

STANFIELD

Coach resigns after parents blame cheerleaders for loss

Coach's mother dismissed from school secretary duties shortly before retirement

By JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN
East Oregonian

A verbal altercation between a school board member and the cheerleading coach after Stanfield High School's loss in the state basketball championship game led to the coach's resignation. And several months later the coach's mother was removed from her job as the school secretary shortly before her planned retirement.

The mother and daughter believe the early dismissal was in retaliation for the heated argument earlier in the year, but school officials say that isn't the case.

Cheerleading coach Naomie Valdez resigned her position on the team following a series of arguments with a group of parents during football and

basketball season, including school board member Terry Monkus, who Valdez said berated her and the cheerleaders after the state championship basketball game.

Valdez claims the group of parents blamed the boys basketball team's 57-54 loss in the title game at the Pendleton Convention Center on the lack of enthusiasm from the cheer squad. It was a complaint similar to what she said she heard from parents after the football team, featuring many of the same players, lost the state championship game in November at Hermiston's Kennison Field.

After an argument between Monkus and Valdez during a student gathering at the convention center immediately after the state final basketball game, Valdez texted Superintendent

Shelley Liscom about the interaction. Liscom apologized to Valdez in a reply text and said it shouldn't have happened, and the next week Monkus apologized to Valdez in an online message.

Valdez said she and the students did not make any official written complaints, but verbally complained to the superintendent and principal as well as the school board chair, but did not feel her complaints were adequately addressed. Valdez, who had coached the cheerleaders for 10 years, resigned soon after.

Scott Morris, the chair of Stanfield's school board, said he met with Valdez, Monkus and a few other school officials as a group. He said he thought the issue had been resolved in that meeting, as did Liscom.

"Some apologies were made," Morris said. "The administration did look into it. We listened to what had transpired."

Monkus told the *East Oregonian* she apologized to the cheerleaders, but said her comments were not directed at them. She said they were made to someone else, and the coach overheard what she said.

"There was nothing more to it," Monkus said.

Valdez said she had hoped to discuss the incident and get her job back. She said she tried repeatedly before the meeting to speak with Liscom and Beth Burton, who is both the Stanfield Secondary School principal and athletic director, but neither responded to her messages.

She said at the end of last month, she received a letter from the district saying they had accepted her resignation.

Valdez's mother, Aleta Lemmon, had worked in the Stanfield School District for 22 years and in December gave notice of her intent to retire at the end of the school year. But not

long after Valdez resigned, Lemmon was moved to a smaller office and had her duties reduced. Shortly after, on May 19, with just a few weeks left in the school year, she was told to turn in her keys and not come back.

Lemmon said she was not given any prior warnings or criticisms before receiving a memo signed by Liscom that she had been relieved of her duties and was to leave immediately.

Liscom said Lemmon was not fired, because she was paid through the end of the school year. The memo stated that Lemmon was relieved of her duties because of several behaviors, including leaving work early, failing to follow school policy and letting students leave campus without parent permission, as well as reading another staff member's card when flowers were delivered to her at the school. The memo also states that Lemmon made the comment "What are they

going to do, fire me?" to students.

Lemmon said some of the accusations were accurate, such as leaving work early, which she said she did because she had not taken a lunch that day, and making the comment to students. But she said she did not do some of the others, such as allowing students to leave campus without permission and slamming the superintendent's door.

While Lemmon is content with her retirement and said she has fond memories of her time in the Stanfield School District, she was upset with the way things ended. Valdez is upset by the way she and her students were treated, and feels it may have had something to do with the way her mother was dismissed.

She also said she would be interested in returning to the job as cheerleading coach, which has not been filled, according to Burton.

UMATILLA

Landing Days kicks off Friday

East Oregonian

In celebration of the town's 155th anniversary, Umatilla Landing Days will feature a two-day celebration.

The festival kicks off Friday, 5-10 p.m. at Umatilla Marina Park. Geared towards an adult crowd, the evening offers food vendors, a beer garden and live music, including The Outsiders and Grupo Viajero.

The event kicks into high gear Saturday, starting with a parade at 10 a.m. in downtown Umatilla. After the parade, the fun moves to the marina park, which will feature a full schedule of entertainment and activities. In addition, craft and food vendors will be on hand.

Additional displays and educational activities include boater safety information, boat rides from the Umatilla County Sheriff's Office marine division, personnel from the Umatilla Rural Fire



File photo

Umatilla Landing Days features outdoor fun Friday and Saturday at the Umatilla Marina Park.

Protection District and a drunk driving display trailer from the Oregon Department of Transportation. In addition, a group of chainsaw artists will be on hand making and selling their creations.

