

FRIDAY  
Feb. 15, 2013  
East Oregonian

COURT HAS REVERTED BACK TO US-  
signing cases based on where  
the crime occurred. The shift  
might save court administra-  
tor Roy Blaine some heat from  
local police, lawyers, victims  
and defendants.

Blaine implemented a blind  
draw system Jan. 1 to assign  
cases to the district's five cir-  
cuit court judges. He  
explained the idea was to  
more evenly distribute the  
work load. But that meant  
judges in Hermiston could  
preside over Milton-Freewa-  
ter cases, or a judge in  
Pendleton could oversee a  
Umatilla case.

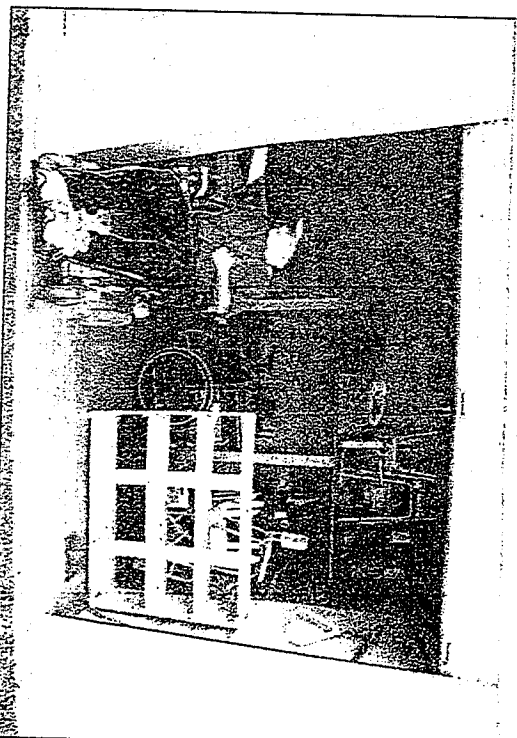
The change irked local law  
enforcement leaders and the  
Umatilla County District At-  
torney's Office, who  
complained witnesses and vic-  
tims could have to travel  
further for court. The clamor  
seemed to have the desired ef-  
fect.

"For now, the judges want to  
go back to hearing the cases in  
either east or west side, de-  
pending on where they  
originated, as much as possi-  
ble," Blaine said Thursday.

Umatilla County District At-  
torney Dan Primus said he  
was pleased with the reversal.  
"I think it was the right  
move to go back," he said. "I  
don't think it was ever the  
right move to change."  
Primus said he understood

See COURT/8A

PENDLETON



Darrin  
Umbarger  
turns off the  
lights in a  
storage unit  
full of used  
medical  
equipment  
that he loans  
out for his  
non-profit  
Clearview  
Mediation and  
Disability  
Resource  
Center in  
Pendleton.

Staff photo by  
E.J. Harris

# No wheelchair, no problem

## Grant dollars allow medical equipment closet to expand

By KATHY ANEY  
East Oregonian

Deanna Messer had a conundrum.  
She had been walking a trio of dogs  
in her neighborhood when she slipped  
off a curb and broke her ankle. The in-  
jury required surgery and 12 weeks of  
downtime.

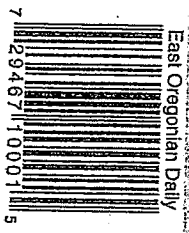
"I couldn't walk to the bathroom or  
stand in the shower," she said.  
The Pendleton woman needed a

wheelchair and a couple of other pieces  
of specialized medical equipment, but  
soon realized buying the equipment  
was financially prohibitive. Even rent-  
ing was expensive.

Then she discovered the medical  
equipment closet at Clearview Media-  
tion and Disability Resource Center.  
Messer could check out a wheelchair,  
shower chair and portable commode  
just like one borrows a book from the  
library — and it was free.

Darrin Umbarger, who has multiple  
sclerosis and operates the center, nav-

See WHEELCHAIR/8A



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BREAKING NEWS — 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

# WHEELCHAIR: Umberger looking for unused equipment

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igates life from his own wheelchair. At the moment, Umberger runs the medical equipment closet from a small storage shed behind his office. Inside is a fleet of manual wheelchairs, walkers, canes, crutches, hospital beds and even a patient hoist.

