

Marion County couple guilty of racketeering, tax evasion

Attorney Gen. Hardy Myers and the Oregon Tobacco Tax Compliance Task Force announced the resolution of a tobacco tax evasion case involving United Trading Co. Inc. (United), an Oregon tobacco products distributor.

United co-owners Francisco and Nicolasa Osegueda pleaded guilty to state racketeering charges, which allege evasion of \$12,000 in state taxes and the illegal sale of "gray market" cigarettes.

The case involved an investigation by officials from Oregon State Police, Oregon Dept. of Justice, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Oregon Dept. of Revenue. During the course of the inquiry, officers determined United sold untaxed cigarettes to various retail stores through the Portland and Salem areas.

In addition, they imported direct from Mexico, cigarettes that are illegal to sell in the United States. These cigarettes are known as "gray market" cigarettes.

The defendant also sold these cigarettes to retailers with Oregon tax stamps attached -- which also constitutes an illegal act, officials said.

And the defendants

filed false tax reports with the Oregon Dept. of Revenue. The reports hid the true amount of tax owed based on false reporting of the quantity and brand of cigarettes sold.

The Oseguedas pleaded guilty in Marion County Circuit Court to one charge of racketeering.

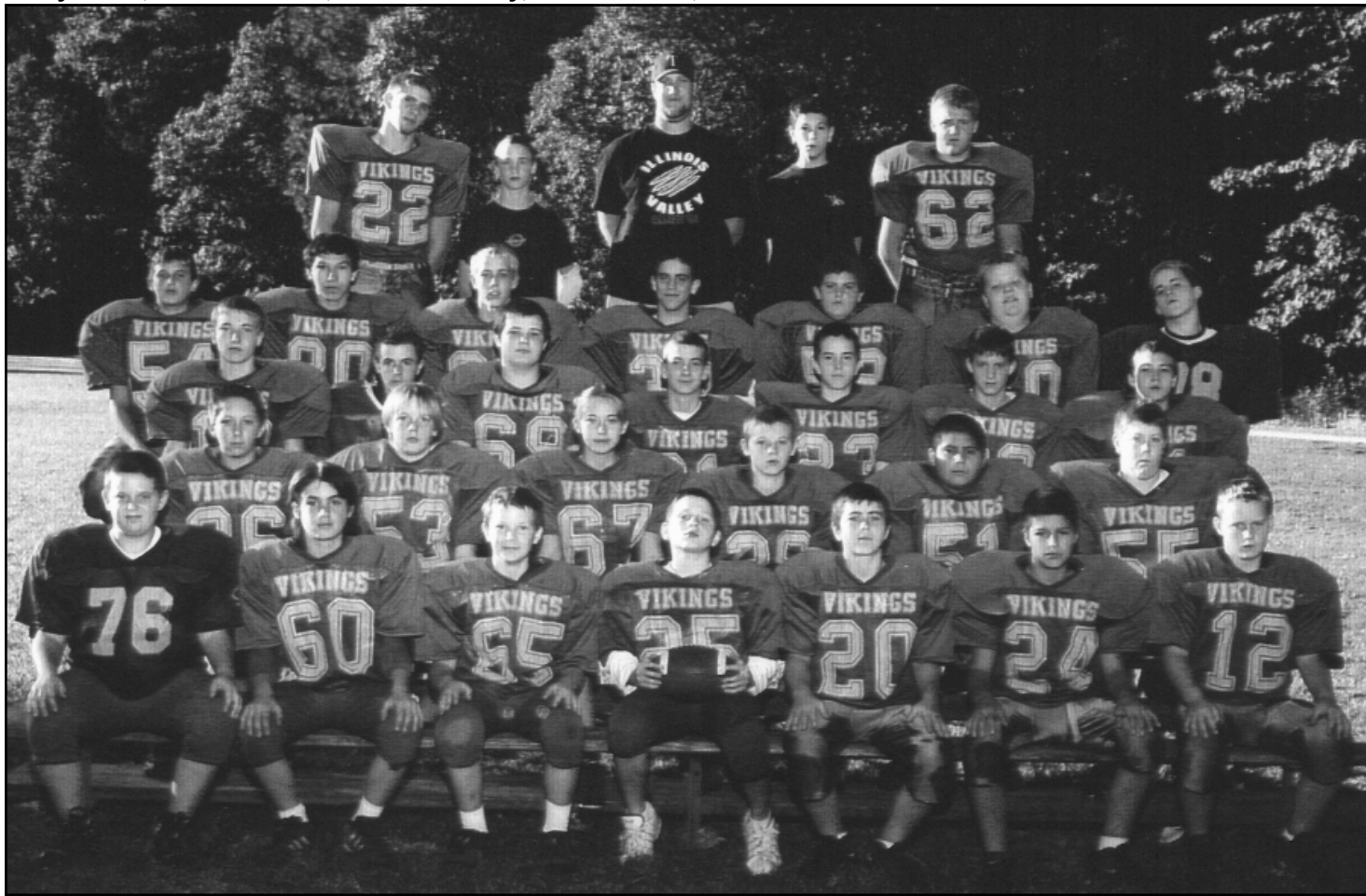
The state agreed to allow the husband and wife to be sentenced to optional probation for a period of five years and credit for time, served, in lieu of a prison sentence.

