

HEPPNER



35¢

VOL. 112 NO. 46 8 Pages Wednesday, November 17, 1993 Morrow County Heppner, Oregon

Dentist hired to serve entire county

The Morrow County Medical Fund has signed a contract with a dentist who will serve both the north and south ends of Morrow County.

T. Blair Smith, 43, began work on Monday, Nov. 15, at the Heppner Dental office, formerly owned by dentists Jim and Frank Allen. The Allens plan to move their practice to Idaho. With the departure of the Allens, the county would have been without a dentist. W.P. Sharkey, who had a dental office in Boardman and Hermiston, closed his Boardman operation around the first of the year. The Boardman dental office is located east of the Boardman Health Care Center on southwest Kincade.

Smith is most recently from San Diego where he has worked as an associate dentist for the past two years. He was born in Richland, WA. but his family moved to Sacramento, CA., Palos Verdes, CA and then to Las Vegas, NV, where he graduated from high school. After the death of his father, Smith moved to Pendleton to live with his uncle. While at Pendleton he attended Blue Mountain Community College. He transferred to the University of Oregon and graduated from there in 1973 with a bachelor of science degree in science. He graduated from the Oregon Health Sciences School of Dentistry in 1976.

After graduation he entered the Navy. He had earlier enlisted in the naval reserve and deferred his service until after dentistry school.

After four years in the Navy, Smith entered into private practice at San Diego. In 1987, he and his wife Karen began missionary work through the Living Way Church. They and their son Patrick, who was then a year and a half, spent three and a half years in Lima, Peru and five months in Mexico.

Smith learned of the opening in Morrow County through a friend who works at Pioneer Memorial Hospital, Russ Demaniew. Demaniew's wife and Karen Smith were girlhood friends. The Smith family has other ties to the area—Karen's brother, Larry Booth, is the pastor of the New Hope Christian Center in Pendleton. Smith's mother and sister both live in Portland.

Smith says that the main goal is to provide good dentistry for the entire county. He says the office may increase staff to make the operation more efficient and hopes to eventually hire a dental hygienist.



T. Blair Smith

Pioneer Memorial Hospital administrator Kevin Erich would not reveal the financial terms of the Medical Fund's five-year contract with Dr. Smith, which, he says, is in the final stages of negotiation. Erich added that doc-

tors do not like to have their salaries made public. The medical fund, however, is tax supported and finances open to the public knowledge. Erich said, that the dental offices are expected to be self supporting.

The Medical Fund is purchasing the Boardman Dental Office, which includes real estate and some equipment for \$84,000. The fund is purchasing the Heppner Dental practice, which includes equipment, but no real estate, for \$70,000 and is in the process of negotiating a lease from First Interstate Bank for the Heppner office, Erich said.

Plans are to computerize the dental clinics' billing systems. Erich said that the rates would remain the same.

Heppner's dental office hours are now Monday and Wednesday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., but may be increased said Smith.

City receives awards

The city of Heppner was the recipient of two awards at the League of Oregon Cities Convention held in Eugene recently.

The first award is the prestigious "1993 Cities Award for Excellence", which is given in recognition of outstanding city programs that reduce the cost of government, improve the quality of life of the community and increase the quality of municipal services.

The league presented the award to Heppner for the city hall automation and downtown renovation project. The two-part project, which was initiated nearly three years ago by the Vision 2000 Committee, has resulted in the renovation of several downtown buildings and funding for a computer automation at city hall.

"The league found the program an innovative way to improve the city's financial and management systems while providing a great example of how

local government and businesses can work together," city manager Gary Marks said. "The award is really a tribute to all the businesses that have participated in the program and especially to the Bank of Eastern Oregon for developing the loan program that has funded several of the renovation projects."

The second award was presented to the city by the League of Oregon Cities and the City/County Insurance Services Trust for recording no on-the-job injuries for the fiscal year ended June 30.

"I'm real proud that our workers were able to receive this award," Marks said. "Accidents happen so quick and can cost a great deal in pain and suffering, higher insurance rates and lost worktime. It speaks very well of our employees and our safety program that we realized no accidents." Marks said this is the second year Heppner has earned this recognition.

