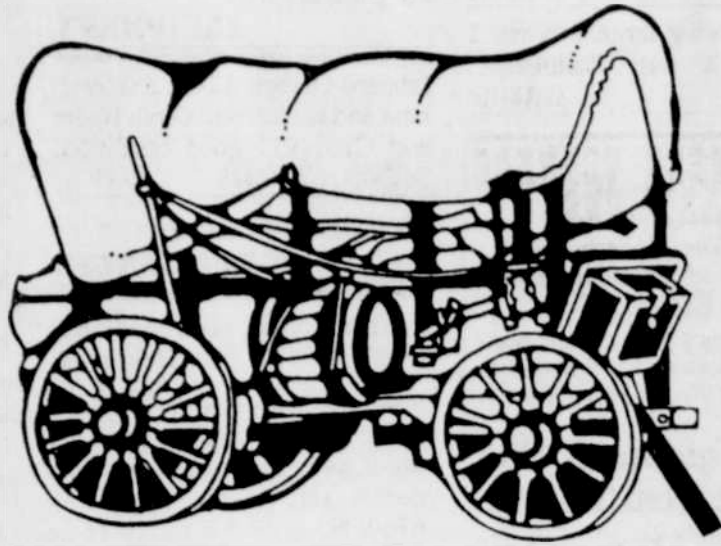


## A message from Morrow County Medical Board

Covered wagons no longer plod the old Oregon trail, but the spirit of those hardy pioneers remains evident among the people who make their home within Morrow County. A spirit characterized by hard work, self-reliance, and a strong sense of community. Few county organizations better embody this spirit than Morrow County's health system.

County medical services consisting of two primary care clinics, a small hospital and nursing home, a home health agency, and a network of ambulances and rescue units are distributed throughout the county based on need. These services are staffed by caring, highly trained county residents, several of whom work on a voluntary basis. Patient fees cover 85 percent of the total cost to operate these services. The annual medical fund levy provides the necessary funds to balance the budget each year.



When county voters go to the polls this March, we hope that the medical levy once again receives strong support. It is absolutely necessary to preserve and strengthen medical services that so many of us depend upon. Let's not go the way of so many other rural counties in America who have lost critically important medical personnel and facilities in recent years due to the lack of proper funding. These losses have a devastating effect on the quality of life both in terms of health and economics. Ours is a healthcare-system we can be proud of. Let's keep it that way!

### Accomplishments and Plans

Several important changes to Morrow County's health system have occurred during 1991. Under Dr. Robert Boss' leadership, the clinic in Boardman has been expanded and new medical equipment acquired. A structure to house the Boardman ambulance has also been constructed. Irrigon has a new rescue vehicle and Heppner a new ambulance. Also, the nursing home portion of the hospital was remodeled to comply with current state and federal standards. In September, the medical board contracted with Western Health Resources, a non-profit healthcare management company with three other Oregon hospital affiliates, to oversee day-to-day operations. WHR immediately set about improving the hospital's billing system.

Plans are now underway to expand the Heppner clinic in 1992 to accommodate the busy practices of Dr.'s Jeanne and Ed Baretta and to recruit additional medical providers for both ends of the county. Ways to better meet the expanding needs of our senior citizens are also being studied.

### Public Input Sought

With a motto of "Empowering Morrow County Citizens to Make Decisions," a group of concerned residents from throughout the county have been diligently working to solicit community input on the county's healthcare system. Sponsored by the medical board and officially called the Morrow County Health Council, this volunteer group has organized several advisory committees representing the residential areas of Boardman, Ione, Irrigon, Lexington, and Heppner. There are also committees comprised of representatives from important economic and social sectors, including the forest service, retail, agriculture, farm labor, healthcare, education, religion, and senior citizens.

The Health Council is focusing on a list of issues raised by citizens during open forums held twice this last summer at both ends of the county. The Council plans to present a set of findings and recommendations to the medical board at an upcoming board meeting. Based on the quality of the groups' efforts thus far, the work of the Health Council will no doubt prove to be a valuable means of educating all of us about our healthcare system, as well as making sure that our system is responsive to the needs and desires of those it is designed to serve.

### A Worthy Investment

Wouldn't everyone like to experience a substantial return on an investment? Residents using local healthcare services and contributing to Morrow County's annual tax levy are. That's the conclusion of an economist from the University of Idaho who recently completed a study sponsored by Morrow County's Health Council.

