

SIBLINGS: Henderson lived in five different foster homes

Continued from 1A

"It was 'Oh, my God, oh my God, oh my God,'" she said.

Westlake learned that her parents, Verna and Robert, birthed at least eight children, but gave them all up, several of them all at once to an Ohio orphanage. Two were taken away by the court in 1956 because the couple had no known residence. DeGraw said the family has kept rough track of five of the kids, but didn't know the fate of the others. She told Westlake that Robert died in 1975 and Verna's whereabouts are unknown.

As an aside, Westlake decided to go through DNA testing offered by Ancestry.com to uncover her ethnic mix, and that's when she got another surprise. Unbeknownst to her, another of Verna and Robert's offspring was on his own quest to find his roots and had already undergone DNA testing. Ed Johns, of Mountain Home, Idaho, got his results a week before Westlake in early May. When the two appeared as matches, Westlake messaged Johns. Soon, they connected by phone.

"Are your feet touching the ground?" Johns asked Westlake.

"I'd been looking for years," Johns said, "and all of a sudden the door opens. My DNA matched perfectly with hers."

To welcome Westlake and Johns to the clan, DeGraw and other family members planned a blowout welcome for last weekend. The reunion started Friday in Pilot Rock at the home of Genevieve Russell, Westlake's and Johns' aunt and DeGraw's mother. They would also meet another sister, Donna Henderson, of Prescott Valley, Arizona, who a few family members had met as a small child.

On Friday, Westlake was the first to arrive. DeGraw and Russell drew her in to their gregarious clan.

"We've been up in the clouds," Aunt Genevieve told Westlake. "I was hoping this would happen before the good Lord called me home."



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Siblings Donna Henderson, Ed Johns and Anita "Cele" Westlake met each other for the first time last weekend at a family gathering in Pilot Rock.

"I'd been looking for years, and all of a sudden the door opens. My DNA matched perfectly with hers."

— Ed Johns, of Mountain Home, Idaho

Soon, Henderson walked in the front door. Westlake, tears welling, took her sister by the shoulders, looked deep into her eyes and pulled her close. When Johns arrived 15 minutes later, the trio of siblings shared another emotional embrace.

They swapped bios. Westlake, a mother of two, had grown up with a paint salesman father and church secretary mother in Washington, California and Ohio. She owned a print shop for a while and then worked in the accounting department of Orcas Power & Light. Now retired, she and husband, Bill, live in the San Juan Islands.

Henderson, 69, had it rougher. She lived in five different foster homes in Ohio and remembers "a lot of work and no love." The Arizona woman has no memory of her parents. As an adult, she worked as a waitress, reporter for a new business publication, escrow officer and paraprofessional with an organization that advocates for at-risk children. She has two grown sons.

Johns, 64, was adopted as a baby and raised in John Day and Burns. The Blue Moun-

tain Community College graduate now drives bus for a transportation company and coaches high school baseball in Mountain Home, Idaho. After connecting with Westlake, he learned from the family that another brother, Ron Frye, lives in the same town as Johns. Johns contacted his brother by phone.

"He told me his parents drove them up to an orphanage in Sandusky, Ohio, and dropped them off when he was seven," Johns said.

In Pilot Rock, the trio braced themselves as a stream of new relations introduced themselves and marveled at the family resemblance. Tissues came out regularly to wipe tears.

"Oh, my goodness, you really look like us," said Faith Pullen, a cousin to the three. "Welcome to the family."

Dozens of family members filled in the blanks and shared what little they knew about Westlake, Johns and Henderson's mother, Verna, who would be about 90 now. At a barbecue at Pendleton's Community Park

on Saturday, Verna's younger brother, LeRoy Russell, of Sandy, said the family was dirt poor during his boyhood in Ontario. Verna had much of the responsibility for taking care of her eight brothers and sisters. She drifted away at about 19.

There were stories of Verna falling from her grandfather's hayloft, knocking herself out and staying unconscious for three days. Maybe the head injury explained her lack of maternal instinct and flighty ways. Others remembered rumors of Verna and Robert working in a circus for a time. No one knew why they had so many children and gave them all up or why they eventually divorced.

When DeGraw, the family historian, heard that Verna had died in an Arizona prison, she investigated and found no record.

It's a mystery that may never be solved.

This weekend, the newly acquainted siblings concentrated instead on gaining their equilibrium as they were pulled into the bosom of a large and loving family, soaking in the stories and photos and the hugs.

Westlake looked happy. "It's been goosebumps and tears," she said.