The day also features a salsa making contest (entries must be submitted by noon), a soccer tournament and an Instagram photo contest — be sure to use the

hashtag #UmatillaLandingDays2017. Also, Nuketown is the featured evening performer.

There is a \$5 parking fee at the gate. Money is used to help cover costs for the fireworks show, which will fill the air Saturday at dusk.

For more information, call 541-922-4825 or search Facebook for "Umatilla Landing Days."

Carrillo arraigned on charges of disorderly conduct, criminal mischief

East Oregonian

Jesus Carrillo, Jr. of Umatilla was arraigned Tuesday on misdemeanor charges of disorderly conduct and criminal mischief after a brawl at a Hermiston hotel, which came just a week after his arrest and release in a suspected assault in Umatilla.

Carrillo and Cesar Placencia have been charged with involvement in a two-on-one beating at the Holiday Inn in Hermiston on Saturday. According to prosecutor Matthew Dyal, Holiday Inn employees reported an estimated \$1,000 in damages. The hotel had to get blood out of the carpet and walls. He also said there were several witnesses to the incident.

Hermiston Police Chief Jason Edmiston said there

was nothing to support that the incident was gang-related, but that the people involved had extensive criminal histories.

Edmiston said his officers responded to a fight at the Holiday Inn at 6:13 a.m. Saturday, and that employees said they had been getting complaints about disturbances and noise all night.

Edmiston said two rooms had been rented at the hotel, and several people in their 20s and 30s were having a party there.

"Our guys arrived and detained Carrillo and Placencia, and several people fled," Edmiston said.

Edmiston said they have yet to track down or identify the third person involved in a fight, but they were able to contact five people. Three more fled on foot.

On June 11, Carrillo, his brother Rudy Carrillo and Antonio Viesca, Jr., were in a fight. Several people witnessed the fight, which left all three bloodied. Viesca was taken to the hospital with a broken arm.

A judge denied probable cause for felony charges in that incident. The state is now pursuing misdemeanor charges for both incidents.

Circuit Court Judge Eva Temple set bail for Carrillo at \$50,000. Additionally, Carrillo was ordered not to have contact with Placencia, his brother Rudy or Viesca.

Carrillo has previously been charged with several other crimes, including criminally negligent homicide in 2012.

His pretrial hearing for Saturday assault is set for July 3 at 3 p.m.

Fragrant festival blooms in Hermiston

By TAMMY MALGESINI
East Oregonian

After a one-year hiatus, this weekend's lavender festival will bloom again as it raises money for Agape House and Martha's House.

Jim and Sheri Konningrud started Purple Ridge Lavender Festival as a way to share their lavender farm with others and to give back to the community. The couple chose the two nonprofit organizations after having contact through them with their business, Pea Ridge Embroidery & Signs.

In its seventh year, the festival is Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Purple Ridge Lavender, 29081 Bridge Road, located west of Hermiston. The general admission cost is \$10 or \$12 for craft beer tasting. Youths under 12 are admitted free. All admission and vendor fees are donated to Agape House and Martha's House.

With a theme of "Magic in the Fields," Sheri Konningrud is excited to host Penelope Pendragon and encourages people to dress up in their favorite fanciful costumes. In fact, those donning whimsical attire will receive \$2 off on admission.

"It's a fairy tale theme with a professional fairy and her wish wagon coming in from Las Vegas," Konningrud said.

On a mission to teach kids about the power of positive thinking, Pendragon even



Contributed photo

"Magic in the Fields" is the theme of the seventh annual Purple Ridge Lavender Festival, which is Saturday in Hermiston. The event benefits Agape House and Martha's House.

consulted with a childhood development specialist when creating her Whimsical WISH Wagon. The imaginative art display teaches steps to take that help boost the power of positive thought.

Pendragon has received positive feedback from adults, as well. At a festival, one woman said she had attended numerous workshops, read all kinds of books and watched DVDs from motivational speakers.

"You just summed it all up in the most simple, imaginative and magical way," the woman told Pendragon.

People are encouraged to bring their camera to the festival. The lovely lavender makes a perfect backdrop for photos.

In addition to the aroma of lavender, live music will fill the air with BBPD from

10-11 a.m., Cruise Control from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Bobby Nelson & Faith Martin from 3-5 p.m. The event also features Northwest artists, artesian jewelry, a henna artist, Auntie Ida's Quilt challenge and display, food and more.

And last, but not least, all things lavender will be available. People can cut fresh bundles, purchase a plant for their garden and visit the farm boutique for everything from culinary lavender products to lavender bath and body gifts of all kinds.

For more information, visit www.purpleridgelavender.com or call 541-561-3945.

