

## Former Heppner teacher likes kids and rock

Many southern Morrow countians remember the enthusiastic Heppner High School bands a serious young teacher directed between 1978 and 1982.

More than that, some remember a musician and performer who was in the upholstery business during a two-year break from teaching.

Jim Ackley, now 36, has a cassette tape, "A Little Bit of Everything," on sale at local markets. He wrote the music, sang the songs, played the instruments, directed the composition, recorded, and produced the whole thing himself at his home in Irrigon. He did send the recording off to a New York firm to be duplicated and printed.

Ackley says his favorite selection on the tape is "Rock and Rollin' Country Style" because it was fun to do and he likes the way it sounds.

"The kids at Irrigon (where he teaches general music, choir, and band to kindergartners through eighth graders) like Whirly Bird best. It's kind of goofy, but I had a helicopter sound on one of my synthesizers and decided I wanted to write a song using that sound," he relates.

"I write songs very quickly," the artist disclosed. "I just decide what to write about. Sometimes just a little 'hook' is all I need, and I build a whole song around it. 'Roasted Lizard' was written for the kids at Irrigon," he says. "It is based on a short play written by school librarian Greg Hanson."

Ackley began recording by himself while still in junior college. His first recording, though, was in 1967 with the 13th Story, a rock band he was associated with during his high school and college years in



Jim Ackley

the Molalla-Clackamas area near Portland.

His music career began before that, at age seven, when he began studying piano. By age 13 when he played with a summer band at the Portland airport for Louis Armstrong, he had added the clarinet, saxophone, and guitar to his accomplishments.

He claims he is not particularly gifted at any one instrument but that he plays a lot of them. He has composed and arranged in most musical areas. To perform, he says, he most enjoys sitting at the piano and singing ballads, perhaps a factor in his singing at 74 weddings, mostly for Heppner couples.

"Humor, music, and working with kids are my strong points," he admits. His goals are educational now, though he admits to some longing to become a rock star while still in high school. "With my voice

though, I'd have probably had to stay with country," he says. He describes his style, especially on the just-released tape, as ballad, rock, and country with a little jazz influence from his earlier days shining through.

"If I can work with kids, act goofy and keep up with rock, I'm doing what I like," he says.

Acting goofy may sound like the composer of "Whirly Bird" or "Roasted Lizard," but seems apart from the serious work of combining almost 40 tracks including 12 background vocals for "If You Let Me Down."

The serious and the goofy come together in his newest project, however, with a partner, Rick Meyer of LaGrande. The pair has put together educational booklets with times tables, history and geography lessons, with cartoon characters and tapes of rock music. They hope to have the product ready by the end of this school year and then to find a national distributor.

Ackley and Meyer are also partners in a local band, "Take Four," which performed last weekend at the Elks Annual in Heppner. The other two members are Scott Arnsen of LaGrande and Kevin Gutierrez of Heppner. The band opened for the Hager Twins when they performed at the Nomad in Boardman.

Look for "A Little Bit of Everything," at Court St. and Central markets in Heppner, at Irrigon Market and at the Boardman Pharmacy. A photo of Ackley on stage, taken by former Ionian Terri McElligott, identifies the new cassette.

## Junior bowlers sponsor rock concert

Heppner Jr. Bowlers are selling tickets for a March 17 rock concert at the Heppner junior high gym. The junior bowlers will pay the band's travel costs and pocket the balance for the proceeds to finance a trip to the state junior bowling tournament held in Albany during March.

The Portland-based rock band, Defiant, will do one show from 6:45 - 9 p.m. at the junior high school. An autograph-signing party at Charlie's Pizza and Video World will give those who wish to meet the band members a chance to collect autographs and purchase Defiant T-shirts. The T-shirts normally sell for \$8; junior bowlers will receive \$1 for each T-shirt the band sells.

Tickets for the concert are available from Heppner junior bowlers, at Heppner Bowl, Charlie's Pizza, and by mailing a money order for \$4 per ticket to Pro-Sound and Talent, P.O. Box 717, Heppner. Tickets will be \$5 at the door.

For further information, call Kevin Gutierrez after 5 p.m. at 676-9932.

## Republican dinner planned



T.J. Bailey

The Chairman of the Oregon Republican Party, T. J. Bailey, Klamath Falls, will be the keynote speaker at the Morrow County Republican Central Committee's Lincoln Day Dinner on Saturday, February 21, according to Ed Glenn, Boardman, Chairman for the event. Other speakers include State Senators Eugene Timms, Bend, and Ken Jersted, Hood River; State Representative Ray French and Morrow County Judge Louis Carlson both Heppner.

The dinner will be held at Dodge City Inn, Boardman, and a fund raising auction of unusual items will be held. Entertainment will be provided by a group from the Blue Mt. Community College swing choir.

Tickets to the prime rib dinner are available from Glenn, 481-3355, or 481-3151; or Bob Jepsen, 676-9850.



Lillian Boyce (left) Marianne and Bob Kahl

## Agencies combined

Bob and Marianne Kahl of Turner, Van Marter and Bryant Insurance of Heppner have purchased the Ray Boyce Insurance Agency from Lillian Boyce. Ray Boyce had the Heppner agency for 18 years.

The Kahls will consolidate both agencies at their same location on Main Street. They will add Oregon Mutual, Unigard and Crop-Hail Management to the companies they provide their customers.


The Kahls have been in Heppner three and a half years. They say they will try to continue the same good service Boyce gave his customers. They urge their new customers to come in and get acquainted.

## Firemen purchase building

The Heppner volunteer firemen have purchased the former church building on the corner of Willow and Gale streets in Heppner, and will donate the building to the city fire department for use as a meeting and training room, Fire Chief Forrie Burkenbine says.

The building, which formerly housed the Christian Life Center, was purchased with donations from individual firemen. The Heppner fire department is a volunteer organization.

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