

# CRASH: Afterward, Bjurlin ran off toward Hermiston Police Department

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picking her daughter up from the high school after a sports workout and saw the chase and crash. "I'm shocked he didn't hit more people," she said, especially as kids were leaving the high school and parents were picking athletes up at that time.

The incident began when Hermiston police tried to stop on an older model Buick Thursday morning. The male subject driving the vehicle did not yield to police, instead taking off at high speeds east on West Highland Avenue.

Witnesses say the Buick was passing vehicles on the left and weaving through traffic when it came to the Highland Avenue and South First Street intersection, where it ran a stop sign and

crashed into a pickup truck. The white Ford F150 had the right of way and was heading north on South First Street through the intersection when the Buick struck the truck, sending it east down Highland Avenue and trapping the pickup driver in the vehicle.

Hermiston resident Jerry Vaughn saw the collision and was one of the first people to attend to the victim. He said the Buick looked like it was going 60 miles per hour before it slammed into the driver's side of the truck. Vaughn said they tried to open the door of the white truck to help the woman, but it was stuck and all the other doors were locked. "The airbag didn't go off," he said, and her head was bleeding, but she was able to commu-



Rescue crews move an injured female to an ambulance following a collision on Highland Avenue in Hermiston.

nicate through the small gap of the slightly rolled down window.

After the collision, the Buick spun and hit a traffic

sign pole. The driver of the Buick emerged from the plume of dust and took off on foot north on South First street toward the Hermiston

Police Department, which was only blocks away from the scene.

Domino's employee Kayla Farmer was standing at the cash register when she saw the car hit the truck, the driver of the car flee, and Hermiston motorcycle police officer Victor Gutierrez go through the pizza shop's parking lot after Bjurlin. "It was all so quick," she said. Police officers were able to catch up to the driver and took him into custody.

Farmer saw bystanders run to the truck to help the woman, but the victim was stuck in her vehicle for what seemed like 20 minutes. Umatilla County District 1 Fire and Rescue crews were eventually able to free the female driver from the white pickup. They took

her by ambulance to Good Shepherd Medical Center, Hermiston.

There was no confirmed report on the extent of her injuries at the scene, but rescue crews did say she was conscious and talking with responders before being taken away in the ambulance.

Acting Hermiston Police Chief Darryl Johnson called the suspect's actions a "senseless act" in a news release.

"This was a senseless act by a driver who would have received a violation level citation for driving without a license, instead he felt the need to try and run from officers," he said. "His actions led to an innocent person getting injured and property being damaged so he could avoid a traffic ticket."

# BRITTON: In his fourth term as a commissioner

Continued from 1A

to represent constituents on road and access issues; refusing to call for an investigation into the handling of the 2015 Canyon Creek wildfires; failing to recuse himself in decisions with agencies where he benefited both personally and financially; and deliberately misrepresenting his intentions at a town hall meeting Jan. 26, where Bundy and his fellow occupiers were scheduled to appear.

Britton has until 5 p.m. Tuesday, July 12 to file his statement of justification against the allegations. Britton, now in his fourth term as a commissioner, said he plans to fight the recall and will not resign.

Julie Carr, of Dayville, was the chief petitioner for recalling Britton. She said she could not discuss it in depth on Thursday, but was pleased to see it move ahead to the ballot.

"I'm glad, because a lot of folks were afraid to sign the petition," Carr said. "I'm glad enough people want to find positive change."

Frances Preston, of Prairie City, also volunteered to circulate the petition and gather signatures. She said most people she talked to were excited to sign, and spur additional change in county government after incumbent Commissioner Chris Labhart lost his bid for reelection against Prairie City Mayor Jim Hamsher in May.

"I think with a change in the two new commissioners, that will bring about a big difference in the way the county is run," Preston said.

But Britton, who has served nearly 14 years, said he will defend himself vigorously. In February, he voted along with Commissioner Labhart and Judge Scott Myers against funding an investigation into the Canyon Creek Complex, which burned more than 110,000 acres and destroyed nearly 40 homes.

Five months later, Britton said he still feels that was the right decision.

"We needed to move on and start healing," he said. "It's a tragedy, but I really felt it was in the best interest of Grant County."

The Malheur National Forest previously detailed its response to the blaze, which started as two smaller fires that merged and spread amid dry and windy weather. The Grizzly Bear Complex and Cornet-Windy Ridge fires also made big runs on the same day, Aug. 14, of last year.

Britton said he did what he could in the immediate aftermath to help residents start rebuilding their homes by reaching out to agencies and streamlining regulations.

"We were really able to help all those people out," he said.

The petition also claims that Britton violated a 2013 county ordinance requiring all roads, trails and byways across public lands remain open unless authorized by the county court and sheriff's office. That ordinance was passed in order for the Forest Service to heed county input on road closures, Britton said.

Since then, Britton said



Britton

**"Everything I do ... is about what's in the best interest of the people of Grant County."**

— **Boyd Britton**, Grant County commissioner

he doesn't recall the court ever denying permission for the Forest Service to close a road, which has been done on a project-by-project basis.

The third complaint in the petition argues that Britton failed to recuse himself "in decisions with agencies and individuals of which he has not only benefited personally, but financially." Britton, who owns a welding shop in John Day, said he works on Forest Service trucks and rigs from time to time, averaging \$4,200 in payments each of the last five years — far from his largest account.

Britton said he doesn't understand how he stands to benefit by being involved in county government and reviewing projects.

"That, to me, is baseless," he said.

Finally, the petition alleges Britton misrepresented his intentions at a community meeting Jan. 26 where Bundy and refuge occupiers were scheduled to make an appearance. That was the same night officers arrested Bundy and four others on Highway 395, and shot and killed Robert "LaVoy" Finicum.

