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Office profile: Medford

Paul M. Devore

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Supporting cast surrounds Mrs. Viola A. Donahue, office secretary; (l. to r.) Paul M. Devore, principal; Mike Tayloe, staff accountant; William S. Cobb, partner-in-charge; and staff accountants Alvin R. Woody and Robert B. Tauer. Paul Devore and his wife, Mickey drafted this [profile] article.



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There is a beautiful green valley out West in Oregon, encircled by four mountain ranges and laced with sparkling rivers and streams. Tidy orchards and farms make a patchwork quilt of the valley's floor. Smoke from the saw-mill burners drifts lazily into the clear blue sky. This is Zane Grey's beloved Rogue River Valley.

Nestled in the heart of the valley lies Medford, just 33 miles north of the California border and 275 miles south of Portland. By mid-twentieth-century U.S. standards, Medford must rank as a small town. But with its population of 30,000, it is nonetheless Oregon's fifth largest city, and the more than 100,000 inhabitants of the surrounding valley rely on Medford for their commerce, culture, health services and other necessities of life. When they go to town, they go to Medford.

People call the Rogue Valley "the banana belt of the Northwest"—for its climate, not bananas, one fruit that doesn't grow there. It has warm summers with cool nights, mild winters, and four distinct seasons. Unlike Western Oregon, the area around Medford receives little rain (only about 20 inches a year). The snowpack on the surrounding mountains, however, provides ample water to keep the valley green the year around, except perhaps for the occasional winter day when everything is frosted white with snow.

The Rogue Valley has come a long way since its origins as Oregon's first gold-rush town and the Indian wars now more than a century ago, though lore and early artifacts are still easy to come by. In 1852, the first lumber mill was built. Even today, lumber and wood products remain the number-one

industry, employing about 15 per cent of the total labor force. It's estimated that the timber lands around Medford will sustain a perpetual cut of 300 million board feet a year (that's enough to build about 30,000 houses).

In 1859, the first fruit grown in the valley was sold—apples, for \$2.50 apiece. Today the Rogue Valley is the world's center of the gift-fruit packing industry. If you've ever had a Rogue Valley pear, you will understand why.

In recent years more and more industrial firms, like Minnesota Mining (3M), have been opening plants in the Medford area because of its ample water, proximity to West Coast markets, climate, recreation, and general good living. This rapidly growing trend is helping to diversify and stabilize the valley's economy.

In January 1948, the firm of Stratford, Visse & Co. opened a branch office in Medford to serve the many local clients that had previously been served out of Portland. A short six years later, the firm merged with Haskins & Sells.

Today the Medford Office is no more typical of H&S across the country than the New York Office is. In many ways they are at opposite extremes. Currently our Medford staff consists of five CPA's, one in each of the Firm's five professional levels, and one secretary. By most standards the jobs are small, requiring either one or two men anywhere from one day to three weeks. Most of our practice is for local clients with few participating engagements for other offices. The majority of our largest clients are in the lumber and fruit industries, but there's also the barber shop across the street and the men's clothing store downstairs. And there

Oregon timber is moved to the mill as Paul Devore, principal, and Merwin Spalding, vice-president of Spalding & Son, Inc. discuss lumber prices. Medford area could supply enough lumber to build 30,000 houses a year.

are the hospital, the newspaper, the country club, a good many auto dealers and equipment dealers, cattle ranches, cemeteries and mortuaries, solid representation in light industry and so on. In all, it's a diversified practice.

Medford must be the perfect illustration of the fact that in a firm the size of Haskins & Sells there's a practice situation to suit every talent and a living environment for every taste. Just as some doctors are called to be neurosurgeons and others to general practice, so with us some prefer heavy concentration in something like SEC work while others like a wide variety of small engagements. Our other offices would complain, and rightly so, if Medford claimed a closer relationship with clients than is customary elsewhere in H&S. But there is something special about the intimacy of small-town practice, the way clients depend on their professional advisers and the gratitude they express for whatever you do for them.

There are other advantages to serving small clients. New men are not limited to a particular area but become immediately involved in the total job. Contact with top management is not confined to the partner or principal but involves all the staff.

The needs of our clients are many and varied. While our services are primarily income-tax oriented, our staff must also be able to advise and assist clients with accounting systems and procedures, payroll tax reports, property and sales tax returns, and in a variety of general business decisions. One day a client may want to know if you think he'd be smart to trade in his pickup truck, and the next day one might



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ask you to draft a persuasive letter to his fertilizer supplier. There can be a lot of personal satisfaction in a general service of this kind.

