

# SHOOTING: Major crimes team called to investigate

Continued from 1A

if a weapon had been found. Police initially taped off a large portion of the apartment complex, the street and a nearby field on Highland Ave., which they combed for evidence on Saturday morning.

Police have identified Tyree Houfmuse, 34, as a person of interest in the death and have asked to speak with him. Houfmuse is African-American, 6-foot-1, 200-240 pounds and has several tattoos including a large rose on the left side of his neck. Anyone with information about Houfmuse's whereabouts is encouraged to call 541-567-5519.

Houfmuse has been arrested for several other violent disputes in Hermiston and Tri-Cities, most recently for a shooting in November 2014 outside a Kennewick bar that left another man paralyzed. He was arrested by federal agents in Hermiston shortly after, but a jury in 2015 ruled that Houfmuse acted in self-defense.

In 2005, Houfmuse pleaded not guilty to an attempted murder charge, in which he had allegedly fired shots into a moving vehicle with three people inside. No one was injured in the incident. The charge of attempted murder was



Members of the major crimes team gather Saturday morning after a man was fatally shot in the vicinity of Southwest 13th Place and West Highland Avenue, Hermiston.

dismissed, but Houfmuse was charged in that incident with menacing, assault in the third degree, unlawful use of a weapon against another, criminal mischief and unlawful possession of a firearm.

Friends have set up a GoFundMe account to assist Cragun's family with a funeral and other expenses, at [www.gofundme.com/helpthecraguns](http://www.gofundme.com/helpthecraguns). Cragun was

a father to young children, according to the page, but attempts to reach Cragun's family and the facilitator of the fundraiser were unsuccessful.

Cragun had been charged several times in the past few years for assault, including in November 2016 for assault in the fourth degree, strangulation and harassment. In March he was sentenced to 180 days of probation for that

crime.

A pair of women, who live in units just across the parking lot from the Viewcrest building that was surrounded by crime scene tape Saturday morning, said they were jolted awake by the sound of yelling and gunfire. Both women, who asked not to be identified, said it was frightening.

Fearing that bullets could come through the walls, the



Police from multiple agencies investigate a fatal shooting Saturday at Viewcrest Apartments, 525 S.W. 13th Place, Hermiston.

woman in the ground-level apartment sprung to action to ensure the safety of her family.

"I grabbed the baby and we went to the back of our apartment," she said.

Her upstairs neighbor said the gravity of the situation didn't initially register. Other than an occasional late night drinking party, she said the neighborhood is typically calm and quiet. At first, she thought the popping sounds from the gun was someone merely banging metal pans together. Curious, she looked outside from her second story apartment.

"I saw everything from my bedroom window," the

woman said. "I didn't even want to step outside."

She said she also saw a couple of cars speed off from the area.

"They were going so fast, I couldn't even tell what kind of car it was," she said.

In addition to the maze of crime scene tape at the apartment complex, police were searching a vacant field at the end of the block at Southwest 13th Place and West Highland Avenue — which is just east of an Ameri-Star convenience store and gas station.

Tammy Malgesini and Jayati Ramakrishnan contributed to this report.

# RING: Found in an old cigar box in dresser

Continued from 1A

four decades later.

Four years ago, Daryl Hamilton, of Willamina, came upon the ring in a cigar box full of knick-knacks and jewelry inside an old dresser that had belonged to his mother. Ila Hamilton died in 1998 and her dresser languished in Hamilton's attic for years. He initially gave the cigar box contents only a cursory glance, but finally inspected the ring more closely. Odd, he mused, he didn't know anyone connected with Pendleton High School. Hamilton put it back in the box.

Two years ago, he came across the ring again. When his brother and sister stopped by for a visit, he showed it to them and asked if they knew any possible connection between their mother and Pendleton High School. They didn't.

"I put it out of my mind," Hamilton said.

Finally, at the prodding of his granddaughter, the retired millwright decided to try and find the ring's owner. Stephanie Rudolph, who lives in McMinnville, helped by doing internet research.

"I love my grandpa," Rudolph said this week, "but he's not computer savvy at all."

She searched for schools that had the letters PHS, eventually identifying the correct school after finding the school's buckaroo logo that matched the one on the ring. Rudolph gave her grandfather the PHS phone number and one day last spring, Hamilton called. Anita Lewis, the school's athletic secretary, answered the phone.

"He explained he had found a men's class ring and was interested in getting it back to the owner," Lewis recalled. "He told me the initials on the ring and the



Kurt Kildow's lost class ring is back on his hand 42 years after it went missing after he collided with another skier at the Anthony Lakes Ski Area.

**"No one's sure why she had it all these years. I guess we'll never know."**

— Stephanie Rudolph, helped find lost ring's owner

year."

