



Crash pollination



Mike Siegel/The Seattle Times via AP

Bee keepers stand next to a semi-truck that rolled early Friday spilling a load of honeybees on the Interstate 5 median at the Interstate 405 interchange near Lynnwood, Wash. The truck had just merged onto Interstate 5 around 3:30 a.m. when it tipped on its side, dumping its load of 448 hives, or about 13.7 million bees, Washington State Patrol Trooper Travis Shearer said.

Highway abuzz with millions of bees after semi tips

Associated Press

LYNNWOOD, Wash. — A semitruck carrying millions of honeybees overturned on a highway north of Seattle early Friday, scattering hives and sending white-suited beekeepers scrambling to save as many insects as they could.

The truck had just merged onto Interstate 5 around 3:30 a.m. when it tipped on its side, dumping its load of 448 hives, or about 13.7 million bees, Washington State Patrol Trooper Travis Shearer said. The driver, a 36-year-old man from Idaho, was not hurt.

The company that owns the insects, Belleville Honey and Beekeeping Supply of Burlington, sent beekeepers to recover as many as possible, and bees covered their protective suits as they worked.

The bees became more active as the sun rose and the weather warmed, and firefighters had to spray a layer of foam on some of the boxes, killing the insects for safety.

Many of the hives were still along the highway more than seven hours after the accident, when a front-end loader began scooping them up and dumping them into a dump truck, Shearer said. The majority of the hives had been crushed.

"I'm sure they'll take that somewhere and try to save as many as they can, but they can do that someplace safer, away from the I-5 corridor," he said.

The bees were being transported from Sunnyside, in central

Washington, to a blueberry farm in Lynden, a city near the Canadian border about 100 miles north of Seattle, Shearer said.

First responders and reporters alike swatted at the bees as they tried to do their jobs.

"I think everybody there got stung," Shearer said.

Seattle television station KIRO posted a video compilation of its on-scene reporter swatting the insects as he reported on the accident.

Shearer urged drivers to keep their windows up and to "#beesafe when traveling through that area," as he wrote on Twitter.

A man who answered the phone at the beekeeping company said he couldn't immediately answer any questions related to the accident.

BRIEFLY

Work group to take up bid to expand birth control access

SALEM (AP) — A proposal to allow women to get birth control without a doctor's prescription has been dealt a setback.

An Oregon state lawmaker this week proposed allowing pharmacists to prescribe and dispense contraception.

But House Committee on Health Care Chair Rep. Mitch Greenlick said Friday the issue needs further discussion. Instead, a work group will take it up and could propose potential legislation in the future.

The work group will be led by Republican Rep. Knute Buehler of Bend, who originally proposed the idea, and Democratic Rep. Val Hoyle.

Buehler says improving access to birth control would give women more control over their health care needs. He says he may try to get the Senate to restore his proposal.

Ex-Reynolds teacher dropped from Oregon National Guard

PORTLAND (AP) — A high school teacher suspended after sending inappropriate text messages has been dismissed from the Oregon National Guard for drunken driving.

A National Guard spokesman told The Oregonian that Capt. Justin Prunk was questioned by military officials after his drunken driving arrest last December. Prunk later pleaded no contest to the charge and was entered into a diversion program.

On Thursday, Prunk was placed on inactive ready reserve, which means he can never rejoin the military.

Prunk was suspended from teaching for sharing information about personal family matters in text messages with girls at Reynolds High School in Troutdale.

Guard spokesman Nick Choy said another factor leading to Prunk's dismissal from the military was his falsely telling school officials he had not sent the messages.

The Reynolds School District said Friday that Prunk has now resigned from his position as band and orchestra teacher.

Man charged with murder in fire that killed father

JEFFERSON (AP) — A Jefferson, Oregon, man has been charged with murder in the death of his father in a December fire.

The Albany Democrat-Herald reports that 37-year-old John Duran was arraigned Wednesday in Marion

County Circuit Court.

Duran was initially charged with first-degree manslaughter in the death of 81-year-old Candido Duran.

In a probable cause affidavit from December, investigators said Duran told them he was on a four-day methamphetamine binge when the fire started on a chair. He allegedly told them he couldn't put it out and fled.

Duran is being held in jail without bail. His next hearing is scheduled for May 12.

Activist group files ballot measure for \$15 minimum wage

SALEM (AP) — A Portland-based activist group has filed paperwork for a ballot measure boosting the statewide minimum wage to \$15.

The group, 15 Now Oregon, revealed plans Friday for a statewide campaign next year. It proposes gradually raising the state's minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2019.

Oregon currently has the nation's second-highest wage floor at \$9.25 an hour. That's \$2 higher than the federal minimum.

On Monday, the state Legislature held three public hearings, but took no action, on several proposals dealing with minimum wage.