Contact Community Editor Tammy Malgesini at tmalgesini@eastoregonian.com or 541-564-4539

BRIEFLY

Mills chosen for produce industry leadership program

HERMISTON — Mackenzie Mills, who works in sales and account management for River Point Farms, has been accepted into the 2017-18 United Fresh Produce Industry Leadership Program.

Mills was one of 15 candidates from across the country selected for the program, sponsored by a grant from DuPont Crop Protection.

During the year-long fellowship, participants will meet and train with top industry experts, including trips to California, Costa Rica, Washington, D.C., and Chicago, where they graduate at the 2018 United Fresh Convention.

"River Point Farms is very excited for Mackenzie," said Bob Hale, company president and CEO. "From the many applicants, the 15 people accepted into the program represent the top talent from the top companies in the produce industry. This is a huge honor for her, and an indication of her high talent level."

The United Fresh Produce Industry Leadership Program has graduated more than 200 people since it launched in 1995, focusing on four core areas of development: leadership, business relationships, government and public affairs and media and public communications.

For more information, visit www.unitedfresh.org.

Seniors fire up the barbie for a grilling good time

PENDLETON — Prizes, fun and food is featured as members of the Pendleton Senior Center fire up the barbie for a community picnic.

People of all ages are invited Friday at noon at Community Park, 1000 S.W. 37th St., Pendleton. Those in attendance should

bring a lawn chair and a potluck dish to share. Hamburgers, hot dogs, punch and table setting will be furnished.

For more information, call 541-276-7101.

Reunion unites old Boardman/Riverside classmates

BOARDMAN — A class reunion for the old Boardman/Riverside High School is planned this weekend.

People can register Saturday at 10:30 a.m. at Boardman Marina Park. A screening of the documentary "Higher Ground" will be shown at 1:30 p.m. at the SAGE Center. The film chronicles the construction of the John Day Dam, which required moving Boardman to a higher elevation. Participants can also view the visitor center exhibits. The day concludes with a potluck at 4:30 p.m. in the Harold Baker Pavilion at the park.

The activities continue Sunday at 11 a.m. with announcements and a catered meal at 1 p.m., events are at the park. The cost is \$20.

For more information, call Shirley Jackson David at 541-922-2488.

Two local cemetery districts receive grants

The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department announced \$70,265 in grants for historic cemeteries across the state, including two in Umatilla County.

Weston Cemetery Maintenance District No. 2 received \$4,000 to repair ten markers, get a emergency response address and install a security system at the Weston Cemetery.

The city of Ukiah was granted \$2,400 to install gates and a kiosk at the Ukiah Cemetery.

Submit information to: 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.

DENTAL Insurance
Physicians Mutual Insurance Company

A less expensive way to help get the dental care you deserve

- ✓ If you're over 50, you can get coverage for about \$1 a day*
- ✓ Keep your own dentists! No networks to worry about.
- ✓ NO annual or lifetime cap on the cash benefits you can receive
- ✓ No wait for preventive care and no deductibles — you could get a checkup tomorrow
- ✓ Coverage for over 350 procedures including cleanings, exams, fillings, crowns... even dentures

FREE Information Kit
1-877-599-0125
www.dental50plus.com/25

*Individual plan. Product not available in MN, MT, NH, RI, VT, WA. Acceptance guaranteed for one insurance policy/certificate of this type. Contact us for complete details about this insurance solicitation. This specific offer is not available in CO, NY, call 1-800-969-4781 or respond for similar offer. Certificate CS20A (ID: CS20E; PA: CS20D); Insurance Policy P150(OA); P150(GA); P150(NY); OK: P150(OK); TN: P150(TN)

MORE HD CHANNELS
FASTER INTERNET AND
UNLIMITED PHONE.

Time Warner Cable | Spectrum

CALL TODAY AND PAY LESS
800-718-0153

Spends up to 100Mbps
Unlimited data — no data caps

BEST INTERNET OFFER
AS LOW AS
\$34.99

FREE ACCESS TO WIFI HOTSPOTS

125+ CHANNELS
UP TO 100MBPS
UNLIMITED CALLING

Triple Play Select
TV, INTERNET AND PHONE

\$89.99

Are You Still Paying Too Much For Your Medications?

You can save up to 97% when you fill your prescriptions with our Canadian and International prescription service.

Get An Extra \$15 Off & Free Shipping On Your 1st Order!

Call the number below and save an additional \$15 plus get free shipping on your first prescription order with Canada Drug Center. Expires June 30, 2017. Offer is valid for prescription orders only and can not be used in conjunction with any other offers. Valid for new customers only. One time use per household. Use code 15FREE to receive this special offer.

Call Now! 855-781-6462
www.canadadrug.us/oregon

Please note that we do not carry controlled substances and a valid prescription is required for all prescription medication orders.