

**HERMISTON**

# Mother's Day shooter sentenced

Bedolla gets six years, eight months in prison

By PHIL WRIGHT  
East Oregonian

Alexis Manuel Paredes Bedolla, 18, of Hermiston, is heading to state prison for shooting another man on May 8, 2016 in a gunfight.

Bedolla last week took a deal from the Umatilla County District Attorney's Office and pleaded guilty to second-degree assault and unlawful use of a weapon, according to circuit court records. Judge Eva Temple

sentenced Bedolla to six years, eight months in the Oregon Department of Corrections, minus the time he served in local jail.

Bedolla's victim was Adalberto Flores, who was 17 at the time and in his apartment at 645 S.E. Fourth St., Hermiston. He took two rounds in his buttocks but also fired back with a rifle and struck Bedolla in the arm, severely injuring him.

District Attorney Dan



Bedolla

Primus did not immediately return a call seeking comment, but he made public statements that revealed Flores was the shooter who killed 22-year-old Salvador Valencia in 2012 in a fight at Gotta Stop convenience store, Hermiston. Hermiston Police Chief Jason Edmiston also confirmed Flores shot Valencia.

The investigation into the deadly shooting, Edmiston said, showed Valencia was

the aggressor. The *East Oregonian* in 2012 reported sources familiar with the case said Valencia and another man started that fight.

While Flores was involved in both gunfights, Edmiston said, linking the two to anything like gang retaliation would be a stretch. The Mother's Day shooting had its origins in a bar room punched-out that took place a few hours before and involved one of Flores' relatives.

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# Echo looking for alternatives to wastewater issues

By JADE MCDOWELL  
East Oregonian

Echo's city council meeting for June did not include any action on the city's ongoing wastewater challenges.

The recycled water the city releases into the Umatilla River does not meet state standards for biological oxygen demand, and the city is under a deadline from the Department of Environmental Quality to complete a project fixing the problem by December 2019.

After working with engineers, the city notified ranch owner Michael Yunker that it would like to buy about 10 acres of his ranch to store the recycled water instead, and may use eminent domain to condemn the land if he did not sell voluntarily.

Yunker said he has not heard anything from the city in the last month, other than a letter delivered to the attorney that he has retained, stating that the city understood how precious his land was to him and was working to find other possible solutions.

City administrator Diane Berry confirmed that the city is looking at a number of possible solutions that would not include Yunker's land, including new evaporation technology that wasn't in use when the city first had a problem years ago.

"If at all possible we will avoid (condemnation), but we can't make any promises," she said.

She said that after news of the letter to Yunker reached the public, some people have commented that the city must have mismanaged its sewer ponds, but she said that such ponds are "pretty static" receptacles that don't leave much to be managed.

"That's not the reason we're having problems with DEQ," she said.

Developer Kent Madison, who is looking at possible development of an RV park and commercial properties north of Echo, has offered to help find a way to integrate a solution to the city's sewer problem into that development. He offered up a report from his engineers from J-U-B Engineers (Echo uses Anderson Perry & Associates) on Thursday giving a second opinion on other solutions, and promised to provide a report to the council each month.

Prior to Echo's regular city council meeting, the city's budget committee approved the proposed 2017-2018 budget with recommendations for the council and staff to consider.

Much of the budget was similar to previous years, but committee members suggested it may be time to revisit Echo's contract with Stanfield Police Department for services, noting that the cost had gone up, even though in recent years Stanfield has struggled to keep a full staff of officers.

Berry said the \$68,564 for 2017-2018 included an increase in costs for dispatch services, which are out of Stanfield's control. She said the council was certainly welcome to ask her to look into other options, but last time she studied similar arrangements between other cities in Oregon she found that Echo was paying less than most. She also noted that when the Umatilla County Sheriff's Office handled Echo's police service years ago the city was getting an average of 28 hours of patrol time per month, compared to more than 100 from Stanfield.

The committee also suggested that the council consider smaller raises for city staff than the 3 to 5 percent outlined in the budget.

**PILOT ROCK**

# Local wildfire season starts with blaze

Wildland season begins on Monday

East Oregonian

Local firefighting teams controlled a 20-acre brush fire Friday morning in Pilot Rock. Pendleton Fire Chief Mike Ciraulo said this marks the start of wildland fire season on the local front.

