

Oregonian Wednesday, 4-11-84

Oregon's jobless rate rises to 9.2% in March

By STAN FEDERMAN
of The Oregonian staff

Oregon's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for March jumped four-tenths of a point to 9.2 percent — but state job experts said the figure is “misleading” and that the economy still is heading upward.

Raymond P. Thorne, state Employment Division administrator, said Tuesday the number of employed Oregonians in March actually rose by 11,000, and unemployment dropped 1,000.

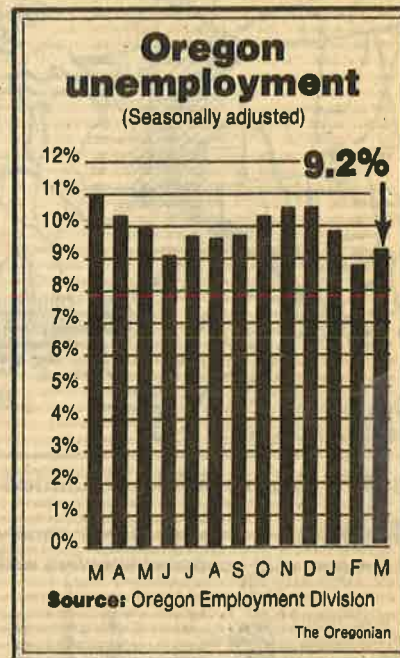
“But March's overall unemployment rate suffers in comparison with February, which was an unusually strong month when the jobless rate dropped by a full percentage point to 8.8 percent,” Thorne said.

The Oregon unemployment rate is based on normal seasonal fluctuations in employment, which takes into account such contributing factors as weather, holidays, back-to-school and harvest periods.

In February, because of major job increases in almost all industries, fairly unusual for a winter month, unemployment dropped by 16,800. “March was a good month for us but paled in comparison with February,” Thorne said.

The 9.2 percent unemployment rate for March is far below the 11.7 percent rate of a year ago. The month's total unemployment dropped to 140,000 — 30,700 less than March 1983.

Oregon's March rate remained above the national 7.8 percent unemployment rate for the month, which



showed no change from its February percentage.

Thorne said one of the brightest spots in the Oregon economy continues to be the improving wood products industry. It registered a 700-job increase in March and showed 64,000 workers employed compared to only 57,200 a year ago.

“The gain in the lumber sector was particularly encouraging because it came in a month when the weather was extremely poor.”

1. Seasonal rate up = + 4/10 of a point at 9.2%
2. Unemployed = 1984 - 140,000

1983 = 11.7%
1983 - 170,700

Improving wood products industry (+ 700 jobs) ^{March}

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Board chooses Byrne as president of OSU

By PHIL MANZANO
of The Oregonian staff

EUGENE — Dr. John V. Byrne, who began his career at Oregon State University 24 years ago, will leave his post as head of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to become the university's next president.

The Oregon State Board of Higher Education voted unanimously Tuesday during a special meeting at the University of Oregon to ask Byrne, 55, to be OSU's 15th president.

Byrne, notified in Washington, D.C., by State System of Higher Education Chancellor William E. Davis, accepted the position.

Byrne will succeed Robert W. MacVicar, 65, who became president in 1970 and will retire Dec. 31.

Davis said it was not known exactly when Byrne would assume the post.

"He was very pleased," Davis said after notifying Byrne about the board's decision. "He has a deep and long-seated commitment to Oregon State University."

Byrne will earn \$72,528 per year plus \$4,956 for expenses.

Byrne was one of two finalists. The other was Dr. Clifford V. Smith Jr., director of the Council for Advanced Science and Engineering Education/Research for Industry, a State System of Higher Education department.

"Naturally, I was disappointed," Smith said. "But I'm glad the process is over."

"The only thing I can say is to make

my congratulations to John," he said. "I look forward to working with him."

Davis said Byrne would come to a well-established university that has great potential to develop programs in the fields of high technology, computer science and molecular biology.

But the major challenge facing Byrne will in attracting research money and other funds for the Corvallis university. Money won't buy quality, but it will help, Davis said.

The board came to its unanimous decision after meeting for two hours in executive session to discuss the candidates. The members of the board took an undisclosed number of straw votes before meeting in open session, said Vice Chairman Loren L. Wyss of Portland.

Wyss called the decision one of the toughest the board has had to make regarding the appointment of a university president.

"Once we came down to the two candidates, it became a horse race," said board member Alvin R. Batiste of Portland. He said both candidates would have made excellent presidents for the university.

Board member Edward C. Harms Jr. of Springfield said the choice between Smith and Byrne was made within "narrow margins," but it was Byrne's long experience at OSU that swayed his vote.

Byrne began his career at OSU in 1960 when he was associate professor in geological oceanography. Over the



JOHN V. BYRNE

next 21 years, he went on to become department of oceanography chairman, dean of the School of Oceanography, acting director of the Marine Science Center, dean of research, graduate school acting dean and vice president for research and graduate studies.

In 1981, he was appointed to his current position as administrator for NOAA in Washington, D.C.

He earned a bachelor's degree in geology from Hamilton College in Clinton, N.Y., a master's degree in geology from Columbia University and a doctorate from the University of Southern California.