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Redmond exploring whether drone spying violates nuisance law

By AARON WEST
The Bulletin

REDMOND — A Redmond woman's concerns about her neighbor spying on her with his camera-equipped drone was met with uncertainty at a City Council meeting Tuesday as to what could be done about it. But others familiar with drone rules say that low-flying drone-harassment potentially violates nuisance and trespassing laws.

Fawn Curry told Redmond councilors this week that since May her neighbor has been using his drone to spy on her and her family in their home, but after contacting local police she'd been told nothing can be done about it.

"I recently have had a situation with a neighbor who lives a block away and is flying his drone over my home day and night," Curry said. "I've asked him to stop but he continues to do so. It sounds like a simple situation but it truly is not."

Curry, who spoke during the meeting's public comment period, said she's called the Redmond Police Department about the drone twice but was told both times that drone usage above a house is outside local law enforcement's jurisdiction.

"Unfortunately there is no teeth in the law for us to be able to take any action against him," Redmond Police Chief Dave Tarbet said on Tuesday, noting that he's taking Curry's complaint seriously. "The FAA mandates that the airspace above the highest object on private property is public airspace, unfortunately."

So Curry, who told *The Bulletin* she's concerned for her family's safety, turned to local government for help.

"Please, at the very least, consider putting a city ordinance in place to

stop the usage of drones in residential areas," she said at the meeting.

Council members promised Curry they'd look into it, asking City Attorney Steve Bryant to investigate the matter. At the meeting, Bryant said that trespassing or nuisance laws could possibly come into play, and that he'd explore those options. Meanwhile, an official ordinance would at least make it obvious where the city stood on such matters, he said.

"Certainly passing an ordinance that says no drone flights in residential areas makes it clear that you can't do that," Bryant told councilors, who seemed receptive to the idea but also hesitant to target a specific situation with a blanket rule.

"I wouldn't want to shut down someone from flying a drone in their backyard," Councilor Jay Patrick said.

"If we want to look at creating an ordinance, frankly I'd be for it," Tarbet said.

But local ordinances restricting drone use are an unknown to the Oregon League of Cities, according to Kevin Toon, communication director for the League, who said that such ordinances probably wouldn't be enforceable because of state and federal preemption.

"There aren't any (ordinances) that we know of," Toon said. "A lot of it's the newness of the subject itself, it takes a while for it to become something we look into. Drones haven't risen to that level where a lot of cities are calling us."

Gary Firestone, Bend's assistant city attorney, said no local rules exist in Bend about the use of drones in residential areas or otherwise.

"The answer is very simple: We don't have any regulations," Firestone said when asked on Thursday about local drone rules.

BRIEFLY

Putin says Russia will work with any U.S. president

ST. PETERSBURG, Russia (AP) — President Vladimir Putin says Russia will work with whoever is elected the new U.S. president.

Putin earlier on Friday dodged the question of whether he would prefer Donald Trump or Hillary Clinton as the new commander-in-chief.

Speaking at a meeting with the leaders of the major news agencies Putin said Moscow is unfazed by the often anti-Russia "campaign rhetoric" and will judge the new president "by their deeds, not by their words."

Putin said he would "seek ways" to restore ties that were dampened by Russia's annexation of the Crimean peninsula in March 2014.

Iraq says most of Fallujah retaken from IS militants

BAGHDAD (AP) — Iraqi special forces swept into Fallujah on Friday, recapturing most of the city as the Islamic State group's grip crumbled after weeks of fighting. Thousands of trapped residents took advantage of the militants' retreat to flee, some swimming across the Euphrates River to safety.

Residents described harrowing escapes even after IS fighters abandoned some checkpoints that had them bottled up in the city. On the river, some boats packed with people overturned in the water. Others picked their way down roads laced with hidden bombs that killed several. In some cases, IS allowed people to leave only if they took the jihadis' families with them.

After weeks of heavy battles since the offensive began in late May, it appeared that IS defenses

collapsed abruptly.

