

Roden: Doctors describe the childrens' injuries as torture

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move the case forward to trial in September, and to allow the prosecution to present the gruesome evidence.

"It's all systems go in September," Brown said.

Traumatized children

Roden, 28, who is facing the death penalty if convicted, is already serving an eight-year prison sentence for violating probation from a previous domestic violence conviction.

He is accused of torturing and murdering Evangelina Wing in December 2014. An autopsy found the toddler apparently died of battered child syndrome with blunt force trauma to her head.

Roden is also accused of abusing the two brothers, Patrick Wing, now 3, and Peydon Kahclamat-Harding, now 7. The boys are living with family in California.

Doctors describe the childrens' injuries as torture. A pediatric doctor testified in April that Peydon is one of the most traumatized children she had ever seen.

Prosecutors believe Evangelina Wing and her brothers were tortured, burned, bitten and caged in the Seaside apartment their mother, Dorothy Wing, shared with Roden.

Wing, 26, pleaded guilty in January to first-degree manslaughter and two counts of first-degree criminal mistreat-



The Daily Astorian/File Photo
Defense attorney Conor Huseby leads Randy Roden away after a hearing at Clatsop County Courthouse.

ment. She was sentenced to more than 15 years in prison, contingent on her truthfully testifying at Roden's trial.

Attempts to dismiss

Roden's defense lawyers attempted to dismiss the case by claiming doctors never

tested the children's tissue for a dangerous flesh-eating virus known as methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus infection. The defense has an expert — Janice Ophoven, a pediatric forensic pathologist — who claims the toddler likely died from complications of the infection, rather than from blunt-force trauma. The two brothers also showed signs of the infection, she said.

"(The doctors) acted in good faith," Brownhill concluded. "Moreover, it was not apparent in December 2014 that testing more tissue for MRSA would produce evidence favorable to the defendant."

The defense lawyers tried to claim Roden does not

qualify for the death penalty because he is intellectually disabled. Brownhill denied their request, concluding that Roden illustrated a history of bad behavior, not intellectual disabilities.

Throughout his school years in Georgia, Roden threaten to kill himself, threatened to kill teachers and other students, hit and slapped other students, threw things in class and used foul and vulgar language.

"He was in special education services in school because of his behavior, not his intellect," Brownhill wrote. "He earned good grades when he wanted to play football. His poor grades were due in large part to absenteeism and his refusal to work."



Photos by Danny Miller/The Daily Astorian

Andrew Gonzalez zips up his graduation gown while getting ready for his graduation ceremony at South Jetty High School, Thursday in Warrenton.



Greg Slate, right, puts on his graduation gown alongside his fellow graduates before the South Jetty High School graduation ceremony begins Thursday in Warrenton.



Demetreas Watier, left, is congratulated by his cousin Rell Brandon after his graduation ceremony Thursday at South Jetty High School in Warrenton.

Grads: Students thanked teachers and staff who cared

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Herrera said he was filling in for a neighboring county when he met Johnson-Fleishman, a young man with a captivating smile who he promised to work with during his time in the system.

"Am I confident he will stay clean and sober? Yes," Herrera said about his client's imminent return to his old stomping grounds. "Will he have bumps? Yes."

Herrera compared sending kids back to their old neighborhoods and temptations to sending them out to walk through the mud. His job, he said, is helping them learn how to stay clean.

A learning experience

Along with friends and family, graduates Thursday gave thanks to the teachers and support staff who cared, stayed after-hours to help and pushed them in the right direction.

Heading the educational programs at South Jetty is Richard Glinert, a former principal in Warrenton's other schools who was transferred to the correctional facility in 2013. Glinert estimates that South Jetty has graduated 65 students out of about 400 who have come and gone during his 3 1/2 years, including 28 in the last year.

It was intimidating at first, he said, checking in behind the security walls, hearing about the worst-case scenarios that could unfold and keeping that in the back of his mind. But like other educators at South Jetty, Glinert said the worst-case scenarios never happened.

