

Criminally negligent homicide charge in Waldo rollover fatality

According to a press release from Oregon State Police (OSP) March 24, 2016, at 3:20 a.m., OSP received a report of a motor vehicle crash on Waldo Road near the intersection of Takilma Road in rural Cave Junction.

The investigation revealed that a 2007 Ford Escape was traveling west on Waldo Road when it left the roadway, rolled several times coming to rest on the north side of Waldo Road. The two passengers in the vehicle were ejected. The driver fled from the scene before the arrival of law enforcement.

The front passenger, a 16-year-old male, was transported to Three Rivers Medical Center for treatment. The rear passenger, 18-year-old Trevor Praszek of Cave Junction was pronounced dead on scene by medical personnel.

The release also stated that March 24, 2016, detectives from the OSP

Criminal Investigation Division arrested Dennis Knight, 23, of Cave Junction, on the following charges: criminally negligent homicide and failure to perform duties of a driver to an injured person -- felony (2 counts).

Knight was detained at the Josephine County Jail. More information will be released when it becomes available as this is an ongoing investigation.



Dennis Knight



(Photo courtesy of the IVFD Media Dept.)

2007 Ford Escape at rest after ejecting two passengers, sending one minor to Three Rivers Medical Center. The second passenger, Trevor Praszek was pronounced dead on the scene.

RCC levy asks for roughly \$10 a year

Judy Hoyle
IVN Contributing Writer

The May primary is fast approaching. One measure on the ballot is 17-69, a proposed 20 year bond levy for Rogue Community College (RCC) of 5 cents per thousand of assessed value for property owners.

"The economy of Southern Oregon is growing and changing. There are exciting new industries, and employers are looking for more employees for skilled jobs," said Peter Angstadt, president of RCC. "Developing a highly skilled workforce will help existing businesses to expand and attract new industry to the region," he added.

The proposal amounts to a mere \$10 per year for a home with an assessed value of \$200,000, yet the bond levy is projected

to raise about \$20 million because it would be district wide. In other words, levy funds would be raised in both Josephine and Jackson counties and expanded district wide as well.

If passed, the bond will help RCC qualify for \$8 million in matching funds, which have already been approved by the Oregon state legislature, and possibly another \$8 million in future matching funds. "The bond levy could attract an additional \$16 million to our area," Angstadt said.

Angstadt stated the RCC community is very grateful for the support it has received in the past. RCC serves over 17,000 students and a recent study of Oregon Community Colleges found the return on investment is substantial. RCC graduates bring millions of dollars into the local economy in wages and taxes every year.

Over the past few decades, RCC has

become an increasingly powerful force for regional economic development. RCC graduates serve throughout the region working as nurses, firefighters, teachers, mechanics, manufacturing technicians, computer technicians and human services providers.

The proposed bond levy would finance new construction and facility improvements to better prepare students for these good paying local jobs as well as successful transfers to four-year universities.

RCC graduates transferring to 4-year universities in Oregon consistently earn higher grade point averages than graduates from any other Oregon community college and also achieve higher graduation rates. Many return to work in Southern Oregon.

The proposed levy would support building projects at all three main campuses and satellite sites, including planned appliance

purchases to complete the commercial kitchen at the Kerby Belt Building.

Another development idea is expanding the "College Now" partnership with I.V. High School. Angstadt said, "We're going to look at what we can do to expand this program and introduce more people to career, technical and educational training."

Using the bond levy, capital project improvements would better support education and training in health care, high technology manufacturing, fire science and emergency services and computer science.

Targeted projects at the Redwood Campus in Grants Pass include a remodel of the E (Elk) Building to upgrade facilities and redesign and remodel science labs and update the Nursing Building to meet modern requirements.

SEE RCC ON A-10

Hunt is on



(Photo by Dan Mancuso, Illinois Valley News)

Two Valley boys intently search for eggs, Sunday, March 27, at Jubilee Park. Large crowds and a blue bird day helped make the I.V. Lions Club annual Easter egg hunt a success.

Meet the candidates: Commissioner Position 3 (part two)

Annette McGee Rasch
IVN Senior Contributing Writer

Non partisan candidate Raymond Smith has lived in the Illinois Valley for 14 years, and with his wife, Michelle, owns and operates Smith Farrier Service.

Smith, who has also worked as a welder, roofer and agricultural laborer, believes the county board would benefit from someone with a working-class background. It's clear that Smith, a nonpartisan candidate, is well-read and very familiar with the county's myriad issues.

"We need honest, everyday people with the common sense who are not interested in a permanent government career," Smith said. "Over time, I believe this would simplify government,

lessen corruption and allow for the government to right itself before going too far out of bounds. ...I believe we have a real problem in our local government. We have a Board of Commissioners that only tends to represent the public's voice when they agree with it. They fail to represent the public's voice at the state level on issues that directly affect us and they try to exclude the public at every opportunity."

Smith noted that public safety is a "top priority" for many, and said that issue will only be addressed by "replacing our county leaders with the right two people. I would not support any tax levies for four years. The majority of the public has said 'no' to tax levies repeatedly. How clear can it be?"

If elected, Smith said he'd focus on O&C county

funding issues. "The O&C counties either have a contract with the federal government, or they do not. We need to stop debating the issue and hold the federal government accountable. In the meantime, we could streamline government and prioritize funding and staff."

Smith would also like to see an audit of all county departments - then make the results available to the public. "Currently, the public is being misled as to what funds actually exist. The commissioners routinely report funding levels that vary by millions. Business carried out for the public should be open to public input and oversight. Without that, you have only blind trust or none at all."

SEE MEET ON A-10