

# Victim of blast in tank filmed for TV shows

By GOSIA WOZNIACKA and TERENCE PETTY  
Associated Press

PORTLAND — Two men killed by an explosion inside a World War II-era tank at an Oregon firing range were participating in a video shoot in a military vehicle owned by one of the victims, a collector who had been filmed for shows on the Discovery Channel, the Smithsonian Channel and a video game commercial.

A crew was filming the tank firing rounds when the blast occurred Tuesday east of the city of Bend, killing vehicle owner Steven Todd Preston, 51, and Austin Tyler Lee, 22, Deschutes County Sheriff L. Shane Nelson said.

Nelson said the cause of the blast was under investigation and the video was to be used for an exhibit, but did not give further details. Steve Greenberg, a close friend of Preston's and fellow tank owner, said his friend had fired rounds before and "everything worked fine."

He said they were "testing some armor plate" when the explosion occurred. Preston was very safety-conscious, which is why the accident is even more shocking, Greenberg said.

Preston's close friends said he was a military vehicle collector who owned the tank as well as a World War II amphibious vehicle, a Humvee, a military motorcycle and a vintage observation plane.

"His passion was with



This Tuesday image made from video by KTVZ-TV shows investigators inspecting the scene of an explosion inside a World War II-era tank at a public firing range that left two people dead near Bend.

the tank and with World War II history and collecting memorabilia," said Dennis Ripp, president of the Military Vehicle Collectors Club of Oregon. Preston was the former president of the group and was a board member of the national Military Vehicle Preservation Association, Ripp said.

"I've been broken up all day about his death," said Ripp, another close friend.

Paramedics tried to save the men, but they died from their injuries.

The armored vehicle is a 1944 M18 Hellcat, which is technically a tank destroyer, the sheriff said. Preston's friends said he took it to parades, fundraisers, auctions and live history displays at schools.

"People would donate

money and he'd give them tank rides," Ripp said. "He was a great guy, a super guy. He could help anyone with projects."

Greenberg said Preston bought the tank — a surplus vehicle — from a dealer in Denver, who had imported it from Yugoslavia.

"It was in a rough shape and Steve did a beautiful job restoring it," Greenberg said. "He spent years hunting around to buy original parts, knick-knacks like binoculars, flashlights, all the tools."

Greenberg said Preston has friends around the world, because he traveled to other countries looking for vehicle parts. He also said Preston was licensed by the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives to fire live ammunition from the tank.

Greenberg said they and their tanks took part in a commercial for the video game "World of Tanks" that was shot last week.

In 2011, Preston appeared in a Discovery Channel reality series. And he took part in the Smithsonian Channel series "The Weapons Hunter," focused on rare military artifacts, that is due to air next month.

Preston and another friend had started a nonprofit and planned to build a museum to display the historic vehicles, Greenberg said.

He said Preston, who owned a Portland towing company, leaves behind a wife and two children.

"He was generous, caring, he was there for other people. It breaks my heart that he is gone," Greenberg said.

## BRIEFLY

### Cleanup of fuel that spilled into Willamette River completed

PORTLAND (AP) — The Coast Guard says crews have finished cleaning up 400 gallons of diesel fuel that spilled into the Willamette River north of Portland.

Authorities said Wednesday that all cleanup materials have been removed from the area.

Authorities say the spill happened on Monday at about 5 a.m. near the Kinder Morgan Bulk Terminal in Vancouver, Wash. The cleanup was complete at 9:30 a.m. the next morning.

The spill came from a fuel barge and was caused by a tank overflow.

The barge is owned by Kirby Offshore Marine, which contracted an oil spill response company to handle the cleanup. A temporary floating barrier — called a boom — and absorbent pads were placed around the spill site.

### Eugene mayor seeks state help in addressing homelessness

EUGENE (AP) — Eugene Mayor Kitty Piercy wants the city council to approve a resolution asking the state for help alleviating homelessness.

Council members are scheduled to vote Wednesday on the mayor's request.

Piercy originally wanted the council to request that Gov. Kate Brown declare an emergency. She's now seeking a resolution that asks the state to convene a work group and spend

more money to address the issue.

