NORTHWEST

Man hit by car, falls 50 feet into icy river, survives

By ANDREW SELSKY Associated Press

An Idaho man not only survived being hit by a car on an icy interstate highway bridge but also a 50-footfall into a river and a swim through its frigid waters with a badly broken leg, authorities said.

Steven Arrasmith, 34, said the image in his mind of his 7-month-old son drove him to keep swimming for shore through the strong current in the Snake River in the dark.

He finally reached an island near the Oregon-Idaho border and awaited rescuers, unable to pull his legs and feet out of the water because of his broken left leg.

"Basically, when I hit the water I was, 'OK, I've got to get to shore," Arrasmith said in a telephone interview with The Associated Press as he awaited surgery in a hospital. "I was thinking about my son. I was wearing an Army field jacket and it weighed me down. I managed to get it off."



Oregon State Police via AP

In this photo provided by Oregon State Police, a damaged car is shown on an Interstate 84 bridge over the Snake River on the Idaho/Oregon border near Ontario on Monday. An Idaho man not only survived being hit by a car on an icy interstate highway bridge but also a 50-foot-fall into a river and a swim through its frigid waters with a badly broken leg, authorities said.

Arrasmith is a lucky man, three times over, said Oregon State Police Capt. Bill Fugate, a public information officer.

"He's very fortunate," Fugate

said. "In any of those events, he could have lost his life."

This tale of survival started before dawn when the driver of a pickup truck lost control on a bridge on I-84 after hitting a patch of black ice, according to the Oregon State Police.

Arrasmith, of Mesa, who makes a two-hour commute each way to his new job with the Idaho Department of Juvenile Corrections in Nampa, said he saw the vehicle in the road and got out of his rented Jeep to make sure everyone inside was all right.

Another vehicle came barreling down the divided interstate and, hitting the ice, also lost control and crashed into the Jeep, which then struck Arrasmith, knocking him over a waist-high concrete-block barrier along the edge of the bridge, Arrasmith said.

"I tried to hang on, for about 10 seconds," he said. Then he fell about 50 feet into the river, according to the highway patrol. Instead of panicking, he coldly calculated where he was and what he needed to do.

"I am familiar with the Snake River, and I know in that section it has a northwest flow," Arrasmith

said. "I was lucky enough to fall feet first, so I was able to orient myself really quickly. There's Oregon. Just continue west. My main concern was, get out of the water and the wet clothes, because the outside temperature was 36 degrees.'

He calculates that he was in the water fully submerged except for his head for five to 10 minutes then another hour with his legs in the water until rescuers waded over from shore. The state police say the responders were drawn by Arrasmith's shouts.

"The main thing is, I wanted to see my son and that's what drove me to get to shore," he said. "The broken leg was quite a hindrance; I was kicking with my leg but my leg was just flopping around.'

The driver of the pickup truck was unhurt, and the driver of the third car received minor injuries, state police said.

"The worst part is I lost my glasses in the river," Arrasmith said. "I can't drive without them."

State senator Edwards to step down to take UO post

By CLAIRE WITHYCOMBE Capital Bureau

SALEM — State Sen. Chris Edwards, D-Eugene, announced Tuesday he is stepping down from the legislature to lead "strategic initiatives" at the University of Oregon's new Knight

Campus at the end of the year.

Edwards, who was elected to the Oregon House in 2006 and appointed senator in 2009. will join the University of Oregon as vice president of strategic initiatives Dec. 15, according to a University of Oregon news release.

Edwards won elections to the seat in 2010 and 2014. His resignation from the state senate is effective Dec. 31.

The Democratic Party of Lane County will choose nominees for the seat through a voting process.

In that process, the party's precinct committee members who live in the district will select at least three and no more than five nominees.

The Lane County Commission has the final say in choosing someone among those nominees to serve the rest of Edwards' term.

State Rep. Val Hoyle, D-Eugene, said Tuesday afternoon that she was interested in seeking Edwards' spot.

Hoyle, a former House Majority Leader, did not run for reelection to her house seat this year, as she sought the Democratic party's nomination for Secretary of State this spring.

Hoyle lost in the primary to Labor Commissioner Brad Avakian, who in turn lost to Republican Dennis Richardson in the general election earlier this month. In his new role,

Edwards will focus on developing the Phil and Penny Knight Campus for Accelerating Scientific Impact, according to the university. He will be paid

\$150,000 per year.

Tuesday, said he applied for the job prior to the gift announcement; he received an offer over the weekend.

the job hoping to keep his spot in the Legislature, but after learning of the gift and the university's plans to seek \$100 million in matching funds from the state, he sought to avoid an apparent conflict of interest.

Activists seek tougher action on climate change

By PHUONG LE Associated Press

SEATTLE — Eight children are asking a Seattle judge to find Washington state in contempt for failing to adequately protect them and future generations from the harmful effects of climate change.

