

TRCI, three other Oregon prisons accused of serving sub-standard food

By MAXINE BERNSTEIN
The Oregonian/Oregonlive

A class action lawsuit on behalf of former and current inmates at four state prisons alleges that Oregon's Department of Corrections fed them chicken and fish marked "not for human consumption."

The lawsuit accuses the Corrections Department of civil rights violations and "deliberate indifference to health and safety." It seeks to compel state prisons to provide adequate nutrition and sanitary food handling.

The prisons cited in the suit are Two Rivers Correctional Institution in Umatilla, Columbia River Correctional Institution in Portland, the Oregon State Penitentiary in Salem and Coffee Creek Correctional Facility in Wilsonville.

Before state health inspections, prison officials would direct inmates to clean up kitchens and remove "not for human consumption" food and move green meat and moldy, spoiled food to mobile refrigerators and freezer trucks, only to return the spoiled food to the kitchen after inspection, attorney Leonard Berman wrote in a suit filed in U.S. District Court in Portland on Tuesday.

Bridgette Lewis, an inmate at Coffee Creek in July 2013, worked in warehousing in



Inmates at four state prisons, including Two Rivers in Umatilla, have filed a class action lawsuit accusing the prisons of serving sub-standard food.

the kitchen of the women's prison and witnessed the delivery of food marked "not for human consumption" being prepared and served to her and fellow inmates, the suit said.

She was ordered to serve the "substandard food over her objections," according to the suit.

Another former Coffee Creek inmate, Tiffanie Lewis, said she also worked in the kitchen in early 2015 and saw "not for human consumption" bait fish and spoiled milk, meats and produce served to

inmates. In stark contrast, she prepared "prime beef roasts" for prison staff, the suit says.

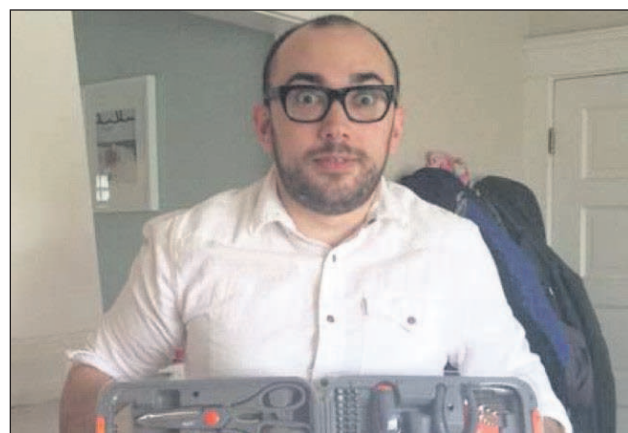
The inmates were often nauseated during and after meals and suffered stomach and intestinal pain and discomfort, the suit says.

The suit seeks unspecified economic and noneconomic damages, including punitive damages.

Betty Bernt, spokeswoman for the corrections department, said the agency doesn't comment on pending litigation.

In 2009, an East Coast

food broker who was selling imperfect sausages and other surplus foods to Oregon prisons was convicted of bribery and tax fraud. He had been bribing the state prison food services administrator at the time to get the sales and was sentenced to three months in prison. The former food services administrator, Farhad "Fred" Monem, fled to his native Iran while facing federal indictment, accused of taking \$1.2 million in bribes while on the job overseeing Oregon's prison food program.



Jeffrey Ryan Kelsay has been reported missing in the Blue Mountains east of Pendleton.

Search for Portland man last seen in Pendleton area

PENDLETON — The Umatilla County Sheriff's Office is looking for a missing Tuesday walking along Interstate 84 in the Blue Mountains.

Jeffrey Ryan Kelsay, 30, was headed to Baker City, according to a press release from the sheriff's office, when his car apparently ran out of gas at milepost 235.

He was last seen at about 3:30 p.m. Tuesday by an Oregon Department of Transportation employee, and Kelsay contacted his father about an hour later and told him he was walking toward Pendleton.

The county's search and rescue team responded to the location Wednesday on the missing person report and found his vehicle but

no sign of Kelsay. They stopped the search, which included the department's drone, at 2:45 a.m. Thursday and resumed it at 5:40 a.m. Union and Walla Walla counties are assisting in the search.

