

CROSS: Brought the girl to his hotel on each of his three trips to Pendleton

Continued from 1A

an 18-year-old former inmate at Oak Creek, a close-custody correctional facility for young women in Albany. They met that spring, when Cross was a group life coordinator for the Youth Authority.

Staff pulled the teen from Cross's work crew after she said she wore makeup to "look good for Gary." But the Youth Authority started its investigation when Cross's wife told one of her husband's co-workers he was having an affair with a teen who paroled out of Oak Creek.

The Youth Authority paroled the girl on Aug. 11 to Community Outreach Inc., a Corvallis halfway house. A week later she ran away, resulting in a felony warrant for her arrest.

Manley told state police that Cross was at the Oxford Suites in Pendleton for Oregon Youth Authority meetings and had been there twice already that month.

Moisan contacted fellow OSP detective Mike Wolf in the Pendleton office and asked him to check the hotel for Cross and the girl. Hotel staff confirmed Cross checked in but would not tell

Wolf any other information. Wolf found the state-owned car Cross drove to the hotel but did not find evidence of the teen.

Manley emailed police that Cross would be back at the Pendleton hotel Sept. 6-9.

The morning of Sept. 9, Wolf spotted Cross outside the hotel, and he was with a girl. Three hours later, Wolf had the girl in custody on the warrant and released Cross to return to Salem in the state-owned car.

Wolf questioned the girl and found photos of Cross's genitals on her cellphone. She claimed she stayed with Cross at the Oxford Suites on two previous trips to Pendleton but did not admit to having sex with him. She also said hotel staff "tipped them off" to the police.

Moisan caught up with Cross at the state lot in Salem where he was picking up his car and took him to the OSP office for questioning.

Cross said he met the girl in May at Oak Creek, and in June used the state's Juvenile Justice Information System to access information about her, although he had no official reason to do so. He said she contacted him on Facebook in August, and they used Facebook

Messenger to communicate. They exchanged phone numbers and met in person. He said did not know she had a warrant.

He told police he brought her to his Pendleton hotel on each of his three stays and admitted to having sex with her multiple times. He said he sent photos of himself, including of his genitals. He used personal and work phones to send her messages, and he drove a state car to pick her up in Centralia, Washington.

"Cross told me," the detective wrote, "he knew his relationship with [name deleted] violated OYA policy."

Benjamin Chambers, communications director for the Youth Authority, said in an email Cross "was duty-stationed at home beginning Sept. 12, 2016, while we began an investigation. We sent a pre-dismissal letter to him on Oct. 7, 2016,

and he resigned on Oct. 19, 2016, while our investigation was still ongoing."

Cross began working at the Oregon Youth Authority on March 31, 2008.

Moisan on Sept. 13 took a call from Youth Authority investigator Manley, who said the girl admitted to her parole officer she and Cross had sex while she was an inmate at Oak Creek when she was 17. She also said Cross drove her from the halfway house the night of Aug. 18, when she absconded, to her friend's home in Centralia, Washington.

Moisan questioned the girl that afternoon at the Eugene juvenile detention center. She claimed she hinted to Cross there might be a warrant for her but never outright said so. She had memorized his personal cellphone number. She saved a message Cross sent from his work phone proposing marriage.

She told Moisan she touched Cross under his clothes at Oak Creek starting in April or May, when she was 17, but he did not touch her, and they did not have sex.

Moisan ended the questioning at 5:35 p.m. that day, left the center and at 6:20 p.m. received a text from the Debbie Anderson, the girl's parole officer.

"When I walked back in ... she said she had the feeling you thought she wasn't being honest," the text stated, and she "might have forgotten the places he touched me."

Anderson also texted what the girl told her and what she told Moisan "was real different" and she could always call Moisan if she remembered.

Moisan testified to a Umatilla County grand jury that indicted Cross on April 6. The charges of first-degree official misconduct stem from Cross using a state

vehicle to transport the girl and getting a break on the price of the hotel room because he was a state employee. The charges of first-degree custodial sexual misconduct relate to having sex with the girl while he was a youth offender supervisor for the state.

A posting for a group life coordinator, the position Cross held, states the job involves "pro-social role modeling" and "coaching, confronting, and correcting the behavior of youth offenders."

Cross remains out of jail on his own recognizance. Circuit Judge Jon Lieuallen during Tuesday morning's arraignment told Cross not to contact the girl. Cross is due back in court June 27, 10 a.m., for a pre-trial conference.

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



This image provided by the U.S. Department of Energy shows a 20-foot by 20-foot hole in the roof of a storage tunnel at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation Tuesday.

Hanford tunnel collapse renews safety concerns about nuclear sites

Associated Press

RICHLAND, Wash. — The collapse of a tunnel containing radioactive waste at the Hanford nuclear weapons complex underscored what critics have long been saying: The toxic remnants of the Cold War are being stored in haphazard and unsafe conditions, and time is running out to deal with the problem.

"Unfortunately, the crisis at Hanford is far from an isolated incident," said Kevin Kamps of the anti-nuclear group Beyond Nuclear.

For instance, at the Savannah River Site in South Carolina, which opened in the 1950s and produced plutonium and tritium, the government is laboring to clean up groundwater contamination along with 40 million gallons of radioactive liquid waste stored in tanks that are decades past their projected lifespan. The job is likely to take decades.

In addition to the tunnel collapse discovered Tuesday, dozens of underground storage tanks at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation in Washington state — some dating to World War II — are leaking highly radioactive materials.

The problem is that the U.S. government rushed to build nuclear weapons during the Cold War with little thought given to how to permanently dispose of the resulting waste.

Safely removing it now is proving enormously expensive, slow-going, extraordinarily dangerous and so complex that much of the technology required simply does not exist. The cleanup has also been plagued with political and technical setbacks.

For example, the nation's only underground nuclear waste repository, in New Mexico, closed to new shipments in 2014 after an improperly packed drum of waste ruptured. The site just recently reopened.

The U.S. Department of Energy spends about \$6 billion a year on managing waste left from the production

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— Kevn Kamps, Beyond Nuclear

of nuclear weapons.

"The temporary solutions DOE has used for decades to contain radioactive waste at Hanford have limited lifespans," said Sen. Ron Wyden, an Oregon Democrat and frequent Hanford critic. "The longer it takes to clean up Hanford, the higher the risk will be to workers, the public and the environment."

U.S. Energy Secretary Rick Perry acknowledged the problem with nuclear waste, saying the nation can no longer delay fixing the problem because lives are at stake.

During a tour Wednesday of the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico, Perry said the federal government has failed to remove the waste in a timely manner and he pledged to make progress.

A recently approved bipartisan federal budget deal for this fiscal year includes \$2.3 billion for the ongoing Hanford cleanup, which matches the amount that Sen. Patty Murray, a Washington Democrat, worked to include last year. President Donald Trump is expected to release his 2018 proposal later this month.

Washington Gov. Jay Inslee said the state plans to issue an order making sure the federal government determines the cause of the tunnel collapse. The order will also require the Energy Department to assess if there's an immediate risk of failures in any other tunnels and take actions to safely store waste in the tunnels until a decision is made about how to permanently handle the material. Thousands of workers at Hanford were told to stay home as efforts began to plug the 400-square-foot sinkhole in the earth over the unoccupied storage tunnel.

Thursday Morning

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STARZ OWL

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