

Two killed in crashes over weekend

East Oregonian

A Hermiston man died Saturday night in a crash with a commercial truck on Highway 207/Diagonal Road near Hermiston and a Philomath man died Friday on Interstate 84 near Boardman.

In the Saturday crash, Richard Dean Cook, 24, was driving a 2010 Chevrolet Traverse on the highway when he pulled onto Otis Lane, a private road, and backed into the highway in an attempt to change directions, according to Oregon State Police.

As he backed into the highway, his vehicle was struck on the driver's side by a northbound semi driven by Harvey Hass, 62, of Umatilla. Both vehicles came to rest in the



A Hermiston man was killed Saturday night in a two-vehicle crash in Highway 207 near Hermiston.

northbound lane, which were closed for more than two hours.

Cook was taken to Good Shepherd Medical Center, Hermiston, where he was pronounced dead. Hass wasn't hurt in the collision.

Jerome Martel Price, 30, of Hermiston, was a passenger in Cook's vehicle and left the scene before police arrived. They caught up with him at Good Shepherd where he was seeking treatment and

interviewed him about the crash.

OSP was assisted at the scene by Hermiston Fire and Ambulance, Umatilla County Sheriff's Office and the Oregon Department of Transportation.

On Friday, Keith Carney, 34, was driving eastbound on the highway near milepost 154 when, for unknown reasons, his 1985 Chevrolet pickup went off the road and hit a large boulder, according to OSP. The truck was engulfed in flames by the time emergency crews arrived on scene.

OSP reports Carney traveled more than 400 feet after going off the road. Troopers were assisted by Boardman fire and police, the Morrow County Sheriff's Office and Oregon Department of Transportation.

BRIEFLY

14 cats removed from Hermiston residence, owner arrested

HERMISTON — A Hermiston man was arrested Monday for animal neglect after police found 14 cats, three of which were dead, at his small downtown residence.

According to a press release from Hermiston Police, officers at 12:50 p.m. responded to the home of David Zehner, 57, at 141 NE 7th Street on a report of animal neglect. Pet Rescue of Hermiston also responded and helped remove the cats from the home, including two that required immediate medical care.

Zehner cooperated with police but was arrested for first degree animal neglect and lodged at the Umatilla County Jail, Pendleton, for first degree animal neglect. "Though minimum care as defined by statute can be very subjective and is often the cause of varying opinions, it was clear based on the conditions our officers found the animals to be living in," Police Chief Jason Edmiston said in the press release. "Minimum care was not being met for these animals."

Edmiston also said he appreciated the work of Pet Rescue in removing the animals.

Hermiston looking for branding committee

HERMISTON — After taking residents' feedback to heart about its "You Can GROW Here" brand, the city of Hermiston is looking for community members to join its Hermiston's Future Branding Committee.

The committee will meet for approximately two months to brainstorm new ideas for a city brand and then help engage the public in giving feedback on the proposals.

The city implemented "You Can GROW Here" in 2013, but after it was painted on the water tower south of town, replacing the watermelon image that had greeted visitors for decades, residents complained it sounded like an invitation to cultivate marijuana.

After a recent survey showed 67 percent of respondents disliked the tagline, the city council voted on Nov. 23 to resurrect the branding committee, add 10 new members from the wider community and come up with new tagline options.

The committee is a partnership between the city, the Greater Hermiston Area Chamber of Commerce and Focal Point Marketing.

Applications for the committee can be found online at www.hermiston.or.us or at city hall, 180 NE Second St. They are due at city hall by Friday, Dec. 18 at 5 p.m.

SAGE Center Christmas light event draws 200

BOARDMAN — More than 200 people turned out Tuesday, Dec. 1 for a first look at the SAGE Center's agriculture-themed Christmas light display.

The show will run nightly from 4:30-9 p.m. through Jan. 1 at the SAGE Center, 101 Olson Road in Boardman. It is set to music, broadcast on 106.9 FM.

In addition, the SAGE Center is accepting non-perishable food items for CAPECO. Canned goods can be dropped off in marked containers at the front doors of the museum.

For more information, call 541-481-7243.

Talent show seeks performers

HERMISTON — The public is invited to audition for the fifth annual Hermiston Swim Club fundraising talent show.

A pair of tryouts are set, including Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. in the commons at Hermiston High School, 600 S. First St. The other audition is Tuesday, Dec. 15, also at 6:30 p.m. in the school's commons.

