

BMCC dental assistants ahead of national average

Dental assistants, graduating from Blue Mountain Community College are well ahead of the national average in national certification tests. On the three-part tests, BMCC students scored a total of 264.7 points last spring. The national average was 255 points. "Our continually high scores are a tribute to knowing we're doing something right here," according to

Jean Nelson, director and instructor for the one-year BMCC dental assisting program. BMCC's dental assisting program is fully accredited which means graduates can be certified by taking the national exam. Accreditation comes from the Commission on Accreditation on Dental and Dental Auxiliary Educational Programs Agency of the American Dental Association.

A full year's curriculum is planned for the dental assisting student. The first term is spent in learning theory while the second term finds the student practicing what they have learned in the school lab. In the lab, there are three operatory stations with modern equipment and x-ray facilities. The lab set-up allows the students to learn both over-the-patient and

behind-the-patient delivery systems. The third term, students put theory into practice as they actually work for a dentist. This clinical experience is on a non-pay basis, but it often serves as a leader for job opportunities for graduates. "I've had 100 per cent cooperation from dentists when placing students for internship spring term," Jean noted.

Nineteen students are currently enrolled in the dental assisting program at BMCC; the program can handle a maximum of 20. In the past, the program has had great holding power with very few dropouts, Jean said. In student follow-up studies, Jean has found that the majority of her students enter a dental assisting career. "The goal of the college program is to make the

student occupationally hireable. What she gains here is very useful whether she takes her certification test or not," Jean said. A dental assistant may be hired without the certificate, although certification is a great help in the search for a job.

A graduate may find employment in private practice, group practice, laboratory, hospital, nursing homes, armed services, dental supply houses, dental manufacturing and the list goes on.

A graduate of the BMCC program herself, Jean advises her students to go where the action is. Assisting with a variety of treatment procedures performed by the dentist in general dentistry may be the student's niche, or, if they prefer a specialty, they may find that their interest is in assisting the oral surgeon in a manner similar to the nurse in the hospital operating room. Specialization may come in orthodontics, pedodontics (dentistry for children), endodontics (inner structure of teeth), or periodontics (surrounding and supporting tissues of teeth.)

EMT class scheduled for Heppner

An organizational meeting for a proposed Blue Mountain Community College sponsored class for emergency medical technician training will be held Dec. 14 in Heppner.

BMCC officials hope to determine if there is sufficient local interest to hold such a class. Anyone interested in establishing a local EMT training program is urged to attend.

The meeting will start at 7:30 p.m. in the conference room at Columbia Basin Electric Co-op.

Christmas tree permits available

The Heppner Ranger district of the Umatilla National Forest is now selling Christmas tree permits to the public. Anyone wanting to select and cut their own Christmas tree from National Forest land this year may do so by obtaining a permit from the local Forest Service office in Heppner.

Permits cost \$2 per tree and must be attached to the tree while being transported from the forest. Permits may be purchased during regular office hours Monday thru Friday, 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and on Saturday, December 16, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Livestock brand book on market

Oregon's livestock 1978 brand book is off the press and now available for distribution through the Livestock Division of the Oregon Department of Agriculture in Salem. Purchase price of the new book is \$25.

The books can be picked up at the Livestock Division or can be ordered by mail. A check or money order made out to the department should be included with the order.

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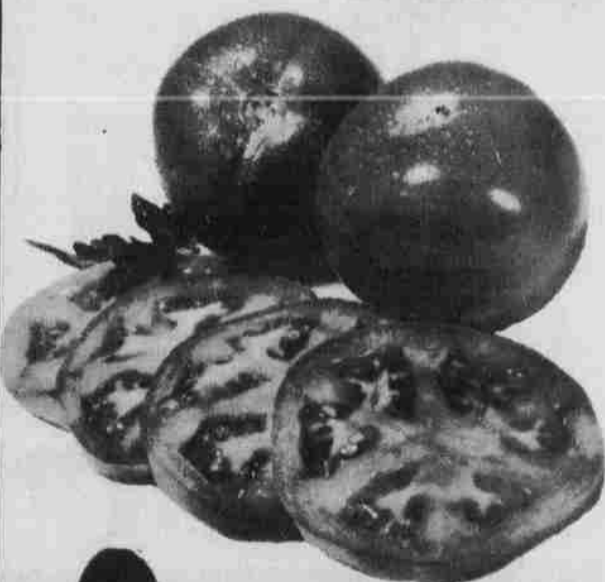
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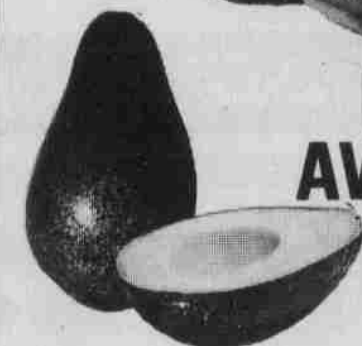
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