

Hermiston hazmat responds to Heppner crash

By JENNIFER COLTON
East Oregonian

On Wednesday afternoon, a garbage truck started over a wooden bridge on Rhea Creek, about 12 miles south of Heppner. The truck broke through the bridge, overturning and landing in the creek.

Fuel began to seep into the water from the truck's engine while the driver struggled to find a way to call 9-1-1 — the phone line to the private property had been severed during the collapse.

The emergency call came from a rural mail carrier who came into contact with the driver, according to Rusty Estes, Heppner fire chief.

"The rural carrier picked him up and took him to the next house," Estes said Friday. "Heppner Rescue responded, the sheriff's office, and of course Heppner ambulance. When the Hermiston hazmat team came in, we were really glad to see them. It's a really good group of guys."

Hermiston Fire & Emergency Services handles all hazardous material calls for northeast Oregon. The district is bordered to the south by district 14, based in Ontario, and to the west by District 3, based in Gresham.

The garbage truck incident happened at 1:45 p.m. Wednesday; hazmat was dispatched at 2:52 p.m., and the eight-man team arrived on scene before 5 p.m.

The Hermiston responders continued the containment work started by Heppner teams, including adding additional booms — long connections that float above and below the waterline to keep oil and debris contained — and



Photo contributed by Hermiston Fire & Emergency Services
Hermiston hazmat crews respond to an overturned garbage truck outside of Heppner on Wednesday.

removing oil from the water. "From what we could tell, most of the oil was coming out of the engine compartment, so that was a only a small amount," Davis said.

Oil and hydraulic fluid were removed from the truck as well, and the driver was transported to a local hospital.

In addition to the Heppner, Morrow County and Hermiston emergency response teams, an environmental company from the Tri-Cities was dispatched to respond, as well as two tow trucks to pull the vehicle from the water.

The Hermiston crew dedicated more than eight hours to the incident, according to battalion chief Jim Davis.

"As far as a dump truck going off a bridge, that's pretty uncommon," Davis said with a laugh. "As far as the hazmat cleaning up oil and diesel spills, that's pretty common. That's probably the most common thing we do."

Public in the area was advised to watch for oil and plan on using a secondary water source while fluids dissipated.

Contact Jennifer at jcolton@eastoregonian.com

BRIEFLY

Riverside High School football and basketball coach arrested

BOARDMAN — A Boardman high school sports coach and educational assistant was arrested Tuesday and may be charged with supplying alcohol to minors.

Matthew Ryan Summers-Johnson, 27, coaches football and junior varsity boys basketball at Riverside High School. He is on administrative leave from the school district pending the allegation.

The Morrow County Sheriff's Office began investigating Summers-Johnson on Feb. 9 based on a complaint that he provided alcohol to a group of student athletes. He was arrested on a warrant out of Clatsop County for violating probation from a 2014 charge of driving under the influence of intoxicants.

Morrow County District Attorney Justin Nelson said he has not yet charged Summers-Johnson with a crime, and plans to review the case on Monday. Summers-Johnson has been with the Morrow County School District since July 2015.



Summers-Johnson

announcing his candidacy, Morehouse wrote he would be an "anti-establishment advocate" on the council.

"I will work to have an outside efficiency expert look at all city operations," he said. "We may not need all the rate increases planned. We need someone

on the council who is retired on Social Security and a 401k, not on government pensions (PERS)."

Morehouse is a regular presence at city council meetings, often using the public comment period to criticize the city's spending and tax proposals.

Additionally, Morehouse was involved in campaigns to defeat city gas taxes in 2009 and 2015.

Despite touting his outsider credentials, Morehouse has more political experience than most of the field.

According to Morehouse's filing paperwork, he served as the mayor and police commissioner of Spirit Lake, Idaho from 1964-1970 and as a Republican precinct committee member from 1981 to 1986.

Morehouse's press release included a dig at Councilor Al Plute, who owes taxes on several downtown properties he owns.

"My property taxes are paid," Morehouse wrote.

With Morehouse's impending candidacy, all five city council races have entrants, although the candidates for the Ward 1, Ward 2 and mayoral seat are currently running unopposed.

The filing deadline for the May 17 municipal election is March 8.

Briefs are compiled from staff and wire reports, and press releases. Email press releases to news@eastoregonian.com

HERMISTON

High school athletic director submits resignation

By JENNIFER COLTON
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Blaine Ganvoa has resigned as athletic director of Hermiston High School, effective at the end of the school year.

Ganvoa submitted his resignation Feb. 12, and the Hermiston School Board of Education will act on his resignation Monday night during a special meeting and work session.

Ganvoa will remain in his position until June 30.

Ganvoa has served as the athletic director at Hermiston High School since July 2014.

"I appreciate the opportunities I have been given, along with the professional guidance and support; however, I am confident that this is a positive move both personally and professionally," Ganvoa said in his resignation letter. "I am conscious of the



Ganvoa

need to provide continued support of the Athletic Department until my departure and I shall give my full commitment until then." Ganvoa did not give a reason for his resignation.

Before coming to Hermiston, Ganvoa served as a teacher and athletic director at Irrigon Senior High School.

Ganvoa said he will not

comment on the matter until after the board meets.

The school board's Monday agenda also includes a school presentation from Rocky Heights Elementary school, discussion of financial planning parameters and an executive session to review the employment-related performance of the chef executive officer.

The meeting begins at 6:30 p.m. at Rocky Heights Elementary School, 650 W. Standard Ave., Hermiston.

Refuge occupier can go home but can't contact husband

PORTLAND (AP) — A woman who stayed at an Oregon wildlife refuge until the last day of an armed occupation there will be allowed to return home as her case goes through the courts.



Anderson

U.S. Magistrate Judge Janice Stewart on Friday granted pretrial release to Sandra Anderson of Riggins, Idaho.

Government prosecutors said Anderson should remain jailed because she

defied orders to leave the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge during the 41-day takeover. They argued she might not follow instructions to return for future court dates.

Anderson's attorney, Tyl Bakker, said

his client was a supporting player in the standoff and has no prior criminal history.

The judge says Anderson must relinquish her firearms while awaiting trial and can't have contact with her co-defendants, including her still-jailed husband. Anderson sobbed when told of the no-contact order.

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