The Register-Guard reports that Piercy changed her resolution after talking to the governor's staff.

She says the governor typically declares a state of emergency in response to a natural disaster, and the request must come from the county, not the city.

Piercy's move comes as she is pushing a community-wide discussion about "travelers" who gather in groups on sidewalks and other public spaces downtown.

### Lands chief wants to beef up state's firefighting crews

SPOKANE, Wash. (AP) — On the heels of the state's worst wildfire season, Washington's public lands chief is asking the Legislature for more money to beef up the state's firefighting crews.

Public Lands Commissioner Peter Goldmark wants more than \$24 million to add firefighters, equipment and training next year. The money would help local fire districts, modernize fire communications and train teams of local, state and contracted firefighters to work together.

Tribal members and area fire officials joined Goldmark Wednesday as he announced his budget request in Spokane.

Three firefighters were killed and about 1,570 square miles burned as this summer's wildfires destroyed hundreds of homes, forced thousands to flee towns and cost about \$320 million to battle.

Goldmark is also seeking about \$137 million to cover cost overruns of fighting this year's wildfires.

## Proposed ballot measure would allow grocers to sell liquor

PORTLAND (AP) — A group backed by Oregon grocery stores filed paperwork Wednesday for a ballot measure that would allow grocers and other retailers to sell liquor.

The proposal, which could go before voters in the 2016 election, would end the state's monopoly that dates to the end of Prohibition in the 1930s. Currently, only the state can import and distribute liquor from its warehouse in Milwaukie. Hard alcohol is sold exclusively at state-licensed stores that keep a percentage of the proceeds.

The initiative would allow private liquor distribution and warehousing. Most retailers that currently sell beer and wine could also sell distilled spirits, though gas stations would still be prohibited.

"They already know how to responsibly sell alcoholic beverages," said Pat McCormack, a spokesman for Oregonians for Competition, the group created to pursue the initiative. "Let's cut the state out of the business of selling liquor and increase its focus on alcohol law enforcement."

The initiative also would

strengthen penalties for people who sell alcohol to minors.

The grocers proposed a similar initiative for the 2014 election, but they ultimately dropped it when they decided to change the language and ran out of time to collect signatures. Grocers will need just over 88,000 valid signatures to place the initiative on the 2016 ballot.

Critics say privatizing the liquor system would harm Oregon nascent craft distilling industry because it would be harder for small players to compete for shelf space in a

grocery store.

Rob Patridge, chair of the Oregon Liquor Control Commission, said he doesn't see people clamoring to upend the liquor system.

"I think Oregonians generally have been satisfied with the way they're able to obtain liquor," Patridge said. The OLCC doesn't take a stand on ballot measures, he said.

With the threat of privatization looming, the OLCC voted earlier this year to create up to 17 new liquor stores in the Portland area. It's currently seeking applications to run them.

## Corrections

The Oct. 28 article "Nine seats on the line" listed two different dates for the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation Board of Trustees election day. The correct date is Nov. 17.

The East Oregonian works hard to be accurate and sincerely regrets any errors. If you notice a mistake in the paper, please call 541-966-0818.

## EAST OREGONIAN

— Founded Oct. 16, 1875 —

211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton 541-276-2211  
333 E. Main St., Hermiston 541-567-6211  
Office hours: Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Closed major holidays

www.eastoregonian.com

To subscribe, call 1-800-522-0255  
or go online to www.eastoregonian.com  
and click on 'Subscribe'

East Oregonian (USPS 164-980) is published daily except Sunday, Monday and Dec. 25, by the EO Media Group, 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton, OR 97801. Periodicals postage paid at Pendleton, OR. Postmaster: send address changes to East Oregonian, 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton, OR 97801. Copyright © 2015, EO Media Group

### Subscriber services:

For home delivery, vacation stops or delivery concerns: 1-800-522-0255

Didn't receive your paper? Call 1-800-522-0255 before 5 p.m. Tuesday through Friday or before 10 a.m. Saturday for same-day redelivery

### SUBSCRIPTION RATES

	Local home delivery	Savings off cover price
EZPay	\$14.50	41 percent
52 weeks	\$173.67	41 percent
26 weeks	\$91.86	38 percent
13 weeks	\$47.77	36 percent