Organizers are seeking a variety of acts — including everything from singing and playing an instrument to dancing and juggling.

The Talent Show and dress rehearsal are Saturday, Jan. 2. Money raised from the event will help with the swim team's transportation costs to and from Pendleton.

For more information, call Lynne Hamblin at 541-571-5691.

Bird club sets annual fundraiser

PENDLETON — The public is invited to the Pendleton Bird Club raffle and auction.

The event, which serves as a fundraiser for the club, is Thursday, Dec. 10 at 7 p.m. at the First Christian Church, 215 N. Main St., Pendleton. Refreshments will be served.

Items up for bid may include bird seed, bird houses, bird photos and new or lightly used books.

For more information, contact Jack Simons at jack@pendletonbirdclub@gmail.com or 541-276-8566.

Town & Country nominations due Friday

HEPPNER — There's still time to nominate community individuals, businesses, teachers and students who have been involved in activities in the Heppner community.

Town & Country awards include Man of the Year, Woman of the Year, Business of the Year, Youth of the Year, Citizen-Educator of the Year and Lifetime Achievement. Forms are available at the Bank of Eastern Oregon, Heppner City Hall, Community Bank, the Heppner Post Office and the chamber office.

Completed nomination forms must be submitted by Friday at Kuhn Law Offices or the Heppner Chamber of Commerce. The awards banquet is Thursday, Jan. 14 at the Morrow County Fairgrounds. Tickets, which are \$20 each, will be available at a later date.

For more information, call the chamber at 541-676-5536.

CCT reschedules 'Hello Dolly' auditions

PENDLETON — Due to inclement weather, which canceled the first day of "Hello Dolly" auditions, College Community Theatre is holding another one next week.

Parts are available for men and women of varying ages and vocal ranges, plus the possibility of chorus members for a few youths ages 10 and up.

The audition, which requires no advance preparation, is Monday, Dec. 14 at 7 p.m. in Bob Clapp Theatre in Pioneer Hall at Blue Mountain Community College, 2411 N.W. Carden ave., Pendleton. The directors will have selections of songs and dialogue for use.

Performance dates are Feb. 25-28 and March 3-6. For more information, contact 541-278-5928 or cct@bluucc.edu.

Happy Canyon duo appears at NFR

By KATHY ANEY
East Oregonian

Looking out into the National Finals Rodeo arena on Saturday night in Las Vegas, professional photographer Molly Morrow had her camera ready for tight shots of performers kicking off the night of rodeo action.

That's when an American Indian man on horseback appeared in the spotlight carrying a U.S. flag. Morrow's eyes opened wide at the gorgeous sight. The Professional Rodeo Cowboy photographer got some quick shots and then scrambled to change lenses.

Bryson Bronson, a registered member of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, sat bareback atop a paint horse named Chinook.

"It was holy smokes," Morrow said. "It was breathtaking."

Morrow, who shot the Round-Up for PRCA last year, immediately recognized them.

"If you've ever been to the Round-Up or Happy Canyon, you knew who that was," she said. "It was very iconic. It was so beautiful — so Pendleton."

At the other end of the arena, a band sang the national anthem and an Indian woman in regalia signed the Lord's Prayer.

Bronson and Chinook stood silently, solemnly. Bronson wore a feather bonnet and leather leggings. He kept the American flag motionless except for air movement.

The crowd was a sea of cowboy hats. Happy Canyon President Jason Hill watched the Pendleton pair with pride.

"All the attention was on them," Hill said. "It was spectacular."

Chinook and Bronson normally perform a little closer to home. During Professional Bull Riding and the Happy Canyon Indian Pageant and Wild West Show, they clomp up a steep wooden platform above the open-air Happy Canyon Arena and become a tableau during the singing of the national anthem, ignoring loud pops and lights knifing across the sky. Each September, they navigate the



Bryson Bronson and Chinook stand solemnly during the singing of the national anthem Saturday at the opening of the National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas.

"It was so beautiful — so Pendleton."

— Molly Morrow, photographer

Westward Ho! Parade route.

Before selection for NFR, Bronson and Chinook's owner and trainer, Rusty Black, made the 850-mile trip to Vegas in April to do something of a trial run at the Federation Equestre Internationale World Cup, a world class dressage and jumping event. They nailed it. Hill said the trio wasn't officially invited to appear at the NFR until after this year's Round-Up.