"It is unknown if Mr. Kelsay made it into either Pendleton or La Grande at this point," Sheriff Terry Rowan said in the release Thursday morning. "So we are asking law enforcement to be on the look out."

Kelsay is 5-feet, 11-inches tall, weighs 175 pounds and has black hair and hazel eyes.

The Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue will continue to search the area. Anyone with information is asked to call the sheriff's office non-emergency line at 541-966-3651.

HERMISTON

Blue ribbons available for Law Enforcement Appreciation Week

East Oregonian

Next week, citizens are encouraged to give a little extra thought to the people that keep them safe, with National Law Enforcement Appreciation week.

"It's an emphasis on just saying 'thank you' to law enforcement at the city, county, state and even federal level," said Terry Cummings, chaplain for the Hermiston Police Department.

Blue ribbons are available at several locations around Hermiston, and members of the community can tie them to the antenna or rearview mirror of their car, so that police officers will see them when they're out driving.

The ribbons are printed with the word "COPS," for "Concerns of Police Survivors," an organization dedicated to supporting police officers and colleagues affected by deaths in the line of duty. The ribbons are free and are furnished by this



The Concerns of Police Survivors organization created these ribbons for people to display on their vehicles to support police officers during National Law Enforcement Appreciation Week, May 14-20.

organization.

The idea began in 1962, when President John F. Kennedy declared May 15 as National Peace Officers' Day. Congress later changed it so the entire week of May 14-20 became National Law Enforcement Appreciation Week.

Cummings said so far,

1,700 ribbons have been distributed, and the week isn't even here yet.

But saying "thank you" doesn't have to be with a ribbon.

"A card, an email, something that says 'you're appreciated,'" Cummings said. "In today's very critical culture of law enforcement, they need

all the support they can get."

He noted that Hermiston's relationship with its law enforcement seems to have remained fairly positive.

"I'm so grateful for that," he said.

He attributed the Hermiston Police Department's image to the quality of service, and to the connection officers have with community members.

"(The public) sees them as real people," he said. "They coach sports teams, they're invested in the community in different ways."

Nevertheless, he said, even these officers can use a boost.

"Last year, from a couple of grade school classes, every kid made a card," he said. "I think every person in the department read every card. It means so much to them."

Ribbons are available in Hermiston at Ace Hardware, Banner Bank, BiMart, the Chamber of Commerce, city hall, Hermiston Drug and the Hermiston Police Department.

BRIEFLY

Rocky Heights carnival on Friday

HERMISTON — Rocky Heights Elementary School will hold its biannual carnival from 5 to 8 p.m. Friday. The festival is open to the public and will have activities such as a dunk tank, Hungry Hungry Hippo, bingo, a volleyball challenge and bouncy house.

Individuals can purchase an entry bracelet for \$5 or \$20 for a family. That fee will apply to all activities except the dunk tank.

Rocky Heights Elementary School is at 650 W. Standard Ave., Hermiston.

City taking transient room tax grant applications

HERMISTON — The city of Hermiston is taking applications for transient room tax grants.

The money can go to any registered 501(c)3 nonprofit for a project in Hermiston that will benefit the community through enhanced tourism, marketing or lodging.

For the 2016-2017 cycle the grant committee awarded \$26,000 to nine different projects. The funds represent roughly 9 percent of the revenue from the transient room tax placed on hotel rooms in the city.

Application materials can be picked up and dropped off at city hall, 180 N.E. Second St., and must be returned by 4 p.m. on Friday, June 2.

Applicants will be invited to give a five-minute presentation to the grant committee on June 21.

Seat belt safety blitz starts Monday

PENDLETON — The Umatilla County Sheriff's Office and other law enforcement agencies will participate in extra patrols to enforce seat belt laws.

The seat belt safety blitz runs Monday through Sunday, May 28, according to the written announcement from the sheriff's office. The Oregon Department of Transportation funds the extra patrol and operates the two-week program in conjunction with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's annual "Click It or Ticket" campaign.

Oregon law requires all occupants to use safety restraints and children weighing less than 40 pounds to use a child seat or harness.