\*EZ Pay = one-year rate with a monthly credit or debit card/check charge

### Single copy price:

\$1 Tuesday through Friday, \$1.50 Saturday

### ADVERTISING

Advertising Director: Jennine Perkinson  
541-278-2683 • jperkinson@eastoregonian.com

### Multimedia consultants

• Terri Briggs  
541-215-0447 • tbriggs@eastoregonian.com  
• Jeanne Jewett  
541-364-4531 • jjewett@eastoregonian.com  
• Kim LaPlant  
541-564-4538 • klaplant@eastoregonian.com  
• Dayle Stinson  
541-966-0806 • dstinson@eastoregonian.com

### Classified Advertising:

1-800-962-2819 • classifieds@eastoregonian.com

### Legal Advertising: Amanda Jacobs

541-278-2683 • ajacobs@eastoregonian.com

### Real Estate Advertising: Jodi Snook

541-278-2670 • jsnook@eastoregonian.com

### NEWS

To submit news tips and press releases: • call 541-966-0818 • fax 541-276-8314 • email news@eastoregonian.com

To submit community events, calendar items and Your EO News: email community@eastoregonian.com or call Tammy Malgesini in Hermiston at 541-564-4539 or Renee Struthers in Pendleton at 541-966-0818.

To submit engagements, weddings and anniversaries: email rstuthers@eastoregonian.com or visit www.eastoregonian.com/community/announcements

To submit a Letter to the Editor: mail to Managing Editor Daniel Wattenburger, 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton, OR 97801 or email editor@eastoregonian.com.

To submit sports or outdoors information or tips:

541-966-0838 • sports@eastoregonian.com

### COMMERCIAL PRINTING

Production Manager: Steve Knobbe  
541-966-0825 • sknobbe@eastoregonian.com

## AccuWeather.com Forecast

**TODAY**

Clouds breaking and breezy

**FRIDAY**

Mostly cloudy, showers around

**SATURDAY**

Cloudy; a shower, windy and mild

**SUNDAY**

Windy with a couple of showers

**MONDAY**

Variably cloudy, a shower or two

PENDLETON TEMPERATURE FORECAST				
62°	48°	63°	56°	54°
66°	49°	66°	58°	58°

HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST				
61°	44°	68°	52°	61°
62°	44°	71°	52°	62°

### ALMANAC

**PENDLETON**  
through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	52°	35°
Normals	58°	37°
Records	80° (1937)	12° (1911)

**PRECIPITATION**  
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"  
Month to date 0.21"  
Normal month to date 0.94"  
Year to date 6.03"  
Last year to date 9.05"  
Normal year to date 9.88"

**HERMISTON**  
through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	56°	35°
Normals	60°	36°
Records	79° (2003)	19° (1948)

**PRECIPITATION**  
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"  
Month to date 0.27"  
Normal month to date 0.61"  
Year to date 3.75"  
Last year to date 5.72"  
Normal year to date 7.17"

### SUN AND MOON

	Last	New	First	Full
	Nov 3	Nov 11	Nov 18	Nov 25

Shown is today's weather. Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows.

