

BRIEFLY

Deputy arrests Hermiston man with drugs ready for sale

HERMISTON — Eric D. Sommerville, 21, of Hermiston, faces a slew of drug dealing charges after a sheriff's deputy caught him Monday.

The Umatilla County Sheriff's Office reported deputy Nathan Rankin arrested Eric D. Sommerville, 21, of Hermiston on a warrant for failure to appear on a previous drug case. During the arrest at the Hermiston Burger King, 1730 N. First St., Rankin found Sommerville had packages of the following drugs for sale:



Sommerville

- almost half an ounce of dried marijuana;
- 16 grams of black tar heroin;
- 1 gram of cocaine;
- 2 grams of brown powder heroin;
- 6 grams of methamphetamine;
- and an oxycodone 30 mg pill.

The sheriff's office also reported Sommerville had "a large set of brass knuckles in his back pocket."

The Hermiston Police Department assisted Rankin, who booked Sommerville into the Umatilla County Jail, Pendleton, on the warrant and for carrying a concealed weapon (the brass knuckles) and for delivery of cocaine, meth, oxycodone, marijuana and the types of heroin.

His total bail comes to \$247,500.

Second Milton-Freewater drive-by shooter goes to prison

PENDLETON — The second of two men pleaded guilty Monday for his role in a Milton-Freewater drive-by shooting.

Clemente Garcia Cerda, 21, of Walla Walla, faced one count of attempted murder and multiple charges of unlawful use of a weapon and recklessly endangering others. He took a deal and pleaded guilty Monday in Umatilla County Circuit Court, Hermiston, to two counts of unlawful use of a weapon and one count of felon in possession of a firearm.



Cerda

Judge Eva Temple sentenced him to five years, 10 months in state prison per the plea agreement Cerda made with the Umatilla County District Attorney's Office. He receives credit of about five months for time spent in the Umatilla County Jail, Pendleton.

Cerda and Francisco Javier Palacios Garcia, 24, of Milton-Freewater, were in a car around midnight May 10 when they opened fire outside the Milton-Freewater home of Eric Rodriguez. He was only a few feet from the vehicle but no bullet struck him nor anyone else.

Milton-Freewater Police Chief Doug Boedigheimer reported it was a gang-related drive-by shooting.

Palacios Garcia took a deal in July and pleaded guilty to two counts each of unlawful use of a weapon and recklessly endangering another person. He is serving a five-year sentence in Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution, Pendleton.

Oregon State Police reports wrong-way driver way drunk

PENDLETON — Oregon State Police reported a wrong-way driver on Interstate 84 near Pendleton had a blood-alcohol level more than three times the legal limit.

Trooper Darin Wong received multiple calls Tuesday around 12:20 a.m. of a driver heading east in the westbound lanes of I-84. The trooper spotted the black Ford F150 pickup and stopped it near milepost 197, about 10 miles west of Pendleton.

The trooper had the driver, Wade Frederick Jordan, 28, of Raymond, Washington, perform a sobriety test before taking him to the Umatilla County Jail, Pendleton, for driving under the influence of intoxicants and reckless driving. At the jail, according to state police, Jordan took a breath test that revealed his blood-alcohol content was 26 percent. The legal limit is .08.

State police put three dogs from Jordan's pickup into the Pendleton city dog pound and took the gun and extra ammunition he was carrying in the small of his back. The Bersa .380-caliber pistol, two magazines and 14 rounds are in safe keeping with state police.

Umatilla County Sheriff's Office starts DUII blitz

PENDLETON — The Umatilla County Sheriff's Office is again teaming up with agencies around the state to catch impaired and distracted drivers.

The sheriff's office in a written statement reported extra patrols hit the road Wednesday through Jan. 1 to look for intoxicated and distracted drivers. Funds for the extra patrols come from an Oregon Department of Transportation grant to crack down on driving under the influence of intoxicants.

On average, according to the sheriff's office, 33 people die in traffic collisions every December in Oregon.

"It is UCSCO's goal to prevent serious injury or fatal crashes on our county's roadways," the agency stated. "Please, buckle up, drive for the conditions, and never drive impaired by alcohol and/or drugs. Be responsible and arrange for a sober driver."

The sheriff's office also encouraged anyone who sees what looks like unsafe operation of a vehicle to call 911 with the vehicle's description, direction of travel and license plate number if possible.

"You may save a life," the sheriff's office stated.

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

Tasered trooper gets sweet apology

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

Oregon State Police trooper Mitchell Goldman was literally shocked during a Hermiston domestic violence call. The cake he got from the Umatilla County Sheriff's Office seemed to make up for the trouble.

State police on Monday posted a photo of Goldman with the cake he received for taking a shot from the Taser of sheriff's Sgt. Josh Roberts. Blue icing on the cake read: "Sorry you got tased."

Goldman the evening of Oct. 11 responded to the call at 2295 N. Townsend Road, Hermiston and contacted Michael Jacob Morris, 21. State police on Facebook reported Morris "became belligerent" when the trooper tried to pat him down and a "scuffle ensued."

Roberts said he pulled up and saw Goldman and Morris in a struggle and wanted to subdue the suspect. He said he fired his Taser stun gun, and one prong struck Morris flush, but the other skipped off and hung up in the trooper's vest. Both men felt the gun's jolt of electricity.

"When they let go, the Taser stopped," Roberts said, "and the guy gave up and that was it."

Roberts said it was not his intent to zap Goldman, but the Taser was the safer choice under the circumstances. The weapon can overwhelm a person's system with electricity while not leaving lasting effects.

State police also reported Goldman shared the photo on Facebook with the line "Getting tased is a cake walk."