The sheriff's office stated vehicle crashes are the leading cause nationwide of death for children ages 1-12, and vehicle occupants without a seat belt or proper restraint are five times more likely to be ejected during a crash.

You can find information on seat belt safety at www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TS/safetybelts.shtml.

Briefs are compiled from staff and wire reports, and press releases. Email press releases to news@eastoregonian.com

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

FRIDAY, MAY 12

PENDLETON MASTERS SWIM CLUB, 5-6 p.m., Roundup Athletic Club pool, 1415 Southgate, Pendleton. \$5 per session coaching fee; non-RAC members pay \$8 pool fee per session. (Tania Wildbill 541-310-9102)

PENDLETON EAGLES LADIES AUXILIARY KITCHEN, 6-8 p.m., Pendleton Eagles Lodge, 428 S. Main St., Pendleton. St. Patrick's Day feast includes corned beef, cabbage, sides and dessert for \$10 per person. Members and guests welcome. (541-278-2828)

SATURDAY, MAY 13
MEN'S BREAKFAST, 8 a.m., Bethel Assembly of God Church, 1109 Airport Road, Pendleton. (541-276-7559)

FRIENDS OF THE UMATILLA PUBLIC LIBRARY, 9 a.m., Umatilla City Hall, 700 Sixth St., Umatilla. (541-922-5704)

EASTERN OREGON CELTIC SOCIETY PIPERS GATHERING, 1 p.m., The Old Meeting House, 901 M Ave., La Grande. For pipers of all skill levels. Instruction is free, but a \$2 donation for use of the building is appreciated. (541-568-4643)

BLACK INTERNATIONAL AWARENESS CLUB, 2 p.m., Starbucks, 1235 N. First St., Hermiston. Practicing the wisdom of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in the community, including all cultures and races. Everyone welcome. (John Cabbage 817-795-6161)

PENDLETON EAGLES STEAK AND LIVE MUSIC, 6-11:30 p.m., Pendleton Eagles Lodge, 428 S. Main St., Pendleton. Dinner from 6-8 p.m., music from 8 p.m. to midnight. Members and guests welcome. (541-278-2828)

SUNDAY, MAY 14
PENDLETON EAGLES BREAKFAST, 9 a.m.-12 p.m., Pendleton Eagles Lodge, 428 S. Main St., Pendleton. Open to members and guests. (541-278-2828)

MONDAY, MAY 15
BOARDMAN QUILT GROUP, 9 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Boardman Senior Center, 100 Tatone St., Boardman. Quilt construction,

quitting updates, education, history and friendship. Free. (Kathy Hyder 541-571-7009)

BLUE MOUNTAIN PIECE-MAKERS, 12 p.m., Thimbles Fabric N More, 1819 Westgate Place, Pendleton.

PENDLETON ROTARY CLUB, 12 p.m., Pendleton Elks Lodge, 14 S.E. Third St., Pendleton.

DIRT DABLERS GARDEN CLUB, 1 p.m., Vert Club Room, 345 S.W. Fourth St., Pendleton. Visitors welcome.

IRRIGON MOOSE LODGE TACOS AND BINGO, 6-9 p.m., Irrigon Moose Lodge, 220 N.E. Third St., Irrigon. Tacos from 6-9 p.m., bingo from 6:30-9 p.m. Open to members and guests. (541-922-1802)

OREGON TRAIL GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY, 6 p.m., Pendleton City Hall community room, 501 S.W. Emigrant Ave., Pendleton. (Tom Moon 541-278-9702)

BLOOMER GIRLS GARDEN CLUB, 6:30 p.m., location varies, location varies, Hermiston. (Barbara Chadwick 541-567-2043)

INLAND NORTHWEST MUSICIANS CHORALE REHEARSAL, 7-9 p.m., Harris Jr. Academy gymnasium, 3121 S.W. Hailey Ave., Pendleton. No tryouts; all welcome. No rehearsals June-July-August or Christmas-New Year. (RaNiel Dunn 541-289-4696)

TUESDAY, MAY 16
PENDLETON TOASTMASTERS NO. 154, 6:30 a.m., Pendleton City Hall community room, 501 S.W. Emigrant Ave., Pendleton.