It is difficult for such a small office to conduct as many of the staff training courses as are available in other offices of the Firm. This is one reason why the transfer rate for Medford is higher than for most H&S offices, although it still allows adequate exposure to the valuable experience Medford has to offer. Also, as a sub-office of Portland the Medford Office spends three days each fall in seclusion with our Portland Office exchanging ideas, discussing recent developments, and generally keeping in touch—some of which seems best accomplished on the golf course. In 1968, the Medford Office hopes to rotate its staff to larger clients of our Portland Office where they can be exposed to more sophisticated accounting systems than most of our Medford clients have.

When it comes to life in Medford, our people there wax eloquent. They talk about commuting (five minutes door to door on the average, and sometimes home for lunch). They talk about travel (only two clients require overnight stays away from home; the rest can be reached in less than an hour). They talk about the even work load, since many of the lumber and orchard clients are on natural business years (no night work in last year's tax season).

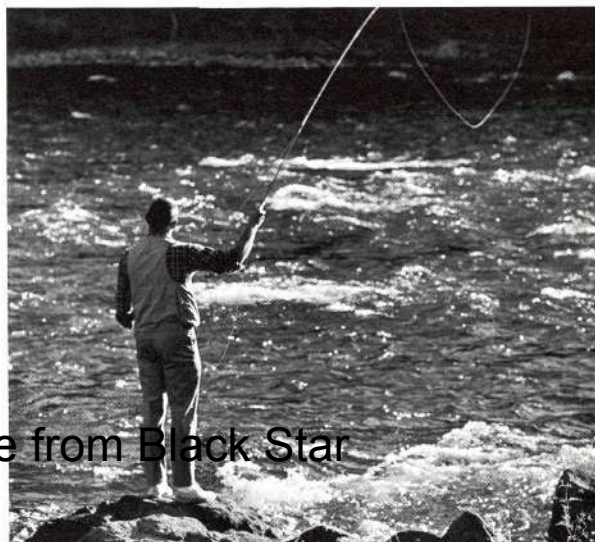
What they like to talk about is the good life of the Rogue Valley. Fishing for salmon and steelhead in the Rogue River is legendary. And there are trout in the mountain lakes and streams, bass and pan fish in the reservoirs, and fish to be had through the ice in winter. In the fall, when the hunting seasons open for duck, geese, pheasant and deer, Medford seems deserted and the only way to find some clients is to grab your gun and go into the field with them.

Setting their sights on hunting season, Bob Tauer and Mike Tayloe, staff accountants, sharpen up in target practice. Medford seems deserted when season opens.

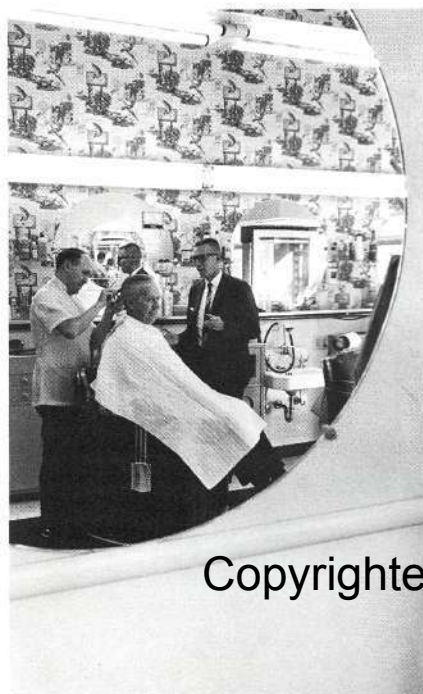
Local news travels fast in Central Barber Shop. Mike Tayloe, staff accountant, (r.) tells his latest fish story.

Flycasting technique must be just about perfect to catch steelhead and salmon in the famous Rogue River.

Town affairs are luncheon topic for Mayor Jimmy Dunlevy (r.) and partner Bill Cobb at Rogue Valley Country Club.