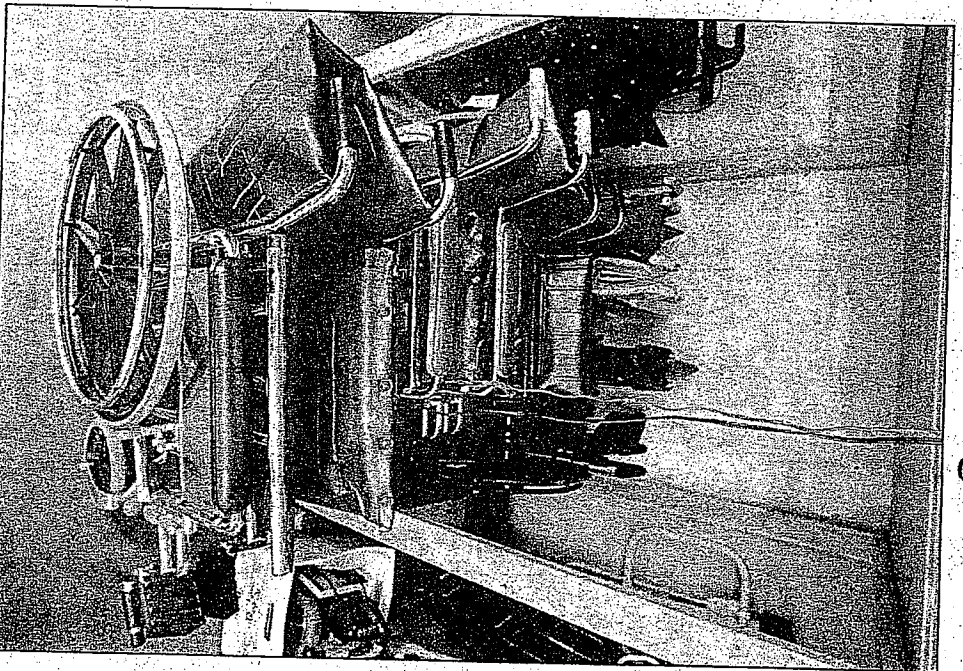
Umberger's little project is about to grow wings, thanks to some unexpected help.

A couple of months ago, Umberger caught the imagination of Kevin Campbell, CEO of Greater Oregon Behavioral Health, Inc. (GOBHI). During the meeting of Clearview's special needs advisory panel of people with disabilities, Umberger mentioned the closet.

Campbell offered \$1,500 each month for a year to pay rent and utilities for a warehouse with the idea that Umberger would grow the project to serve the rest of Eastern Oregon.

Umberger agreed readily. He gets the keys on March 1 for space at 607 S.E. Dutton. After that, he hopes people will search their attics, garages and closets for medical equipment that is gathering dust and donate items to the loan closet.

"I envision having satellite offices all over Eastern



Staff photo by E.J. Herlihy

Clearview, Mediation & Disability Resource Center takes donations of used medical equipment and loans it out to those in need.

Oregon," Umberger said. "We're hoping this will be a pilot project to show all of Oregon how this is done."

Campbell said the GOBHI money will allow Umberger's project to operate on a larger scale for

a year, after which they will re-evaluate. He said the project is exactly the kind the state's new health care delivery system of coordinated care organizations should encourage. Campbell leads the Eastern Oregon Coordinated Care Organization, which provides care for Oregon Health Plan patients on this side of the Cascades.

Under this model, 600,000 OHP enrollees would get their health care from a team of providers, offering coordinated physical, mental and dental services. The CCO pays providers from a lump sum instead of a fee for service and focuses on prevention to cut costs and improve health outcomes.

"This is really what the CCO is all about — finding non-tradition partners, listening to their good ideas, granting small amounts of money toward implementing those ideas and giving them time to bear fruit," Campbell said.

Umberger is bracing for a barrage of gently used medical equipment starting in March. He said people wishing to donate can call Clearview at 541-276-1130 for instructions. Donors will receive a receipt for their taxes.

Contact Kathy Aney at [kahney@eastoregonian.com](mailto:kahney@eastoregonian.com) or 541-966-0810.

# COURT

Continued From

Blaine was trying to minimize court costs, the change was ship for victims a it more difficult nesses, including The revised system about a month Primus said he y cenned if it co more defendant, not show up fo Blaine said he judges realized it portant for poli Primus.

Prosecutors will again file all crimes at the Umatilla Courthouse, Pen and staff will direct them to judges. Term of assigning to preside over iversity of major cas as homicides and sex crimes, will co

The experiment brought to light usual Oregon law. Revised Statute mandates circuit judges hold court Pendleton, Herr Milton-Freewater Heppner as the ca requires. Two county judges work Shafford/Hansell's ment Center, Herm and three at the U la County Court

