

# Drug team makes three busts in three days

By PHIL WRIGHT  
East Oregonian

The local police drug task force took down three drug houses in three cities in three icy days.

Pendleton police chief Stuart Roberts said the Blue Mountain Enforcement Narcotics Team made two arrests Tuesday in Pendleton, then Wednesday netted 10 arrests at a site in Milton-Freewater. And on Thursday morning they were at a home in Stanfield and arrested another two.

"It was an extremely slow roll to Milton-Freewater yesterday," Roberts said, because of the weather. "But they got the job done."

Roberts said police at all three locations served search warrants and seized drugs, primarily methamphetamine but also heroin. The searches also yielded guns, as well as a cache of stolen goods in Milton-Freewater, which the Umatilla County Sheriff's Office is investigating.

The raids in Milton-Freewater and Stanfield required the Oregon State Police SWAT team due to the threat of certain suspects. Even so, Roberts said, the team of police did not beat down doors, but instead surrounded homes and called out for occupants to surrender.

Roberts said the more cautious approach has gained

traction nationwide. The tactic reduces danger but takes longer and comes at a cost. At the Milton-Freewater and Stanfield raids he said suspects tried to destroy evidence before police entered.

Roberts, who chairs the drug team's board of directors, said the three sites sold drugs independently of each other and each had their own supply source. The investigations that culminated in this week's arrests took three to six months. He stressed the SWAT team was essential to this week's arrests.

The drug team assesses threats before a bust, Roberts explained, and investigations revealed "some pretty dangerous characters." Three people at the home in Milton-Freewater and one in Stanfield "were self-professed gang members," he said.

The ice storm that hit the region Tuesday night was not enough to call off the raids. Troopers throughout Oregon serve on the SWAT team, so once the drug task force coordinates with state police and sets dates, backing out represents a significant waste of time and money.

The sheriff's office online jail roster shows police arrested 10 people Wednesday at 122 S.E. Third Ave., Milton-Freewater, including Salvador Duran Saucedo Jr.,

27, and Terry Diaz, 27, for possession and delivery of meth. They and eight others also face the misdemeanor charge of frequenting a place where drugs are used.

Umatilla County Circuit Court records show Diaz lives at the 122 S.E. Third address and has a history of driving violations going back to 2008. In 2016 he faced misdemeanors for committing harassment and attempted assault on March 5. The Umatilla County District Attorney's Office dismissed the case on Jan. 12.

Three witnesses saw Diaz assaulting the victim on the side of a road, according to the state's motion to dismiss, but those witnesses now may not be able to identify the defendant. And the officer who responded and arrested Diaz is facing charges and cannot be a witness for the state.

The motion does not identify the officer, but the state conceded it cannot prove the case.

Court records show the state also dismissed a misdemeanor fleeing charge in early 2016 against Saucedo.

The roster also shows the sheriff's office arrested one person at the home — Jaime Torres, 21, for possession of burglary tools, a felony. He also has an ongoing criminal case in Umatilla County for possession of meth.

## HERMISTON



Staff photo by Jade McDowell

Vehicles move through a flooded intersection at the corner of Northwest 11th Street and Orchard Avenue.

# Melting snow creates wet mess

East Oregonian

Temperatures in the mid-30s on Thursday afternoon in Hermiston helped melt ice off the roads but created a slushy mess on side roads.

The city of Hermiston's snow plows were still

out Thursday afternoon clearing slush off the streets. The day before, city crews were out early spreading gravel at intersections to help cars get traction on the ice.

As residents and businesses clear their sidewalks and parking spaces they are

encouraged to pile the snow on lawns, not the road. Clearing the area around street drains, which may be blocked by a pile of snow, will help flooded intersections drain faster, meaning less ice on the roads when the temperature dips back below freezing.

## MILTON-FREEWATER

# New police station, Hispanic advisory committee among city council goals

By ANTONIO SIERRA  
East Oregonian

Built in 1910, Milton-Freewater City Hall is not only one of the centerpiece of the city, but central to the city government's goals for the future.

In a report to the Milton-Freewater City Council before the members adopted the goals Jan. 9, city manager Linda Hall called the list for 2017-2022 "one of the longest and most wide-encompassing that I have seen in my career."

Although the list spans several different areas, the future of Milton-Freewater's historic city hall took several bullet points.

The Milton-Freewater Police Department is currently housed in the city hall basement, a fact the city would like to change.

Hall said in an interview that the people in charge of building city hall couldn't have anticipated a larger police force, computers or a records retention schedule, meaning the modern police department operates in cramped environs.

"It's pretty horrible," she said, adding that there's also a lack of natural light.

Hall said the council is interested in building a new, stand-alone police station on a city-owned lot west of city hall.