Hamilton, whose vision is fading, mistakenly told her that the initials on the ring were "R.R.," instead of "K.K." Lewis hunted down a 1975 PHS yearbook and located two boys with the initials R.R., but ran into a wall when trying to track them down.

During the summer, Rudolph realized her grandfather's bad eyesight had led him to misidentify the

initials. Hamilton looked closer with a magnifying glass and concurred. He called Lewis again with the correct initials.

"I called her and told her about the mistake," he said. "I figured she'd think 'this guy's nuts,' but she was real nice."

Lewis looked again and found one male student with the initials K.K. — Kurt Kildow. By talking to a local member of the class

and through Facebook, she finally located Kildow and sent him a Facebook message. Lewis waited — and waited.

Kildow was deep in the Russian Arctic conducting seismographic surveys, a way of mapping the earth's crust with seismic waves for oil exploration. He worked five weeks at sea and five weeks off in Norway.

"It was four or five months before I noticed the message," Kildow said.

He called Lewis, who connected him with Hamilton. Last week, the two men talked and tried to figure out how the ring came into the possession of Hamilton's mother. Hamilton said his parents had owned a restaurant eight miles away from Anthony Lakes in North Powder at the time of Kildow's collision. They didn't ski, but often drove to Anthony Lakes in the summertime to relax.

"They used to take a picnic lunch to Anthony Lakes just to get away," Hamilton said. "They liked to go for walks."

Maybe they found the ring on one of those walks, he surmised, or maybe a skier found the ring, ate afterwards at the restaurant and left it on the table.

"No one's sure why she had it all these years," Rudolph said. "I guess we'll never know."

Hamilton sent the box last Monday by priority mail and Kildow opened it on Friday, took it out of the box and tried it on. It was tighter than he remembered, but it still fit. Kildow said he's just happy to get the ring back after its four-decade hiatus.

"What are the odds?" Kildow mused. "I can't even begin to figure that out."

Contact Kathy Aney at [kaney@eastoregonian.com](mailto:kaney@eastoregonian.com) or call 541-966-0810.

# SCHOOL: Branding in the plan

Continued from 1A

creating classrooms without borders; and instructional excellence.

Although the initiatives are broad, specifics are already starting to form.

The committee identified solutions like creating a branding mission statement, overhaul the district's hiring process to ensure best candidates are hired, increase the district's mental health awareness and services, and survey student's educational needs.

There are still steps that need to be taken before the plan can be adopted.

Like the city of Pendleton's recent goal-making process, the district wants to define measurables the board and administrators could use to keep track of the districts progress toward meeting the initiatives laid out in the strategic plan.

McBee pointed toward enrollment as a way to measure the district's progress.

"Do we see a turnaround in enrollment?" she said. "Do we see people that have chosen to go to Helix or another district decide to come back? Or some kids that have gotten online classes choose to do things back in the district?"

Yoshioka said administrators will be responsible for finalizing the strategic plan before the beginning of the 2017-2018 school year in late August.

This not only gives administrators more time to review the plan, but will allow for more input from incoming superintendent Chris Fritsch.

Since he was selected May 5, Fritsch has made the trip from Longview, Wash-

ington to Pendleton several times to meet with local leaders and community members.

Besides stints in Texas and Ocean Shores, Washington, Fritsch has spent almost his entire life and career in Longview, 50 miles north of Portland, rising from a longterm substitute teacher to the assistant superintendent of Longview Public Schools.

Fritsch said he's spent his trips familiarizing himself with the district, including the strategic plan.

Fritsch said the issues facing the district are common across the Northwest.

"The challenges are the same as what we're all facing, whether you're on the north side or the south side of the Columbia," he said.

As a Longview administrator, Fritsch said he dealt with issues of declining enrollment and has already worked on the type of projects the district is currently considering, like establishing a district-run online school.

Educators struggle with promoting themselves, Fritsch said, and the district will need to advertise Pendleton's positive qualities to bring more families to town.

With the state's school funding situation frequently volatile, Fritsch said the district will have to look for new ways to develop self-sufficiency and local partnerships instead of looking externally.

Fritsch anticipated the strategic plan would be a "living document" that would continue to evolve and stay involved in the district's activities.

## No structures damaged in Boardman fire

BOARDMAN — The Boardman Fire Department battled a 60-acre blaze Monday afternoon, and were able to contain the flames within an hour and a half.

Department officials said the fire took place at Insitu Farms in Boardman, west of

the bombing range.

They said the fire started when workers were trying to burn the tops off carrots to prepare them for harvest, and the blaze got out of hand.

According to the department, no structures were damaged in the fire.

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