worthy of its Red Mountain locale. Unobstructed views stretching from Aspen Mountain to Highlands to the slopes of Buttermilk offer a direct connection to the mountains. Designed by renowned Aspen architect Bill Poss and custom built by Paul D'Amato, this 4,552-sqft home offers desirable single-level, above-grade living. Interiors feature wood flooring, ceilings and beams, and divided-light windows throughout. Five bedrooms and four and a half baths are situated so that a separate guest wing allows privacy for all. An open-floor plan encourages easy access to a large flagstone deck area for entertaining, as well as a beautifully landscaped flat lawn. Web#: AN160135



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