

Court rules on university employee's legal fees in rape suit

PORTLAND (AP) — The Oregon Court of Appeals has ruled that the state isn't obligated to pay the legal fees for a former Eastern Oregon University administrator who successfully defended himself against a lawsuit accusing him of raping a co-worker.

The Oregonian reports Robert Davis sought \$100,000 from the state for his defense costs, arguing that he had been sued for something that allegedly occurred on the job.

But a three-judge panel Wednesday upheld the ruling by a Union County Circuit judge stating that sexual intercourse wasn't within Davis' duty as a university employee.

Marla Johnson accused Davis of raping her while on a work trip in Atlanta in February 2006. A Union County Circuit jury ruled in favor of Davis, who said the sex was consensual.

Snorkeler finds 1928 class ring in lake

By Kailey Fiscaro
The (Bend) Bulletin

BEND (AP) — When Gina McNeill found a tarnished 1928 class ring in Cultus Lake while snorkeling late last month, she wondered who the owner was. Thursday, the granddaughter of that owner came forward.

While McNeill was finishing up snorkeling July 31, the ring caught her eye as she approached the shore.

"It had a shine and I looked at it," McNeill, 56, of Bend, said. She swam over to it and picked it out of the shallow water, only about 2-1/2 to 3-1/2 feet deep. Even though it was brassy in color she could tell it was gold, and it looked like an old class ring.

After cleaning it up at home, first with seltzer water and dishwashing liquid and then a toothbrush and toothpaste to really get the job done, she could make out the details: "Bend HS" for Bend High School, "1928," "10k" for 10 karat gold and initials carved clearly inside — "RBC." McNeill did some research online at home, but then contacted Bend-La Pine Schools to see whether staff there could help in the search. The district shared a picture of the ring on Facebook and Twitter Wednesday morning.

Thursday, McNeill brought the ring to the Des

Chutes Historical Museum to enlist the help of staff there as well. Searches by *The Bulletin* and museum staff through old yearbooks, directories and marriage records at the museum for someone living in Bend during that time with those initials were not fruitful Thursday — and for a tricky reason.

Robert Berwyn Coyner, the original owner, went by his middle name. Old records all showed simply "Berwyn Coyner," which slipped under the radar.

His granddaughter, Leslie Smith, saw a news report about the ring but didn't really pay attention. Then her dad became interested.

"He remembered his dad had graduated in that year," Smith, 57, of Redmond, said. Smith's dad, Bob Coyner, checked to see whether he had his father's high school diploma. He did.

Smith then messaged Bend-La Pine Schools via Facebook.

"I'm contacting you about the class ring found at Cultus Lake," the message from Smith said. She sent it to the school district Thursday afternoon; from start to finish, the

ring was connected to the owner's family in just a day and a half.

"My grandfather was a member of the Bend High School class of 1928. His name is Robert Berwyn Coyner, he was a lifelong fisherman and spent a lot of time fishing Central Oregon lakes. He died in 2003," the message read.

Now, Smith is looking forward to connecting with McNeill and the museum to see the ring.

McNeill said to have found the owner's granddaughter is "amazing." She plans on releasing the ring to the family.

"It was kind of exciting," Smith said of realizing

the ring belonged to her grandfather.

Museum staffers were excited Thursday evening to find out the news, too. Mysteries like this one are always fun for them to try to crack.

Even before the owner was identified, Kelly Cannon-Miller, executive director of the museum, and Vanessa Ivey, museum manager, had narrowed down who the owner might have been. They judged from the size of the ring the owner was a man.

They were right. Coyner lived to be 92. Coyner owned a Ben Franklin retail store in Redmond and the Redmond Hotel. He was also a banker.

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