

Governor denies 2nd request for special prosecutor

SPOKANE (AP) — Gov. Jay Inslee has denied a second request to appoint a special prosecutor in the case of a Mexican man shot and killed by three Pasco police officers. This request came from the attorney for the victim’s estranged wife and daughters.

Nicholas Brown, an attorney for the governor, this week sent a letter to Yakima attorney George P. Trejo Jr. denying the request.

The letter said nothing had changed since the governor told the Hispanic advocacy group Consejo Latino last month that he wouldn’t appoint a prosecutor in the Feb. 10 shooting of Antonio Zambrano-Montes, 35.

The shooting of the unarmed Mexican national sparked a series of protests in Pasco, an agricultural city of 68,000 that is majority Hispanic. More demonstrations are planned this week-end.

“We look forward to reviewing all the facts of the incident before any further decisions are made,” Brown wrote.

Trejo was highly critical of the decision, which he contrasted to Saturday’s shooting of Walter Scott in South Carolina, where the officer accused of killing Scott was immediately fired and charged with murder.

“It is even more disgusting when one compares the cold blooded killing of Mr. Zambrano with that of the

defenseless man in South Carolina,” Trejo wrote in an email. “There, prosecutors did not hesitate to charge the officer. Here in the State of Washington everyone wants to look the other way.”

Trejo said the Hispanic community was disappointed in Inslee.

Earlier, Trejo had demanded that a planned coroner’s inquest into the shooting be canceled and the three officers charged immediately with murder.

The Feb. 10 shooting in Pasco, about 130 miles southwest of Spokane, was captured on video and widely viewed on social media.

Zambrano-Montes was fired upon 17 times by Pasco police officers Ryan Flanagan, Adam Wright and Adrian Alaniz after he reportedly threw at least one rock at them. The orchard worker was not carrying a gun or knife. A rock was found near his body, which was struck by at least five bullets.

Trejo was recently hired by Teresa De Jesus Meraz Ruiz, the widow of Zambrano-Montes.

The inquest will allow a jury of six civilians to determine the cause and manner of death in the shooting. The jury also will decide if the shooting was justifiable.

Though the jury will reach a verdict, Franklin County Prosecutor Shawn Sant ultimately will decide whether criminal charges should be filed.



Staff photo by Kathy Aney
Dr. Jonathan Hitzman, family physician and health officer for Umatilla County, speaks about the state of Umatilla County health on Wednesday evening at a fundraising dinner.

HEALTH: County programs will benefit from more than \$7,000 raised from dinner

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in November.

At last night’s fundraising dinner, Murdock quipped that he directed the department “for a short period of time during which I prayed there would be no serious outbreaks of anything.” The remark brought a laugh from the crowd of about 100.

At that point in the evening, Murdock hadn’t received his hero award yet. He was merely making opening remarks before diners descended on the buffet, which offered such healthy fare as cranberry spinach salad, green beans al dente and an array of fruits, as well as smoked beef brisket, mushroom chicken and some desserts.

The evening would raise funds for two key community health programs and give attendees an overview of the recently released County Health Rankings provided by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. Dr. Jonathan Hitzman, family physician and Umatilla County health officer, explained the numbers with the help of charts projected onto a screen.

The county came in 27th, ranking far below the state average in 10 categories such as obesity and smoking. The obesity rate is 33 percent compared with the state average of 27 percent. Twenty-two percent of residents smoke compared with 16 percent for the state. Other problem areas include exercise rates, teen pregnancies, health care availability and high number

of uninsured residents.

Hitzman said it will take time to turn the tide.

“We won’t jump from 27 to number one by next year. It won’t happen overnight or maybe in some of our lifetimes,” he said, “but that doesn’t mean we shouldn’t be trying to change.”

The county’s health leaders, he said, are concentrating on the most dire health issues and creating short- and long-term plans.

During the evening, diners also learned about two county programs — CARE (Community Access for Resource Effectiveness) and Nurse Family Partnership — that will benefit from the more than \$7,000 raised from the dinner.