Both have already served more than 90 days in jail, as they fled the state to avoid prosecution and were located and arrested in Las Vegas. They have been in custody since.

They have further agreed to pay a restitution of \$24,775 and a fine of \$5,000. United Trading Co. was dissolved by the court, and the defendants have been divested of their interest in the company.

They are prohibited from participating in any tobacco related business and their cigarette distribution licenses were revoked.

Furthermore, they are restrained from applying for or obtaining a tobacco-related license in any state during their probation.



PERFECT SEASON -- The Lorna Byrne Middle School Vikings football team finished the season with a per-

fect record after defeating Grace Christian in their final game 34-8. (Photo by Lifetouch School Photography)

LBMS Vikings finish the football season undefeated

The Lorna Byrne Middle School (LBMS) Vikings kept their undefeated record perfect by ruling over the Grace Christian Vikings, 34-8, recently in White City.

The Vikings scored first on a 5-yard run by

Aaron Baker, and an 18-yard run by Steven Paul put the Vikings up 12-0.

Grace Christian intercepted a pass to set up its only score and the Vikings took over from there.

Other Viking touchdowns came on Steven

Paul's 70-yard kick off return, Aaron Baker's 53-yard run and William Maher's 15-yard reverse. Lukas Reynolds and Alex Bergman each scored on extra point tries.

Defensive leaders for LBMS included Paul,

Jacob Ellis and Reynolds with a total of 14 tackles and 17 assists between them.

The Vikings will celebrate their undefeated football season with a team pizza party scheduled for this month.

Fuels reduction sought to save scenic areas of the Rogue River

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Medford District has developed a fuels reduction project that will enhance efforts to protect citizens and resources against the threats of catastrophic wildfires.

The Rogue River Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project is part of a model Environmental Assessment Pilot that provides guidelines to enhance and improve the efficiency of hazardous fuel reduction projects on public lands.

Fire hazard within the 8,657-acre corridor of the Hellgate Recreation Section of the Rogue National Wild and Scenic River has been increasing for many years due to fire exclusion and natural vegetation growth. Currently, fire risk is high due to extensive residential and recreation use. Additionally, the wild

and scenic values of the Rogue River could be impacted by wildfire.

The proposed action will emphasize residential/structural protection by treating most heavily in the home ignition and defense zones. Work will be accomplished both manually and mechanically. Specific methods of treatment will be determined on a neighborhood by neighborhood basis.

These neighborhood plans would break-out small portions of the river corridor where there is a common focus and interest in addressing issues specific to that location. BLM anticipates 20-30 neighborhood plans over the next two years. BLM is working with Oregon Dept. of Forestry, Josephine County and private landowners on the project.

Mt. Ashland does its part to save, protect environment

Mt. Ashland Ski Area is doing its part to help keep Oregon green by buying Pacific Power's Blue Sky wind energy. Mt. Ashland signed up to buy 38 blocks of Blue Sky each month, representing a significant amount of the electricity used to power ski operations.

"By purchasing Blue Sky wind power we are reinforcing our commitment to environmental stewardship," said Jeff Hanson, general manager.

Wind power helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It produces no air pollutants, wastewater, smog or acid rain. Over the course of one year, Mt. Ashland's purchase will prevent the release of 32 tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

Blue Sky gives customers a way to grow the demand for wind energy. It is sold in 100-kilowatt-hour block increments for \$1.95 each, in addition to a customer's regular monthly electric bill. Purchasing one block of Blue Sky energy over a period of one year is equivalent to

offsetting more than one ton of carbon dioxide emissions. More than 3,900 Oregon Pacific Power customers partici-

Some people get lost in thought because it is such unfamiliar territory. -- G. Behn --

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We appreciate all that you do for our children. We also want to thank all of these businesses for their support and donations.

*Kerbyville Farms *Wild River Brewing & Pizza Co.
*Taylor's Sausage Country Store *SOFAB
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A fun time was had by all.
Thanks again.

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