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Silverton police arrest man on child porn charges

WHITNEY M. WOODWORTH
STATESMAN JOURNAL

A Marion County man was arrested Thursday for encouraging child sexual abuse by downloading and possessing child pornography, according to court records.

A grand jury indicted Ronald Heigh, 49, on five counts of first-degree encouraging child sexual abuse and two counts of second-degree encouraging child sexual abuse.

According to the indictment, Heigh is accused of duplicating and downloading photos depicting explicit

content involving child abuse from November 2014 to November 2015.

A warrant was issued for his arrest Wednesday, and he was detained by Silverton police the next day, taken to Marion County jail and held on \$120,000 bail.

His arrest came almost 18 months

after Silverton police began investigating him, officials said.

According to court records, agents with the Oregon Department of Justice were also involved in the investigation.



Ronald Heigh

Rain dampens Oktoberfest tally

CHRISTENA BROOKS
SPECIAL TO THE APPEAL TRIBUNE

MT ANGEL – The booths are gone, the music halls are empty and the streets are quiet again.

Now Oktoberfest organizers are counting the money made at the Sept. 15-18 festival and preparing, as usual, to give away tens of thousands of dollars. After last year's record attendance, they presented \$91,000 to 45 organizations from more than 10 cities.

In November, they'll announce this year's festival giveaways. It's too early to tell exactly what the total will be, but it's not expected to reach last year's levels. Neither will the festival's 50 food booths best last year's gross earnings of \$700,000.

"It rained on Saturday – all day – and that's always a tough one for us," said Oktoberfest marketing director Monica Bochsler. "We are certainly affected by the weather. Our venues are covered areas, but we understand who really gets impacted by rain are all our great food booths."

If there's good news, it's that until Saturday's downpour, attendance was tracking with the past few years' upward trend. An estimated 325,000 people came to eat, dance, sing, shop and enjoy the celebration of all things German. That number is usually 350,000, Bochsler said.

"Overall, it was a great year," said Oktoberfest board president Chris Bischoff. "If the weather had cooperated on Saturday, we could've been really close to last year."

Until its Nov. 17 meeting, the board will be counting its money, deciding what expenses to pick up (last year, it voted to make double payments on the Festhalle mortgage) and picking recipients for the profits. Grant applications are available at info@oktoberfest.org.

"Grant applications are happening now," Bochsler said. "We try to support that grants that come in."

While 2016 was a "quieter year," it still was a memory-maker, she said. This was the first and only time that the town's Glockenspiel, giant musical clockworks housed in a restaurant of the same name, featured a new collection of military figures. The wooden figures, roughly half life-size, were each accompanied by songs recorded by Z Musikmakers.

The Glockenspiel's 10-year-old traditional German figures were on display in a tent below for Oktoberfest visitors see. For the first time, partygoers were able to examine the characters that usually "play" in the clock up close and personal.

"Everybody wanted to have their pictures taken with Papa Oom Pah. He's like Santa Claus!" said Henri Dill, one of the three owners of the



Bratwurst with sauerkraut is a festival favorite.



Festivalgoers brave the rain during the 51st Mount Angel Oktoberfest on Saturday, Sept. 17. The four-day festival celebrates the harvest, features live music, Bavarian-style food and beer.

PHOTOS BY DANIELLE PETERSON / STATESMAN JOURNAL

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Oregon wildfires down significantly

ZACH URNESS
STATESMAN JOURNAL

Despite dry conditions and summer temperatures on the warm side, Oregon enjoyed one of the least damaging forest fire seasons of the past decade.

Wildfires torched 186,317 acres in Oregon this year, the lowest total since 2010 and well below the 10-year average, according to data from the National Interagency Fire Center.

Forest fires are down nationwide as well, with 4.9 million acres burned, compared to last year's record-setting 10 million acres blackened.

"We've seen significantly less fire activity than last year," said Jessica Gardetto, spokeswoman for the interagency fire center.

Even human-caused fires are down in Oregon.

People caused 910 fires and burned 126,409 acres this season, down from 1,397 fires and 139,483

acres burned in 2015.

There is still the chance of fires popping up during October. However, no large wildfires are active in Oregon and most fire restrictions have been lifted after cool and wet conditions on the state's west side.

A major reason for the overall improvement was the lack of dry lightning strikes this summer, officials said.

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Silverton Spotlight

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