

Train T-bones truck near Echo

By ALEXA LOUGEE
East Oregonian

A train collided with a semi-truck Wednesday near Rieth Road, about nine miles east of Echo.

The train was heading east toward Pendleton pulling roughly 15 railroad cars at about 30 mph, according to Umatilla Count Undersheriff Jim Littlefield.

The semi-truck, belonging to Platinum Transportation in Hermiston, was carrying two trailers of wheat and headed north when it failed to yield at the railroad crossing.

The driver, Budd Richards, 54, from Hermiston, was conscious, but complaining of head, neck and leg pain when rescue crews arrived. He was transported via ambulance to St. Anthony Hospital and was expected to be released Wednesday.

According to Union Pacific Railroad employees at the scene the train had sounded its horn, but could



A semi-trailer hauling wheat lies on its side after being struck by a locomotive Wednesday at a railroad crossing on Cunningham Road west of Pendleton. Staff photo by E.J. Harris

not stop in time before hitting the truck. Cell phone service is scarce in the area, and the call for help came via radio.

Mariano Hawk, the

terminal manager for Union Pacific, said the train struck the truck where the two trailers were hitched together, knocking the truck

cab and one trailer on its side north of the railroad tracks and leaving the rear trailer upright to the southeast of the tracks.

HERMISTON

Sheriff connects with county over coffee

Gives public opportunity to voice questions, complaints

By ALEXA LOUGEE
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Umatilla County Sheriff Terry Rowan doesn't mind drinking a cold cup of coffee.

"It's not the coffee, it's what's in the coffee," he said Wednesday morning as his once-hot cup of joe cooled over the hour he sat and visited with locals at Hermiston's Eastside Market. "It's the caffeine," he said with a smile.

This was the first in what Rowan hopes will be a series of informal meet-and-greets in different communities around Umatilla County. He wants to give people the opportunity to ask questions, voice complaints and make suggestions. The plan is to do this twice a month, depending on how the public responds.

Rowan is running for his second term as county sheriff against Ryan Lehnert, a corporal with the Pendleton Police Department, in the November election.

One goal of the new program is to create more effective partnerships with local citizens.

Rowan pointed to his gold badge, which is currently adorned with a black band.

"I don't like wearing this banded badge, because it signifies that we lost another brother or sister," Rowan said. He said over the last couple of weeks local law enforcement has received an overwhelming amount of support. He said he does not see the tension here between officers and the public that is clear in other parts of the county, but the local words of support really resonate with officers.



Sheriff Terry Rowan talks with Larry Stormont and Sonny Liebe on Wednesday at Eastside Market in Hermiston. Rowan was kicking off a series of Coffee with the Sheriff sessions at various locations throughout the county. Staff photo by Gary L. West

Rowan talked about the challenges of serving in Umatilla County.

"For too long we didn't have enough presence around the county," he said. He said it is still an issue that he and his department are taking steps to improve.

He started working for the sheriff's office in 1989, at that time there were seven patrol deputies, a number that held consistent through 2012. But, according to Rowan, back in 1989 Oregon State Police had 24 troopers covering the area that includes Umatilla County, and that helped ease the pressure. Now he believes there are only four or five state troopers assigned to the area.

The sheriff's department has doubled its deputy force since 2012 and is in the process of adding a 15th deputy. He said the national average is to have between one and two deputies per 1,000 people in a county. Currently, Umatilla County has less than one deputy per 1,000 people.

The Umatilla County Sheriff's Office has also started addressing loose dogs in the county. Rowan said they are doing research and looking into adding a full-time animal control deputy.

Rowan invites the public to come out and give him an earful. He tries to think outside the box, look at resources and see what can be done to address concerns. During the coffee hour one man asked whether the sheriff's office patrols Forest Service roads, which they do, but Rowan said deputies are not able to patrol them as often as they probably should.

Rowan came into law enforcement out of necessity, needing a job.

"It's become so much more than that," Rowan said. He has developed a passion for serving and making a difference.

The next coffee with the sheriff event will be in Pendleton, with a date and place to be determined.

PENDLETON

Council to champion housing incentives

East Oregonian

The Pendleton City Council voted Tuesday to make housing a permanent priority.

The council unanimously agreed to accept the recently commissioned housing study and its recommendations, which include reviewing the study every two years to measure progress in building new homes and incorporating the results into a 10-year plan.

The report found that the success of recent housing developments indicates the market could support 125 more rental units and 90 for-sale units.

To reach market capacity, the study recommended recruiting entry-level housing developers, establishing a revolving loan fund with the Round-Up Development Corp. and creating incentives for home developers and buyers, among other suggestions.

The council also unanimously agreed to declare two adjoining properties

at Southwest Fifth Street and Sixth Street, by the railroad tracks, as surplus. That allows beginning the process of selling them. Despite being zoned light industrial, the 0.22-acre properties are in a residential area.