TOPS CHAPTER OR 1110, 8 a.m., Missionary Baptist Church, 125 E. Beech St., Hermiston. 8 a.m. weigh-in followed by meeting at 8:45 a.m. (Margaret Wetherling 541-720-0276)

GREENFIELD GRANGE PINOCHLE, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Greenfield Grange 579, 209 N.W. First St., Boardman. (541-481-7397)

BIBLE STUDY, 10 a.m., First United Methodist Church, 352 S.E. Second St., Pendleton. (Rev. Jim Pierce 541-276-2616)

GREATER HERMISTON AREA REPUBLICAN WOMEN'S CLUB, 11:30 a.m., Desert Lanes Bowling Alley, 1545 N.

Main St., Hermiston. No-host lunch. All women welcome. (541-567-0006)

"THE LIFE MODEL: LIVING FROM THE HEART JESUS GAVE YOU" BOOK STUDY GROUP, 1-2:30 p.m., Bowman Building, 17 S.W. Frazer Ave., Pendleton. (Pat 541-276-6671)

WESTON-MCEWEN LI-ONS CLUB, 1 p.m., Doubletree Restaurant, 327 E. Main St., Athena. (Elynn 541-566-3987)

TOPS CHAPTER OR 1169, 4-5:30 p.m., Hermiston Assembly of God Church, 730 E. Hurlburt Ave., Hermiston. Use west side door. (Janell Bailey 541-571-5744)

STUDYING THE MIRACLES OF JESUS, 4-6 p.m., Good Samaritan Ministries, 319 W. Locust Ave., Hermiston. (541-564-1041)

STARBOTTLE SKI CLUB, 6 p.m., location varies, location varies, Pendleton. No-host dinner, rotating restaurants. New members welcome. (Ray Cable 541-969-7759)

AWANA, 6:30-8 p.m., Pendleton Baptist Church, 3202 S.W. Nye Ave., Pendleton. For children age 3 through sixth grade. (541-276-7590)

A SHARP PLAYERS ORCHESTRA REHEARSAL, 6:30-

8:30 p.m., Pendleton High School band room, 1800 N.W. Carden Ave., Pendleton. Intermediate orchestra for players of any instrument. (JD Kindle 541-276-0320)

PRELUDES ORCHESTRA REHEARSAL, 6:30 p.m., Blue Mountain Community College McRae Activity Center, 2411 N.W. Carden Ave., Pendleton. For beginning strings players of all ages. (JD Kindle 541-276-0320)

HEPPNER BOOK CLUB, 7 p.m., Heppner Public Library, 444 N. Main St., Heppner. Watch a TED Talks video and read the corresponding book, then discuss at the next meeting. Copies will be available to check out. Everyone welcome. (Kathy Street 541-481-3365)

ODD FELLOWS EUREKA LODGE NO. 32, 7 p.m., IOOF Hall, 19 S.W. Dorion Ave., Pendleton. (Gladys Biggerstaff 541-276-4417)

UMATILLA COUNTY EXPERIMENTAL AIRCRAFT ASSOCIATION, 7 p.m., Pendleton Airport main hangar, 2016 Airport Road, Pendleton. (541-276-1908)

HERMISTON MASONIC LODGE NO. 138 AF & AM, 7:30 p.m., Hermiston Masonic Lodge, 200 W. Orchard Ave., Hermiston.

PENDLETON CENTER for the ARTS

OPEN REGIONAL EXHIBIT

May 4 - June 23, 2017 / FREE Admission

5TH ANNUAL CRUISIN' FOR SCHOLARSHIPS CAR SHOW

Blue Mountain COMMUNITY COLLEGE

SATURDAY MAY 13 9am-2pm

BMCC Pendleton Campus Main Lawn

A car, truck, and motorcycle show with proceeds benefiting the BMCC Diesel Technology Program and student scholarships.

Car Registration: \$20, includes dash plaque and first 50 entries receive complimentary goodie bag.

Registration begins at 8:30am, or register online prior to event at www.blueecc.edu/carshow

Web registration fees will be collected event day check-in.