

PUBLIC SAFETY LOG

TUESDAY

12:44 a.m. - Pendleton police received a report of suspicious activity at Southeast Isaac Avenue and Second Street involving two "guys" who got out of a green car, possibly a Nissan Altima, then walked through a neighbor's property, and one of them may have had a knife.

9:01 a.m. - A caller reported spray paint graffiti and vandalism at the Main Street Park, Heppner.

11:51 a.m. - Staff at the Baltimore Apartments, 180 Baltimore St., Heppner, reported someone broke into a basement room and stole flashlights, a drill and more.

1:06 p.m. - An Irrigon resident on Wagon Wheel Loop reported a neighbor plugged an extension cord into her power and is stealing her electricity.

1:30 p.m. - The Oregon Department of Transportation was the victim of theft at a rock pit at the junction of Highway 730 and Highway 207. Oregon State Police reported the suspect or suspects stole 100 gallons of diesel fuel, \$400 in hand tools and cut out and stole about 50 feet of 2-inch copper wire that has a replacement cost of \$2,880.

2:19 p.m. - Distracted driving was the reason behind a crash on Highway 11 near Pendleton. Oregon State Police reported it was not a cellphone, however, that distracted the 18-year-old female from Athena. Even so, she drifted off the road in a red Chevrolet Cavalier, over-corrected and flipped the car. State police also reported she was not injured, but took an ambulance ride to the hospital as a precaution.

3:10 p.m. - A Hermiston man reported the theft of his Glock 19-mm pistol. He told Oregon State Police the crime occurred at his residence around September or October 2012.

Police have no suspects at this time.

3:15 p.m. - A caller told Hermiston police about finding a stack of identification and credit cards with different names in a garbage container on West Sunland Avenue.

3:34 p.m. - Another Hermiston caller reported suspicious activity on Southeast Crestline Drive involving a slow-going green van with its hood open. The caller said she talked to the driver, a man in his 20s or 30s, who said he thought his wife was cheating on him with someone in the area. She told him to get out of there.

5:42 p.m. - A criminal conviction for domestic violence assault prevented a 37-year-old man from buying a gun at Bi-Mart, 901 S.W. Emigrant Ave., Pendleton. Oregon State Police responded to the denial and advised the man not to buy a gun until after the four-year waiting period expires.

ARRESTS, CITATIONS

The Umatilla County Sheriff's Office at 8:29 p.m. responded to the Long Branch Cafe & Saloon, 201 E. Main St., Weston, on a stalking complaint. Deputies arrested Raul Ureno Alvarez, 32, of 114 W. Water St., Weston, for interfering with a peace officer, second-degree trespass and stalking.

DEATH NOTICES

Billy Wayne 'Bill' Stalford

Hermiston
May 8, 1958 - Nov. 29, 2017

Billy Wayne "Bill" Stalford, 59, of Hermiston died Wednesday, Nov. 29, 2017, in Richland, Wash. He was born May 8, 1958, in Corvallis. A celebration of life service with military honors will be held Friday, Dec. 15 at 1 p.m. at the Hermiston Church of the Nazarene, 1520 W. Orchard Ave. Burns Mortuary of Hermiston is in care of arrangements. Sign the online condolence book at burnsmortuaryhermiston.com

Edward Victor 'Ed' Verkist

Weston
March 25, 1940 - Dec. 5, 2017

Edward Victor "Ed" Verkist, 77, of Weston died Tuesday, Dec. 5, 2017, at his home. He was born March 25, 1940. Munselle-Rhodes Funeral Home in Milton-Freewater is in charge of arrangements.

Richard C. Gay

Pendleton
Feb. 24, 1949 - Dec. 5, 2017

Richard C. Gay, 68, of Pendleton died Tuesday, Dec. 5, 2017, at his home. He was born Feb. 24, 1949. Arrangements are pending with Pendleton Pioneer Chapel, Folsom-Bishop. Online condolences may be shared at www.pioneerchapel.com

UPCOMING SERVICES

THURSDAY, DEC. 7

STONE, MARGARET — Viewing at 10 a.m. followed by a funeral service at 11 a.m. at Bateman Carroll Funeral Home, 520 W. Powell Blvd., Gresham.

FRIDAY, DEC. 8

No services scheduled

OBITUARY POLICY

The East Oregonian publishes paid obituaries. The obituary can include small photos and, for veterans, a flag symbol at no charge. Obituaries may be edited for spelling, proper punctuation and style. Expanded death notices will be published at no charge. These include information about services. Obituaries and notices can be submitted online at www.eastoregonian.com/obituaryform, by email to obits@eastoregonian.com, by fax to 541-276-8314, placed via the funeral home or in person at the East Oregonian office. For more information, call 541-966-0818 or 1-800-522-0255, ext. 221.

