

Astoria man gets five years for theft, robbery

His girlfriend joined him on crime spree

By KYLE SPURR
The Daily Astorian

An Astoria man who counterfeited money and committed robbery and theft with his girlfriend was sentenced to five years in prison Thursday in Clatsop County Circuit Court.

Cameron James McKey, 25, was first arrested in October for attempting to pass a counterfeit \$20 bill at the Astoria Mini Mart.

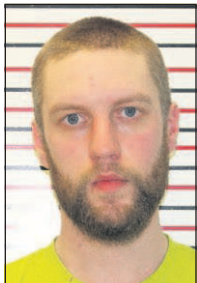
In December, he stole personal belongings out of two storage units in Warrenton. Less than a month later, he robbed a woman in Astoria and stole more than \$1,000 worth of tools from Englund Marine & Industrial Supply.

During the thefts and robbery, McKey was with his 28-year-old girlfriend, Robyn Joyce Spear.

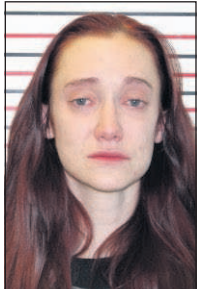
Spear, of Astoria, is facing similar charges for the robbery and thefts. She is also accused of a separate counterfeit attempt at the Mini Mart. In addition, she is charged with possessing heroin and methamphetamine.

"They were on a crime spree," Astoria Police Deputy Chief Eric Halverson said. "They would be arrested and go to jail and get out and continue."

McKey pleaded guilty



Cameron James McKey



Robyn Joyce Spear

last month to first-degree forgery, third-degree robbery and three counts of first-degree theft. Other charges of burglary and theft were dismissed as part of the plea negotiations.

The Clatsop County District Attorney's Office is still determining the restitution amount McKey owes the victims. The victims recovered some of their belongings, but not all of the items.

McKey and Spear reportedly stole crab pots, animal traps, camping gear, parts of an antique grandfather clock, dishes and other items from the two Warrenton storage units.

The Astoria woman who was robbed in January accuses the couple of spraying her with Mace, stealing about \$100 in cash and putting needles and drugs in her pocket so if she called police it would look like she was in possession of the drugs, according to Astoria Police.

Before the counterfeit arrest, McKey denied he knew the \$20 bill was fake and claimed he got it from the bank. Police seized McKey's vehicle, which belonged to Spear's mother, and found evidence of about a dozen more counterfeit bills. The bills appeared to be poorly photocopied.

Astoria Police are reminding businesses and residents to examine money carefully.

"People need to be aware and make sure they take a good look to try to determine if it is legitimate or not," Halverson said.

Local man seriously injured after crash near Fort Clatsop

By KYLE SPURR
The Daily Astorian

An Astoria man towing a gillnet boat was seriously injured and flown to a Portland hospital after he crashed his pickup truck into a tree Thursday morning near Fort Clatsop.

Blake Charles Painter, 36, crashed at about 10:30 a.m. on Fort Clatsop Road just south of Fort Clatsop in Lewis and Clark National Historical Park. Emergency responders used the Jaws of Life to remove him from the pickup truck.

Painter is known for his appearance on the Discovery Channel's "Deadliest Catch."

Fort Clatsop Road was shut down Thursday afternoon just past the entrance to Fort Clatsop, but travelers were still able to access the park.

Clatsop County Sheriff's Office, Oregon State Police, Warrenton Fire and Police departments, Lewis and Clark Fire Department, Olney Fire Department, Medix and park rangers all responded to the scene.

First responders found the pickup truck completely destroyed against the tree. The boat was damaged and fell off the trailer.

The cause of the crash is still under investigation.

Corrections department poised to add inmates at two prisons

By PARIS ACHEN
Capital Bureau

SALEM — Despite a \$55 million investment in programs to reduce the prison population, the state Department of Corrections is poised to spend \$4 million before fall to add beds at two minimum-security institutions.

The legislative Emergency Board approved the additional allocation to the Department of Corrections last week.

The money will pay for additional staff and security equipment at Deer Ridge Correctional Institution in Madras and prepare the mothballed Oregon State Penitentiary-Minimum in Salem to accept female inmates.

The department already received \$2.5 million in February to move 787 male inmates from a minimum-security facility to a larger vacant medium-security building at Deer Ridge, where there is room to add more beds. Another \$3 million approved last month will pay for security equip-

ment to complete the move and add 200 beds to the prison. The Emergency Board also approved 33 additional positions at the prison to serve the additional anticipated inmates.

Another \$1 million was approved to pay for the process of reopening the Oregon State Penitentiary-Minimum in Salem — an annex of the Oregon State Penitentiary, which was mothballed in 2010 to save money during the recession. Opening the annex will relieve pressure from the state's only women's prison, Coffee Creek Correctional Facility in Wilsonville.

The threshold number of inmates that can safely be housed at Coffee Creek is 1,280, said Colette Peters, director of the Department of Corrections. The facility is currently operating with 110 emergency beds. Its population hovers just above or below the threshold on a daily basis, Peter said. The April prison population forecast projects the average daily women's population to exceed 1,300 as

early as June 2017.

The Department of Corrections could request another \$9.5 million in September to actually open the minimum security annex and accept female prisoners. The department also anticipates requesting another \$3.9 million in the fall to fully staff Deer Ridge and add another 100 beds, Peters said.

The Department of Correction's biennial budget failed to account for the cost because the state projection for the inmate population ballooned in the past year. The April forecast projects the prison population to grow from 14,636 this year to 15,319 by March 2026.

The Justice Reinvestment Fund was created in 2013 to give resources to counties to set up support services for offenders on probation and parole. The bill also restructured the state's sentencing guidelines to try to ebb the flow of offenders into the prison system.

The Criminal Justice Com-

mission divvied up \$15 million from the fund in 2013-14. About \$40 million was earmarked for the fund for 2015-16. The \$9.5 million expansion at Deer Ridge would come out

of the \$40 million amount.

Peters said the Justice Reinvestment program is working. Without it, she said the department would have needed to build a new prison at Junction

City this year and opened it next year.

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