Semi turns over near Rowland Lake

■ By Jacob Bertram
Columbia Gorge News

A bee entered the cabin of a 40-year-old semi-trailer truck driver and stung him, according to the account he gave Washington State troopers for why his rig ended up top-down, twisted around a guardrail on an embankment situated between State Route 14 and Rowland Lake last Wednesday afternoon.

The truck went veering off into the western shoulder and scraped against a guardrail several hundred feet until it entered the embankment and flipped over. The driver and his truck full of cheese were en route from Idaho to Tillamook when the incident occurred around 3:40 p.m. Wednesday, April 14.

'Lucky' is how troopers and crew members working on the truck's recovery described the event, which saw driver Joshua Young basically unharmed, save for some bumps, bruises, a bee sting and a citation from state patrol. No one else was involved in the incident, said state patrol officials.

Crews from Washington Department of Transportation and specialized environmental clean-up crews from Bishop Towing and Repair were still working mid-afternoon Thursday on unloading the trailer before rotating the rig upright. While some of the trailer's load of cheese had been ejected across the surface of the highway and below the wreckage onto an embankment and into the lake, much of the product remained in the trailer.

"It's going to be a long process," one crew member told *Columbia Gorge News*. The key issue here, they said, is preventing more product from offloading into the lake.

Single-lane closures were expected through Friday, with intermittent closures of both lanes.

Washington State Trooper Will Finn said it may take another couple days before a full recovery of all the debris.

The incident caused a diesel spill but crews were able to stop the leak before it entered the water. State Department of Fish and Wildlife and Department of Ecology officials were notified of the event, said Finn.

EMS and fire officials responded to the incident, as well as agents from Washington State Patrol and Klickitat County Sheriff's Office.

Above left, an upside-down semi straddles the guardrail along Highway 14. Above, Washington Department of Transportation crews hitch the trailer mid-day Thursday as they work to remove it. Specialized environmental clean-up crews from SMAF Environmental LLC and Bishop Towing and Repair worked methodically to unload the trailer before rotating it upright.

Jacob Bertram photos

Superintendent candidates named

■ By Jacob Bertram
Columbia Gorge News

White Salmon Valley School District officials released the names of the three final candidates for the superintendent position ahead of the April 22 marathon interview event.

The three finalists will visit each campus on Thursday and attend an interview with the school board and observer panel, and will participate in a student-led and community-led forum.

A full calendar of the day's events can be found on the White Salmon Valley School District web page.

Out of the 20-odd candidates discovered by recruiters NW Leadership Associates, three candidates made it to the final stage, listed below: Keith Harris, assistant superintendent of Dickinson Public Schools from Dickinson, S.D.; Sean McGeeney, executive director of P-12 Programs from Yakima, Wash.; and Edward Murray, Director of Personalized Learning and Public Relations from Laurens, S.C..

Keith Harris

Keith Harris has been assistant superintendent of Dickinson Public Schools since 2018, according to his resume. Having received his undergraduate degree from Weber State University in 1996, Harris began teaching social studies a year later in Driggs, Idaho, eventually becoming pre-K-5 principal at Driggs Elementary School in 2001, according to his resume. In 2004, Harris began work as the K-12 Principal in Afton, Wyo., where he stayed until 2015, when he became the curriculum director for the Big Horn School District No. 1 in Cowley, Wyo. Following a two to three year stint there, Harris found his current position in South Dakota. One achievement listed in his resume boasts a "100 percent high school graduation rate for 11 consecutive years" during his time in Afton.

Sean McGeeney

Sean McGeeney began his teaching career at Hamilton Creek K-8 School in Lebanon, according to his resume. After nearly four years, McGeeney was named interim principal while transitioning between administrators. He later served as assistant principal at Highlands Elementary School in Renton, Wash., and then principal of Crescent Heights Elementary School through 2018. According to his resume, in his role as executive director for P-12 programs at Yakima Public Schools, McGeeney provided leadership for 12 teaching and learning departments, ranging from music to Highly Capable to mentoring new teachers to Migrant and Indian Education programs. McGeeney received his doctor of education in Educational Leadership from George Fox University.

Edward Murray

Edward Murray has most recently served as the director of Personalized Learning and Public Relations, a position he started last year. In that role, according to his resume, Murray said he served as acting superintendent at board and civic meetings, while orchestrating operational, administrative, and fiscal processes. Murray also spent some years as assistant principal and dean of students in North, S.C., and as an adjunct science professor at the University of Phoenix. Murray received his undergraduate degree from California State University, and later received two masters from National University and University of Texas. According to his resume, he is currently a doctoral student at Clemson Univer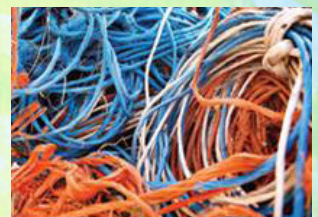sity, studying Educational Systems Improvements Science.