UCo Health Administrator Meghan DeBolt handed out two additional awards. Janet Jones, the health department’s community health educator, received the County Employee Award, presented to the UCo employee for outstanding service to the public. The county’s Women Infant & Children (WIC) program received an award as an outstanding community partner that has influenced policy solutions that improve public health.

Murdock, who knows firsthand that changing health habits is possible, envisions a healthier county.

“We are 27th with a new direction and a new future,” he said. “We have room to grow. We can individually affect those statistics.”

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AUTHOR: Surprised school library with gift of \$1,000

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So Adams, using Google Earth and other information from the Internet, set her first novel, “The Red Sun,” in Pilot Rock. And the towering rock formation outside of town became a portal to a magical realm called Orkney.

Adams has written two other books in the series and has been handing them out to schools where she speaks, but they aren’t for sale yet. Before they are published Adams thought it would be a good idea to come and take a tour of Pilot Rock and weave in more details about the community.

“I’ve read so much about this place I wanted to come and see it for myself,” she said.

As part of her visit she surprised the school with a gift of \$1,000 for new library books from the Rise Up Foundation, which Adams started to encourage children to get excited about reading.

Adams recycles the net proceeds from her books back into the foundation, which has given away more than 6,000 books since it began.

In another effort to “drive kids to reading,” Adams is working with a developer on a mobile gaming app based on her books. The game can be played without having read the books but it is easier to advance and collect points if the player knows things from the books about the characters. The idea is to prompt teens and pre-teens to cross over from the game to the books.

“So many kids are hooked to their devices,”



Staff photo by E.J. Harris
Social studies teacher Liz King, English teacher Chris Whitaker and librarian Marion Schuening react to a donation of \$1,000 from author Alane Adams’ Rise Up Foundation to the Pilot Rock High School’s library on Thursday in Pilot Rock.

“When you read books you escape this life and believe another life is possible, that you can do something better with your life.”

— Alane Adams, author

Adams said.

Her goal is to encourage more kids to pick up a book and voluntarily read it from cover to cover.

In a presentation to the Pilot Rock students — her eighth one of the day — Adams said mediums like movies can be good for getting people interested in a book, but reading is always better than watching.

When she wrote the word “tree” on the board, she said everyone in the room was picturing a different size, shape and species of tree unique to them. Watching

a movie, she said, was like looking at the picture of a tree she had just pulled out.

“The moment you see this picture your brain no longer has to do any work,” she said.

She told students the brain is a muscle and the more they exercise it by reading the smarter they will get.

Another advantage of reading, she said, is building empathy. Someone watching a movie can guess what a character is feeling from their facial expressions, but someone reading a book

knows exactly what the character is thinking. It can help them step into someone else’s shoes in an unprecedented way.

Adams said reading also allows people to imagine what can be. The most innovative scientists of our country, she said, including the people who put the first man on the moon, were reading science fiction about space travel and other technological advances long before they became a reality.

“You have to read to believe in other places and possibilities,” Adams said. “When you read books you escape this life and believe another life is possible, that you can do something better with your life.”

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VACCINE: New bill would require a document signed by a health care practitioner in order to send their children to school

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because the conversation had largely shifted from discussion about the health and well-being of Oregon’s children to a debate about the credibility of vaccine science.

“When are the medical-

ly fragile people going to come to my child’s school? I mean, these people who have chemo, wouldn’t they be home, wouldn’t they be too weak?” Garland said.

The bill also undoes part of a measure Steiner Hayward passed two years ago, which required par-

ents enrolling unvaccinated children in school to either prove they consulted a physician for information or show a certificate verifying they had watched an online educational video about the risks and benefits of immunizations.

Under this new bill,

parents wishing to opt out of vaccinations would no longer have the option of watching the educational module and would instead have to submit a document signed by a health care practitioner, such as a physician, in order to send their children to school.

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