Circuit Court records show Morris faces misdemeanor charges of attempted



Photo courtesy Oregon State Police

Oregon State Police trooper Mitchell Goldman was accidentally tasered by a Umatilla County Sheriff's Office deputy back in October. The deputy apologized with a cake.

assault, assault, harassment and interfering with police from the Oct. 11 fracas and misdemeanors of assault and interfering with police from July 29. His cases go to trial Dec. 19 and 20, and for now he remains in the Umatilla County

Jail, Pendleton. Goldman was off duty Tuesday. Roberts said he never got a piece of the cake, which a co-worker baked for the trooper. Morris didn't get any cake, either.

HERMISTON

Hermiston 'stars' to waltz into new year

Tickets on sale for Jan. 13 performance

By TAMMY MALGESINI
East Oregonian

Returning for a sixth season, Dancing with the Hermiston Stars features six community members who will take the stage with professional dancers from the Utah Ballroom Dance Company.

Presented by Desert Arts Council, money raised will help support the organization's mission of growing the arts. The winner will be determined by a combination of the judge's scores, audience votes and money raised.

Scoring a perfect 30 out of 30 from the judges during the 2015 event, Erica Sandoval is coming back for another chance to take home the coveted mirror ball trophy. An officer with the Hermiston Police Department, Sandoval performed a memorable mambo to a song from the movie "Dirty Dancing."

Eged out by audience voting and money donated on behalf of other dancers, Sandoval is already politicking on Facebook. She's looking to get extra votes through donations for the 2018 event.

"I've got another chance at this," she said. "I've got the dancing down but I'm gonna need your help with the rest."

Rather than dancing for individual charities like past shows, each of the dancers will raise money for Desert Arts Council, said Mary Corp, event co-chair. Others hoping to claim the trophy and bragging rights include



Sandoval



Seibel



Mooney



Juarez



Burns



Bendixsen

Cameron Bendixsen, Josh Burns, Erik Juarez, Tricia Mooney and Ashley Seibel.

Bendixsen, who moved to Hermiston as a first grader in 1987, is excited to take the stage in support of the arts. A 1999 Hermiston graduate, Bendixsen returned in 2013 to join his father's law firm. The arts, he said, contribute to the creativity, diversity and unity of growing communities.

"Our youth can flourish as they showcase their talents," Bendixsen said.

Moving to Hermiston six years ago, Burns is general manager at the Walmart Distribution Center. He enjoys the small-town feel of Hermiston. In addition, he said the community offers many opportunities, including those offered through Desert Arts.

"I believe we're better human beings when we've opened ourselves up to learn about others," he said. "Art

allows us to do that in an enjoyable way, whatever the medium."

A Hermiston native, Juarez is an analyst at Good Shepherd Medical Center and serves as a commissioner for American Youth Soccer.

"I feel blessed to be able to be in a position where I can help the youth in Hermiston," he said.

In addition, Juarez is looking forward to raising money to benefit Desert Arts programs. He's especially supportive of showcasing local artists to assist in furthering their careers.

Currently the Hermiston School District interim superintendent, Mooney started her career in education as a teacher in Hermiston

in 1995. After working in the Pendleton School District from 2008-16, she returned "home" to a thriving community that possesses a "can do" attitude that supports its businesses, schools and citizens. Mooney especially appreciates the dedication of the Desert Arts Council in providing quality arts and entertainment opportunities.

"I want to give back in support of all that is given for our community," she said.

A Umatilla County native who has lived in Hermiston for 15 years, Seibel owns a photography business. She believes creativity builds confidence and enjoys being a part of nurturing and supporting youths in an expressive environment.

In addition, Seibel knows her way around the dance floor — she's an instructor at Dance Unlimited and is the head dance coach at Hermiston High School.

Dancing with the Hermiston Stars is Saturday, Jan. 13 at 7 p.m. in the HHS auditorium. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$10 for students. They are available at www.desertartscouncil.com, Hermiston Parks & Recreation, and the Hermiston Chamber of Commerce. For more information, call 541-667-5018.

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

STUDENT OF THE WEEK



Margaret Campbell
Junior - Condon High School

Margaret is a junior at CHS, and the daughter of Tim and Elizabeth Campbell. She is an active student leader, currently serving as co-class president. In addition to being a leader she has served on the Honor Society, assisting in gathering food for the food pantry and volunteering at the Red Cross Blood drive. She has earned Honor Roll recognition her four previous semesters of high school, and has a 4.0 accumulative GPA. Margaret has also been involved with the Early College Program offered to CHS student by Columbia Gorge Community College, taking courses to earn dual credit. She has participated in volleyball and tennis at CHS. Outside of school Margaret is heavily involved with 4-H and serves as a County Ambassador. She is also a member of the International Club, and is raising funds for the Rome to Athens trip in March of 2019. She has accomplished much in and out of the classroom, serves her school and community well. She is an outstanding student, young adult, and citizen, and a positive role model for younger students and peers alike. She is deserving of this honor and recognition of Student of the Week!

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If you were suddenly transported into the presence of God and you heard a prosecuting attorney listing all the reasons you should be sent to hell, how would you plead? Guilty or not guilty?

The apostle Paul said, "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God? (Romans 3:23). That makes us guilty as charged. What is the penalty for our sin? "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord? (Romans 6:23)

What could we say in our defense? "God demonstrates His own love towards us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8)

Because Jesus became our substitute, the penalty has been paid. But we must accept His forgiveness as a gift. The only requirement is that we recognize our need and accept His offer.

"If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved... For 'whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved' (Romans 10:9, 13)

If you Haven't done so before, tell Jesus that you believe He died as your substitute and accept the free and undeserved gift of forgiveness. That's the only way to be right about your wrong, to be accepted by God, and to be sure of heaven.

Merry Christmas

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