

Two Die After Car Chase

By April Bamburg

Two men died in a high speed chase over the Fourth of July holiday. Authorities say that the driver, 33-year-old Brooks Jay Anderson, crashed after attempting to navigate around spike strips placed on the roadway. The crash occurred on Scappoose-Vernonia Highway, approximately three miles from the Nehalem River Highway.

On June 4, at approximately 9 p.m., Deputy Ryan Dews observed a reportedly stolen 1989 Nissan 240SX near Brinn and Pittsburg Roads in St. Helens. A vehicle matching that description had reportedly eluded Scappoose Police on July 3. As Dews attempted to overtake the vehicle, speeds reached as high as 80 miles per hour. The chase began at Sykes and West Kappler Roads, in St. Helens, and continued on Cater Road, before moving to Scappoose-Vernonia Highway. The chase lasted 15 minutes, traveling 16 miles,

The press release states that the driver, now identified as Brooks Jay Anderson, 33, of St. Helens threw debris from the driver side window to create obstacles for the pursuing deputy, including the anti-theft device known as "The Club," large fencing staples, a gasoline can and a pair of pants.

Two officers from the Vernonia Police Department joined the chase, using spike strips in an attempt to deflate one or more of the tires on the Nissan

240SX. As Anderson attempted to avoid the spike strip, laid by Vernonia officer Shawn Carnahan, the driver lost control of the vehicle and it left the roadway before bursting into flames.

Carnahan and Vernonia Sergeant Mike Conner were able to pull the passenger, identified as Robert J. Regan, 37, from the burning vehicle, but were not able to get to Anderson to pull him out. Regan was transported via Life Flight to a Portland area hospital, where he died from his injuries on July 7, 2010. Police say he lived at an unknown Columbia County address, but had previously lived in Terre Haute, Ind.

Columbia County Sheriff Jeff Dickerson has said that Dews maintained a safe following distance behind the eluding vehicle his actions "were within policy and under proper authority pursuing a stolen vehicle on county roadways." Dews was hired in a full-time capacity in Nov. 2009, after several years as a reserve deputy.

It took several days for authorities to release the name of the driver, as the Oregon State Medical Examiner had to resort to dental records for a positive identification. Police then notified his next of kin.

At the request of the Columbia County Sheriff's Office, the Oregon State Police led the investigation into this incident. An OSP crash reconstructionist assisted in the investigation.

Series Of Women's Self-Defense Classes This Summer

The Columbia County Sheriff's Office is pleased to offer a women's self-defense class to the public every other Saturday in July and August this summer. The classes will be held in the Sheriff's Office Training/Conference Room at 901 Port Avenue, in St. Helens. The classes will begin at 9:00 AM and will conclude at approximately 3:00 PM

The class will be offered free of charge to Columbia County residents and a light lunch will be provided at no charge. Classes are offered on the following Saturday dates this summer: July 17, July 31, August 14 and August 28. Although the classes are free, a sign-up process is involved. Class space is limited, so early registration is encouraged.

The course will be taught by certified defensive tactics instructors who received their certification through the Oregon Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST) and American Council on Criminal Justice Training (ACCJT). The course is designed to teach participants skills to protect themselves in situations that

could result in serious assault or death. The course will be taught in "hands on" format. Topics will include personal safety strategies for the workplace and travel.

All participants are asked to bring a bottle of water and to wear comfortable clothing, socks and tennis shoes. Participants under the age of 18 are required to have a parent present and sign a release form in order to participate in the class. If you plan to send your child with another adult, please contact the Sheriff's Office prior to the class to ensure the accommodation can be made. Due to the mature nature of the information presented, this class is not appropriate for children 15 years and younger.

Class space is limited and individuals interested in participating must pre-register to attend. Registration forms are available at the Columbia County Sheriff's Office or by going on line to the sheriff's web pages at www.co.columbia.or.us/sheriff. Questions can also be directed to Timmi Sue at the Sheriff's Office at (503) 366-4651.



County Announces Furlough Days

Due to the County's budget situation, the County Board of Commissioners has approved the implementation of four unpaid furlough days for County employees with two exceptions; employees in the Sheriff's Office and the Roads/Parks Department will not be included in the furlough plan approved at the Wednesday, June 23, 2010, Commission meeting.

This action, along with several other staff related measures, will save approximately \$125,000 and is just one of the steps being taken by the Commissioner's to balance the coming year County budget. The furlough days

are effective beginning July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011.

The designated furlough days that were approved by the Commission are:

Friday, July 2, 2010;
Friday, August 20, 2010;
Friday, November 12, 2010;
Thursday, December 23, 2010.

Residents should note that they will not be able to conduct County business on the above specified furlough days, however, State Court Offices will remain open and operating on those days from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM.

County Land Development Services Office Closed On Fridays

Beginning Friday, July 9, 2010, the County Land Development Services office in St. Helens will be closed on Fridays. The Friday closures are necessary due to another round of staff cuts in the Land Development Services Department.

"Planning and Building Program staff have been reduced to levels that are inadequate to maintain the current public counter hours of Monday through Friday and to complete necessary development review activity in a timely fashion. Staff cuts have resulted from continuing low levels of permit activity and related permit revenue which is the primary source of funding for the Land Development Services Department", said Todd Dugdale, Land Development Services Director.

"Columbia County, like many other Oregon cities and counties, is having to cut both staff and service hours in response to the impact of the economic recession on development activity. However, we will continue to do our best to provide quality and responsive services to our customers within the limitations imposed by budget and staff cuts," said Director Dugdale.

The Land Development Services offices will continue to be

open from 8:30 AM to 12 Noon and 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Thursday excepting Holidays and the staff furlough days scheduled for Thursday, July 2, 2010, and Thursday, December 23, 2010.

The Friday closure will not affect building and on-site wastewater system inspections. County Building and On-Site Program inspectors will continue to perform inspections on Fridays, even though the main office is closed.

Building and on-site wastewater system inspections will also continue to be received on the County inspection phone line Monday through Friday and every effort will be made to perform these inspections within 24 hours of any request on a Monday through Friday schedule.

Residents should note that Land Development Services will not be accepting planning, building, and on-site wastewater applications on Fridays nor will County planning, building, solid waste, and code enforcement staff be available in the office or by phone during the Friday office closures.

For any questions regarding the Friday closure, please contact Land Development Services Director, Todd Dugdale at 503-397-7207.

Nicotine Anonymous

A new Nicotine Anonymous, will be starting on Thursday at 5:30 PM - 6:30 PM at the St. Helens Alano Club at 215 N. 6th in St. Helens, Oregon. The meetings started on June 17th

2010. The only requirement for this meeting is a desire to stop using nicotine products. Any Questions, please call Dick at 503-397-6268, or Cell 503-396-2889.



Need body work?

At Meyer's Auto Body

we'll take your order and give you great service.

MEYER'S AUTO BODY
493 BRIDGE STREET,
VERNONIA
503-429-0248