

Smith sees school consolidation 'coming down the tracks'

Four-county school district discussed

By David Sykes
State Representative Greg Smith told a gathered crowd Saturday morning he sees an effort to consolidate school districts across Oregon "coming

down the tracks" this legislative session, but doesn't see enough rural legislators in Salem to stop it.

Smith held a "meet and greet" session at the Stable of Youth Restaurant in Heppner where he laid out what is coming up in this session of the Oregon Legislature. Smith is starting his sixth consecutive term as District 57 representative.

"Budget, budget, budget," he responded when asked the three most important things on the agenda this session. Smith said because of an expected \$350 million plus reduction in school funding this session, there is a lot of talk about cost cutting, and what Smith sees coming may not be good for rural Oregon.

"Portland doesn't think we need to have this many districts out here," Smith said of the attitude of the urban legislators. He said both Democrat and Republican leaders support consolidation of districts and "There just aren't enough rural legislators to throw ourselves in front of this train to stop it." He said urban legislators do not understand the culture of small towns, where residents identify with their school and school district more so than in large cities like Portland.

Smith said there is talk of consolidating so each county has only one school district, and others are even talking of regional school districts which might include Wheeler, Gilliam, Morrow, and Umatilla counties into one school district. "Does this mean the legislature could undo all that Ione has done there?" someone in the audience asked. "That is a very real possibility," Smith said.

He also said there is talk of consolidating educational service districts (ESDs), which provide services to school districts on a regional basis, and there is a bill that would let large districts opt out of paying into ESDs which Smith said would probably kill off some of the weaker ones.

Smith said that cutting school transportation funding has also been discussed as the urban legislators do not understand why small districts in Eastern Oregon need so much money for bussing. "They just don't understand the distances out here," he said.

The Oregon house is split this session between 30 Republicans and 30 Democrats and

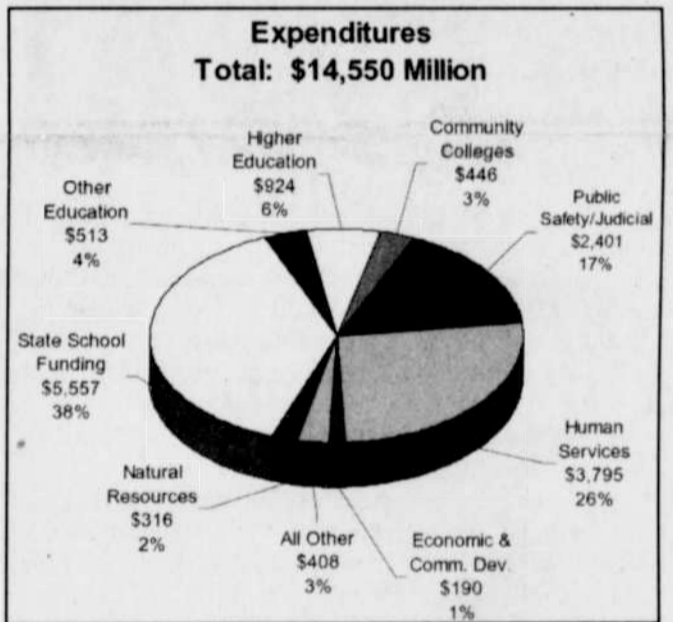


Rep. Greg Smith (right) talks with (left to right) Larry Mills, Jerry Healy, Les Paustian, Suzanne Jepsen and Jerry Breazeale in Heppner Saturday. Smith held a meet and greet to talk to constituents about the upcoming legislative session. -Contributed Photo

Smith is the ranking member on the powerful Ways and Means Budget Committee. He is also the co-chair of the subcommittee on transportation and economic development, and he warned constituents that he was going to have to make tough vote choices this session. "Some of you are not going to like the way I vote, but there are going to be lots of tough choices made this session," he said. "I think you are going to find out who your leaders are and who your politicians are," he added.

"There are going to be program cuts," he said. He said public employees are going to have to start contributing to their pension, health care and other programs. He said he hopes Oregon does not have the same type of labor unrest as Wisconsin is going through. "But we have to balance the budget," he said. "All sides are going to have to come to the negotiating table." He also said in order to get things done and solve the state's problems the legislature is going to have to work in a bipartisan manner.

Below is a breakdown of the proposed Oregon general fund budget and how it is spent. Last term's budget was \$14.234 billion. Amounts below are in millions.



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Daly family named grand marshals for St. Patrick's Celebration

Grand Marshals for this year's St. Patrick's Day Celebration are the Charlie Daly Family. Though Daly has lived and worked in Morrow County for the past 81 years, his Irish roots run deep.