Artifactory tables still available

Tables are still available for the Artifactory Dec. 4 held at the Morrow County fair pavilion in Heppner. Those wishing to reserve a table should contact Vi Wilgers, 989-8309.

Tickets are on sale for Christmas tree decorations which

are displayed in the window at Heppner TV and a gift certificate for a live Christmas tree. Tickets are 50 cents or three for \$1 and may be purchased at Heppner TV, the Artifactory or from a Soroptimist member. The drawing will be held at during the Artifactory Dec. 4.

First Interstate Bank files lawsuit against Miller & Sons and Shears

First Interstate Bank of Oregon has filed a lawsuit against Miller and Sons Construction, Thomas and Ruby Shear and RMR Construction Services, Inc., in connection with a gasoline leak during the 1991 excavation of the U.S. Forest Service building in Heppner.

The Shears, Eugene, are the owners of the building, which is leased by the Forest Service and is located across the street from the First Interstate Bank. Ruby Shear is the daughter of Roice and Betty Fulleton, who at one time operated a gas station at the site.

Miller and Sons were employed by the Shears for excavation work. RMR Construction is no longer in business.

Apparently a gasoline tank, of which the Shears and Miller and Sons were unaware, was damaged during excavation.

First Interstate Bank is seeking \$700,000 in damages from each

defendant and attorneys' fees.

According to the suit, filed at the Morrow County Courthouse, First Interstate is suing for liability, trespass and nuisance.

First Interstate claims that the defendants "trespassed" on the First Interstate property by "causing an intrusion of gasoline onto the plaintiff's property."

First Interstate also claims that the nuisance consisted of "substantial interference" with their "use and enjoyment of their property by the defendants' release of gasoline from Shears' property onto the First Interstate property."

"The seepage mentioned above," continued the claim, has created harm to the health and comfort of ordinary persons occupying plaintiff's property and has thus resulted in an increasing interference with the plaintiff's use and enjoyment of the plaintiff's property."

The suit alleges that the defen-

dants caused the gasoline seepage by their own negligence by:

-taking inadequate steps to prevent against a gasoline leak during removal of tanks on the defendant's property;

-puncturing a gasoline tank on the defendant's property during removal;

-taking no steps to abate gas seepage once it was discovered during removal of the tank on the defendant's property; and

-taking inadequate steps to guard against a release of gas from the defendant's property onto the plaintiff's adjoining property.

First Interstate is represented by Martin E. Hansen, with Karnopp, Petersen, Noteboom, Hubel, Hansen and Arnett, Bend attorneys.

Joe Miller, doing business as Miller and Sons Construction had no attorney at presstime Nov. 16.

School bond estimates reach over 19 million

Estimated costs for a bond issue to fund construction and repairs at Morrow County schools have increased from \$16 million to over \$19 million, according to figures released by Morrow County School superintendent Chuck Starr at the Nov. 15 school board meeting.

Estimates include:
-\$1,593,490 at A.C. Houghton Elementary School, Irrigon, for sitework, demolition, construction, remodeling and miscellaneous repairs and other items;

\$1,778,190 at Columbia Junior High School, Irrigon, for sitework and demolition, new class construction, locker room construction and wheelchair lift, plus other miscellaneous items and repairs;

-\$381,890 at Heppner High School for a wheelchair lift, remodeling of the stage area, construction of a greenhouse, plus other miscellaneous items and repairs;

-\$3,922,340 at Heppner Elementary/Middle School for a chair lift, demolition and rebuilding of new gym, art room, music room and cafeteria, a new boiler and other miscellaneous items and repairs;

\$225,350 at Ione Elementary School for a barrier free elevator and miscellaneous items and

repairs;
-\$400,640 at Ione High School for miscellaneous items and repairs;

-\$4,954,690 at Riverside High School, Boardman for sitework and demolition, new classroom construction, gymnasium and wrestling area, corridor and lobby, lockers and weight room, auditorium and platform, restrooms and remodeling; and other miscellaneous items and repairs;

\$1,329,690 at Sam Boardman Elementary School, Boardman, for sitework and demolition, new classroom construction and remodeling; and miscellaneous items and repairs;

-\$61,500 for the district office for replacement of floor tiles, installing a chair lift to the first floor, roofing the gym (storage area) and adding recycle bins; and

\$1,080,000 district-wide for wiring and equipment for technology/communication update and copy machine updates.