The council originally considered declaring several more properties surplus, but City Attorney Nancy Kerns said staff found need to keep the other properties in the city's inventory.

Lastly, City Manager Robb Corbett said CyDat Industries has made progress in obtaining an energy source large enough to power a planned \$45 million data center on Airport Road. Corbett said CyDat, a subsidiary of the Vancouver, Washington-based Makad Corp., had a good meeting with Cascade Natural Gas and is still excited about the project.

Although the council agreed to a 30-year lease with CyDat in October, the company has until Aug. 31 to start the lease.



Firefighters Rob Martin (left) and Cody Boggs with Umatilla Rural Fire District try to stop a fuel leak on a Dodge Ram pickup that crashed over the embankment Wednesday on Old River Road near Umatilla. Staff photo by Gary L. West

Crash forces closure of Old River Road near Umatilla

East Oregonian

A Dodge Ram pickup took out a power pole and speed limit sign and crashed down an embankment late Wednesday afternoon on Old River Road near Umatilla.

Rob Tooley, assistant chief of Umatilla Rural Fire Protection District, said no one was taken from the scene by ambulance and occupants of the vehicle were able to get out on their own before firefighters arrived.

It was unclear late Wednesday how many people were in the pickup when it crashed and ended

up upside down in the dry portion of the river channel along the road.

Firefighters closed down old River Road between Jones Scott Road in Umatilla and Bensel Road north of Hermiston due to loose power lines hanging down about 10 feet above the southbound lanes of travel.

Pacific Power crews were also dispatched to deal with the power line hazard, but the road was closed or restricted to only one line of travel for more than two hours.

Firefighters also dealt with a fuel and fluid leak on the pickup.

BRIEFLY

Organization bowls against domestic violence

HERMISTON — The fourth annual Domestic Violence Services Bowl-A-Thon will help raise money to support its services in Umatilla and Morrow counties.

The event is Saturday, July 30 from 6-8 p.m. at Desert Lanes, 1545 N. First St., Hermiston. The cost is \$30 per bowler or \$120 for a team of four. The fee includes three games and shoe rental. It's open to all ages, and prizes will be given.

For more information, call 541-276-3322, search Facebook visit or www.domesticviolenceservices-or.org.

Happy Canyon looking to cast new roles for night show

PENDLETON — As its 100th anniversary approaches, the Happy Canyon Night Show is seeking people to fill roles in this year's pageant.

Happy Canyon Show director Harper Jones said he is looking for mostly males to fill new and old roles for the show that takes place Sept. 14-17. Those interested who are at least 18 years old can audition for a part Aug. 7 at Happy Canyon Arena at 7 p.m.

"With Happy Canyon turning 100 this year, we

have some special things planned for the show," he said in a press release.

New parts are Hick Band drum major, Hick Band cymbalist, Black Bart and noted Pendleton ruffian Hank Vaughan.

Jones said he is also looking for a "folksy" sounding narrator as well as banjo and guitar players to do a rendition of "Dueling Banjos."

Contact Happy Canyon publicity director Corey Neistadt at 541-240-1081 with questions. Visit happycanyon.com for further information on the show.

Let's Walk Hermiston continues in Aug.

HERMISTON — A program that encourages people to get out and walk continues the first Tuesday of each month through October.

Sponsored by Good Shepherd Medical Center and Hermiston Parks & Recreation, the next event is Tuesday, Aug. 2 at 5:30 p.m. at Riverfront Park, located off Orchard Extension Loop at Southwest 23rd St., Hermiston.

There is no fee. The program includes a web program, fitness tips, results and fun. Also, T-shirts may still be available.

For more information, contact 541-667-3509 or healthinfo@gshealth.org.

State fair seeks creative submissions

SALEM — Oregonians have an opportunity to showcase their talents in the Oregon State Fair.

The Creative Living Competitions feature everything from cake design, photography and flower arrangements to Legos, fine art and woodworking. A long-standing tradition, it highlights the creativity of children and adults from across the state.

Entrants register online and, with a few exceptions, there is no fee to participate in Creative Living Competitions. Deadlines are:

- Tuesday, Aug. 9 for fine art, calligraphy, photography
- Tuesday, Aug. 16 for most other departments
- Sunday, Aug. 21 for baked goods
- Monday, Aug. 22 for floral and farm & garden

Submissions to the Creative Living Competitions can be taken to Portland or several statewide drop-off locations. In addition to Creative Living Competitions, fair-goers can enjoy world-class music, animals, carnival rides and great food.

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The Oregon State Fair is Aug. 26 through Sept. 5 in Salem. For more information, contact creativeliving@oregonstatefair.org, 971-701-6571 or visit www.oregonstatefair.org.

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