"It was a very short time frame," he said. "They were willing to drop everything and go. We're so proud of Bryson and Chinook and Rusty for everything they did to get there. It was

a year-long process."

Bronson admitted to a few nerves before heading out into the arena, but said they disappeared as soon as he climbed aboard Chinook.

"I concentrated on being in the moment," he said.

Owner Rusty Black watched from the shadows. She and Bronson had towed Chinook hundreds of miles and acclimated the horse to the arena the day before. Waiting for his turn for a practice run, the horse had stood unflinchingly as a rock band practiced. When performance time arrived, Black soaked it in.

"The two of them and the flag — it always makes me a little teary-eyed," Black said. "It's a beautiful sight."

Contact Kathy Aney at kaney@eastoregonian.com or call 541-966-0810.

Prank calls create mischief for local McDonald's

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

Three local McDonald's restaurants had to shut down after prank calls Sunday afternoon convinced employees to activate fire suppression systems.

Deputy state fire marshal Scott Goff in Pendleton said the calls targeted the McDonald's in Hermiston, Pendleton, the Pilot Travel Center, Stanfield, and the Arrowhead Travel Plaza on the Umatilla Indian Reservation near Pendleton. The caller claimed to represent a fire protection

equipment company that remotely monitored the fire suppression systems and asked staff to test those.

Employees at Stanfield, Pendleton and Arrowhead activated the systems, Goff said, causing a cascade of "wet chemical extinguishing agent" to cover deep fryers and more. He said he heard reports of this happening to McDonald's in the Tri-Cities, Washington, as well.

"After staff activated the systems, then whoever it was on the phone let them know it was a prank," Goff said.

The chemicals work to

smother grease fires, and while the wet chemicals do not get all over the restaurant, Goff explained, it does make a mess, and the restaurants shut down temporarily.

Staff at the Arrowhead McDonald's reported the restaurant would be fully operational Monday evening, and Pendleton could be down until Tuesday morning. The Stanfield restaurant was open on Monday morning.

Goff said the fire suppression systems are not remotely controlled or monitored, and any testing must be done on site.

Goff notified Pendleton Fire Chief Mike Ciraulo and others about the pranks. Ciraulo said fire agencies do not call people to have them test systems.

"We will personally visit you — a fire marshal, chief or personnel will arrive to test the system," he said.

Ciraulo also said people can call the fire department if they have questions or want to seek verification. Goff said he would like to know who was making the calls and asked anyone with that sort of information to call him at his office: 541-276-4076.

PENDLETON

Holiday Music Festival features community ensembles

East Oregonian

The Oregon East Symphony and Chorale, along with a number of community vocal ensembles, will ring in the season with a holiday performance.

The Holiday Music Festival is Sunday at 3:15 p.m. in the Vert Auditorium, 480 S.W. Dorion Ave., Pendleton. Tickets are \$20 for adults, \$15 for seniors and students 12 and over or \$45 for a family of four. They can be purchased in advance at the symphony office, 345 S.W. Fourth St., or Armchair Books, 39 S.W. Dorion Ave. In addition, tickets will be sold at the door.

Conducted by Steve Muller, the Oregon East Symphony and Chorale will



The Pendleton Men's Chorus will perform during Sunday's Holiday Music Festival at the Vert Auditorium.

perform Antonio Vivaldi's "Magnificat," featuring soloists Karen Lange, Lezlee Flagg, Norman Baton, Bob Pfeiffer and Cheryl Carlson. Also, Ralph Vaughn William's "Fantasia On Christmas Carols," will feature Joshua Rist, Hermiston High School choir director, as the baritone

soloist.

Among the community ensembles performing are the Sherwood Heights and McKay Creek elementary schools children's choirs. Under the direction of Cheryl Carlson, with assistance from Rebecca Emmons and piano accompaniment by

Sue Nelson, the choirs will combine to perform five selections

Also, the Pendleton High School swing choir, under the direction of Emily Muller Callender, and Hermiston High School's Majazzytzy under Rist's direction, will sing together as well as separately.

Finally, the Pendleton Men's Chorus, under the direction of Bill Mayclin with Nelson accompanying on piano, will round out the evening with a host of tunes. Their selections will include Emile Bill as the featured soloist on "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas."

For more information, call 541-276-0320 or visit www.oregoneastsymphony.org.

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