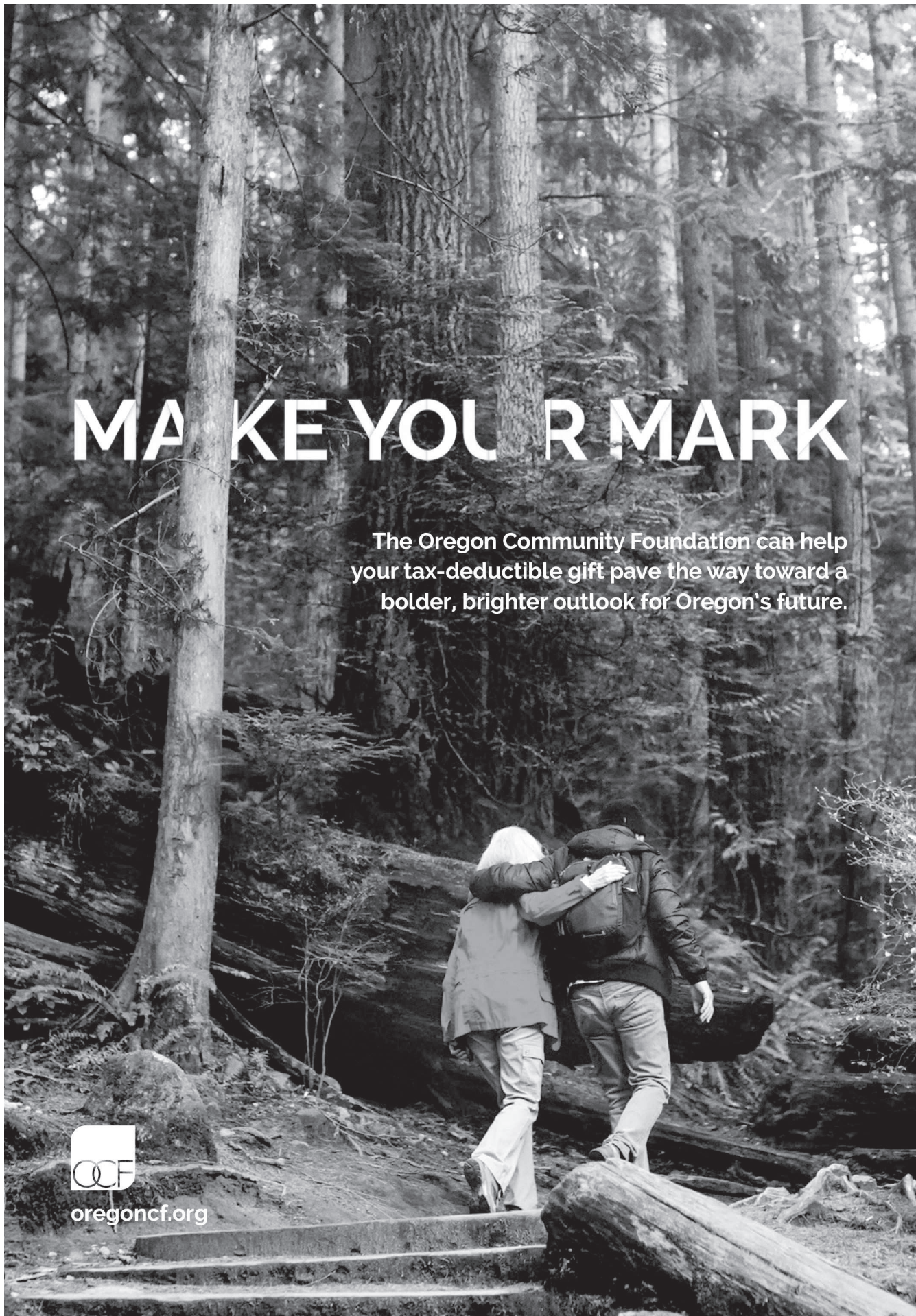
In the early morning Friday, Iraqi forces punched into the city center, meeting intense fighting. But by evening, the special forces commander Brig. Haider al-Obedi said that his troops controlled 80 percent of the city. It was a major step toward regaining the Islamic State group's last major foothold in Iraq's western Anbar province, the heartland of the country's Sunni minority. The militants overran the city in early 2014, the first urban area to fall into its hands before it overran much of northern Iraq.

Kerry's Arctic climate change adventure hits Greenland

ABOARD THE HDMS THETIS, Greenland (AP) — Sailing through fields of large icebergs aboard a Danish naval vessel, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry brought his tour of the Arctic to Greenland on Friday, visiting the Northern Hemisphere's largest glacier to bring attention to the dangers of climate change.

Hazarding a brief June snow and hail flurry in Disko Bay off Greenland, some 220 miles north of the Arctic Circle, Kerry was meeting with scientists researching the dramatic erosion of the Sermeq Kujalleq Glacier that is contributing to global sea rise. The icecap has receded 12.4 miles since 2001.

A number of factors, including increasing air temperatures, the rise of black carbon emissions that discolor the ice and make it absorb more heat, and the introduction of warm sub-surface water from the Gulf Stream which erodes the ice sheet from below, have all contributed to the retreat of the glacier, which is the most active outside Antarctica.



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