

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

A California motorist was cited and the passenger was injured following a May 24 crash in the Illinois Valley. At about 7:50 a.m. May 24, crews from the Illinois Valley Fire District as well as American Medical Response were dispatched to the single-vehicle wreck at the south end of Sauers Flat. IVFD public information officer Ned Booth said the northbound vehicle left U.S. Highway 199 just after the double lanes started. The passenger was transported by AMR Ambulance to Three Rivers Medical Center in Grants Pass for treatment. The Oregon State Police cited the unidentified driver for careless driving. OSP was still investigating a crash that happened in the evening of May 23 on Redwood Highway in Kerby. Booth said no one was hurt in the two-vehicle collision.

A Grants Pass area transient has been sentenced to more than six years in prison for committing two bank robberies, stealing two vehicles, possessing drugs and driving one of the stolen cars while impaired last year. According to Josephine County Court records, 45-year-old Gabriel Gene Suiter was ordered by Circuit Judge Thomas Hull this

week to spend the next 75 months with the Oregon Department of Corrections. In three separate cases, Suiter pleaded guilty to two counts of third-degree robbery, two counts of unauthorized use of a motor vehicle and one count of driving under the influence of intoxicants. Grants Pass Police arrested Suiter twice for holding up banks in 2018 -- last May for robbing the Umpqua Bank on NE F Street and last October for robbing the Key Bank on Williams Highway. No weapon was displayed by the suspect in either heist. Judge Hull also sentenced Gabriel Suiter to serve 36 months of post-prison supervision.

The Josephine County Sheriff's Office jailed three local men on multiple charges after catching them with stolen vehicles, weapons and drugs in the Wilderville area early May 23. The sheriff's office reports 27-year-old Tyler Christopher Bacon of Grants Pass, 24-year-old Dylan James Wilson of Grants Pass and 22-year-old Josiah Francis Laqua of Medford were placed into custody by deputies at gunpoint. On May 23 around 7 a.m., deputies responded to a report of a pickup stolen from Moser Paving Company off Waters Creek Road in Wonder. The reporting party followed

the stolen truck to a location off Round Prairie Road. The victim eventually recovered his vehicle, but it was damaged and a chain saw was taken. A short time later, a resident on Round Prairie Road reported that an all-terrain vehicle had been stolen off her property. But the thieves were foiled when they found a locked gate in their path. Deputies arrived on scene and arrested them. Bacon, Wilson and Laqua were transported to Grants Pass and lodged in the Josephine County Jail on charges including unauthorized use of a motor vehicle.

The Oregon State Police (OSP) jailed an ex-convict on a statewide felony warrant the evenign of May 23 after stopping him while he was riding a bicycle in Cave Junction. OSP reports troopers pulled over a bicyclist they identified as 42-year-old Jack Lee Duke near the corner of Lister Street and Sawyer Avenue at 7 p.m. Troopers said they stopped Duke for a violation and he proceeded to give them a false name. A brief investigation revealed his true identity and that he was wanted on a Coos County felony warrant for felony possession of methamphetamine. Further investigation revealed that Duke was also wanted on a statewide warrant for felony parole and

probation violations. He was additionally charged with possession of meth and furnishing false information to police. Duke was transported to Grants Pass and lodged without bail in the Josephine County Jail.

The Josephine County Sheriff's Office apprehended a female fugitive and arrested her male companion late May 22. The sheriff's office reports deputies spotted a white BMW sedan containing 29-year-old Andrea Lee McGrath and 38-year-old Justin Robert Calderon -- both of Cave Junction -- in the 4000 block of Holland Loop Road at 4 p.m. Deputies followed the car and pulled it over in the parking lot of Bridgeview Church. McGrath and Calderon were placed into custody without incident. McGrath was wanted on Josephine County felony warrants containing of nine charges including possession of dangerous drugs and probation violation. Calderon was charged with probation violation related to a previous arrest for fourth-degree domestic assault. McGrath and Calderon were transported to Grants Pass where they were lodged in the Josephine County Jail on no-bail detainers.

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Saturday, May 11 at 5:30 a.m. Shawn and Meredith Hunt found their dog Moose an anatolian shepherd barking at a cougar in a tree near their home off of White School House Rd. in Cave Junciton. Meredith Hunt says she was not scared until she looked into its eyes and felt like prey. She felt they were only safe because Moose was there.

(Photo courtesy of Meredith Hunt)



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