

Rescuers 'searching for a miracle' in Calif. mudslides

MONTECITO, Calif. (AP) — More than two full days after mudslides ravaged the coastal town of Montecito, the search for the missing became an increasingly desperate exercise Thursday, with growing doubts about whether anyone would be found alive. Seventeen people from ages 3 to 89 were confirmed dead, and more than 40 others were unaccounted for.

"In disaster circumstances there have been many miraculous stories lasting many days and we certainly are searching for a miracle right now," Santa Barbara County Sheriff Bill Brown said. He noted that some people had been rescued Thursday.

Santa Barbara fire Capt. Gary Pitney said most if not all rescues conducted Wednesday and Thursday were of people who were safe but just wanted to get out of the area.

"These were people that were sheltered in place that had needs that just took a while to get to some of them," Pitney said. "They were OK but they wanted to get out."

The air smelled of sewage and ash as more than a dozen firefighters climbed through rubble in the backyard of a mansion that had been torn apart. Some rescuers used poles to probe the muck for bodies, while others waded chest-deep in the mire. Two black Labrador retrievers swam around a debris-filled swimming pool, trying to pick up any scent.

House OKs spy program after Trump tweets spark confusion

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump's puzzling tweets about a key U.S. spying law threw the House into temporary disarray Thursday, but lawmakers ended up renewing the law — with a new restriction on when the FBI can dig into the communications of Americans swept up in foreign surveillance.

During a hectic morning of House votes and presidential tweets, Trump's national intelligence director also issued new guidance for how officials can find out the names of Americans whose identities are blacked out in classified intelligence reports.

Trump has said previous rules were far



Emergency workers search areas damaged from storms in Montecito, Calif., Thursday. Rescue workers slogged through knee-deep ooze and used long poles to probe for bodies Thursday as the search dragged on for victims of the mudslides that slammed this wealthy coastal town.

AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez

too lax and led to damaging leaks about top aides, a claim fiercely contested by Democrats.

The new guidelines on "unmasking" Americans, however, were a side show to the House showdown over the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, reauthorizing a collection program set to expire on Jan. 19. The bill passed 256-164 and is now headed to the Senate. It would extend for six years the program, which includes massive monitoring of international communications.

Trump has said he'll sign the renewal, but his first tweets Thursday suggested he had suddenly turned against the program, alarming intelligence officials.

Work requirement rewrites health care rules for poor

WASHINGTON (AP) — Rewriting the rules on health care for the poor, the Trump administration said Thursday it will allow states to require "able-bodied" Medicaid recipients to work, a hotly debated first in

the program's half-century history.

Seema Verma, head of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, said requiring work or community involvement can make a positive difference in people's lives and in their health. The goal is to help people move from public assistance into jobs that provide health insurance. "We see people moving off of Medicaid as a good outcome," she said.

But advocates said work requirements will become one more hoop for low-income people to jump through, and many could be denied needed coverage because of technicalities and challenging new paperwork. Lawsuits are expected as individual states roll out work requirements.

"All of this on paper may sound reasonable, but if you think about the people who are affected, you can see people will fall through the cracks," said Judy Solomon of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, which advocates for the poor.

EOTEC: Needs to update planning commission each month

Continued from 1A

also flouted a 2012 rule that an ingress on Ott Road is to be used for emergency access only.

Nate Rivera, who came to EOTEC as interim manager the week after the 2017 Umatilla County Fair and is now helping transition to management by VenuWorks, said county commissioner and EOTEC board member Larry Givens made the decision to start using the Ott Road entrance in addition to Airport Road. He said the decision was made in consultation with Sheriff Terry Rowan after extensive traffic jams on the first day caused serious concerns about safety.

City planning director Clint Spencer said it "rankled" to read in the newspaper that a condition for approval of EOTEC's zoning was being violated after the first day of EOTEC's first large event. Rivera said EOTEC was "fully aware" that it had failed in its responsibility to make sure conditions set by the planning commission were met but things would be different now that VenuWorks had taken over management of the center and could craft parking and traffic plans.

