

Wood says Weaver 'glorifies' issues

By MARY BETH ALLEN
Of the Emerald

Bob Wood, Lane County commissioner and candidate for Fourth District Congressman, thinks "it's going to take someone more perceptive of local government" than his opponent, Congressman James Weaver, to effectively fill the Fourth District position.

Wood thinks he is that someone, and he's hoping to convince Fourth District voters of it.

"Here's where government meets people," Wood says of his present county job. "What better preparation could anyone have (to be congressman)?"

Wood feels the "purpose of government is to serve people." He says, "When people can't serve themselves, then government serves them collectively."

"I understand the uniqueness of Oregon and the Fourth District," Wood says. He also thinks it is important for a congressman to "take national legislation and see how it will affect your district," and then weight the benefits the legislation will have for the home area and the country as a whole.

County government has given Wood experience in many federal programs.

"I'll bet I can name more national programs than Weaver," he claims. "What does he do or know

that I don't know?"

Wood feels he has had firsthand experience with many of the programs that congress members deal with in terms of paper and from the perspective of Washington, D.C.

As far as Bureau of Land Management programs go, Wood says, "I'm the one that's up in the woods with those people."

Weaver has "glorified" issues like the wilderness, says Wood. "Truckdrivers, workers — he's alienated them," says Wood of his opponent. "They're fearful of being unemployed."

The ability to go beyond superficial analysis of a problem is essential, says Wood. For example, he says in the area of road maintenance, while it may seem extravagant to legislate tax dollars to fix roads, it actually makes sound fiscal sense. If roads are in top condition, log trucks and other commercial vehicles can haul twice as heavy loads as they could on poorly maintained roads, cutting down on fuel expenses that the extra trips would entail.

Wood, who filed for governor before switching to the congress race, says the transition hasn't affected his campaign.

"I don't think it's (reaction) been negative," he says. He says his supporters prefer he run against Weaver rather than Gov. Bob Straub, who would have been his opponent in the democratic primary.

The prospect of living in



Bob Wood

Washington was the main reason Wood was reluctant to run for Congress.

He says, "When I started out against Straub, it was more of a statement rather than anything. It brought issues up."

Wood says the decision of former governor Tom McCall to enter the race on the Republican side didn't influence his decision.

"I decided if I wanted to stay in politics and serve the people the realistic race would be this one,"

he says.

"I probably received more support by transferring over," Wood speculates.

He says if he loses the race, "I won't get bitter about it. I believe in politics and I wish more people did." In the event of defeat, Wood says he has "built a lot of options," and isn't worried about the future.

"I'm not a front-page politician," Wood says, adding this is the basic difference between Weaver and himself.

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