

Twin Falls, Idaho

## X-rays courtesy of Ryan Seacrest

### 'American Idol' gives local clinic funds for machine

By Nate Poppino  
Times-News writer

Dental patients, your next X-ray could come courtesy of Jordin Sparks.

The "American Idol" contestant and her fellow singers in the show's sixth season raised more than \$75 million for children in poor communities across the U.S. and in six African nations. Now a little of that money has found its way to the Magic Valley and non-profit community health center Family Health Services.

The center, CEO James Schroeder said, partners with the Children's Health Fund to operate its mobile dental unit. The fund was one of four U.S. groups to receive money from the charity event, and the agency plans to use the first part of its cut — \$120,000 over two years — to install a panoramic X-ray machine in the dental bus.

The machine will allow for more complete scans of patients' upper and lower jaws, said Dr. Adam Hodges,

the primary dentist with the unit.

The tool should be purchased and installed by the end of November, and its addition will give all Family Health Services locations an accessible panoramic X-ray.

"Once you get that on there, for general dentistry we'll have just about everything you'd need," Hodges said Friday.

Sadly, the X-ray won't be presented by "Idol" stars Melinda Doolittle or Sanjaya Malakar.

But the TV show's role in securing the money didn't go unnoticed by Schroeder, who was impressed by the fundraiser.

"The response was actually pretty overwhelming to get that much pledged in those couple of nights," he said.

The money is part of \$7.5 million the Children's Health Fund is distributing among all of its 21 programs over the next two years.

Dr. Irwin Redlener, who founded the nonprofit 20 years ago with singer Paul Simon, said he's impressed by what Schroeder has accomplished with the dental bus and that the decision to buy the X-ray machine came from Twin Falls.

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"We just basically gave them what they thought they needed," Redlener said. "We really vest a lot in the wisdom and judgment of the medical teams within our national network."

He was also pleased with how smooth the "American Idol" operation was. Efforts of that size can take much longer to get the money distributed, he said.

"The people that run that foundation understand how important it is to not hold up the process to an excessive amount of bureaucracy," Redlener said. "It was ... a surprisingly sophisticated organization we were able to work with."

Neither Schroeder nor Hodges said they watch "American Idol" regularly. But the show has a following at Family Health's Burley office, and Redlener said he tunes in now and then — though he never expected it to turn into a charity.

"What a wonderful surprise," Redlener said. "For them to then attach themselves to a charitable mission, I think, is quite admirable."

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