"We had that in place and it didn't seem to matter," commissioner Kathy Erz replied, noting the time the planning commission spent discussing concerns that the two-lane, unpaved Ott Road would not handling heavy traffic. "After the first day

"We need at least one more year to gauge if these conditions are effective."

— **Clint Spencer,**
city planning director

the whole plan was thrown to the wind."

Rivera said plans for the first year were all based in theory, but moving forward it would be easier to craft a plan with knowledge from last year's event.

"Let us work with our new management company and let us come back with a plan that is well thought out and well considered," he said.

There won't be as much data as the planning commission hoped, however. Ridership for the free shuttles — which commissioners said they had expected would run all week but instead only ran Friday and Saturday — was not tracked. Equipment failures caused by high temperatures in the afternoons kept the fair from getting an accurate attendance count for 2017, and Rivera said data from traffic counts conducted by the county were "not able to be recovered" either.

Planning commissioner Derek Caplinger said he was worried that with the lack of data and a new management company, "we're essentially starting over" again next year.

Hamm said in his five or six years on the planning commission he had never seen someone fail to follow through on conditions set by the planning commission on a variance. He asked Spencer what the normal procedure would be.

Spencer said EOTEC was an unusual case because usually conditions are set before construction begins and the city simply does not issue an occupancy permit until the conditions are met. He said the redress after a building begins operation is usually to take the owners to municipal court and levy fines. However, he also noted earlier in the meeting that "construction of the facility was literally going until the first day of the event" and a management company had not yet been hired.

"We need at least one more year to gauge if these conditions are effective," he said.

Under questioning by the commission, EOTEC chair/city manager Byron Smith said the board could likely have a plan for parking and traffic for the planning commission's review by May. He and Givens also noted that the state legislature included about \$1 million in their transportation package for improvements to Ott Road and Airport Road. Givens said the project likely wouldn't be completed in time for the 2018 fair but perhaps 2019.

Planning commission chair Margaret Saylor said

she was there on the first day of the fair when traffic was backed up hours, and thought that the decision to route some traffic through Ott Road was needed for safety. However, it still broke the conditions of EOTEC's variance. She said EOTEC needed to begin work immediately on better plans for next year, and come back to update the planning commission each month.

Commissioner Moses Frederic also added that the plan needed to include backup provisions.

"Multiple plans in place would allow you to pivot to another transportation plan instead of making these decisions ad hoc," he said.

As the meeting wrapped up, former EOTEC board member Dennis Doherty said he thought he was never going to get out of EOTEC after the rodeo on the first night and faulted the planning commission for setting the condition that Ott Road not be used. He also said it seemed there were "expectations placed on the EOTEC board that they don't have the authority, power or time to solve." He said he took his hat off to all of the people who volunteered countless hours of their time to pull off the fair and rodeo at EOTEC, and urged everyone in the room to "not let people divide us."

Contact Jade McDowell at jmcdowell@eastoregonian.com or 541-564-4536.

DRUGS: There is no law against the consumption of drugs — only possession

Continued from 1A

that details symptoms and identifiers for the different drug categories. At the end of the class, they take an exam, which includes recreating the matrix from memory.

The matrix will allow them to eliminate certain substances based on behaviors symptomatic of a certain drug.

Officers search for horizontal gaze nystagmus (HGN), an involuntary jerking of the eyes. "If I don't see HGN, I can rule out CNS depressants, inhalants, and dissociative anesthetics," Roberts said. "If we see HGN, we look at those three categories as contenders for impairment."

Once they've completed the course, Roberts said students have a field certification training in Portland where they work on identifying people who are impaired.

Often times, Roberts said, the people that volunteer are homeless.

"We give them a sandwich and a soda," Roberts said. "We're not threatening anyone with jail, they're total volunteers."