The Oregon Department of Forestry will officially declare the beginning of fire season Monday, June 26 across the Northeast Oregon District, which includes more than 2 million acres of private, state, county, municipal and tribal land in Umatilla, Union, Baker and Wallowa counties — along with small portions of Morrow, Grant and Malheur counties.

The Pilot Rock blaze began a little before 9 a.m. at 600 N.W. Cedar St. near the Boise Cascade lumber mill, a site that catches fire almost every summer. Ciraulo said he and a crew from Pendleton arrived with a brush truck, along with two members of the Pilot Rock Rural Fire Protection District.

Firefighters from the Umatilla Tribal Fire Department and Oregon Department of Forestry also joined the effort. And a local property owner used a dozer to establish a fire break.

The burn was about 10 acres at the beginning, Ciraulo said, and grew to about 20 before crews had it contained a few hours later. Pilot Rock division chief Richard Hemphill said firefighters burned off the rest of the area. If they did not do that now, he said, they would



Photo contributed by Pendleton Fire Department

Firefighters put out a grass fire Friday morning near Pilot Rock.

**"There is perhaps a false sense that fire conditions won't be too bad this summer with the spring moisture, but we need people to work and recreate safely."**

— Logan McCrae, La Grande unit forester for ODF

end up fighting it later this summer.

The Northwest Coordination Center predicted a normal fire season this year in Oregon, which would mean an increase in fires and their sizes over the previous year. Ciraulo said while mountain fire fuels remain green and wet, the lower elevations, such as around Pendleton and Pilot Rock, are drying out and have lots of fuel with a high potential to burn.

"Fire season," he said, "is upon us."

Logan McCrae, La Grande unit forester for

ODF, said this year's heavy winter snow and spring rains has been a blessing, but has also spurred the growth of vast amounts of light fuels at lower elevations that can burn quickly once it dries out.

"There is perhaps a false sense that fire conditions won't be too bad this summer with the spring moisture, but we need people to work and recreate safely, as well as keep an eye out for fire starts," McCrae said.

A number of burning restrictions will be in place once fire season begins. Burn permits will be required for

all open burning, except campfires. Landowners who burned slash piles last fall should also check to make sure they are completely out and all the heat is gone.

Logging and other industrial operations must meet requirements for fire prevention, such as fire tools, water supply and watchman service while working on ODF land. Campers are reminded that campfires need to be attended at all times and extinguished completely before leaving.

For more information, local ODF offices can be reached at:

- Pendleton — 541-276-3491
- La Grande — 541-963-3168
- Baker City — 541-523-5831
- Wallowa — 541-886-2881

To report a fire, call 9-1-1.

**UMATILLA**

# Landing Days brings back Friday entertainment

By JADE MCDOWELL  
East Oregonian

Landing Days is back in full after faltering last year.

The annual celebration of Umatilla's history was kicked off Friday night instead of Saturday morning for the first time in several years. And Saturday's schedule was much more full than last year, when the event was first canceled due to lack of volunteers and then brought back in a very limited form.

Only a handful of people had shown up by the time the first band started playing at 6 p.m., but more were slowly trickling in as they got off work.

"Tonight might be a little slow but we're building up to tomorrow," said Mark Ribich, Umatilla Chamber of Commerce interim president and city councillor.

He said organizers were excited about the "fantastic weather" for the weekend. They expected a large turnout for Saturday's events, which will include a parade, contests, bands, dance groups, beer garden, food and craft vendors, wood carvers auction, kids' talent show and fireworks over the marina at 10 p.m.

Friday night featured food vendors, a beer garden and bands The Outsiders and Grupo Viajero. High school students Bianca Spain and Jacquelin Brown showed up early and said the part they were most excited about was the food.

Spain said she has been



Staff photo by Jade McDowell

The Outsiders perform at Umatilla Landing Days on Friday at Marina Park.

to Landing Days before and her other favorite part of the event was the fireworks.

"Over here is just a beautiful view of the river and with the fireworks, it's just so

pretty," she said.

Brown said she had never been to Landing Days before but was looking forward to it.

Barb and Robert White of Hermiston said they had never been to Landing Days before, but had talked to someone at the marina about it recently and were planning on attending both days. After enjoying an elephant ear, they were particularly interested in the craft vendors, watching the Round-Up City Cloggers perform, listening to the live music and watching the fireworks.

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