MEETINGS

For a complete listing of regional events, visit easternoregonevents.com

THURSDAY, DEC. 7
ADAMS PLANNING COMMISSION, 6:30 p.m., Adams City Hall, 190 N. Main St., Adams. (541-566-9380)

FRIDAY, DEC. 8
No meetings scheduled

MONDAY, DEC. 11
IRRIGON FIRE DISTRICT, 7 a.m., Irrigon Fire Department, 705 N.E. Main Ave., Irrigon. (541-922-3133)

PENDLETON SCHOOL DISTRICT, 6 p.m., Pendleton School District office, 107 N.W. 10th St., Pendleton. (541-276-6711)

HERMISTON SCHOOL DISTRICT, 6:30 p.m., district office, 502 W. Standard Ave., Hermiston. (541-667-6000)

MILTON-FREEWATER SCHOOL DISTRICT, 6:30 p.m.,

Central Middle School, 306 S.W. Second St., Milton-Freewater. (541-938-3551)

HEPPNER CITY COUNCIL, 7 p.m., Heppner City Hall, 111 N. Main St., Heppner. (541-676-9618)

MILTON-FREEWATER CITY COUNCIL, 7 p.m., Milton-Freewater Public Library Albee Room, 8 S.W. Eighth Ave., Milton-Freewater. (541-938-5531)

PILOT ROCK FIRE DISTRICT, 7 p.m., Pilot Rock Fire Department, 415 N.E. Elm St., Pilot Rock. (541-443-4522)

HERMISTON CITY COUNCIL, 7 p.m., Hermiston City Hall council chambers, 180 N.E. Second St., Hermiston. (541-567-5521)

ADAMS CITY COUNCIL, 7 p.m., Adams City Hall, 190 N. Main St., Adams. (541-566-9380)

ATHENA-WESTON SCHOOL DISTRICT, 7 p.m., Athena Elementary School library, 375 S. Fifth St., Athena. (Kam Thul 541-566-3551)

TUESDAY, DEC. 12
OREGON WHEAT COMMISSION WEB CONFERENCE, 9-11 a.m., Umatilla County Extension, Blue Mountain Community College Umatilla Hall, 2411 N.W. Carden Ave., Pendleton. (Diana Thompson 503-467-2161)

PENDLETON PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION, 12 p.m., Pendleton City Hall community room, 500 S.W. Dorion Ave., Pendleton. (541-276-8100)

PORT OF UMATILLA COMMISSION, 1 p.m., Port of Umatilla offices, 505 Willamette Ave., Umatilla. (541-922-3224)

PENDLETON FARMERS MARKET BOARD, 5:30 p.m., Pendleton Early Learning Center, 455 S.W. 13th St., Pendleton. (541-969-9466)

WESTON CEMETERY BOARD, 6 p.m., Memorial Hall, 210 E. Main St., Weston. (541-566-3313)

PENDLETON LIBRARY BOARD, 6 p.m., Pendleton Public Library meeting room, 502 S.W. Dorion Ave., Pendleton. (541-966-0380)

LEXINGTON TOWN COUNCIL, 7 p.m., Lexington Town Hall, 425 F St., Lexington. (541-989-8515)

LOTTERY

Tuesday, Dec. 5

Mega Millions
14-15-37-42-67
Mega Ball: 22
Megaplier: 4
Estimated jackpot: \$160 million

Lucky Lines
04-05-10-13-FREE-18-24-27-29
Estimated jackpot: \$14,000

Pick 4
1 p.m.: 2-7-0-3
4 p.m.: 0-1-8-8
7 p.m.: 3-5-7-6
10 p.m.: 0-1-1-6

Wednesday, Dec. 6

Pick 4
1 p.m.: 5-6-9-0

Homelessness jumps for the first time in seven years

By **CHRISTOPHER WEBER** and **GEOFF MULVIHILL**
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — The nation's homeless population increased this year for the first time since 2010, driven by a surge in the number of people living on the streets in Los Angeles and other West Coast cities.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development released its annual Point in Time count Wednesday, a report that showed nearly 554,000 homeless people across the country during local tallies conducted in January. That figure is up nearly 1 percent from 2016.

