

McIver takes deal in Nelson homicide case

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

Joseph Aaron McIver made a deal to plead guilty to his role in killing Thadd Nelson outside his Meacham home in 2016. And co-defendant Armando Ruben Vargas has a change of plea hearing in the case as well.

McIver, 23, pleaded guilty on Aug. 8 in U.S. District Court, Portland, to felon in possession of a firearm, according to federal court records. The charge stems from Nelson's homicide.

The agreement McIver signed four days earlier shows he also will plead guilty in Umatilla County Circuit Court to one count of first-degree conspiracy to commit burglary and one count of second-degree manslaughter.

He faces those charges Wednesday in Hermiston.

The Umatilla County District Attorney's Office filed the two felonies Aug. 9, accusing McIver of "unlawfully and recklessly" causing the death of Nelson and conspiring with Edward Duarte Ayala, Nicholas Benjamin Jones and Armando Ruben Vargas to enter Nelson's home at 67547 Old Oregon Trail Road to commit a crime. McIver also waived an indictment, allowing the district attorney's office to bring the charges without first presenting evidence to a grand jury.

The federal weapons charge carries a maximum

prison sentence of 10 years. Second-degree manslaughter carries a mandatory minimum sentence in Oregon of six years, four months. Under terms of the plea deal, McIver gets credit for time served in jail and an Oregon prison sentence of nine years, two months to run concurrent with the federal punishment.

McIver's sentencing on the federal charge is Nov. 21 in Portland; he does not have a sentencing date yet in the local court.

Federal court records show Vargas plans to change his plea Tuesday morning in Portland. The terms of the deal are not yet available.

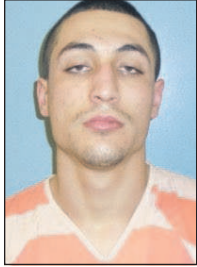
Nelson died Jan. 27, 2016,

from gunshot wounds from two firearms, according to federal court documents. He was 44. The crime took place on the Umatilla Indian Reservation.

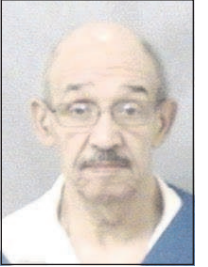
McIver and Vargas become the second and third defendants to take plea deals in this case. Ayala in June was first when he pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit burglary and manslaughter and received a sentence of 16 years. That time is running concurrent with the 20 years in federal prison for gun crimes connected to the homicide.

The fourth defendant, Nicholas Benjamin Jones, awaits trial, now on the U.S. District Court docket for Oct. 24 in Portland.

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



McIver



Yzaguirre

BRIEFLY

Inmate, 64, dies Saturday at TRCI

UMATILLA — An inmate at Two Rivers Correctional Institution in Umatilla died unexpectedly Saturday night.

Benjamin Yzaguirre, 64, was found unresponsive in his cell around 9:39 p.m. Security, medical staff and Umatilla Emergency Medical technicians administered life-saving efforts, but were unsuccessful. Yzaguirre was taken to a local hospital and pronounced dead at 10:55 p.m.

Yzaguirre has been in the Department of Corrections' custody since July 2015, on one count of rape and one count of sodomy. He was expected to be released in June of 2021.

Yzaguirre's next of kin were notified, and the Department of Corrections released no other information about the cause of death.

As with any unexpected death in a state prison, the Oregon State Police Criminal Investigation Team is conducting an investigation.

Athena Mainstreet block party showcases former PGG building

ATHENA — After buying the town's old Pendleton Grain Growers building in May, the Athena Mainstreet Association is ready to celebrate its new acquisition.

The nonprofit is hosting a block party on Friday at the corner of East Main Street and Third Street to share information on the restoration process and promote local partnerships with businesses and community organizations, according to an association press release.

The Athena Mainstreet Association will also show a historic photo slideshow and is encouraging the community to bring old photos of the East Main Street building.

Other attractions at the block party include music by Rob Barret & The Coyote Kings, free hot dogs and refreshments, a photo booth, and various children's activities.

The event will run from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. on East Main Street in Athena.

Cold War Patriots offer resource information in the Tri-Cities

A pair of community resource events for nuclear weapons and uranium workers and their families are available in the Tri-Cities.

The Cold War Patriots present the town hall meetings to assist current and former Hanford workers in getting the recognition, compensation and healthcare benefits they have earned. The regional gatherings are:

• Tuesday at 10 a.m. or 6 p.m. at Hampton Inn, 486 Bradley Blvd., Richland.

• Wednesday at 11 a.m. at Red Lion-Columbia Center, 1101 N. Columbia Center Blvd., Kennewick.

The meetings are free of charge.