Britton said he attended that meeting at the request of others in the community who were curious about its purpose. Commissioner Labhart and Judge Myers also attended the meeting, during which none of them addressed the crowd.

Judge Myers said he prepared a statement in case he was asked to speak, but otherwise isn't sure what people expected them to do. Myers said he feels the recall against Britton is unfounded, and believes it will fail as Grasty's did.

Britton said he feels there are similar issues at heart between the two efforts, and said he hopes Grant County residents will feel the same way as Harney County.

"Everything I do ... is about what's in the best interest of the people of Grant County," he said.

Contact *Glaven Plaven* at [gplaven@eastoregonian.com](mailto:gplaven@eastoregonian.com) or 541-966-0825.

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# DOGS: In midst of seven-event, five-day tour

Continued from 1A

started Border Collie International 25 years ago, first showcasing his dogs in local and national competitions before transitioning to performances in front of audiences.

Gustafson and his five border collies performed on a lawn near Pendleton Public Library Thursday afternoon to a crowd of approximately 50 people.

The event was part of the Pendleton Library's summer reading program, which hosts a few events for children. This year's theme, "Ready, Set, Read," encompasses outdoor activities with reading, according to Assistant Library Director Jennifer Costley.

Booking a group of fun-loving, high-jumping border collies was an easy decision.

"In general children love animals, so we thought it would be a good fit," she said.

The five border collies included Macabee, Teddy, Rerun, Read and the lone female of the group, Myra.

Macabee caught footballs from children volunteers, Teddy vaulted over Gustafson to catch Frisbees, Read shot basketballs into a hoop using his snout, and Myra rolled around in the grass before greeting crowd members. Gustafson told the crowd Rerun and Teddy, who are brothers, were treated badly by their previous owner, and Rerun sometimes gets overwhelmed in big groups. Sure enough, the 10-year-old walked onto the lawn for a few seconds before trotting back to his crate.

A key part of Gustafson's shows is teaching kids to be responsible as animal



Children crowd around the border collie Myra to pet the dog on Thursday at the Pendleton Public Library.



Macabee waits to catch a football thrown by Miranda Leonard, 8, of Pendleton during an exhibition by Border Collie International at the Pendleton Public Library.

owners. He believes children who abuse animals are more likely to abuse people as adults.

"If we can teach them to have respect and love for the animals when they're kids, now we're a step ahead," Gustafson said.

Border Collie International is currently in the midst of a seven-event, five-day tour, which has already included stops in Prineville and the Eastern Oregon Youth Correctional Facility in Burns. Going along with his goal of instilling kids with

respect and responsibility in dealing with animals, Gustafson said the latter event was particularly meaningful.

Along the way, Gustafson aims to make people aware of border collie misuse. They are among the most returned breeds because most people don't know how to properly care for them, Gustafson said.

Three of the five dogs he owns came from the Oregon Humane Society in Portland, where they were deemed unadoptable because of incidents with previous owners. Because border collies are natural herding dogs, they require activity and space to roam.

"They need a job to do," Gustafson told the crowd. "If they don't find one, they will invent one."

Contact *Will Denner* at [wdenner@eastoregonian.com](mailto:wdenner@eastoregonian.com)

# POOL: College needs \$2.6 million to fix and update the pool

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a week. "It's been the best thing ever. It's changed my life. I'm off blood pressure medicine, I've lost a significant amount of weight, and feel great."

"I know this, and everybody who knows about pools, knows that they do not generate income," BMCC President Camille Preus said. On average the pool generates \$35,000 a year in revenue, but costs \$55,000 a year to operate. "That wouldn't be unsurmountable for us. What is unsurmountable is the current state of the pool."

The current state of the pool refers to the outdated pumping system, HVAC system and other areas of the facility falling into disrepair. In order for the college to continue to pass health code standards, \$2.6 million is needed to fix and update the pool. In 2013, voters shot down a bond that included funds to address the pool's needs. BMCC went back to the drawing board, taking input from the

community and put together a new bond that left a few things out, including the pool. According to Preus, the pool did not generate enough public support to be included on the most recent bond, which passed in November 2015.

Pendleton Swim Association Board President Fred Robinson stood and read a letter in support of keeping the pool open. At the end of his impassioned plea, Robinson asked four questions, "What's the path of success for the pool? What are the needs? And when does it all need to be done? And lastly, how can we help?"

BMCC Board of Education member Kim Puzey encouraged the swimmers to get started fundraising now. He called it a "sprint, not a marathon." Puzey encouraged the swimmers to share their stories, share their enthusiasm and help their cause catch fire. Puzey indicated it would cost roughly \$34 per Umatilla County resident to get the

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— **Camille Preus**, BMCC President

pool renovations done.

"I'm confident we can come up with the \$2.6 million," Puzey said. As a show of his confidence, he told the swimmers he would donate \$500 that night if each of them would commit to \$50. Each representative of the swim association pledged their \$50, followed by BMCC Board Member Ed Taber pledging \$500.

"Sounds like we've got \$1,500 and change already,"

Puzey said, "That's a pretty good night's work."

There will be two community outreach meetings hosted by BMCC, one in late July and one in early August. Specific dates and times have not been set, but will be announced soon. These meetings will provide opportunities for the public to tour the McCrae Activity Center pool and see the specific needs the pool has and what those will cost.

Casey White-Zollman, BMCC's vice president of public relations, encourage Wednesday's attendees to invite everyone out to the community meetings.

"This is certainly not a closed book," White-Zollman said.

Contact *Alexa Lougee* at [alougee@eastoregonian.com](mailto:alougee@eastoregonian.com)

**Veronica Zapata**  
Auto Health Home Life  
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