From the bottom of city hall to the top, Hall said the city also wants to explore restoring city hall's third floor, an old auditorium, and turn it into the council's permanent chambers.

The council currently meets in a room at the Milton-Freewater Public Library.

Accessing the third floor, or any other besides the ground floor, is also an issue for city hall. Without an elevator, the building doesn't meet Americans with Disabilities Act standards.

Hall said installing an elevator into the building would set the city back roughly \$500,000.

Besides city hall improvements, other goals include establishing more funding for parks and recreation, re-establishing the city's urban renewal district and securing long-term funding for street maintenance.

On the latter goal, Hall said a \$3 million state grant from several years ago helped the city with some major street projects, but there's still a need for more road improvements.

Hall highlighted Broadway Avenue, a four-lane road that used to belong to the state that is now starting to accrue some wear and tear.

While the feasibility of some of the goals has yet to

take shape, others are already showing progress.

The city is interested in re-starting a schools resource officer position — Hall said the position was eliminated during a round of budget cuts in mid-1990s — a prospect the Milton-Freewater Unified District has already discussed with the city.

The council also continues to consider starting a Hispanic advisory council after Umatilla County Commissioner Bill Elfering in June approached the city about starting something similar to Hermiston's advisory council.

Hall said Milton-Freewater has requested the ordinance that established the original advisory council from Hermiston and is waiting to hear back.

"We're intrigued by Hermiston's services, but they're bigger than we are," she said.

Because the population of Hermiston is more than double than that of Milton-Freewater (16,745 and 7,050, respectively), Hall said the council is also considering appointing a single liaison rather than an entire committee.

At 43.1 percent of the population, Milton-Freewater has the highest share of Latino residents in Umatilla County.

# School board to discuss snow day exemptions

The Oregon State Board of Education will discuss the possibility of a temporary exemption to instructional time requirements, in light of the unusual number of snow days for schools around the state.

The state sets a minimum amount of "seat time" for students in the classroom each year, but many school districts have had too many cancellations due to inclement weather to meet that requirement without adding more days on to the school year.

Hermiston School District, for example, did not originally build any snow days into its 2016-2017 schedule, then later moved graduation back a week in order to accommodate the five snow days the district had been forced to take. The district is now up to six snow days and two late starts and has not specified how or where it will make up the extra time. The district did state that the date for graduation will remain the same. Pendleton and other Umatilla

County school districts have had a similar number of snow days but have held off in addressing make-up days to see if the state would allow any flexibility.

Prior to 2015, schools were allowed to count up to 14 hours of time off for inclement weather toward their mandatory instructional time. Under a rule change in 2015, schools were no longer allowed to count any time off as instructional hours.

The proposal before the Oregon State Board of Education during their Jan. 26 meeting would allow local school boards to petition the state's Deputy Superintendent to count up to 14 hours of time off for inclement weather toward their instructional hours for 2016-2017. If they want to count more time than that, they can submit a request for a waiver for up to 22 hours that would have to be approved by the State Board of Education.

The discussion will take place at the Oregon State

Board of Education's Jan. 26 meeting from 1-5 p.m., in the Public Service Building, Room 251 at 255 Capitol Street NE Salem. The board's deliberations will also be live-streamed online at <https://livestream.com/accounts/4436497/ODEV-ideo>. The agenda estimates the snow day discussion will start about 2:15 p.m.

## Every rock star had to start somewhere.

Youth (8-12 yrs.) beginning guitar classes start Jan. 9 and run each Monday 5:00-6:00 pm through March. We'll even provide the guitar.



PENDLETON CENTER for the ARTS

Mention this ad and pay just \$40 for all 10 sessions. More info: 541-278-9201 or [pendletonarts.org](http://pendletonarts.org)

## BRIEFLY

### Humanities program starts conversation

The Conversation Project brings Oregonians together to discuss important and challenging issues and ideas

More than 90 free programs will take place in communities around the state this winter and spring. Programs presented in Umatilla County are:

- Good Food, Bad Food: Agriculture, Ethics, and Personal Choice by Kristy Athens. Wednesday, Jan. 25 at 10 a.m. at BMCC, 2411 N.W. Carden Ave., Pendleton.

- Life after War: Photography and Oral Histories of Coming Home by Jim Lommasson. Friday, Feb. 3 at 6:30 p.m. at Frazier Farmstead Museum, 1403 Chestnut St., Milton-Freewater.

- Homeless in the Land of Plenty by Ryan Stroud. Wednesday, Feb. 8 at 11 a.m. at BMCC, 975 S.E. Columbia Drive, Hermiston.

Other topics offered across the state include immigration, racial diversity, gender issues, the purpose of prisons and refugee communities in Oregon.