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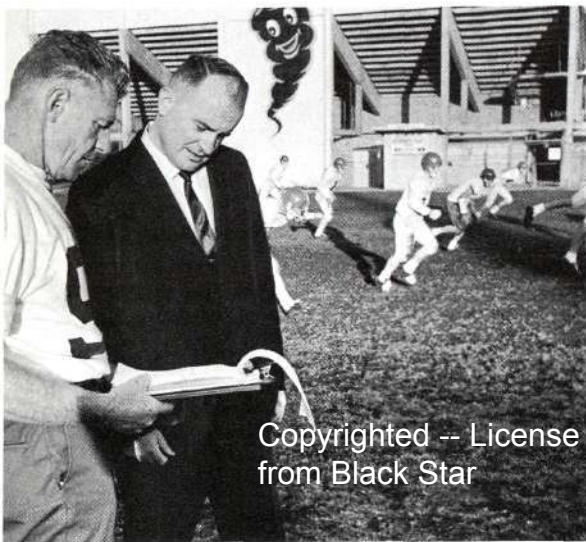


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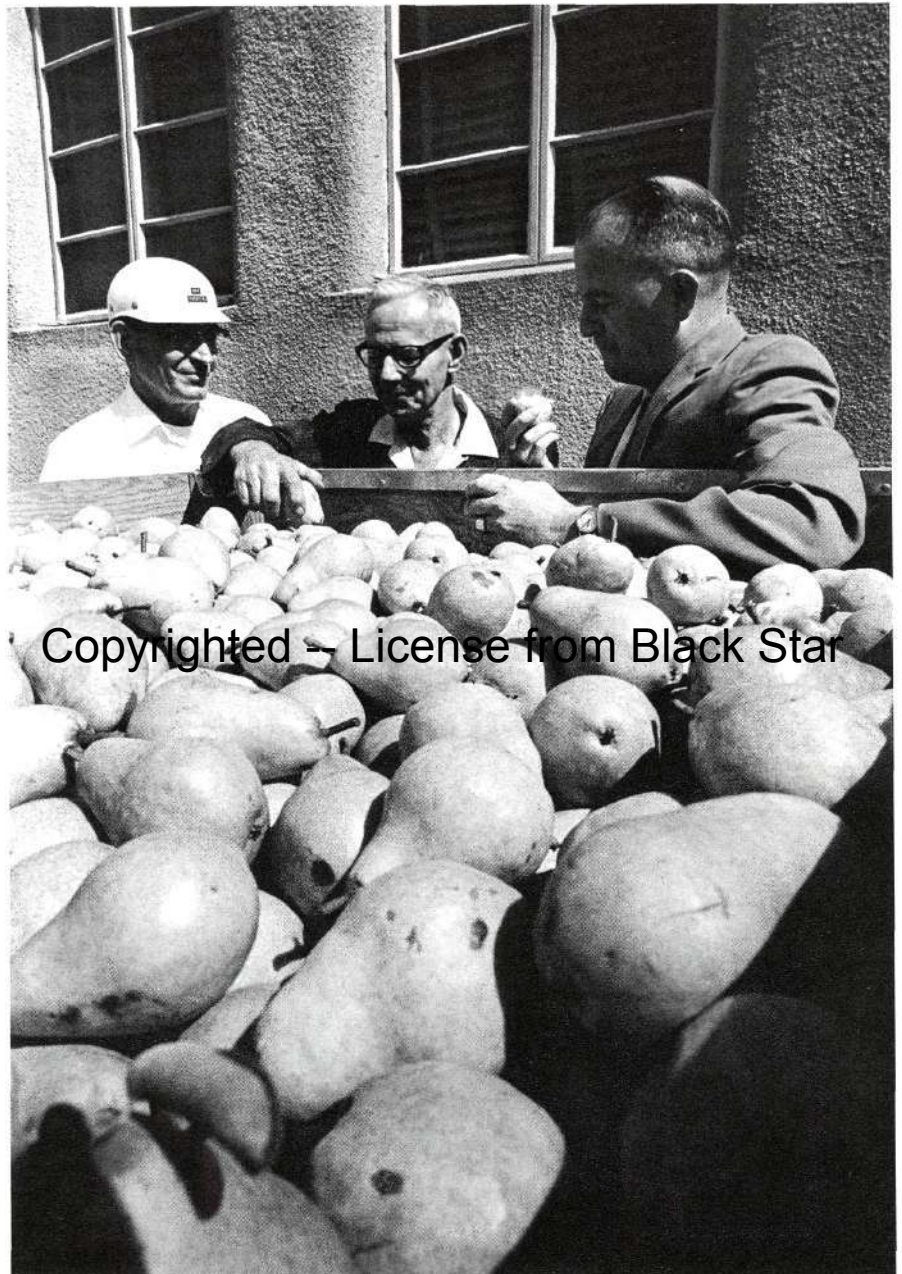
Varsity roster of Medford High School football team includes Charles Cobb, 215 lb. junior, starting offensive tackle. His father, Bill Cobb, H&S partner (r.), looks in on practice after work to review team's prospects with Coach Fred Spiegelberg.

