

Oregon Public Safety

Yoncalla incident Ruled Murder/Suicide
Yoncalla, OR - DCSO has concluded its investigation into the apparent homicide/suicide in Yoncalla that was discovered on Friday, January 31, 2025. Deputies had responded to the residence in the 100-block of Williams Road in Yoncalla. Upon arrival, a deputy observed two persons down in the residence and forced entry. The deputy confirmed the two adult individuals were deceased from apparent gunshot wounds.

Detectives determined the incident was the result of a homicide/suicide domestic violence incident. During the course of the investigation it was determined 68-year-old Yoncalla resident Steven Curtis Bolin shot and killed his wife, 62-year-old Michelle Bolin before turning the gun on himself. There are no additional updates expected in this investigation. The Douglas County Sheriff's Office was assisted by the Oregon State Police, Sutherlin Police Department and North Douglas County Fire & EMS.

Pedestrians stuck by Vehicle, 1 dead, 1 Injured
Salem, OR - The Salem Police Traffic Team is investigating a deadly crash resulting in one person deceased and one person hospitalized. Just after 2 a.m. on March 1, two adult pedestrians were struck by a pickup truck on Silverton Rd NE near Highway Ave NE. Both were transported to Salem Health where Raymond Dale, 77, died from his injuries. The second pedestrian, Ephraim Dale, 49 of Salem, remains hospitalized with critical injuries. A third pedestrian, a 17-year-old female, was traveling with them and witnessed the crash.

Emergency personnel from both Salem Police and Salem Fire were heavily involved in managing this incident and the road remained closed for several hours. The driver of the truck, Eugene Ensinger, 63 of Salem, stayed at the scene and the circumstances of the crash remain under investigation. This is Salem's third traffic fatality of 2025.

Fatality on Rural HWY 138
Douglas County, OR - On Wednesday, February 26, 2025, at 4:58 a.m., Oregon State Police responded to a

two-vehicle crash on Highway 138W, near milepost 6, in Douglas County. The preliminary investigation indicated an eastbound Ford Escape, operated by Carl Gregory Miller (38) of Eagle Point, veered into the westbound lane of travel and struck a Kenworth Commercial Motor Vehicle, operated by Grant Crossgrove (34) of Sisters, head-on. The Ford Escape burst into flames on impact. Motorists on scene extricated Miller from the burning vehicle.

The operator of the Ford (Miller) was declared deceased at the scene. The operator of the Kenworth (Crossgrove) was reportedly uninjured.

The highway was impacted for approximately five hours during the on-scene investigation. Fatigue is believed to be a possible factor in the crash. OSP was assisted by the Kellogg Rural Fire, Elkton Rural Fire, North Douglas Fire and EMS, Bay City Ambulance and ODOT.

Structure Fire in Mobile Home
Roseburg, OR - At 12:23 p.m. on Tuesday, 02/27/25, Central Douglas Fire & Rescue was dispatched to a structure fire on Berry Loop in the Green community of Roseburg. Initial reports indicated that there was a fire in the ceiling of the residence and flames were visible.

A quick response from Central Douglas Fire & Rescue is credited to the fire being contained to a single room and its contents, stopping it from rapidly spreading throughout the residence or adjacent structures. Although the house suffered damage to the area of origin, the most important thing is the occupant of the residence was able to escape from the home safely. No injuries were reported by the occupant or the firefighters working on the scene.

CDF&R responded to this incident with three fire engines and two command units, totaling 12 personnel. Pacific Power, Douglas County Sherrifs office and Umpqua Valley Ambulance aided in the response.

Battalion Chief Ryan Felker, with Central Douglas Fire & Rescue emphasized the importance of working smoke detectors in your home. He stated, " Sometimes there's an annoyance when smoke detectors give false

notifications but the importance of their functional operation surpass the inconvenience they sometimes bring." He also commended the work of the responding engines stating," These are well trained professionals who do what they do well. Not for accolades, but because the safety of the public means so much to them. The results of this incident, from what could have been, confirms their dedication to the service they provide."

House Fire near Jasper spurs Warrant Arrest
Lane County, OR - On February 26th at about 3:30 a.m., LCSO deputies responded with fire personnel to a house fire in the 85900 block of Edenvale Road, west of Jasper. Fire personnel determined no one was inside.

Deputies contacted a person associated with the residence, Fred Lemuel Bunge, 54, walking away from the area. Deputies determined there was a Lane County Circuit Court warrant for Bunge's arrest for Attempt to Elude by Vehicle and Reckless Driving. Bunge was arrested and lodged at the Lane County Jail without incident.