Additional monies are required for design, fees, contingency and the cost of issuance of the bond.

The board heard comments from the audience concerning options for the Irrigon and Boardman schools. Irrigon students are

now bused to Boardman for high school and Boardman students are bused to Irrigon for Junior High School. Some favored adding on more classrooms to accommodate growth in the north end schools and leaving the high school in Boardman and the junior high/middle school in Irrigon. They expressed concern that if the schools in Irrigon and Boardman are remodeled to accommodate students in seventh through 12th grades the younger students would not fare as well in such close proximity to high school students.

Those advocating seventh through 12th grades at both Irrigon and Boardman, said that a student is better off attending a school in his own community and cited a sense of community pride that does not exist if students are bused out of their home towns.

Starr said that if the board was to look at a seventh to 12th grade schools in the north end, they would also have to look at the same situation in Heppner. Ione schools already have that arrangement.

Others voiced concerns about curriculum in smaller schools and the length of time the students spend riding the bus.

Sewer project to begin soon Earl Woods to run for D.A.

The Heppner City Council heard a report Monday night Nov. 15, that the long awaited sewer system improvement project would be under construction by early December.

City manager Gary Marks reported that the city's tentative construction bid award to

Michael Becker, general contractor, of LaGrande had been approved by the Corps of Engineers and DEQ. Marks also reported that the construction agreement, bond forms and certificates of insurance had been delivered to the contractor for completion. A ground breaking ceremony for the project is scheduled for Monday, Dec. 6 at 1 p.m. at the sewer treatment plant. Construction will begin within a few days after the ground breaking.

Marks reported that final approval of a supplemental financing package for the project provided by the Oregon Economic Development Department (OEDD) was imminent. He said the previously approved \$300,000 OEDD grant/loan package would be expanded to \$470,000. "The OEDD money is making the project possible," Marks said. "If the city had to use traditional bond financing to raise the same level of funding, we would have to raise sewer rates by \$5.11/month. Thankfully we won't have to do that."



Earl R. Woods, Jr.

Earl R. Woods, Jr., has announced that on November 3 he filed for election as the district attorney for Morrow County. Woods currently holds that position having been appointed after Jeff Wallace was elected as a district court judge.

Woods has eight years of experience as a prosecutor and is endorsed for election as district attorney by Roy Drago, Morrow County Sheriff, Doug Rathbun, Heppner Chief of Police, and Greg Sayles, Boardman Chief of Police. Woods was a private practicing lawyer for 12 years and served as a deputy sheriff for two years. He is a major in the Oregon National Guard, serving as a battalion commander and is a former special forces volunteer, when he served as an enlisted man.

Woods' wife, Gail, is a registered nurse. They live in the county just south of Boardman and have two children attending Riverside High School.

Currently, Woods is in the process of forming an election committee, which to date includes: Lee Docken and John Grace of Boardman, Tom McElligott and Pauline Winter, Heppner, treasurer Val Doherty, Lexington and Deane Seeger of Irrigon.

County fair earns gold medal

The Morrow County Fair has received a gold medal for its 1993 fair from the Oregon State Fair Commission, reports LaRae Kindle, Morrow County Fair committee member.

Kindle said that the commission remarked on the Morrow County Fair's outstanding floral display, demonstrations, entertainment and entries. Comments

included that the local fair was a "great small county fair with lots of flair, great people and lots of improvements."

The fair earned 970 points, the highest received so far. Kindle said that the fair earned \$17,500 from the state last year and is expected to earn around the same this year. However, this is the last year the county will receive state money, because of budget cuts.