H&S families spend many weekend afternoons together on legendary Rogue River, favorite picnic spot of Tauer and Devores.

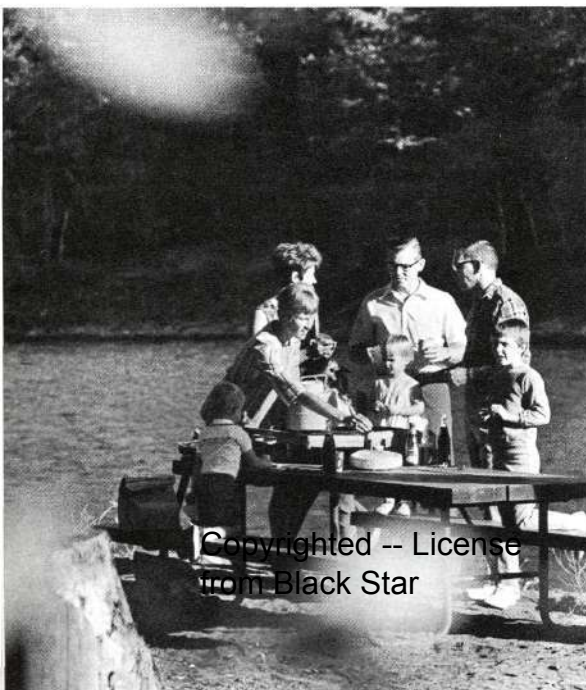
Pear crop is sampled by partner Bill Cobb (r.) as Bob Rukovina (l.) and Al James of Rogue River Packing Corporation take pride in his approval. Medford pears are shipped throughout the world.



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Airport welcome for Al Woody, staff accountant, from wife, Carnell, is one of advantages of small-town life. Medford staff goes to Portland Office once a year for technical training.

For community welfare, Mike Tayloe, staff accountant, explains annual report of United Fund to Pat Boye (l.) and Beverly Mann of Fund staff.

Medford



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Crater Lake, admired by most people only from the air, is a scant two-hour drive from Medford, and the mountains surrounding the town provide endless opportunities for camping, hiking, picnicking and berry picking in the summer and skiing in winter.

The Rogue Valley Country Club offers a 27-hole course, tennis, swimming and dining a mere five minutes from the office. It's no trick in the summer to get in nine holes after work and be home for seven o'clock dinner. The Club is a client, and scores of other client officials can be seen there, for many Valley people belong (initiation fee is \$90, and dues \$17.40 a month).

At Christmas time there is no need to fight the prices and crowds at the downtown tree lots. It is both easy and fun to select just the tree you'd like from God's own farm. The crisp chill of winter in the Rogue Valley, amid its natural beauties, brings color to the

cheeks and vigor to one's stride. Many make quite a holiday outing of this, and end up at someone's fireside for hot cider or rum, and lots of good cheer.

Yet for all the emphasis on the great outdoors, Medford is by no means culturally impoverished. Each spring Shakespearean scholars and authorities from all over the United States converge on nearby Ashland to lay the foundation for the annual summer Shakespearean Festival, billed as America's First Elizabethan Theatre. Its four-play repertory attracts audiences from near and far to "stay four days and see four plays." In 1967, the Community Concert Association in Medford and Southern Oregon College lecture series presented performances by Mantovani, Philippe Entremont, Maria Von Trapp and Meredith Willson, and lectures by Erskine Caldwell and Vance Packard, for example.

Regardless of the season, one needs only to glance from the windows of the H&S office, corner of Main and Central, to appreciate Medford. Across the street the druggist stops to chat with the shopkeeper sweeping his walks, a girl in the brokerage office finishes posting the latest stock prices on the blackboard, and the farmer in his overalls and boots passes on his way to the hardware store for supplies. Further on, a logging truck rolls by on its way to the mill, while the early morning jet from San Francisco flies low overhead on its landing approach and the freight train moves past the old packing houses on its way to the southern markets.

This is Main Street, Medford. The town and the country around it are a great place to visit. We Oregonians find it an even better place to live.