'I have not had a kid square up to me in 3 1/2 years. That's because I treat them with respect.'

Richard Glinert

he's heading the educational programs at South Jetty

"They're just kids," he said. "I know they've committed crimes, but ... I know a lot of these guys would like to move on with their lives, and I can respect that."

"I have not had a kid square up to me in 3 1/2 years. That's because I treat them with respect."

New operator, uncertain teachers

The Northwest Regional Education Service District will take over the contract for South Jetty from Warrenton-Hammond in July.

Paul Peterson, deputy superintendent of the service district, said the plan is to try and bring back all the existing teachers, who get first dibs at the South Jetty jobs, and keep things similar. "We are carrying forward the program that has been here and has been very successful," he said.

But for reasons unrelated to the service district, it may have to find some new staff.

Sam Ko, an educational specialist for the state's youth corrections and juvenile detention education programs, said the state is looking to standardize the educational programs between different facilities, trying to ensure

kids get the same quality education wherever they go. Glinert said educators around the state are pushing back against the new model of standardization, feeling different schools with different populations should not be treated the same.

"Some of the teachers said the process is chaos," Glinert said. "They didn't want to be a part of a program that was largely computer work."

Glinert said one of the two teachers and three of the four teaching assistants are planning to come back under the service district, while he wants to leave administration and get back into teaching math.

Kate Licitra, a popular language arts and writing teacher at South Jetty and the longest-tenured after four years, said that although her salary would jump significantly under the service district, she is leaving to help kids from the outside.

"I don't believe in the prison system," said Licitra, a self-described abolitionist.

Moving back to Portland, she plans to open a coffee shop employing recently released inmates, helping people pass their GED exams and providing a support network to avoid recidivism.



South Jetty High School graduates gaze outside the windows looking for their family and friends to arrive at the correctional facility for their graduation ceremony Thursday in Warrenton.



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ODOT: Union Pacific conducts a stress test every 18 months on metal fasteners

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Union Pacific conducts a stress test of those metal fasteners, called lag bolts, once every 18 months, using a special vehicle that tests the strength of the bolts, said Justin Jacobs, a spokesman for Union Pacific.

"What that vehicle does is it is designed to go down the tracks and put lateral pressure on rails so if there is a broken bolt, it will detect it," Jacobs said. "That vehicle provides equivalent pressure of a locomotive to the rails."

That specialized equipment is "above and beyond" what the Federal Railroad Administration and the department of transportation do in their inspections, Garrett said.

Union Pacific now plans to use that vehicle to inspect the bolts four times a year and plans to replace the older

bolts with spiked bolts in the Columbia Gorge by end of year and across the state within the next two years, he said.

The spiked bolts are easier for state inspectors to see, Gard said.

State transportation officials have requested Union Pacific's inspection records, data on the last stress test on the Columbia Gorge line and construction plans. Gard said he wants rail traffic to stop until the Federal Railroad Administration and his agency can verify that Union Pacific's plans are sufficient to keep people safe.

"I need to be able to stand with straight face and say this track is as safe as it possibly can be," Gard said.

The Federal Railroad Administration plans to start a technical investigation specifically into the bolts and is conducting intense inspections

on both sides of the Columbia River. Gard said he has yet to receive word on whether the federal agency will grant his request for a moratorium on train traffic until then.

Union Pacific has a history of violations in the state. Nationwide, the company has paid more in penalties in the last two years than any other railroad, according to The Oregonian. None of the Oregon violations concerned defective railroad bolts, which caused the Mosier derailment, the newspaper reported June 10.

Several state leaders earlier last week also requested a moratorium on oil trains in the state, including Oregon Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merley, Gov. Kate Brown, and Reps. Earl Blumenauer and Suzanne Bonamici.

In the meantime, Union Pacific trains continue to carry products through the Gorge.