

Teen pleads guilty in murder

By CRAIG MURPHY
Of the Keizertimes

The son accused in the murder of his mom and the attempted murder of his dad has pled guilty.

Brett Angus Pearson, 18, pleaded guilty on March 26 to one count of aggravated murder, one count of attempted murder with a firearm and one count of conspiracy to commit aggravated murder.

The charges stemmed from the March 5, 2014 murder of 44-year-old Michelle Pearson and the attempted murder of her 57-year-old husband, Wilfred "Bill" Pearson. The guilty plea was entered in the courtroom of Marion County Circuit Court judge Dale Penn.

David Wilson, Marion County deputy district attorney, said the trial against

Brett Pearson had been set for Sept. 15 to Oct. 2. The guilty plea means that trial won't be happening, with sentencing scheduled for Aug. 28.

"A lot of times it's easier on a family to not go through a trial," Wilson said last Thursday. "There are some details that don't come out in a change of plea."

Wilson said the sentencing range would be between 30 years and life.

At this point, last Thursday's plea has no impact on the other teenager charged in the crime. Brett Pearson's friend Robert Daniel Miller II, 18, is scheduled to go to trial in November. Wilson said last Thursday it is too early to know if Miller will change his plea as well.

John Storkel, Brett Pear-



Brett Pearson

son's lawyer, did not return multiple messages seeking comment.

Both Pearson and Miller were arraigned on two counts each of conspiracy to commit aggravated murder and attempted aggravated murder with a firearm in March 2014. According to an indictment, Pearson agreed to pay Miller "money and things of value to unlawfully and intentionally" cause the death of his mom. In the same act, according to the indictment, Pearson agreed with Miller to cause the death of his parents between Feb. 1 and March 5, 2014.

Keizer Police Department

personnel responded to the Pearson house on Ventura Loop around 11:30 p.m. last March 5, after an alarm at the house was activated. The deceased body of Michelle Pearson was found inside the house, while Bill Pearson was transported to Salem Hospital with "serious gunshot injuries." He was released from the hospital 17 days later.

Brett Pearson was arrested around 1 a.m. that night in Keizer, with Robert Miller arrested a short time later at a Salem hotel.

Brett Pearson had dropped out of McNary High School and was a student at Downtown Learning Center in Salem, while Miller still attended the Keizer high school at the time of the incident.

In a jailhouse interview

with Portland TV station Fox 12 a couple of days after the shooting, Brett Pearson admitted to being on methamphetamine at the time.

"Regardless of being under the influence, it's still a decision I made," he said while tearing up during the interview. "It's still something I did. It's still something that was very wrong and should never have happened."

Shortly after the incident, the Pearson family thanked the community for its support in a prepared statement.

"We are overwhelmed by the outpouring of kindness and love for our family and would especially like to thank our faith communities for their continuing support and prayers," the statement read in part.

Love is coming...



KEIZERTIMES/Craig Murphy

Love Love Teriyaki II is expected to open on either the second or third weekend of April in the former Adobo Republic building in Keizer Station, next to GameStop.

Organization Day big day for Big Toy

By CRAIG MURPHY
Of the Keizertimes

For the Big Toy playground project, it's time to get organized.

Construction consultant Bill Hugill from New York-based project consultant Leathers and Associates will be in Keizer next Tuesday, April 7. Hugill will spend the day meeting with leaders of the project, including chairs of the various committees, two months before community volunteers are expected to come out in force to build the play structure at Keizer Rapids Park. Construction will take place over a five-day span, from June 10 to 14.

"Bill is one of our lead construction consultants," said Kyle Cundy, the project manager at Leathers. Doug Hanauer was going to be coming, but a medical situation led to a change.

"It's organization day, which is very much what it sounds like," Cundy said. "We will have our construction consultant meet with each committee, check their status and determine what they need to do between today and the build date. They will create a site layout plan. They'll get things prepared

and on track so we can kick off the build on the right foot. At the end of the day is a wrap up meeting. The consultant will give an update on where they're at, an evaluation of their progress and will be there to answer questions. The construction captains who are new to the process will have questions of their own."

