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Wolf biologist questions hunter's story of attack



Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife via AP, File
This 2014 file photo provided by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife shows a female wolf from the Minam pack outside La Grande after it was fitted with a tracking collar.

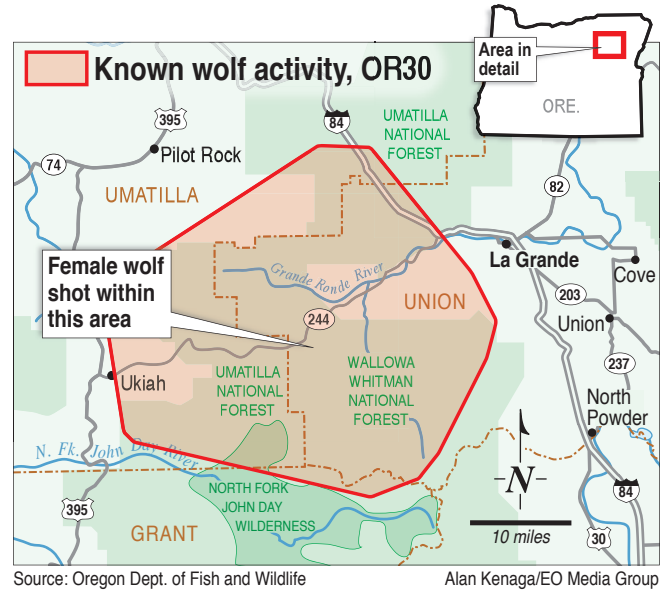
By **ERIC MORTENSON**
EO Media Group

A retired U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologist with 30 years experience said it is unlikely a wolf shot by an Oregon elk hunter was attacking the man.

Carter Niemeyer, who lives in Boise and oversaw or consulted on wolf recovery work throughout the West, also said descriptions of the bullet trajectory — in one shoulder and out the other — raise doubt about the hunter's account that the wolf was running at him when he fired. "That's a broadside shot, not a running-at-you shot,"

Niemeyer said. "If the bullet path is through one side and out the other, it indicates to me an animal could have been standing, not moving, and the shot was well placed."

A bullet that hit the wolf as it was running forward most likely would have exited out the hips or rear end, Niemeyer said. He acknowledge the bullet or fragments could have deflected off bone, but said a forensic exam would have to explain that. Michelle Dennehy, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife spokesman, said



See **WOLF/8A**

OSP bomb-bot gets new home

State police give bomb-inspecting robot to students

By **JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN**
East Oregonian

The students of the Umatilla School District got a surprise on Monday when they found out they're the new caretakers of a robot. Not just any robot, either — a bomb-inspecting robot formerly used by the Oregon State Police.

Lt. Mike Turner told the students of Clara Brownell Middle School that he and some other officers had heard about Umatilla's active robotics program, and wanted to give the students the robot to help them apply the skills they're learning in the real world.

"A lot of what state troopers do is going out and patrolling the highway, but there are many other things we do as an agency," he said. "One of those things is the bomb technician program."

Turner and three members of the explosives division demonstrated three different robots for students: an iCore robot, a lightweight machine which can quickly climb stairs and is primarily used to observe and reach for objects, and a Remotec F6A, a heavy-duty robot which is used for visibility and to manipulate or open packages. Both robots had several cameras attached to them.

The third one, a Green Cub Robot, had a unique nickname.

"We call it 'Dill Pickle' because it's green," said Detective Placido Lopez.

The students were excited to learn that the robot was there to stay. A student from each grade was picked out of the audience to learn



Staff photo by Jayati Ramakrishnan
OSP Detective Placido Lopez discusses a robot with Umatilla High School and Clara Brownell Middle School students.

See **ROBOT/8A**

UEC lands \$48.8M loan for power lines

East Oregonian

A \$48.8 million loan from the U.S. Department of Agriculture will help the Umatilla Electric Cooperative build 25 miles of new power lines, while improving another 41 miles of lines and investments in other "smart grid" projects.

One of the upcoming projects is a new power line from McNary to the Hermiston Butte substation, which will boost reliability for UEC and Hermiston Energy Services customers, according to a UEC spokesman.

The spokesman said the loan provides low-interest funding for the co-op to update and improve its 2,250-mile transmission system.

Democratic Sens. Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley announced the loan Monday.

"This is a smart investment in our infrastructure and our future," said Merkley, who is the top Democrat on the Senate subcommittee that funds the USDA. "Ensuring rural cooperatives have the resources necessary to maintain modern and reliable electric infrastructure provides economic opportunity that rural communities across Oregon need to thrive."

The Harney Electric Cooperative, based in Hines, also received an \$11.7 million loan to build 53 miles of line, among other improvements.

Two men in a truck chase down Texas church shooter

By **WILL WEISSERT**
and **JIM VERTUNO**
Associated Press

SUTHERLAND SPRINGS, Texas — A former National Rifle Association instructor who grabbed his rifle and ran barefoot across the street to open fire on the gunman who slaughtered 26 people at a small-town Texas church was hailed as a hero Monday, along with the pickup truck driver who helped chase the killer down.

Stephen Willeford, 55, said he was at his Sutherland Springs home Sunday when his daughter alerted him that she'd heard gunfire at the First Baptist Church nearby. Willeford said he immediately retrieved his rifle from his weapon safe.

"I kept hearing the shots, one after another, very rapid shots — just 'Pop! Pop! Pop! Pop!' — and I knew every one of those shots represented someone,

"There was no thinking about it. There was just doing. That was the key to all this."

— **Johnnie Langendorff**, driver who helped chase down church shooter

that it was aimed at someone, that they weren't just random shots," Willeford said Monday during an interview with television stations KHBS/KHOG in Fort Smith and Fayetteville, Arkansas.

Willeford said he loaded his magazine and ran barefoot across the street to the church where he saw gunman Devin Patrick Kelley, 26, and exchanged gunfire.

"He saw me and I saw him," Willeford

See **SHOOTER/8A**



Nick Wagner/Austin American-Statesman via AP
Johnnie Langendorff speaks to reporters about the mass shooting at the First Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs, Texas, on Monday. Langendorff says he and another man chased down the gunman after he fled the church where he killed more than 20 people.

