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ONE DOLLAR

Guilty plea in child murder case

Smith faces life in prison but avoids death penalty

By KYLE SPURR
The Daily Astorian

Jessica Smith will face life in prison after she pleaded guilty Wednesday to drowning her toddler daughter and

slashing her teenager in a Cannon Beach resort in July 2014.

Smith, 42, of Vancouver, Washington, entered Alford pleas to aggravated murder and attempted aggravated murder following two days of settlement talks in Circuit Court. An Alford plea is a guilty plea from a defendant who proclaims their innocence, but admits the prosecution has enough evidence to prove they are guilty.

Smith remained seated in court, kept

her head down and spoke quietly as she answered for her crimes. In a written plea petition, she accepted the evidence against her, "wishing to avoid additional stress and harm" to her surviving daughter, Alana Smith, her family and herself.

Last week, Judge Cindee Matyas allowed a video confession to be played at trial. The video was seen as a final blow to Smith's defense.

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Jessica Smith pleaded guilty Wednesday in Clatsop County Circuit Court to aggravated murder and attempted aggravated murder of her children.
Danny Miller
The Daily Astorian

FORGING A FUTURE



Christian Saputo, center, and Sam Long made nametags and put the finishing touches on a bench for Saputo's cat, who Long said is drawn to metallic smells. More photos online at DailyAstorian.com

Photos by Edward Stratton/The Daily Astorian

State school board leaders adopt lead testing rule

Local districts need a plan by October

By PARIS ACHEN
Capital Bureau

SILVERTON — The Oregon Board of Education adopted a new rule Wednesday that for the first time requires school districts to test for lead in water at district-owned buildings and report those results to the public.

The board in June agreed to fast-track adoption of the new rule at the request of Gov. Kate Brown, after widespread media coverage of a scandal in Portland Public Schools over lead in drinking water that went unreported.

The rule requires school districts to submit a preliminary plan for testing for both lead and radon by October, with a final plan due by January. While the rule gives no specific deadline for testing for lead, it does require districts to report results to the public within five business days and to send out an annual report.

"What we like about this plan is that part of what we saw in Portland was the community didn't have access to information, and in fact, when you have large institutions information can get lost over the years," said Emily Nazarov, operations policy analyst with the Oregon Department of Education, who headed up the rulemaking.

"By creating a plan you have one place that community members and parents can look to find out how does the school district address radon, how does the school district plan to address water?"

The Board of Education pushed ahead with the rule despite protests from school advocates who said the timeline was too tight and expressed worry about where to find money to address the cost of testing and mitigation.

"You are setting up a framework by which we have assurances at the state level that our schools are taking action in a comprehensive way toward health and safety," said Oregon Chief Education Officer Lindsey Capps. "It's an imperative that every student should be entitled to."

Additional costs

The requirement will entail hundreds of millions of dollars in additional costs to schools in the form of testing,

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High-school students perfect welding at college

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

On the last day of class, Sam Long and Christian Saputo put the finishing touches on a bench for Saputo's cat. Brayden Chase finished cutting out his grandfather's nickname for him, forged from a steel plate and inserted into Albert Einstein's theory of relativity. Patrick McCargish finished fashioning a metal mask modeled from his left hand.

Hoping to learn welding skills for the future, 14 Warrenton High School students on Monday completed an eight-week course at Clatsop Community College's career-technical campus under Harley Bristol, former director of the college's welding program.

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On the last day of class at Clatsop Community College, Warrenton High School student Brayden Chase cut out his grandfather's nickname for him in metal, inserting it into Albert Einstein's theory of relativity.



Warrenton High School students got to play around with plasma cutters Monday at Clatsop Community College's career-technical campus, after passing an eight-week introductory course.

State, Linn County spar over timber lawsuit

State attorneys fight class action claim

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI
Capital Bureau

ALBANY — Linn County shouldn't be allowed to represent other counties in a lawsuit seeking \$1.4 billion from Oregon over its forest management practices, according to the state's attorneys.

It's also impractical for the case to proceed as a class action due to the different forest circumstances in each

county, the state's attorneys claimed during oral arguments Wednesday in Albany.

The county filed a lawsuit against the state earlier this year, arguing that insufficient logging had cost 15 counties — including Clatsop County — more than \$1.4 billion.

The complaint claims these counties turned over ownership of forestlands to Oregon in the early 20th century with the expectation the state would manage timber revenues, but since 1998, forest managers have instead prioritized wildlife habitat, water quality and recreation values.

More than 650,000 acres were donated to Oregon by

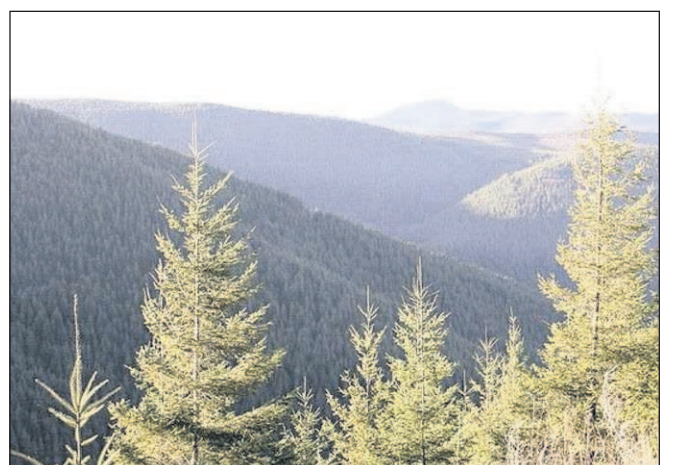
Benton, Clackamas, Clatsop, Columbia, Coos, Douglas, Josephine, Klamath, Lane, Lincoln, Linn, Marion, Polk, Tillamook, and Washington counties.

Linn County is seeking class action status for the lawsuit, permitting it to represent the other counties in the case.

Scott Kaplan, an attorney for the state, said the problems in managing the case as a class action would be "enormous."

The counties donated 183 separate parcels of land to the state, each of which contains different slopes, tree types,

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EO Media Group/File Photo

Linn County is suing the state over how it manages Oregon Forest Trust Lands. The suit, filed on behalf of 15 counties that donated timber land to the state, seeks \$1.4 billion in lost revenues.



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