

Illinois Valley News

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Man fatally shot at home in O'Brien

GRANTS PASS, Ore. (AP) — Oregon State Police are investigating the fatal shooting of a man in Josephine County.

The agency identified the man as 46-year-old Jeffrey Hunsaker of Cave Junction. His body was discovered at a home in the unincorporated community of O'Brien.

Police have yet to talk about the circumstances, but said Friday that a person has been identified as the shooter and is cooperating with the investigation.

Vehicle strikes tree, claims life

On September 29, at 11:35 p.m., Oregon State Police (OSP) troopers responded to a single vehicle fatal crash in Josephine County, which is south of Cave Junction.

The preliminary investigation revealed a Dodge Neon was southbound on Rockydale Road when the driver failed to stop at the intersection of Waldo Road and drove across the road impacting a tree where the vehicle caught on fire. Illinois Valley Fire responded to extinguish the fire and located one deceased occupant in the vehicle.

The investigation is ongoing to determine the identity of the driver and the cause of the crash.

OSP was assisted by Illinois Valley Fire Department and Illinois Valley Funeral Home.

Publisher's note:

While the identity of the driver appears to be well known at this point, the investigation is ongoing to determine the identity of the driver and the cause of the crash. The name will continue to be withheld by this paper until it comes from either the family or OSP.

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Armed robbery highlights issues

Jason McMillen

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On Sept. 10 at around 6:43 p.m. a white adult male wearing a red baseball hat, black leather jacket, blue jeans, and surprisingly no mask entered PAPA's dispensary. Wielding a handgun he walked behind the register and demanded the employee manning the desk to hand over the money. After the employee handed it over to him he pocketed the cash then grabbed another employee and attempted to get into the back room.

It was at this time that Mike Clemenson, the operations manager, stepped into the retail section and confronted the robber with the news that there is no more money in the back room. When the robber dropped his guard, Clemenson drew a weapon which he then pointed at the thief and forced him to leave. The man left peaceably with \$124 in cash.

Since this incident PAPA has made a lot of improvements to their overall level of security. This includes a better surveillance system and safety training for their employees. Clemenson, when asked about the morale of his employees after recent events, stated that, "They feel protected ... they know what to do in this kind of situation. They know we're doing what we need to do to protect them." Fortunately this crime hasn't affected their customer base either as the business is reportedly as healthy as ever.

However, one issue was raised about the situation in that the police took nearly 24 hours to respond after the conclusion of the event. On the topic, Clemenson stated, "They blew it off for funding." Despite the lagged reaction, Clemenson reported that they did a fine job. On Sept. 11 at 2:20 p.m., William Smith, 43, the primary suspect in the case, was investigated at his residence and following an interview with police was taken into custody. He is currently facing charges for robbery I, theft II, plus menacing and unlawful possession of a firearm.

SEE PAPA ON A-8

The signs of fall



(Photo by Michelle Binker, for the Illinois Valley News)

Illinois Valley High School's Nathan Klaiss, No. 60; Paul Binker No. 70; and Skylar McLanahan, No. 1, chase down a Clatskanie ball carrier. See story on A-3.

Sheriff's budget has grim future

Anita R. Savio

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Municipalities in other parts of the country may be experimenting with community policing: Your friendly neighborhood cop walks or drives a daily beat and gets to know the people and the problems. That's not the case in Josephine County. According to Sheriff Daniel, "There's not much of a patrol going on, we're just running from call to call to call."

Three numbers sum up the law enforcement story in Josephine County. The first is \$7.9 million, which makes up the current sheriff's office budget. That amount includes the latest Secure Rural Schools (SRS) grant, appropriated by Congress to help make up for the loss of O&C timber receipts. A glance at the pie chart reveals two pieces of information about the current budget. The slices represent the relative dollar amounts in each budget category. The labels show how many personnel are assigned to each budget category.

Note that the personnel numbers are approximate, because some people's hours, including the sheriff and his lieutenant, are distributed over more than one budget category.

But the important take-away is that patrol effectively consists of 12 law enforcement deputies, if you count Sheriff Daniel and Lt. Snyder.

The breakdown is:

- Seven general duty deputies (One is a new recruit who will come on board in December.)

- One search and rescue deputy
- Three special assignment deputies that are paid for with outside resources: Cave Junction, State Marine Board, and Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

- A portion of the time of the Sheriff and Lt. Snyder

Special assignment deputies are allowed to spend up to 10 percent of their time responding to general duty calls. The sheriff and lieutenant answer calls in certain urgent or emergency situations.

What part of these resources are available to the Illinois Valley?

According to Sheriff Daniel, the Illinois Valley receives approximately half of his patrol resources on any given day.

"Primarily this is due to the Cave Junction contract deputy and the other deputy that is required to go out to the Illinois Valley," Daniel said. "When the CJ deputy is off, we still respond to calls in the I.V. with two deputies."

Cave Junction also benefits from a dedicated jail bed, as part of its contract with the sheriff's office.

But note that the Cave Junction deputy generally only serves the city of Cave Junction, not the rest of the Illinois Valley.

The second number, \$4.0 million, represents a worst case scenario. Oregon's Congressional delegation has so far been unsuccessful in convincing its counterparts to renew our SRS appropriation. But without a renewal, Josephine County Public Safety departments – Sheriff, District Attorney,

and Juvenile – will be faced with a total loss of \$2.7 million. That loss will hit us either next fiscal year or, in the very best case, the year after.

But wait, shouldn't we be facing an even greater loss of \$4.7 million, the amount of the SRS grant in the last fiscal year? No. Because what Congress gave with one hand, it took with another. In approving previous SRS grants, it appropriated to itself our O&C timber receipts. Those receipts generally amount to about \$2.0 million per year. So with no new SRS grant, Congress gives us back our good old O&C timber receipts and we're left with a net loss of \$2.7 million.

The bar chart shows how this cut in resources will likely affect us.

Note that the sheriff's office budget will essentially be cut in half. Asked what he would do to keep his department afloat without new SRS monies, Sheriff Daniel responded that he would ask for "any and all reserve funds."

But where are those reserves to be found? According to county Finance Director Arthur O'Hare, in only one place: Public Works, where there is currently \$1.5 million in reserves and contingencies. But there is a problem, according to O'Hare.

"This is only a one time shot. This amount was accumulated over very many years. Using these funds only kicks the can down the road, because it will take us years to recuperate them.

SEE BUDGET ON A-8