For more information about the Cold War Patriots, visit www.coldwarpatriots.org or call 888-903-8989.

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

PENDLETON

Developer offers \$660K for land to build 45 homes

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

The Pendleton City Council will take actions Tuesday that could spur the start of one housing development and continue progress on another.

The council will consider selling 14 lots it owns at Sunridge Estates to Pendleton developer Dusty Pace, who intends to re-plant them as approximately 45 lots and build single-family homes on each of them.

According to a staff report to the city council, Pace will have an option to individually buy the re-platted lots at a \$15,000-per-lot price over a seven-year period. Regardless of whether he's purchased all of the lots or not, Pace must pay a total sum of \$660,000 to the city by July 31, 2024.

As a part of the deal, the city would also waive the re-plant's planning fees and make some improvements to the area's water distribution system.

Umatilla County foreclosed on 21 Sunridge properties in 2016, and with the city having a liens on them as a part of a failed local

improvement district, the city ended up acquiring most of them.

The city council declared the lots surplus in February and still has 17 left in their inventory.

The city still owes \$759,287 to Banner Bank on the local improvement district and isn't set to finish paying off the debt until 2025. City staff want to use the proceeds from the sale to Pace and \$162,000 in refunded money from a community development block grant to cover the costs.

If the council approves the deal, Pace would be responsible for turning the lots into homes.

In an interview, Pace said he wants to build single-family dwellings ranging from 1,400 to 3,000 square feet with an expected cost of \$180,000 to \$300,000 per home. Each house will have three bedrooms and two bathrooms.

Pace said he's built 80 homes in Pendleton, including some at Sunridge, and characterized it as a "win-win" deal for both sides.

If Pace follows through on building almost four-dozen

homes in Sunridge, a subdivision on the southern end of town near Tutuilla Road, it could make a dent in Pendleton's tight housing market.

According to a 2016 study commissioned by the city, Pendleton has capacity for 90 entry and mid-level houses priced up to \$210,000 with additional support for high-end housing up to \$330,000.

Further up Tutuilla Road, Newberg developer Saj Jivnaje has already built 32 townhouses at the Pendleton Heights development, but he now wants the council to revise his debt-payment schedule for infrastructure improvements before he proceeds with plans to build an additional 100 apartment units.

The city placed \$320,000 liens on the townhouses to help cover \$1.3 million in infrastructure improvements, which Jivnaje was originally supposed to pay once they were completed.

The council will consider Jivnaje's new request, which would have him pay the city \$200,000 for the townhouse liens and defer payment for the rest of the debt until after

the apartment complex is complete.

In other agenda items, the council will consider finalizing the city's commitment to a "construction manager/general contractor" method of construction.

A first for the city, the method would require hiring a contractor during the design process instead of bidding out the project once the designs are complete.

City staff believe the collaboration will result in lower construction costs.

Before the council meeting, the council will meet as the Pendleton Development Commission and consider approval of a \$23,532 Jump Start loan to Oregon Grain Growers Brand Distillery to cover half the costs a fire suppression sprinkler system.

The 511 S.E. Court Ave. microdistillery plans to add a restaurant in September and would need sprinklers as a part of the new service.

The commission meeting will be held at 6 p.m. and the council meeting at 7 p.m. Both meetings will be held inside council chambers at city hall, 500 S.W. Dorion Ave.

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AccuWeather.com Forecast

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Pleasant with sunshine	Pleasant with plenty of sunshine	Sunny and delightful	Plenty of sun	Abundant sunshine and pleasant
85° 56°	89° 56°	86° 57°	92° 63°	86° 52°
87° 58°	92° 60°	90° 58°	95° 65°	90° 54°

HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST
87° 58° 92° 60° 90° 58° 95° 65° 90° 54°

ALMANAC

PENDLETON

through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	77°	49°
Normals	88°	58°
Records	107° (1933)	40° (1910)

PRECIPITATION
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"
Month to date 0.07"
Normal month to date 0.18"
Year to date 11.37"
Last year to date 7.34"
Normal year to date 8.13"

HERMISTON

through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	79°	56°
Normals	88°	58°
Records	105° (1992)	44° (1931)

PRECIPITATION
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"
Month to date 0.06"
Normal month to date 0.09"
Year to date 6.65"
Last year to date 4.99"
Normal year to date 6.01"

SUN AND MOON

	New	First	Full	Last
Sunrise today	5:56 a.m.			
Sunset tonight	8:03 p.m.			
Moonrise today	none			
Moonset today	2:37 p.m.			

Aug 21 Aug 29 Sep 5 Sep 12

REGIONAL FORECAST

Coastal Oregon: Areas of low clouds and fog, then some sun today.

