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EAST OREGONIAN

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One shooter identified in Nelson case

More information released as homicide investigation continues

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

Federal prosecutors last week revealed the identity of one shooter connected to the death of Thadd Nelson.

Joseph Aaron McIver, Edward Duarte Ayala and Armando Ruben Vargas face federal weapons charges stemming from

Nelson's homicide on Jan. 27 at his home near Meacham on Umatilla Indian Reservation land.

According to the Aug. 8 filing from assistant United States attorney Jennifer J. Martin, "Defendant Ayala, and at least one other individual fired guns, with two shots from different weapons killing Nelson."

The information came in the government's response seeking to prohibit Ayala from having access to the identities of witnesses. Martin lays out a brief statement about what happened in the shooting death.

McIver, Ayala, Vargas, and two

See HOMICIDE/8A



Ayala

McIver

Vargas



Contributed photo

Cindy Womack talks to a group of Kenyan teenagers about the difficult subject of suicide during her recent trip to Africa.

Taking on the taboo

Pilot Rock woman tackles tough topic of suicide in Kenya

By KATHY ANEY
East Oregonian

Cindy Womack recently flew 9,000 miles to talk to teenagers in Kenya about suicide.

Womack, a suicide prevention specialist for Blue Mountain Community College, usually leads suicide prevention workshops closer to home. The invitation came after Womack and her husband Terry hosted two directors from an international organization called Good Samaritan Ministries for a few days in their Pilot Rock home. One of the directors, James Opiyo, oversees mission work on the continent of Africa, while the other, Gorrety Amollo, directs the program in Kenya. Womack invited the pair to attend a suicide prevention workshop she was teaching.

"I brought them to work with me," she said. "Afterwards, both of them came to me and said, 'You need to come to Kenya.'"

See SUICIDE/8A



Contributed photo

A group of grade school kids smile happily for the camera during Cindy Womack's recent trip to Kenya to talk with mostly older students about suicide and how to prevent it.

State board adopts lead testing rule

By PARIS ACHEN
Capital Bureau

The Oregon Board of Education adopted a new rule Wednesday that for the first time requires school districts to test for lead in water at district-owned buildings and report those results to the public.

The board in June agreed to fast-track adoption of the new rule at the request of Gov. Kate Brown, after widespread media coverage of a scandal in Portland Public Schools over lead in drinking water that went unreported.

The rule requires school districts to submit a preliminary plan for testing for both lead and radon by Oct. 1, with a final plan due by Jan. 1. While the rule gives no specific deadline for testing for lead, it does require districts to report results to the public within five business days and to send out an annual report.

"What we like about this plan is that part of

See TESTING/8A

IMESD to assist in lead testing

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

The InterMountain Education Service District is taking the lead on lead.

Since elevated levels of lead were announced in Portland Public Schools' water supply earlier this year, IMESD Superintendent Mark Mulvihill said one of the district's top priorities has been to help schools sort out the "alphabet soup" of bureaucracies offering their input on how to protect children from the harmful chemical element.

But the IMESD is going further, offering assistance with testing and a September conference for local superintendents where city and county public works officials will answer technical questions.

The IMESD itself recently released the results from a round of testing, which revealed that all of the district's facilities were well below levels the Environmental Protection Agency says should spur some sort of action.

See LEAD/8A

HEPPNER

4-H showcases small animals at MoCo Fair

Months of hard work pay off for young competitor

By GEORGE PAVLEN
East Oregonian

Raising small animals is a big job for kids in 4-H, as Stephine Wendler has learned with her Japanese bantam chicken named Chabo.

Wendler, 13, bought Chabo from a hatchery in April. He's a small bird compared to the other chickens — Japanese bantams are known for having extremely short legs and usually weigh less than 2 pounds. But just because he is small doesn't mean caring for Chabo is easy.

"You can't feed them whole corn, or they'll choke," Wendler said during showmanship and conformation Wednesday at the Morrow County Fair. "You have

to crumble it, and grind it up into a fine powder."

As a chick, Wendler said Chabo's coop had to be kept at a certain temperature at all times. If it got too cold, he could become sick. If it got too hot, he might lose his feathers.

"We keep them in a portable chicken coop with the heat lamp on at all times," Wendler said.

Her months of hard work paid off as she was awarded reserve champion showman at opening day of the fair. Showmanship and conformation was also held for ducks, roosters and rabbits, with kids from 4-H groups across Morrow County standing

See FAIR/8A



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Isabella Orr, 11, right, picks up her black Australorp rooster for judge Beth Dudley during showmanship Wednesday at the Morrow County Fair in Heppner.



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