



Cherise Kaechele / The Observer

Terri Stoltz, co-owner of Hometown Hardware, is excited about getting a credit union in the City of Union. She said once that happens, the town will be able to offer its community everything they would need without having to travel.

UNION

Continued from Page 1A that exist to serve their members. Like banks, credit unions accept deposits, make loans and provide a wide array of other financial services.

Having a local bank again "will help big time," said Mike Colkitt, owner of Union Market. "I am really excited. (Many of the) business store owners (in Union) are."

In particular, he is look-

ing forward to the opening of the Old West branch because it means he won't have to make so many trips to La Grande to make deposits.

The building Old West Federal purchased in Union was occupied by Community Bank for several years before it closed in early 2012.

Union will be Old West Federal Credit Union's eighth branch location, Olson said. The other branches are located in

La Grande, Baker City, Pendleton, Hermiston, John Day, Prairie City and Burns.

Union Mayor Leonard Flint said he believes Old West will be a good fit for the community.

The mayor noted Old West is headquartered in John Day and understands the small rural communities it serves.

"They know what people in rural communities need from a financial institution," Flint said.

Olson announced in May that Old West was considering opening a branch in Union at a meet and greet attended by about 50 people at Union's city hall.

Walt Brookshire, a member of the Union City Council, also said the credit union will be a big plus, explaining it will mean fewer people will be leaving town to do their banking in the future. He said when people leave town to bank they are more likely to do grocery shopping, pick up a pizza and make other purchases out of town they otherwise might have done in Union.

Brookshire, the owner of Union Drug Co. and Soda Fountain, said business at his store has declined since Umpqua Bank closed and many other store owners have told him their sales have also fallen.

Brookshire said local store owners have told him the decline is most noticeable on Fridays, with sales down 10 to 25 percent. He believes this is because many people who live in Union but work in places like La Grande are paid on Fridays. Without a bank in town, residents must cash or deposit their paychecks at banks outside of Union

and often purchase items in La Grande and other towns instead of doing so in Union, he said.

Brookshire is hoping the new credit union will mean downtown Union will again be much busier on Friday afternoons.

The upcoming addition of the credit union is "a step in the right direction," Brookshire said. "It (will) definitely will be a positive."

Union Hometown Hardware with her husband, Lee, echoed Brookshire's comment.

"I'm really excited that we will be a whole town again," she said.

She noted Union has a drugstore, a gas station, a health clinic.

"Now that we have a bank, that rounds it out," Stoltz said. "You will not have to leave town for anything."

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BOISE

Continued from Page 1A transaction will be completed.

A spokesperson from Woodgrain was not available by press time.

Chapman said she was not sure if Woodgrain intended to have layoffs.

"We're not privy to what Woodgrain would do once they take over," Chapman said. "Woodgrain will be meeting with existing managers and employees within that time frame.

The operating plan will be determined by Woodgrain once they take possession of the mills, so we cannot speculate what, if any, changes will be made to the employment structure."

Chapman added Woodgrain, which

is based in Fruitland, Idaho, is a family-owned and -operated company that has served its community for 60 years.

In May, Boise Cascade announced it would begin the curtailment of its lumber operation in Elgin in 60 days. The phased shutdown included the sawmill, planer and shipping department, while the powerhouse and log utilization center remains operational. The curtailment impacted 90 employees in Elgin.

Chapman said the particleboard plant and the lumber mill were sold because the company is moving in a different direction. Woodgrain could better utilize the particleboard plant.

"Being a fully integrated company in each step of our supply chain has

become one of our core strengths as a company," said Kelly Dame, Woodgrain CEO, in the release. "Being able to grow the Woodgrain Lumber division is a key step in growing as a company. We are excited about the opportunity it offers."

Woodgrain Millwork provides an integrated supply chain of both international and domestic mills, according to its website. The company's diverse product offering includes molding, prefinished molding, door shop products and window parts.

Woodgrain has locations in California, Georgia, Iowa, Alabama and Oregon. According to the company's profile, it reports earnings of \$100 million to \$500 million and has more than 1,000 employees.

JUDGES

Continued from Page 1A became an attorney."

With a few months on the bench behind her, Mona said attaining her goal has been fulfilling.

"My biggest accomplishment so far has been learning the job and realizing my almost 30 years of experience has paid off," Mona said. "There are a lot of areas I'm familiar with, and it's been gratifying to know that all that work and all those years of doing so many different things has given me a really good background for this job."

Mona touted her experience in juvenile law, which is handy in Union County, where both juvenile criminal cases and dependency law, typically cases of abuse or neglect, are prevalent — both of which she said are complex areas of the law.

"I have 12 years of experience dealing with (juvenile law). I don't think my opponent has that same experience," she said.

Mona said her mantra as DA was to "do the right thing" and do right by the public, victims and the accused — and that mind-

set has continued to drive her work as judge.

Wes Williams

Wes Williams was born in Oregon City and graduated from Estacada High School in 1979. He went on to attend what is now Southern Oregon University before graduating from Portland State University with a degree in social science and a teaching certificate. Wes went on to teach at Sandy High School for seven years while saving money for law school. He then attended law school at the University of Oregon and graduated with a juris doctor degree in 1996.

Wes has been practicing law and living in La Grande since 1996, when he opened his practice. He said he spends about half his time in

transactional cases, such as contracts, wills and setting up small businesses, and the rest of his time on civil litigation cases, criminal cases and a small percent on appeals.

Wes previously appealed one of his cases to the Oregon Supreme Court, where he successfully secured a mother's parental rights.

This diversity of experience is what Wes said makes him qualified for the bench. He also said he believes he has the disposition necessary to be an impartial judge.

"A judge who has good judicial temperament does not prejudice any case," Wes said. "A judge that has good judicial temperament listens to everyone and shows respect to everyone in the courtroom, and that's everyone, regardless

of their economic status, their race, their ethnicity, their gender."

If Wes is elected, he said his intent would be to make sure everyone in his courtroom has a fair proceeding.

"My number one goal is to make sure every citizen who walks in my courtroom has been treated with respect and fairness," Wes said, "and feels they have had a full and fair hearing."

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