

Josephine County Crime Briefs:by Sam Marsh, KLDR 104.5 FM / KAJO 1270 AM / 99.7 FM

A Grants Pass area man has been permanently banned from entering all parks in Josephine County after stealing several park signs. The Josephine County Sheriff's Office reported deputies and county parks personnel recovered six signs March 29 from a male subject residing in the 3700 block of Rogue River Highway. The sheriff's office did not identify the man and he was not arrested, but he had already been trespassed from Josephine County parks for six months. Due to the sign heists, the man has now been permanently prohibited from entering parks. Deputies warned the man that the next time he is caught in any county park, he will be arrested.

The Oregon Department of Corrections (DOC) is reporting an inmate from Josephine County has died at the Two Rivers Correctional Institute in Umatilla. According to DOC, 75-year-old Dennis Devon Willian -- formerly of Cave Junction died in the prison infirmary while on hospice care. As with all in-custody deaths, the Oregon State Police has been notified and is investigating the exact cause of death. Willian entered DOC custody July 27, 2010, from Josephine County with a scheduled release date this June. However, the inmate was in very ill health and required hospice care. Next of kin has been notified. News archives show Dennis Willian had been sentenced to nine years in prison with no provision for early release after being convicted of four counts of first-degree sexual abuse.

The Josephine County Sheriff's Office responded to 2,285 calls for service during the month of February. The sheriff's report for activity last month showed that 1,764 of those calls were handled by patrol deputies and 243 were handled by dispatchers. In addition, there were 173 animal-related calls. The report also showed there were 450 jail bookings, 72 warrants issued, 278 civil paper services, 47 new concealed handgun licenses issued and 70 concealed handgun licenses renewed. So far in 2019, the sheriff's office has responded to 4,980 calls for service and 159 warrants have been issued. The majority of the calls this year have been in the Illinois Valley where deputies responded 862 times since Jan. 1. There were also 445 calls in the city of Cave Junction which contracts with the sheriff's office for law enforcement. Outside Grants Pass where the Public Safety Department takes care of most enforcement duties, the sheriff's office responded to numerous calls both south and north of Grants Pass.

The Josephine County Sheriff's Office rounded up eight more fugitives this month for skipping scheduled court dates. According to a press release titled, "Warrant Wednesday," the sheriff's office reported the arrests of Ryan Alan Curtis, Michael David Brenden, Michael David Baze, Joseph Virgil Guess, Andrea Lee McGrath, Ronda Nadine Quintero, Robert Dale Morris and Brian Ellington. Curtis was arrested on SE 7th Street in Grants Pass. Brenden was arrested on Placer Road in Sunny Valley. Baze was arrested on Holland Loop Road near Cave Junction. Guess was arrested on Takilma Road. McGrath was arrested on Laurel Road. Quintero was arrested at Rocky Riffle. Morris was arrested on North Redwood Highway. Ellington was arrested on Williams Highway.

Firefighters were able to save the contents of a shop building early yesterday after responding to a blaze in the Selma area. March 27 at 9:29 a.m., the Illinois Valley Fire District (IVFD) and Grants Pass Fire & Rescue (GPFR) were dispatched to a reported structure in the 4900 block of Lakeshore Drive. Crews arrived on scene to find a lean-to attached to a shop on fire. Units from IVFD and GPFR quickly extinguished the blaze. The lean-to and a common wall with the shop were destroyed, but the rest of the shop was completely intact. There were no reported injuries and the cause of the fire was under investigation by the IVFD fire marshal. Also assisting at the incident were the IVFD Rehab Group, the IVFD Citizen Emergency Response Team and Pacific Power.

The Josephine County Board of Commissioners passed Ordinance 9.25 that prohibits panhandling along all public roadways outside incorporated cities March 27. The Ordinance amends the Josephine County Code by adding an unlawful transfer on a highway, road or street. It was passed by Commissioners Dan DeYoung and Darin Fowler -- Board Chair Lily Morgan was absent. The ordinance takes effect in 90 days and it states that Josephine County seeks to protect the health, safety and welfare of its citizens by regulating the transfer of items between occupants of vehicles and pedestrians. The presumptive fine for violating the ordinance is \$115, with a maximum fine of \$250 for repeat offenses. Commissioners DeYoung and Fowler were both members of the Grants Pass City Council when a similar ordinance was passed and it has substantially reduced the number of local transients panhandling on public roadways inside the city limits.

The Josephine County District Attorney's Office is investigating an unusual weekend motor vehicle accident that happened on Redwood Highway in Kerby. The Oregon State Police (OSP) reported troopers and emergency crews responded to the two-vehicle crash near milepost 27 of U.S. Highway 199 March 29 at 8:55 p.m. Troopers said a white Toyota truck driven by 28-year-old Jarred Cottrell was stalled on the highway when a green Toyota Tundra struck it from behind. Cottrell was injured in the crash and -- while he was receiving treatment -- his father arrived on scene and caused a disturbance by striking the medical technician. Both Cottrell and his father then fled the scene. Cottrell was later contacted at Three Rivers Medical Center where he was cited for driving under the influence of intoxicants. Both occupants of the Toyota Tundra were uninjured. The medic who was struck by Cottrell's father was identified as 45-year-old William Fisher. He was not seriously hurt. OSP referred additional charges against Cottrell and his father to the district attorney's office for review and possible prosecution.



(Photo by IVFD Media Dept. for the, Illinois Valley News)

Vehicle driven by Jarred Cottrell Friday, March 29.

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