

HERMISTON

Police identify victim, possible suspect in stabbing

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

Hermiston police are having a tough time determining what happened Thursday that led to a stabbing.

Police chief Jason Edmiston said there have been no arrests because of conflicting initial statements and people not cooperating with the investigation, including the victim.

"We want to make sure the threshold is there before we arrest somebody," Edmiston said.

Edmiston identified the victim as Troy Curtis Rutherford, 30, and the possible suspect as Marcus Allen Nelson, 32, both of Hermiston.

Hermiston police

Thursday morning responded to reports of a stabbing at a trailer at Dun Rollin Trailer Park, 445 E. Jennie Ave., Hermiston. Officers found no one involved, then checked at Good Shepherd Medical Center, Hermiston, where Rutherford received treatment for superficial stab wounds to the head and back of his shoulders, according to statements from Edmiston.

Police also found Nelson at the hospital and detained him, but he does not currently face charges, nor does anyone else.

Edmiston stated potential witnesses are not complying with the investigation, Rutherford has been uncooperative, and initial statements from Rutherford and Nelson conflict. Edmiston also reported police don't

yet know Rutherford's "true intention" of going to Nelson's residence.

And while police have yet to know just what went down, Edmiston said his department would hand over its findings to the Umatilla County District Attorney's Office to consider any charges.

Rutherford has a misdemeanor theft case and a trespassing case pending in Umatilla County Circuit Court, according to court records. And Nelson has hearings Jan. 17 to change his pleas in an identity theft and forgery case and to charges of methamphetamine possession and misdemeanor theft.

Contact Phil Wright at pwright@eastoregonian.com or 541-966-0833.



Staff photo by Jade McDowell

Ten escape fire uninjured

Ten people escaped a burning home in Hermiston Thursday night, but no one was injured.

Umatilla County Fire District 1 responded with multiple fire engines to reports of a fully-engulfed house on East Cherry Avenue about 10 p.m.

Chief Scott Stanton said to the district's "best count" there were 10 people in the home when the fire started, and the district ended up paying to house seven of them in a hotel for the night.

The fire is believed have been caused by an electric heating source.

HERMISTON

Council to consider Ranch & Home store replat, renaming Airport Road

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

A final replat for a planned Ranch & Home store is on the agenda for Hermiston's city council on Monday night.

George Dress, owner of Tri-Cities retailer Ranch & Home, plans to build a Hermiston location on an 18 acre piece of property on South Highway 395 near the Wal-Mart Distribution Center. The property is currently made up of three separate lots; the replat would reconfigure the lines between those lots. The agenda also includes an item to "consider authorizing the city manager to sign the development agreement with

George Dress for development of a Ranch & Home store."

On Monday the council will consider a recommendation from city manager Byron Smith to petition the county to rename East Airport Road. The Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center is located on the road, and Smith said in a memo to the council that since the event center opened many delivery drivers and visitors have ended up lost on the neighboring Airport Way. Renaming East Airport Road to something less similar could alleviate some of the confusion, Smith said. He did not make a recommendation for what the new name might be.

Mayor David Drotzmann, municipal judge Thomas Creasing and at-large city councilors Manuel Gutierrez, Doug Primmer, John Kirwan and Rod Hardin will be sworn in on Monday night and the council will be asked to elect a new council president for the year.

Before the regular 7 p.m. meeting, the council will hold a work session at 6 p.m. with city staff on the subject of downtown parking.

The meeting will be at city hall, 180 NE 2nd Street. The full agenda can be found online at hermiston.or.us/citycouncil-meetings.

Contact Jade McDowell at jmcdowell@eastoregonian.com or 541-564-4536.

BRIEFLY

Frozen switch stalls Union Pacific train

PENDLETON — A frozen switch was to blame for a Union Pacific train that stalled Friday morning in northwest Pendleton, blocking at least one crossing at Murietta and McKennon roads for hours.

Justin Jacobs, UP spokesman, said the stoppage was first reported at 5:30 a.m. as overnight temperatures dropped as low as zero degrees. The train was finally moved by early afternoon.

The weather in Pendleton is expected to warm over the weekend into the low to mid-30s, though snow and freezing rain are in the forecast.