A representative from Leathers was last in Keizer for Design Day back in November 2013, when designer Jane Lewis Holman and assistant Steven Meyer looked at possible sites for the play structure, coordinated meetings with elementary students in Keizer, incorporated all of the ideas into a design and finally presented their design to the community in an overflowing council chambers that same night.

Project general coordinator Mark Caillier, who was not on board at that time, noted Holman and Meyer were shown three sites around KRP when they visited. Of the three, Holman liked the original "big tree" site by the amphitheater best. That was the site until the

Please see BIG TOY, Page A12

Mural meeting doesn't exactly pack the room

By CRAIG MURPHY
Of the Keizertimes

Originally, any artist who wanted to have their design considered for Keizer's second public mural had to attend Tuesday's meeting on the subject.

That rule is being changed. The reason is simple: only two artists showed up at the mural meeting.

One of those two artists was Colleen Goodwin-Chronister, who did the first mural, titled *Valley Treasures*, on the side of Keizer Florist last summer. The other artist was Brigitte Cobb.

The mural will be done this summer or early fall on the north wall at Town and Country Lanes, located at 3500 River Road N. Lore Christopher, chair of the Keizer Public Arts Commission, measured the wall as being 140 feet wide and nine feet high.



KEIZERTIMES/Craig Murphy

Brigitte Cobb (left) and Colleen Goodwin-Chronister discuss the proposed mural for Town and Country Lanes during a meeting March 31. The two were the only artists attending a meeting about the mural that had been called mandatory.

The concept drawing by Jill Hagen calls for an impressionistic background to be painted by local high school students, artwork such as handprint leaves and finger print blossoms to be done by young children and reliefs designed and painted by professional artists.

Artists can submit a design for any section, or for the entire mural.

"We have a general concept," Christopher said at Tuesday's meeting. "We don't know that this is *the* vision. This is *a* vision."

Please see MURAL, Page A8



They work hard for the ivy

Vince Alvarez watches his goats Chip (front) and Ergo do their thing on his property by Keizer Rapids Park on Tuesday. The city is utilizing the goats to chew up poison ivy at the park.

By CRAIG MURPHY
Of the Keizertimes

Some work for the money. Some work in exchange for food or beer.

And then you have Chip and Ergo, who are helping to clean up the poison ivy around Keizer Rapids Park.

Chip and Ergo work for ivy.

After all, they are goats. Vince Alvarez has lived right next to KRP since before it was a park. An animal lover since childhood, Alvarez has goats, sheep, geese, emu, chickens and horses.

About six months ago city employee Shane Witham, who lives on the park property, suggested to Parks Supervisor

Robert Johnson that the goats be employed to clear ivy around the park.

"Shane said the city was paying to clear the ivy, so he asked if I'd be interested," said Alvarez, who readily agreed to help out — after all, he'd made the suggestion himself previously. "Then Robert called and said, 'I'm at Wilco, do you want me to buy you panels?'"

Johnson got Alvarez six panels to build a pen to go around the goats.

"You put the pens around them," Alvarez said. "Once they're done in one area, you move the pen to another area and move the goats."

Alvarez said each of the

panels is about \$20 and can be reused, so the total cost to the city is \$120. Neither Alvarez nor his goats get any payment.

In all, Alvarez said he currently has six goats. Two are

Please see GOATS, Page A8

Stories We Like
 Saluting the people that make us proud of our community
capitolauto.com

Home & Garden
 SPECIAL SECTION

Traffic safety discussed
 PAGE A2

A look at Easter weekend activities
 PAGE A5

GUSTAV'S
Opening date set
 PAGE A6

MHS golf faces tough challenge
 PAGE A10

0 88267 02324 6

MAKE YOUR MOMMA PROUD
GET & YOUR MAMMO

SPA WEEK 2015: MAY 4-8
SCHEDULE YOUR MAMMOGRAM: 503-588-2674
 1165 Union St. NE #100 - Salem
www.salemimaging.com/spaweek

Women's Center
 at DIAGNOSTIC IMAGING of SALEM