### REGIONAL FORECAST

**Coastal Oregon:** Rain and drizzle across the north today; mostly cloudy in central parts. Partly sunny in the south.

**Eastern and Central Oregon:** A brief shower or two today; clouds and sun across the north and near the Cascades.

**Western Washington:** Mostly cloudy today with a brief shower or two.

**Eastern Washington:** A shower in places today; times of clouds and sun.

**Cascades:** Mostly cloudy today with a passing shower or two.

**Northern California:** Mostly sunny today. Partly cloudy tonight; cold in the interior mountains.

### REGIONAL CITIES

	Today			Fri.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Astoria	61	55	r	63	58	r
Baker City	55	32	sh	51	36	sh
Bend	56	35	pc	58	48	c
Brookings	62	50	pc	60	54	c
Burns	56	24	c	57	37	c
Enterprise	50	34	sh	49	44	sh
Eugene	66	49	sh	60	54	sh
Heppner	59	44	pc	59	53	c
Hermiston	66	49	pc	66	58	c
John Day	55	42	sh	56	49	c
Klamath Falls	57	28	pc	60	34	c
La Grande	56	40	sh	54	49	sh
Meacham	53	41	sh	53	48	sh
Medford	66	42	pc	65	43	c
Newport	59	54	c	60	56	r
North Bend	63	53	c	62	58	sh
Ontario	62	35	c	56	41	c
Pasco	67	45	pc	67	56	c
Pendleton	62	48	pc	63	56	sh
Portland	62	55	c	62	58	r
Redmond	59	35	pc	61	44	c
Salem	65	53	sh	61	56	sh
Spokane	55	42	pc	55	49	sh
Ukiah	53	38	pc	54	49	sh
Vancouver	61	54	c	61	58	r
Walla Walla	61	49	pc	64	55	sh
Yakima	65	44	pc	67	51	c

### WORLD CITIES

	Today			Fri.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Beijing	55	34	s	56	31	s
Hong Kong	84	75	pc	85	75	s
Jerusalem	61	54	t	65	56	pc
London	60	54	r	61	53	r
Mexico City	72	55	t	72	57	t
Moscow	35	28	pc	36	24	pc
Paris	59	50	c	63	47	pc
Rome	66	47	t	69	49	pc
Seoul	57	31	pc	51	32	s
Sydney	72	59	s	74	61	s
Tokyo	64	56	r	70	52	c

### WINDS

(in mph)	Today	Friday
Boardman	WSW 7-14	SW 8-16
Pendleton	WSW 10-20	SW 10-20

### UV INDEX TODAY

0 1 2 2 1 0

8 a.m. 10 a.m. Noon 2 p.m. 4 p.m. 6 p.m.

0-2, Low 3-5, Moderate 6-7, High; 8-10, Very High; 11+, Extreme

The higher the AccuWeather.com UV Index™ number, the greater the need for eye and skin protection.

Forecasts and graphics provided by AccuWeather, Inc. © 2015

### NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY

Shown are noon positions of weather systems and precipitation. Temperature bands are highs for the day.

**National Summary:** Gusty winds and spottier showers will replace the midweek soaking across the Northeast and Midwest today. The Plains will be dry as showers dot the Pacific Northwest, Rockies and Four Corners.

**Yesterday's National Extremes:** (for the 48 contiguous states)  
High 97° in Falfurrias, Texas Low 9° in West Yellowstone, Mont.

### NATIONAL CITIES

	Today			Fri.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Albuquerque	63	48	pc	57	40	t
Atlanta	74	50	pc	68	50	s
Atlanta City	71	49	pc	60	42	s
Baltimore	71	42	pc	60	36	s
Billingham	57	39	pc	59	42	c
Birmingham	75	46	pc	70	50	s
Boston	59	37	c	56	45	c
Boston	71	47	pc	60	39	pc
Charleston, SC	81	59	pc	77	51	s
Chicago, IL	65	39	c	56	36	s
Chicago	51	40	c	55	45	pc
Cleveland	52	41	pc	51	40	pc
Dallas	77	59	s	73	63	r
Denver	60	36	c	53	34	c
Detroit	51	39	c	53	41	pc
El Paso	74	54	t	66	49	c
Fairbanks	29	22	sn	26	12	sn
Fargo	47	33	pc	56	37	c
Honolulu	89	75	pc	90	76	pc
Houston	79	63	pc	77	69	sh
Indianapolis	54	38	pc	57	42	c
Jacksonville	83	61	pc	82	60	s
Kansas City	55	34	s	57	45	c
Las Vegas	74	55	pc	75	55	s
Little Rock	73	45	s	69	54	pc
Los Angeles	83	63	pc	85	61	s

	Today			Fri.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Louisville	60	41	s	61	44	s
Miami	72	45	s	70	52	pc
Miami	85	74	t	86	74	pc
Milwaukee	50	41	c	53	46	pc
Minneapolis	49	38	pc	54	46	pc
Nashville	69	39	s	64	45	s
New Orleans	81	62	pc	78	69	pc
New York City	72	49	pc	59	42	pc
New York						