

OUT OF THE VAULT

Muddy kneepprint leads to killer's capture

Persistent police work and a corduroy kneepprint in a muddy river bank led to the arrest of a teenage Pendleton boy in a shocking murder case in October 1943.

June Reiman, a 16-year-old resident of the McKay Creek district five miles south of Pendleton, left her home Oct. 3, 1943, armed with a .22 rifle. She told her family she was going to hunt along the creek, but when she hadn't returned by sunset a search party was formed. Her partially nude body was found just 150 feet from the family home in a grassy, brushy area at about 8 p.m. that evening. A blow to the head and asphyxia from blood in her lungs were determined to be the cause of death. There were no signs of a struggle, and the rifle was not found with her body.

A manhunt was formed, but clues were scarce. Local, county and state investigators joined the search, and the .22 rifle June had been carrying was found the next evening in a pool of water about 150 feet away from where June's body was discovered. The gun's stock was partly broken, indicating that it was likely the weapon used to strike her head. A medical examiner's inquest into June's death revealed that, although an attempt had been made to attack her, no sexual assault had been committed. A 60-year-old man found walking along the highway near the murder scene was

held by police for questioning, but he was not charged with a crime and was eventually released.

June's funeral was held Oct. 6 with schoolmates from Pendleton High School serving as pallbearers and singers.

Almost a week later, Pendleton police arrested a 14-year-old boy and charged him with June's murder. Ronald Elder, a ninth grader and neighbor of June's on McKay Creek, was identified as a suspect after a confidential tip that he had come home the night of the murder with wet feet. After his arrest, Elder was taken to the riverbank where the impression of corduroy trousers had been found in the mud. Elder immediately confessed to the killing in front of three police officers. Elder said he had come across June the afternoon of her death and they had walked along the creek bank together, planning to shoot fish in the deeper pools in the creek. She had allowed him to carry her rifle. He was walking behind her, he said, when suddenly an uncontrollable urge to kill her came over him. He pointed the rifle at the back of her head and fired.

After June fell to the ground, Elder turned her onto her back and started to undress her, but a noise in the bushes startled him and he ran, crossing the creek and tossing the rifle into a nearby

pool — but he slipped, and went down on one knee on the bank. He returned to the highway where he had left his bicycle and returned home. He later joined the search party, coming near her body twice during the evening.

Elder denied having clubbed June with the rifle, and eventually led officers to the recovery of a single .22 shell casing near the crime scene. But the autopsy revealed no trace of a bullet. Despite the discrepancy, Elder was charged with second-degree murder.

Ronald Elder pleaded guilty to the murder of June Reiman on Nov. 16, 1943, and was sentenced to a mandatory life prison sentence. Instead of serving his sentence in the Oregon State Prison, Elder was held in the state prison hospital due to his age. State penitentiary warden George Alexander said he had not made plans for Elder's education, but thought maybe they could make a dentist out of him in perhaps five or six years. He would be eligible for parole after serving seven years of his sentence.

Elder eventually was freed from prison, married and had a family. He died Oct. 29, 2004, at the age of 75 as the result of injuries from a car accident.

Renee Struthers is the Community Records Editor for the East Oregonian. See the complete collection of Out of the Vault columns at eovault.blogspot.com

DEAR ABBY

Stepson snubbed by family's habit of selective gift-giving

Dear Abby: My husband and I were together for eight years before we married a year ago. He has a kid from a previous marriage who just turned 11. The boy has been a part of my life since he was 3. But it wasn't until his father and I were married that my parents began sending him Christmas presents. They don't usually send him birthday gifts.



JEANNE PHILLIPS Advice

My husband and I had our own child seven months ago. Now they're sending a ton of Christmas presents for my biological son, but only a few token gifts for my stepson. My sister didn't bother buying anything for my stepson or my husband. When I pointed it out to her, she ignored me.

I don't think it's fair that they exclude my stepson. My sister has two girls and I bought gifts for everyone — including her husband — although money was tight. Now I wish I could take everything back. How can I get them to not shortchange my stepson? Or should I just tell them not to bother sending anyone gifts? — **Outcast In Montana**

Dear Outcast: It appears your husband may have a less-than-ideal relationship with your mother and your sister. Before taking any action, discuss this with your husband. If he agrees, then you are within your rights to tell them the way they are treating your husband and stepson is hurtful. Say that if it can't be corrected, you prefer gifts no longer be exchanged because the discrimination is blatant and not what these holidays are supposed to be about.