The Oregon State Fire Marshal is investigating the cause of the fire. Thanks to the multiple fire agencies who responded to the incident and prevented the fire from spreading to nearby residences. LCSO Case #25-0960

Down Power Line causes 5th Wheel Fire
Douglas County, OR - At 12:32 Monday afternoon, Central Douglas Fire & Rescue (CDF&R) was dispatched to a power pole transformer blown from a down tree. Crews responded and were updated that a 5th-wheel trailer was now on fire. A tree had fallen through power lines onto the trailer. The first arriving engine reported a fully involved travel trailer with multiple structures threatened. Heavy winds were reported, along with additional hazards from overhead power lines.

An efficient response contained the fire to the fifth wheel and prevented it from spreading to multiple exposures. The fifth wheel suffered significant damage and is considered a total loss. No injuries were reported by the resident or the firefighters working at the scene. CDF&R responded to this incident with three fire engines and one command unit, totaling eight personnel. Winston

Police Department, Umpqua Valley Ambulance, Pacific Power, and Red Cross assisted crews and resident at the scene.

Pedestrian Killed on HWY 99
Lane County, OR - On Sunday, February 23, 2025, at 8:28 p.m., Oregon State Police responded to a vehicle versus pedestrian crash on Highway 99, near milepost 3, in Lane County. The preliminary investigation indicated a southbound Acura MDX, operated by Jaidene Raie Torgison (18) of Creswell, struck a pedestrian, Gary Dale Obert (54) of Eugene, who was in the roadway.

The pedestrian (Obert) was declared deceased at the scene. The operator of the Acura (Torgison) and passenger, a juvenile male (17), were reportedly uninjured. The highway was impacted for approximately four hours during the on-scene investigation. OSP was assisted by ODOT.

Mohawk Valley Double Murder
Mohawk Valley, OR - Lane County Sheriff's deputies are investigating the deaths of two adults found inside a residence on McGowan Creek Road on Sunday afternoon.

According to the Lane County Sheriff's Office, deputies responded to a home in the 36000 block of McGowan Creek Road, northeast of Springfield, shortly after 3 p.m. on February 23 when a caller reported discovering individuals believed to be deceased. Emergency crews arrived on the scene and confirmed the deaths of Paul Allan Turner, 89, and Beverly Jean Turner, 84. Both were found deceased with gunshot wounds.

Their son, 59-year-old Christopher Allan Turner, was also located on scene and detained. Throughout the course of the investigation probable cause was established that Christopher Turner was responsible for the deaths. Turner was taken into custody and is facing two charges of Murder in the First Degree. This investigation is ongoing and no further information is available at this time. More details will be released as they become available. This investigation is in its early stages. Anyone with information is asked to contact the Lane County Sheriff's Office at 541-682-4150 opt. 1. LCSO Case #25-0923

Community Matters

Where is the New Drain City Hall?

Story by Rusty Savage

The city of Drain has been in need of a new City Hall for quite some time, having now spent over 3 years at it's temporary location. The old City Hall, at 129 West C Ave, was dedicated in September of 1954. Originally designed to house City Hall, Sheriff's dept, Library and Civic Center but by 2019 the building had seen it's course when the city found black mold, asbestos and bulging floors and structural problems. Shortly afterwards, after some talk of using the Civic Center, the City Hall was eventually set up at 431 Payton Ave. That current location is on ND County Fire district property under a temporary agreement with the fire district and city. That agreement has been expired for at least 6 months but there, currently, appears to be no urgency to vacate. City council meetings and public functions have been comfortably accommodated at the Drain City Civic Center.

Back to the original building, it was formerly condemned in 2022 and was demolished in February of 2024. Once the building was demolished and the lot cleared, the talks by the City seemed to pick up momentum towards the construction of a new City Hall at the old location on West C Avenue. The city began to budget towards that eventuality and gave numerous reports as to the progress with design and funding. In the 2024 budget there was at least \$300,000 and the implication that more funds were possible and progress seemed to be in full swing for making it a reality.

Late last year and earlier this year the City Council began to make progress reports on the design options and asked for public input as to some more specific criteria and needs for the City Hall. The discussions centered on parking, spaces needed for county and city services as well as potential commercial spaces as well. At the beginning of 2025, by all appearances, the next steps would be architectural and design in nature. According to previous City Administrator, Jeni Stephens, there were no real obstacles in the funding aspects and now it was just a matter of logistics.