Of that total, 193,000 people had no access to nightly shelter and instead were staying in vehicles, tents, the streets and other places considered uninhabitable. The unsheltered figure is up by more than 9 percent compared to two years ago.

Increases are higher in several West Coast cities, where the explosion in homelessness has prompted at least 10 city and county governments to declare states of emergency since 2015.

City officials, homeless advocates and those living on the streets point to a main culprit: the region's booming economy.

Rents have soared beyond affordability for many lower-wage workers who until just a few years ago could typically find a place to stay. Now, even a temporary setback can be enough to leave them out on the streets.

"A lot of people in America don't realize they might be two checks, three checks, four checks away from being homeless," said Thomas Butler Jr., who stays in a carefully organized tent near a freeway ramp in downtown Los Angeles.

Butler said he was in transitional housing — a type of program that prepares people for permanent homes — for a while but mostly has lived on the streets for the past couple of years.

The numbers in the report back up what many people in California, Oregon and Washington have been experiencing in their communities: encampments sprouting along freeways and rivers; local governments struggling to come up with money for long-term solutions; conflicts over whether to crack down on street camping and even feeding the homeless.

The most alarming consequence of the West Coast homeless explosion is a deadly hepatitis A outbreak that has affected Los Angeles, Santa Cruz and San Diego, the popular tourist destination in a county where more than 5,600



AP Photo/Jae C. Hong

A homeless man, who declined to give his name, is dwarfed by skyscrapers Monday in Los Angeles. The U.S. Department on Housing and Urban Development release of the 2017 homeless numbers are expected to show a dramatic increase in the number of people lacking shelter along the West Coast.

people now live on the streets or in their cars. The disease is spread through a liver-damaging virus that lives in feces.

The outbreak prompted California officials to declare a state of emergency in October.

The HUD report underscores the severity of the problem along the West Coast.

While the overall homeless population in California, Oregon and Washington grew by 14 percent over the past two years, the part of that population considered unsheltered climbed 23 percent to 108,000. That is in part due a shortage of affordable housing.

In booming Seattle, for example, the HUD report

shows the unsheltered population grew by 44 percent over two years to nearly 5,500.

The homeless service area that includes most of Los Angeles County, the epicenter of the crisis, saw its total homeless count top 55,000 people, up by more than 13,000 from 2016. Four out of every five homeless individuals there are considered unsheltered, leaving tens of thousands of people with no place to sleep other than the streets or parks.

By comparison, while New York City's homeless population grew to more than 76,000, only about 5 percent are considered unsheltered thanks to a system that can

get people a cot under a roof immediately.

In the West Coast states, the surge in homelessness has become part of the fabric of daily life.

The Monty, a bar in the Westlake neighborhood near downtown Los Angeles, usually doesn't open until 8 p.m. Partner and general manager Corey Allen said that's because a nearby shelter requires people staying there to be in the building by 7. Waiting until after that to open means the streets outside are calmer.

Allen said the homeless have come into his bar to bathe in the restroom wash basins, and employees have

developed a strategy for stopping people from coming in to panhandle among customers.

Seventy-eight-year-old Theodore Neubauer sees the other side of it. Neubauer says he served in Vietnam but now lives in a tent in downtown Los Angeles. He is surrounded by thriving business and entertainment districts, and new apartments that are attracting scores of young people to the heart of the nation's second most populous city.

"Well, there's a million-dollar view," he said.

Helping those like Neubauer is a top policy priority and political issue in Los Angeles.

Since last year, voters

in the city and Los Angeles County have passed a pair of tax-boosting ballot initiatives to raise an expected \$4.7 billion over the next decade for affordable housing and services for the homeless. HUD Secretary Ben Carson praised the region for dealing with the issue and not relying solely on the federal government.

"We need to move a little bit away from the concept that only the government can solve the problem," he said.

But Mayor Eric Garcetti said that insufficient federal funding for affordable housing and anti-homelessness programs are part of the reason for the city's current crisis.

"Los Angeles' homelessness crisis was not created in a vacuum, and it cannot be solved by L.A. alone," Garcetti said in a statement.

Excluding the Los Angeles region, total homelessness nationwide would have been down by about 1.5 percent compared with 2016.

The California counties of Sacramento, which includes the state capital, and Alameda, which is home to Oakland, also had one-year increases of more than 1,000 homeless people.

In contrast, the HUD report showed a long-running decline in homelessness continuing in most other regions. Nationally, the overall homeless number was down by 13 percent since 2010 and the unsheltered number has dropped by 17 percent over that seven-year span, although some changes in methodology and definitions over the years can affect comparisons.

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