Dear Abby: I'm a 12-year-old girl in seventh grade. I have this crush and we're friends. I finally got up the courage to tell him I liked him, and he has said nothing about it for the past two days. My best friend, Sara, tried to ask him why twice at lunch, but he left every time she tried to bring it up.

I know we're only in middle school, but I'm ready. Should Sara and I confront him together or give him time? I can't do it without Sara because then

I would probably run. What should I do? — **Girl With A Crush**

Dear Girl With A Crush: Twelve-year-old girls in seventh grade may be ready for crushes, but 12-year-old boys in seventh grade may not be. You have already gotten your message across to him. Forget confronting him and do not involve your friend Sara, or he will run in the opposite direction the minute he sees you coming.

Be patient. It may take some time, but he will develop an interest in girls eventually. And when he does, you do NOT want him to remember you as the one who embarrassed him in public.

Dear Abby: How do I treat someone with respect whom I do NOT respect and who does not respect me? I try to treat everyone courteously; however, it's tough to do when often the respect only flows one way. — **Unsure In California**

Dear Unsure: Here's how. First, keep your distance, if that's possible. And then refrain from showing your disdain by using basic good manners whenever you are forced to be in the person's presence.

DAYS GONE BY

100 Years Ago From the East Oregonian Dec. 16-17, 1917

Harold Casey, star backfield man of the Pendleton high school football team, was chosen as a member of the all-northwest interscholastic team as picked by George Bertz, sport writer for the *Oregon Journal*. He is the only Pendletonian and the only eastern Oregon man to be honored with selection for the mythical eleven. Portland, Walla Walla and Everett each have two representatives on the team. The other institutions represented are Salem, Pendleton, North Central High of Spokane, Lincoln High of Seattle and Aberdeen. "Yenny of Walla Walla, W. Dailey of Everett and Casey of Pendleton were the players who probably stood out as the best," says Bertz.

50 Years Ago From the East Oregonian Dec. 16-17, 1967

Les Szabo, shepherd at C&B Livestock, Hermiston, is using the best method that we've seen for handling feeder or market lambs. Date palm leaves are real motivators in moving lambs. Les said, "We just shake the palm leaf over the lamb's back and head and they move up. And besides, the tickle and

the rattle of the palm leaf doesn't bruise the meat or hurt the lamb." Tom Watson, manager of the lamb feed operations at C&B, not only believes but has his crew practice "when handling livestock — easy does it." And believe it or not, the palm leaf works.

25 Years Ago From the East Oregonian Dec. 16-17, 1992

A 14-year-old boy has been charged with criminally negligent homicide in the Nov. 24 shotgun shooting of 12-year-old Cody McNeel in Umatilla. Martin Ortiz also is being charged with carrying a concealed weapon — a .22-caliber pistol — and unauthorized use of a motor vehicle. District Attorney Dave Gallaher said Ortiz, who remains in detention at the Northeast Oregon Regional Youth Center in Pendleton, will be charged as a juvenile, not an adult. McNeel was killed at the end of an armed confrontation that never materialized. Authorities say eight Umatilla boys had armed themselves, taken a car from the uncle of one of the boys, and driven to Hermiston to confront one or more other youths. McNeel was killed after the group returned to Umatilla and a shotgun discharged as the boys were getting out of the car.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Today is the 350th day of 2017. There are 15 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Dec. 16, 1773, the Boston Tea Party took place as American colonists boarded a British ship and dumped more than 300 chests of tea into Boston Harbor to protest tea taxes.

On this date: In 1653, Oliver Cromwell became lord protector of England, Scotland and Ireland.

In 1809, the French Senate granted a divorce decree to Emperor Napoleon I and Empress Josephine (the dissolution was made final the following month).

In 1811, the first of the powerful New Madrid earthquakes struck the central Mississippi Valley with an estimated magnitude of 7.7.

In 1917, science-fiction writer Sir Arthur C. Clarke was born in Minehead, Somerset, England.

In 1930, golfer Bobby Jones became the first recipient of the James E. Sullivan Award honoring outstanding amateur athletes.