Eastern Washington: Mostly sunny today. Mainly clear tonight. Abundant sunshine tomorrow.

Cascades: Sunny and pleasant today. Clear tonight. Plenty of sunshine tomorrow; pleasant.

Northern California: Low clouds followed by sunshine at the coast today; mostly sunny elsewhere.

Eastern and Central Oregon: Sunny and pleasant, except sunshine mixing in the south today with some clouds.

Western Washington: Some clouds, then sunshine today, except areas of low clouds and fog at the coast.

REGIONAL CITIES

	Today			Wed.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Astoria	69	54	pc	68	55	pc
Baker City	83	44	s	84	44	s
Bend	81	48	s	85	49	s
Brookings	69	55	pc	74	57	pc
Burns	81	45	s	84	42	s
Enterprise	80	47	s	82	48	s
Eugene	80	50	s	85	54	s
Heppner	82	55	s	87	56	s
Hermiston	87	58	s	92	60	s
John Day	84	52	s	85	53	s
Klamath Falls	83	47	s	85	48	s
La Grande	83	48	s	85	49	s
Meacham	80	45	s	82	47	s
Medford	90	57	s	93	58	s
Newport	63	50	pc	65	52	pc
North Bend	68	53	pc	69	55	pc
Ontario	89	57	s	90	58	s
Pasco	86	53	s	91	55	s
Pendleton	85	56	s	89	56	s
Portland	78	55	s	80	58	pc
Redmond	82	43	s	87	44	s
Salem	82	53	s	85	57	pc
Spokane	80	56	s	83	56	s
Ukiah	79	44	s	82	45	s
Vancouver	80	54	s	80	58	pc
Walla Walla	85	60	s	89	62	s
Yakima	86	53	s	91	55	s

WORLD CITIES

	Today			Wed.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Beijing	87	71	pc	85	69	t
Hong Kong	92	81	pc	91	82	t
Jerusalem	86	68	s	85	67	s
London	74	53	pc	72	61	pc
Mexico City	76	57	pc	76	55	t
Moscow	72	54	s	73	55	s
Paris	79	55	t	78	62	pc
Rome	88	66	s	90	69	pc
Seoul	76	71	r	79	72	sh
Sydney	72	66	pc	72	54	s
Tokyo	80	75	r	79	74	r

WINDS

(in mph)	Today	Wednesday
Boardman	WSW 4-8	W 6-12
Pendleton	W 4-8	W 6-12

UV INDEX TODAY

2 4 7 7 4 2

8 a.m. 10 a.m. Noon 2 p.m. 4 p.m. 6 p.m.
0-2, Low 3-5, Moderate 6-7, High; 8-10, Very High; 11+, Extreme

The higher the AccuWeather.com UV Index™ number, the greater the need for eye and skin protection.

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NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY

Shown are noon positions of weather systems and precipitation. Temperature bands are highs for the day.

National Summary: Storms will extend from the southern Atlantic coast to much of the Plains and Rockies today. The rest of the West will be dry. Storms will also extend from the lower Great Lakes to northern New England.

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)
High 108° in Needles, Calif. Low 30° in Chemult, Ore.

NATIONAL CITIES

	Today			Wed.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Albuquerque	88	63	pc	88	64	s
Atlanta	87	73	t	90	75	t
Atlanta City	79	70	pc	85	69	pc
Baltimore	83	68	pc	88	69	pc
Billings	78	55	s	85	59	pc
Birmingham	87	75	t	89	76	t
Boise	87	59	s	88	59	s
Boston	80	68	pc	85	62	s
Charleston, SC	94	77	t	95	77	t
Charleston, WV	81	67	pc	88	68	pc
Chicago	83	64	pc	85	71	t
Cleveland	86	65	pc	84	66	pc
Dallas	98	80	pc	98	80	pc
Denver	84	56	pc	79	55	t
Detroit	86	64	t	85	66	pc
El Paso	95	74	pc	94	69	s
Fairbanks	63	49	sh	64	45	sh
Fargo	74	61	t	71	57	r
Honolulu	88	76	sh	89	76	pc
Houston	96	79	pc	96	80	pc
Indianapolis	87	70	pc	87	74	t
Jacksonville	91	76	t	93	77	c
Kansas City	87	72	pc	84	68	t
Las Vegas	97	75	pc	99	77	s
Little Rock	87	74	t	92	77	pc
Los Angeles	76	63	sh	77	62	pc
Louisville	91	74	pc	91	76	t
Memphis	85	74	t	91	77	t
Miami	92	79	pc	91	80	t
Millwaukee	75	64	pc	79	70	t
Minneapolis	79	65	pc	72	64	r
Nashville	86	73	pc	89	75	t