A King County Superior Court judge is hearing arguments Tuesday afternoon in the case brought by the petitioners, between 12 and 16 years old, who allege the state has violated its duties to take action to address climate change.

The petitioners' lawyer says a state rule adopted in September to cap emissions from large carbon polluters doesn't do enough to protect young people. They contend that the state is violating prior court orders by not doing more.

The state says in court documents that there's no basis for finding the Department of Ecology in contempt. Ecology complied with court orders by adopting its clean air rule requiring industrial carbon polluters such as power plants and refineries to reduce their emissions by an average 1.7 percent each year, Assistant Attorney General Katharine Shirey wrote in a response filed with the court Friday.

"Taken together all the things Ecology have done to date aren't protecting the rights of these kids, and that's why they need to do more," said Andrea Rodgers, an

attorney representing the young petitioners.

The case is not about the clean air rule, Rodgers said, but about whether the state has fulfilled its constitutional and statutory duties to protect the fundamental rights of young people from the perils of climate change.

The case is part of a nationwide effort led by the Oregon-based nonprofit Our Children's Trust to force states and the federal government to take action on climate change.

The juvenile climate activists in Seattle brought the petition in 2014 asking the court to force state officials to adopt new rules to limit carbon emissions based on the best available science. They say the state has violated its duties under the state constitution and the legal principle called the public trust doctrine, which requires the government to protect shared resources.

In November, Judge Hollis Hill denied their appeal but affirmed some of the children's arguments, saying the state has an obligation to protect natural resources for future generations.

"Petitioners assert and this court finds, their very survival depends

upon the will of their elders to act now, decisively and unequivocally, to stem the tide of global warming by accelerating the reduction of emission of GHG's before doing so becomes first too costly and then too late," Hill wrote in November.

At the time, the judge noted that Ecology was already working on meeting that obligation by writing new rules for greenhouse gas emissions ordered by the governor.

The plaintiffs again asked the judge to step in after Ecology in February withdrew its proposed clean air rule to make changes. Ecology was in the process of writing new rules but Hill in April ordered the agency to proceed with its rulemaking and come up with a rule by the end of 2016.

The state's lawyer, Shirey, said in court documents that the court didn't direct Ecology to adopt any particular rule, nor did the court say what should or should not be in the rule. She also said that the plaintiffs' claims amount to a challenge of Ecology's clean air rule, which should be heard in Thurston County Superior Court.

'There's no dispute that they have not fulfilled their responsibility," Rodgers said.

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Atlanta 68/54

Corrections

The East Oregonian works hard to be accurate and sincerely regrets any errors. If you notice a mistake in the paper, please call 541-966-0818.

The campus was established by a \$500 million gift from the Nike co-founder and his wife and was announced Oct. 17.

Edwards, reached by phone

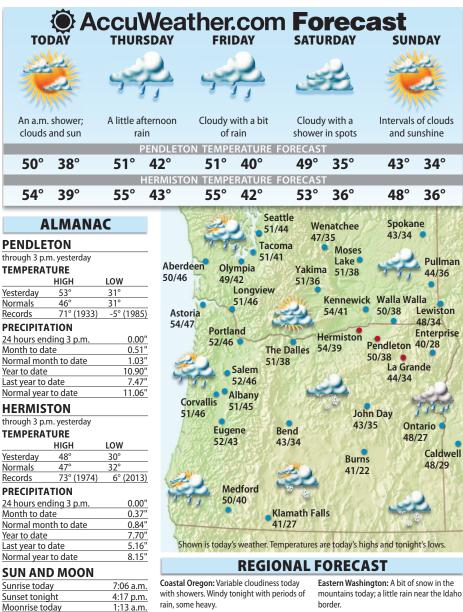
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Eastern and Central Oregon: A shower today, but a bit of snow in central parts.

1:54 p.m.

Last

Dec 20

Full

Dec 13

Moonset today

First

Dec 7

New

Nov 29

Western Washington: Mostly cloudy today with showers. Rain, some heavy tonight.

border.

Cascades: Snow showers today, accumulating 1-2 inches in the south and central parts and up to an inch across the north.

Northern California: A little rain today, except a bit of snow in the interior mountains.

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ber, the greater the need for eye and skin protection. Forecasts and graphics provided by

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Los Angeles 69 50 s 74 49 s Wichita 57 33 s 62 30 s

Weather (W): s-sunny, pc-partly cloudy, c-cloudy, sh-showers, t-thunderstorms, r-rain, sf-snow flurries, sn-snow, i-ice.

51/44

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NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY

Shown are noon positions of weather systems and precipitation. Temperature bands are highs for the day

Winnip 35/27

Kansas City 50/32

National Summary: Rain and spotty thunderstorms will extend from the lower Great Lakes to the northwest Gulf Coast with a wintry mix over the upper Great Lakes today. Showers will dampen coastal areas of the Northwest.

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states) High 89° in McAllen, Texas Low -2° in Bodie State Park, Calif.

Billing: 45/30

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NATIONAL CITIES

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