According to the economist, the medical fund's \$3.1 million annual budget in 1990 (including tax levy funds) generated about \$3.6 million in total economic contribution to Morrow County. This is because the clinics, the hospital and nursing home, as well as the ambulance services and rescue units spend a substantial portion of their annual budgets compensating staff and buying goods and services within the

county. Known in economic parlance as the "multiplier effect," it is estimated that for every dollar spent in supporting Morrow's healthcare services—either through patient charges or from the tax levy—a \$1.16 in economic benefit to residents is produced.

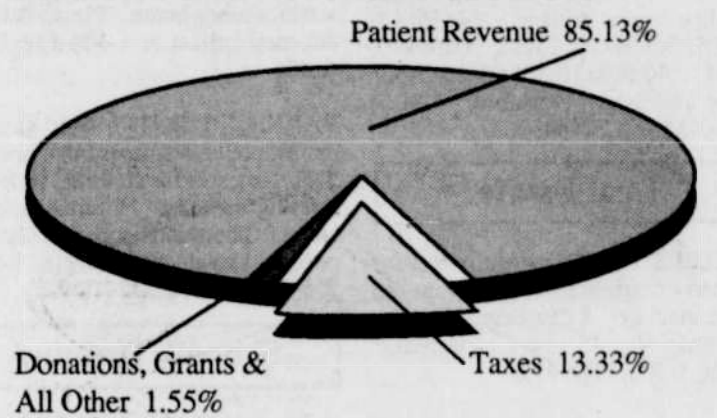
Apart from the obvious economic value to the county, the local healthcare system also provides an immeasurable amount of "social benefit" to area residents, according to the economist. How does one measure the value of having ready access to primary care or emergency services or a place for senior citizens to reside when they can no longer care for themselves? In the words of the economist, referring to the county's healthcare system, "You're getting more out of it than you're putting in."

### Meet the Medical Board

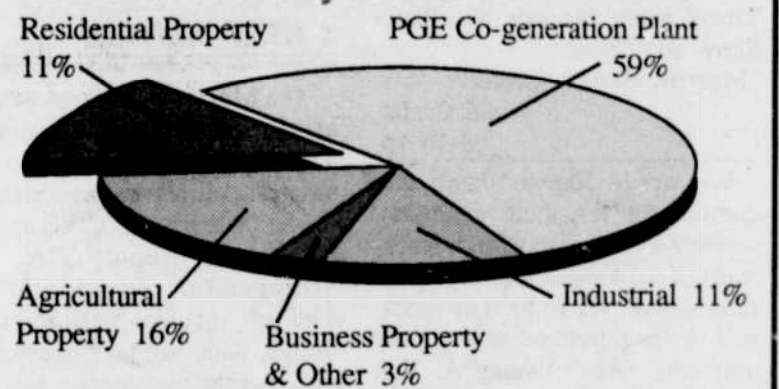
Jackie Bergstrom, Chairperson	Ione
Roger Cash	Boardman
Merle Cowett	Heppner
John Hascall	Boardman
Lori Pruitte	Irrigon
Bill Sheirbon	Lexington
Paul Sumner	Heppner
Vacant	Irrigon

For a listing of the upcoming Medical Board's 1992 meeting schedule, contact Pioneer Memorial Hospital, Administration, 564 East Pioneer Drive, Heppner, Oregon 97836 or call (503) 676-9133.

### Medical Fund Revenue Resources



### Source of Tax Levy Funds



### Statement of Revenue and Expenses for FY 1990-91

Total Patient Charges & Other Operating Revenue	3,104,886
Uncollected Amts. Due to Govt. Discounts, Charity, & Bad Debts	(428,057)
<b>Net Operating Revenue Available to Pay Bills</b>	<b>2,676,829</b>
Less Expenses	
Payroll	(1,785,861)
Supply	(810,473)
Utility	(24,285)
All Other	(404,168)
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>(3,024,787)</b>
<b>Net Operating Gain (Loss)</b>	<b>(347,958)</b>
Plus Other Revenue	
Donations, Grants & Other Non Operating Funds	48,599
Tax Revenue	419,040
<b>Total Non Operating Revenue Available</b>	<b>467,639</b>
<b>Funds Available for Use in Capital Improvements</b>	<b>119,681</b>

### How Tax Levy Funds Were Used in FY 1990-91