Volunteers needed for ATV advisory committee

Volunteers are needed to fill four vacant positions on the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department's All-Terrain Vehicle Advisory Committee.

The committee, established in 2010, meets two to four times per year at locations throughout the state. Members are tasked with making recommendations to Oregon State Parks on ATV classifications, safety requirements and funding for grant projects.

Representatives are needed for the Americans with Disabilities Act, Oregon Vehicle Dealer Association, rural fire protection district and emergency medical services provider. Application forms can be found online at



Staff photo by George Plaven

A frozen switch was blamed for stalling a Union Pacific train in northwest Pendleton Friday morning.

www.oregonohv.org. For more information, contact Jeff Trejo at [jeff.trejo@oregon.gov](mailto:trejo@oregon.gov) or 503-986-0585.

Boom rattles windows around Hermiston

HERMISTON — A mysterious boom rattled windows, and a few nerves, around Hermiston Friday afternoon.

Residents in various part of the city, and in surrounding areas, reported hearing a booming sound that shook windows and homes about 2:45 p.m.

The noise resulted in several calls to law enforcement and widespread speculation on at least one social media group forum on Facebook.

Hermiston police chief Jason Edmiston said his department received calls

about the sound and he also heard whatever it was himself.

"I was in a closed-door meeting in my office and it rattled my windows," Edmiston said.

Edmiston, one of his captains and other officers drove around the city to investigate, but nothing was found to explain the noise.

"It would not surprise me if it turned out to be something at a high altitude," he said, like a meteor or a sonic boom from an aircraft.

As of early Tuesday evening there was no confirmation of what caused the sound, which some people described as sounding like an earthquake.

The U.S. Geological Survey has not recorded any earthquakes in either Oregon or Washington state over the last 24 hours.

MILTON-FREEWATER

City considers solution to trailer park's water

East Oregonian

Milton-Freewater city manager Linda Hall recommended city council consider a proposal to provide clean water to Locust Mobile Village.

The manufactured home park at 1501 N. Elizabeth St. is outside the north end of Milton-Freewater's city limit, but inside the urban growth boundary. The park has endured water-quality problems for years, and the 30-or-so residents there have been living under a warning from the Oregon Health

Authority to boil their water due to contamination.

The state health agency in December identified a grant that would cover the cost of providing clean water to the park. Hall, in a memo to the council, reported one solution would be extending city water lines to the park at "absolutely no cost to the city or its citizens or ratepayers."

The extension makes the most sense, she explained, because the park is near the city boundary and drilling a new well would be risky.

The Oregon Water Resources Department

declared Milton-Freewater a "special water management area" due to its declining aquifer, according to Hall. New well permits, she stated, "are very likely to be prohibited in the very near future." And if the city ever annexed the property, she said "it would be awkward" to have a private well inside city limits.

The council meets Tuesday at 7 p.m. at the Albee Room at the city library, 8 S.W. Eighth Ave., Milton-Freewater. The council also will consider updating the city code.

Applications being accepted for century farm & ranch program

East Oregonian

The Oregon Century Farm & Ranch Program is now accepting applications for 2017 to honor farms and ranches in continuous family operation for 100 years.

To date, 1,175 families have formally received the century farm or ranch designation, while 33 others have received the sesquicentennial award, marking 150 years. There are 74 century or sesquicentennial farms and ranches in Umatilla County, and 27 in Morrow County.

Century farms or ranches must be in continuous family operation to qualify for the program, and generate a gross annual income of at least \$1,000 for at least three out of the past five years prior to application. Family members must also live on or actively manage the land to this day.

A committee reviews documentation provided with each application, which may include photos, original deeds or other historic records. All documents are archived for public access, providing a glimpse of Oregon's agricultural history and settlement patterns.

Successful applicants will receive a personalized certificate with acknowledgment from the governor and state

Department of Agriculture, as well as a metal roadside sign. Each family will be honored during a special ceremony and reception at the Oregon State Fair on Aug. 26. The deadline to apply is May 1.

The Oregon Century Farm & Ranch Program was established in 1958, and is administered by the Oregon Farm Bureau Foundation for Education. For more information, contact Andréa Kuenzi, program coordinator, at 503-400-7884 or cfr@oregonfb.org.

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