During this time, members of the public have requested updates on the progress and information relating to the design and funding, for which their answer was to wait and see. So it was with some surprise, at the February City Council meeting that the city was looking at a commercial property, basically a warehouse, away from downtown, even further than the Payton Ave location. The building is at 649 Fir St and at that meeting, the owner spoke to the council and expressed the price of the building was 1 million dollars. When asked about some specifics, there seemed to be some question as to a current tenant's term of lease and the exact nature of recent or prior inspections of the building. When investigating the neighborhood and input from some of the city residents, there are some questions as to the real feasibility of this location as a viable City Hall. Basically, residents who have been following this development feel removed from the discussions taking place and are looking for some transparency.

In a recent post on North Douglas Community Internet forum, the question was asked if residents thought City Hall should be located Downtown. First of all the responses were overwhelming for a downtown location. A variety of reasons were given, all worth noting - historical, convenient, logical choice, and due to the preparations made to date. The second most reactions were for cost concerns. Some were of the notion that a new City Hall would increase their taxes and be cost prohibitive. It's clear that information on plans to date, currently held funds and funding was not readily known to many residents responding. Some of those felt that cost alone should dictate remaining as it is.

The situation at hand is that something will have to be done, the City Hall can not remain indefinitely at it's current location. A solution is needed and up to the present, efforts

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Yoncalla Polar Plunge

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Yoncalla Junior Bella Sybrant, who is in her third year of involvement in Unified Sports and Special Olympics, stated that "The Polar Plunge is great because it gets students who are not normally interested in school activities, to participate. Being involved in Special Olympics has helped to bring

our school together, make friends with people you do not normally hang out with, and meet a ton of new people."

If you would like to donate to the Yoncalla Unified Sports or Special Olympics Oregon, please contact Matt Sybrant at Yoncalla High School at matt.sybrant@yoncalla.k12.or.us or 541-849-2175.

Veterans Corner

Veterans Administration dismisses more than 1,000 employees

Story by Scooter Brown

The Department of Veterans Affairs fired 1,000 probationary workers and approximately 60 diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) staffers, as ordered by Trump's Office of Personnel Management (OPM). Those dismissed include non-bargaining unit probationary employees who have served less than a year in a competitive service appointment or who have served less than two years in an excepted service appointment.

The dismissals were effective immediately and communicated directly to each employee. As an additional safeguard to ensure VA benefits and services are not impacted, the first Senior Executive Service (SES) or SES-equivalent leader in a dismissed employee's chain of command can request that the employee be exempted from removal.

The dismissals are part of the Trump Administration's effort to make agencies more efficient, effective and responsive to the American People. To that end, VA is refocusing on its core mission: providing the best possible care and benefits to Veterans, their families, caregivers and survivors.

The federal budget cuts targeting the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) have sparked concern across the nation, particularly in Oregon, where state officials and advocacy groups are actively working to mitigate the impact on veterans. These cuts, which have led to staffing reductions and financial strain on essential services, threaten to disrupt healthcare access, research funding, and support programs that veterans rely on. In response, Oregon leaders have taken decisive action to safeguard these vital resources.

One of the most significant moves by Oregon has been its participation in a multi-state lawsuit challenging the Trump administration's freeze on federal payments. State officials argue that this sudden funding halt

ODVA Concerned, Takes Action & Reassesses Budget

endangers essential programs, including those serving veterans, by blocking reimbursements critical to their continued operation. By joining the lawsuit, Oregon aims to prevent further financial instability and protect veterans from the fallout of abrupt budgetary changes.

The cuts have also placed Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU) at risk of losing approximately \$80 million in federal funding. This loss would threaten critical medical research and clinical trials, many of which directly benefit veterans. Recognizing the potential damage, a federal judge has issued a temporary restraining order to halt the cuts, ensuring that ongoing research efforts—and the veterans who depend on them—are not immediately impacted.

Beyond legal action, Oregon's Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) is reassessing its budget to address the funding shortfall. With the potential for reduced federal support, state officials may need to prioritize essential services and seek alternative funding sources to maintain veterans' healthcare, housing, and employment assistance programs. Additionally, concerns over staffing shortages at the Portland VA Medical Center highlight the risks posed by the cuts, with possible reductions in access to medical care for veterans.

While the full consequences of these budget reductions are still unfolding, Oregon's proactive approach demonstrates a commitment to protecting its veterans. Through legal challenges, strategic financial planning, and advocacy for sustained funding, the state is working to ensure that those who served their country receive the care and support they deserve. In the face of uncertainty, Oregon's response serves as a critical reminder that veterans' well-being must remain a top priority, regardless of political or fiscal changes at the federal level.