He said while they occasionally find people in possession of drugs during the exercises, they typically focus on the task at hand.

"We always use officer discretion," he said. "If we find a residual amount, now under the new law it's a misdemeanor. Often, we'll just give them a warning."

Roberts added that the field exercises are easier to conduct in Oregon, because there is no law against the consumption of drugs — only against possession.

"If you've ingested it, it's not technically a crime," he said. "That gives us the freedom to walk around and ask people to volunteer."

"The volunteers we get are really vital to the process," he said. "It would be really difficult to hold field certification otherwise."

The final step of training is to confirm students' evaluations with toxicology tests.

"Each student has to have at least 80 percent of the evaluations confirmed, that what they called is actually

confirmed in the toxicology test," Roberts said.

The drug expert program has been around since the 1990s, according to Hermiston Police Chief Jason Edmiston.

Roberts said over time, the drug recognition experts learn to look for signs that a

person may have used multiple drugs, or if a person has been using drugs that may have quickly left their system.

"You see a change in how the body reacts over time," he said. "Some drugs are really fast-acting, like inhalants. We look at things like pulse rate, how eyes are moving. If there's involuntary jerking of the eyes, we put them through the same field sobriety tests."

Other tests include whether a person can divide their attention, and the degree to which a person's eyes are dilated. They will also check the person's vital signs, and examine their muscle tone and skin for signs of injection marks.

Eynon pointed out that getting further testing from a DRE is voluntary for someone who has been pulled over, but there is some incentive to agree to further tests. If an officer has reason to believe a person is impaired, they will still be required to submit a urine sample.

Edmiston said police spend an inordinate energy on DUIs.

"There's often more time and resources dedicated to one DUI investigation and arrests than for many felony crimes and arrests," he said.

He said while the drug expert positions are helpful in identifying impairment, they still pull officers from their duties.

He said in the past several years, all Class A misdemeanors, including DUIs, have gone to the courts, which means pulling officers off their beats and paying for medical analysis. And he is not aware of a Breathalyzer equivalent for other drugs.

Contact Jayati Ramakrishnan at 541-564-4534 or jramakrishnan@eastoregonian.com

UMATILLA: National Guard has been training at the site since the 1980s

Continued from 1A

Regional Training Institute, which trains infantry leaders.

The \$25 million will be spent over several years, according to the release, and pay for sewer line repairs, a water distribution system, roads, fencing, improvements to offices, lodging and the dining facility and new classrooms. An additional \$2 million has already been spent on the project.

The depot was constructed in 1941 in preparation for World War II, and Lt. Col. Noel Hoback told the *East Oregonian* in September it seems that many of the buildings being used by the National Guard were part of the original construction.

The Oregon National Guard has been training at



Sgt. Jennifer Sargeant of the Washington National Guard learns infantry tactics during a day of training at Camp Umatilla, Oregon in November 2016.

Photo by Jonathan (Jay) Koester, NCO Journal

the site since the 1980s and has built arms ranges and kept vehicles.

"A lot of the facilities and infrastructure out there haven't been updated in decades if at all," said Eric Manus, the senior manager for the Camp Umatilla construction projects. "We

have already been out there working projects to modernize the infrastructure so that we have a solid foundation for building renovations over the next several years."

The Oregon Adjutant General and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers signed a

license on Nov. 27 that dedicated the land as a training center. The U.S. Army has yet to transfer the rest of the land to local control, including a 5,600-acre wildlife refuge and 4,000 acres of industrial development.

Jim Willeford is the Oregon Military Department's head of construction, and said working with the needs of the neighboring entities is important.

"As we train out there, we want to have plans in place so that we can balance getting our training done with having minimal impact on the surrounding land and wildlife," he said. "We also want to preserve some things like the old parade grounds for their historic value."

Willeford said some of the large grass lawns will be turned back into desert, saving on irrigation.