For more information about presentations, visit [www.oregonhumanities.org/calendar](http://www.oregonhumanities.org/calendar). For questions, contact Mikaela Schey at 503-241-0543 or [m.schey@oregonhumanities.org](mailto:m.schey@oregonhumanities.org).

### Ciao! Italy

HERMISTON — A trip overview for an Italian adventure will be presented through Chamber Explorations.

The once-in-a-lifetime experience is Oct. 17-26. Ryan Campbell of Chamber Explorations will share about the itinerary, which includes round-trip airfare from Portland, 11 meals, wine tasting, a cooking class and many sight-seeing highlights.

The informational meeting is Wednesday, Jan. 25 at 6 p.m. at Holiday Inn Express, 245 N. First Place, Hermiston. For

### Student anthology seeks submissions

PORTLAND — The deadline for student art, photography, poetry and prose is Jan. 31 for an anthology created by a Portland-based conservation organization.

"Honoring Our Rivers" seeks submissions from kindergarten through college students from across the state. Items submitted should reflect the relationship between students and Pacific Northwest rivers and watersheds, including weather, land, plants, animals and habitats that make up river systems.

A special feature, Working Rivers — in honor of the Port of Portland's 125th anniversary and in celebration of rivers connecting communities — focuses on towns, traditions and economies (fishing, agriculture) connected to rivers, iconic bridges and historical expeditions. Students are encouraged to be creative.

For details on the four ways to submit, visit [www.honoringourrivers.org](http://www.honoringourrivers.org). Photographs of art installations, bulky items or sculptures also are accepted.

In addition to the publication, students artists and authors are celebrated during special readings and gallery exhibits across the state.

### Ione FFA hosts fundraisers

IONE — An Apple watch is being raffled off to benefit the Ione FFA and the Ione Cardinal Booster Club

Donated by the Port of Morrow, tickets are \$5 each or five for \$20.



Tickets can be purchased from FFA or booster club members during basketball games. The drawing will be held Saturday, Feb. 11 during the basketball game against Horizon Christian.

In addition, metal art trees created in the shop at Ione Community School will benefit the Farmers Ending Hunger project. They are available for purchase in the gift shop at the SAGE Center, 101 Olson Road, Boardman.

For more information, contact 541-422-7131 or [erin.heideman@ionesd.org](mailto:erin.heideman@ionesd.org).

### Library seeks friends members

HERMISTON — People who enjoy books and libraries are encouraged to join the Friends of the Hermiston Public Library.

The group meets quarterly and assists the library by raising money through the annual book sale and periodic basket raffle baskets. Members can help decide how money that is raised is used.

There are membership dues, but with that comes perks — including a preview and discount for the book sale. To learn more, attend the next meeting Wednesday, Feb. 8 at 6 p.m. at the library, 235 E. Gladys Ave., Hermiston.

For more information, call 541-567-2882.

Submit information to: [community@eastoregonian.com](mailto:community@eastoregonian.com) or drop off to the attention of Tammy Malgesini at 333 E. Main St., Hermiston or Renee Struthers at 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton. Call 541-564-4539 or 541-966-0818 with questions.

### 13th Annual Cattleman's Workshop

*Navigating the Future in the Cow/Calf Industry*

**Saturday, January 21st, 2017**  
Blue Mountain Conference Center • 404 12th Street, La Grande, OR

**FREE!**  
No Pre-Registration Required.  
Lunch Included.

<b>9:00 - 9:15</b>	<b>Workshop Introductions &amp; Overview</b> Kevin Ochsner, Host Cattlemen to Cattlemen TV; Kersey, CO
<b>9:15 - 10:00</b>	<b>Cattle Market Challenges and Opportunities in 2017</b> Dr. Derrell Peel, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK
<b>10:00 - 10:45</b>	<b>Genetic Technologies in the Poultry Industry, The Other Protein</b> Dr. Mitch Abrahamsen, Senior VP Research & Development; Cobb-Vantress, Siloam Springs, AR
<b>10:45 - 11:15</b>	<b>Break</b> (provided by sponsors)
<b>11:15 - 12:00</b>	<b>Ethics, Values &amp; Science. Finding the Right Mix For Building Consumer Trust</b> Donna Moenning, Center For Food Integrity; Gladstone, MO
<b>12:00 - 1:15</b>	<b>Lunch</b> (provided by sponsors)
<b>1:15 - 2:00</b>	<b>Keys to a Successful Heifer Development Program</b> Dr. Che Trejo, Zoetis Beef Technical Services Veterinarian; Malad, ID
<b>2:00 - 3:00</b>	<b>Navigation Tools for the Cow/Calf Producer</b> Kevin Ochsner, Host Cattlemen to Cattlemen TV; Kersey, CO

**NOTE:** For more information, please contact Kim McKague at (541) 562-5129 • <http://oregonstate.edu/dept/eoarcunion>