Ballot measure organizers say political leaders in Salem have indicated they're not going to bump minimum wages this session.

The group will need 88,184 valid signatures by July 2016 in order to qualify an initiative in time for the November 2016 ballot.

Half-million bond for hit and run death

PASCO, Wash. (AP) — The suspect in a hit and run crash that killed a Pasco father of two is being held on a \$500,000 bond.

The Tri-City Herald reports Miguel A. Paniagua fled during an April 2 traffic stop and crashed into Jason Smith's car at 60 miles per hour. Court documents say surveillance footage captured a man resembling Paniagua running from the scene.

He was assigned a public defender and is expected to enter a plea next week.

The repeat felon had eluded police until Wednesday, when a tip led officers to the house where he was hiding.

Prosecutors asked a Franklin County judge for the half-a-million-dollar bond in light of Paniagua's failure to appear in court five times so far this year. He faces several charges, including vehicular homicide.

Oregon Legislature unlikely to increase DMV fees this session

By PETER WONG
Capital Bureau

SALEM — Some fees for driver's licenses should be increased so that vehicle title and registration fees do not subsidize the costs of operating the Driver and Motor Vehicle Services Division, according to a report presented Thursday.

But Oregon's 2.9 million drivers should not expect increases soon.

Even though the Oregon Transportation Commission accepted the report, it's unlikely to result in action this session by the Oregon Legislature, which has the final

say on fees.

"You have to rely on the Legislature if fees are going to change," DMV Administrator Tom McClellan said. "In many cases, our costs exceed our charges."

The commission did not act on a similar report from September 2013, based on an assumption that lawmakers would increase some of those fees this year to raise more money for road and bridge work.

However, the prospects for action on a transportation funding package — including increases in fuel and truck taxes — are uncertain at best in the current session.

McClellan said DMV will recommend legislation for the 2017 session.

The report says that fees for driver-related services — such as licensing and testing — are recovering only 40 percent of their actual costs. It says vehicle title and registration fees are offsetting the difference, but in turn, they are generating less for road and bridge work by the state, counties and cities.

"I hope you can bring that home to legislators," commission member David Lohman of Medford said after the presentation by McClellan.

The proposed fee increases

would recoup an estimated \$88.3 million over a two-year budget period.

Some examples of the higher fees: Original driver's license, from \$54 to \$100; license renewal (eight years), from \$34 to \$60; driving skills test, from \$9 to \$37; vehicle registration fee (two-year basis), from \$86 to \$96; identification card, \$40.50 to \$54.

All fees exclude a pro-

posed \$4 surcharge for a 10-year DMV computer upgrade, the first stage of which is underway. That project, which among other things will enable DMV to accept credit and debit cards, is estimated at \$100 million over a decade.

Lawmakers increased some of these fees in 2003 and 2009, but earmarked specific increases to pay off bonds for highway and

bridge projects, not for recovery of DMV costs.

McClellan says DMV has shed 24 positions over the past four years, and with 40 percent of its workforce scheduled for retirement in the next few years, is likely to reduce a few more.

The Capital Bureau is a collaboration between EO Media Group and Pamplin Media Group.

I wish to say THANK YOU to my wonderful family and many cherished friends for an outstanding and unforgettable 90th Birthday Party on Saturday, April 11th at the Hermiston Christian School.

For starters, I love the three tiered cake produced by Nydene Moore of Hermiston. It was so beautiful with cascading fondant butterflies of various sizes and colors.

There was a nice variety of hors d'oeuvres created and attended by representative of The Country Gentleman, of Kennewick.

Beautiful floral arrangements were supplied by Kopacz Nursery of Hermiston.

Dale Have, of Pasco, was the artist that created an absolutely unique ice sculpture. He beautifully carved and decorated my large numbers representing my total number of birthdays. He even spelled my first name correctly...L I N I S.

On display was an antique American Flag from 1912. It displayed just 48 stars and reminded everyone of earlier times.

Brass Fire, a local band, played for most of the party. At one point, they took a break and disappeared. While they were gone, family and friends took turns with a microphone and mentioned many warm and loving memories.

Then and to a round of applause, Brass Fire reappeared. However, this time the entire band was dressed in US Army dress uniforms. From that point on, they played 1940's Big Band Era music. It was as if we were celebrating my 20th birthday.

What a party! Thanks to all that had a part in it.

Welcome

Morrow County Health District is pleased to announce the addition of **Vicki Kent, ARNP** to our Irrigon Medical Clinic.

Vicki joins John Adair, PA-C, at the clinic, where she will focus on the needs of the entire family. Her first day will be April 20, 2015.

She is accepting new patients and is looking forward to serving our community.

To make an appointment, call (541) 922-5880.

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