In 1944, the World War II Battle of the Bulge began

as German forces launched a surprise attack against Allied forces through the Ardennes Forest in Belgium and Luxembourg (the Allies were eventually able to turn the Germans back).

In 1950, President Harry S. Truman proclaimed a national state of emergency in order to fight "world conquest by Communist imperialism."

In 1960, 134 people were killed when a United Air Lines DC-8 and a TWA Super Constellation collided over New York City.

In 1976, the government halted its swine flu vaccination program following reports of paralysis apparently linked to the vaccine.

In 1985, at services in Fort Campbell, Kentucky, President Ronald Reagan and his wife, Nancy, offered condolences to families of 248 soldiers killed in the crash of a chartered plane in Newfoundland.

In 1991, the U.N. General Assembly rescinded its 1975 resolution equating Zionism with racism by a vote of 111-25.

In 1997, singer Nicolette Larson, a recording artist who lifted Neil Young's pop hit "Lotta Love" to the top of

the charts in the 1970s, died in Los Angeles at age 45.

In 2007, British forces formally handed over to Iraq responsibility for Basra, the last Iraqi region under their control. Singer-songwriter Dan Fogelberg died in Deer Isle, Maine, at age 56.

Today's Birthdays: Civil rights attorney Morris Dees is 81. Actress Joyce Bullfant is 80. Actress Liv Ullmann is 79. CBS news correspondent Lesley Stahl is 76. TV producer Steven Bochco is 74. Former Nevada Gov. Jim Gibbons is 73. Pop musician Tony Hicks (The Hollies) is 72. Pop singer Benny Andersson (ABBA) is 71. Actor Ben Cross is 70. Rock singer-musician Billy Gibbons (ZZ Top) is 68. Rock musician Bill Bateman (The Blasters) is 66. Actor Xander Berkeley is 62. Actress Alison LaPlaca is 58. Actor Sam Robards is 56. Actor Jon Tenney is 56. Actor Benjamin Bratt is 54. Country singer-songwriter Jeff Carson is 54. Actor-comedian JB Smoove is 52. Actress Miranda Otto is 50. Actor Daniel Cosgrove is 47. Rhythm-and-blues singer Michael McCary is 46. Actor Jonathan Scarfe is 42. Actress

Krysten Ritter is 36. Actress Zoe Jarman is 35. Country musician Chris Scruggs is 35. Actor Theo James is 33. Actress Amanda Setton is 32. Rock musician Dave Rublin (American Authors) is 31. Actress Hallee Hirsh is 30. Actress Anna Popplewell is 29. Actor Stephan James is 24.

Thought for Today: "History never really says goodbye. History says, 'See you later.'" — Eduardo Galeano, Uruguayan writer (1940-2015).

WORD★Roundup™

by David L. Hoyt & Jeff Knurek

Find and Circle...

- Six months □□□□□
- Four pieces of furniture □□□□
- Four four-letter fish □□□□
- Three five-letter words ending in GO □□□
- Largest type of primate □

Answers to Saturday's puzzle: FEBRUARY OCTOBER AUGUST MARCH JULY MAY / ARMCHAIR TABLE DESK BED / TUNA PIKE CARP SOLE / LINGO MANGO VIRGO / GORILLA

12/16

J L I N G O R I L L A Y
Z U R V I R G O C R E R
M K L M K D T V E J R A
A M A Y A S E B Z T I U
N B A C U R O S E A O R
G E N G A T C L K B M B
O D U V C R O H P L R E
L A T O K S P I K E A F

7 LITTLE WORDS

Find the 7 words to match the 7 clues. The numbers in parentheses represent the number of letters in each solution. Each letter combination can be used only once, but all letter combinations will be necessary to complete the puzzle.

CLUES	SOLUTIONS
1 British principal (10)	_____
2 establish a central office (11)	_____
3 vexatious problem (8)	_____
4 be the main musical draw (8)	_____
5 car interior stat (8)	_____
6 posture with feet aloft (9)	_____
7 Beats, perhaps (10)	_____

DQUA	DL	HEAD	HEAD	TER
DST	PH	HEAD	HEA	INE
HEA	AND	OM	DRO	HEA
RTER	MAS	ONES	HEA	ACHE

Today's Answers: 1. HEADMASTER 2. HEADQUARTER 3. HEADACHE 4. HEADLINE 5. HEADROOM 6. HEADSTAND 7. HEADPHONES

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