Charlie's parents, Jim Daly and Kate McDevitt, both came to America from Ireland. Jim was born in the town of Grannard, County Longford, and immigrated to the U.S. in 1907. He had been living in New York for three years working as a street car conductor when he met John Kenny from Heppner. Jim quit his job in 1910 and came with Kenny to Heppner where he worked for John Kilkenny on his Sand Hollow Ranch. In 1917 Jim went into the army as a machine gunner during World War I and was discharged in 1919 with the rank of sergeant.

Kate was born in Ireland in the town of Templemoyle, County Donegal, in 1891. She came to Oregon, along with her sister Bridgett, in 1910. Her two brothers, Charlie and Pat McDevitt had already immigrated to Oregon. Another sister, Sarah, came to Oregon later.

Jim and Kate were married on November 11, 1919, in Pendleton. Though



Charlie and Yvonne Daly

Jim had a homestead in Newman County when they married, the couple lived on the Kilkenny Ranch on Little Butter Creek (now the Currin Ranch), where Kate cooked for the hired men and Jim farmed and worked in lambing. They moved onto their homestead in the fall of 1920 and purchased more property (Gleason Butte) and built up a small band of sheep and cows.

Jim and Kate had four children: Mary, Patty, Kathlene, and Charlie. In 1936 Jim sold their Newman Canyon property to

Hugh Currin. They purchased the Olie Neil property on Little Butter Creek and also did a land trade with Charlie Bartholomew and Ralph Thompson with their Gleason Butte land. This was all done during a time where many places were being foreclosed on, so the Dalys were able to purchase and pay off their property in three years.

The Dalys had their small band of sheep, milk cows (sold the cream), and turkeys that they sold at

-See ST. PAT'S GRAND MARSHAL/Page SIX

Ione School Board votes to join innovative pilot program

Plan would result in sweeping changes for some Eastern Oregon high schools

The Ione School Board, at their regular meeting on Feb. 22, voted unanimously to join a pilot program proposed by Intermountain Education Service District (formerly Umatilla-Morrow ESD) Superintendent Mark Mulvihill, who is also superintendent of the Ione School District.

In agreeing to join the pilot program, termed

"The Eastern Promise," Ione will get in on the ground floor of a bold and innovative plan which would allow high school students to earn college credits while they are still in high school. The plan would create a consortium which would include Intermountain ESD, based in Pendleton, but providing services to many school districts in Eastern Oregon,

Blue Mountain Community College in Pendleton, Eastern Oregon University in LaGrande, Treasure Valley Community College in Ontario and six Eastern Oregon high schools that elect to opt in to the program.

Mulvihill told the Ione board that the plan would require districts to employ some teachers with -See EASTERN PROMISE/Page SIX

Compromise reached on renaming Squaw Butte

An apparent compromise has been reached with the Umatilla Indian Tribes on the renaming of Squaw Butte in Morrow County.

The Tribes had originally wanted to rename the landmark "Sisu" (translation: smelly) Butte. It was originally put forth

to be renamed Immigrant Butte, and then landowners in the area suggested Lone Butte.

It looks like everything has been worked out to rename the butte "Lone Butte," except the renaming apparently has to be approved by the Morrow County Court, then by the

Oregon Geographic Names Board.

All the Squaw name landmarks are being renamed, as Squaw is apparently an offensive name to American Indians.

Lone Butte is located along Immigrant Lane about 11 miles north of Ione.

Ione School Board approves contract with principal, ESD

The Ione School Board, at their regular meeting Feb. 22, unanimously and enthusiastically approved a contract with Intermountain Educational Service District (formerly Umatilla-Morrow ESD) for educational and administrative services and approved extending the district's contract with current Principal Jerry Archer.

The board's contract with Archer was \$77,000 per year from July 1, 2010-June 30, 2011 with a salary increase in subsequent years at the same rate as the negotiated agreement for licensed district employees (teachers). The principal is required to work 220 work days a year with four paid holidays.

The board also of-

icially approved a previous year's contract with UMESD in the amount of \$37,156 which had not been ratified earlier. The breakdown of the 2010-11 ISD contract with UMESD is as follows: \$26,393-business services; \$6,150-human resources services; \$4,613-board secretary services; \$13,196.50-business.

Also at the meeting, UMESD Superintendent Mark Mulvihill detailed a proposal "Eastern Promise" which would enable high school students to obtain college credits while still in high school. (See story, front page.) The ISD Board unanimously opted to join the pilot program.

In other business, the board:

-approved the 2011-12 district budget calendar as follows: March 24-publish first notice of budget committee meeting; April 7-publish second notice; April 12-budget committee meeting, elect officers, present budget message and document and hear citizen input, 7 p.m.; May 24-final meeting target date for budget approval by budget committee; June 22-publication of notice of budget hearing and summary of budget and funds; June 28-budget hearing, 5 p.m., regular board meeting; adopt budget, make appropriations and levy tax.

-approved the 2011-12 Intermountain ESD local service plan.

-See IONE SCHOOL BOARD/Page SIX

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