Guilty plea for DUII homicide

Ukiah man rolled vehicle, throwing

East Oregonian

Anthony King Enriquez of Ukiah drove drunk in March and killed his friend in a crash. Now he's going to prison for the crimes.

Enriquez, 42, pleaded guilty Tuesday in Morrow County Circuit Court to criminal negligent homicide and driving under the influence of intoxicants, District Attorney Justin Nelson reported. Circuit Judge Eva Temple sentenced Enriquez to five years, five months in state prison in accordance to a plea deal. Enriquez will receive credit for the time he spent in the Umatilla County Jail, Pendleton, following the crash.

Enriquez

Nelson said Enriquez and Joshua Herrig, 35, were friends and occasionally worked together. They met during the lunch hour on March 21 and purchased three cases of Budweiser.

"They then met back up after work (around 5 p.m.) and decided to go to Ione for dinner," according to Nelson. "The two then left for Ione in Mr. Herrig's work truck with Mr. Enriquez driving the vehicle. Mr. Enriquez stated that he drove because Mr. Herrig was too intoxicated to drive."

Enriquez reported he looked down at his phone at 5:33 p.m., Nelson stated, and when he looked up he was off the road. He over-corrected, the pickup crossed the highway and he over-corrected again. The pickup rolled, ejecting Herrig. He died at the scene.

Enriquez got out of the vehicle and admitted to being the driver and to consuming three beers before the crash, Nelson stated. A blood draw two hours after the crash showed Enriquez had a blood alcohol content of .19 percent, more than twice the legal limit of .08 percent.

Nelson also said his office and the victim assistance office kept Herrig's family informed of the status of this case and consulted them prior to accepting the plea deal. Herrig's mother and sister gave statements to the court at the sentencing hearing.

Rural program aims at catching colon cancer

By JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN
East Oregonian

Residents of some of the most rural parts of Eastern Oregon can now get easier access to colon cancer screenings. The Eastern Oregon Healthy Living Alliance is offering free screening kits to people in Gilliam, Morrow and Sherman counties. People between the ages of 50 and 75 can pick up a kit from one of several different locations in the three counties.

The Fecal Immunochemical Test kit allows people to take the test, which checks for blood in the stool, in the privacy of their own home, and then return the kit at a designated location.

Colorectal cancer is preventable, according to the organization's press release, and a person can minimize their risk by getting screened regularly.

John Adams, executive director of the Eastern Oregon Healthy Living Alliance, said the organization looked at all the counties in the area and their health needs.

"Based on population and identified need, we're trying to share resources," he said.

The Healthy Living Alliance focuses on much of the same coverage area as the Eastern Oregon Coordinated Care Organization, which provides services for Medicaid-eligible people in 12 Eastern Oregon counties, including Umatilla County.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Nolan the Colon provides information about colorectal cancer at the 2017 Family Health & Fitness Day at Hermiston High School. The Eastern Oregon Healthy Living Alliance is offering free screening kits to people in Gilliam, Morrow and Sherman counties.

Adams said rural counties in Oregon were a priority because of their aging populations.

"Throughout Eastern Oregon, there's higher rates of older adults than the state average," he said.

According to the 2010 census, about 15 percent of Morrow County residents are 65 and older, while about 25 percent in Sherman County and 27 percent in Gilliam county fit that demographic.

Adams added that one in three Oregonians from ages 50 to 75 are not screened as recommended, and that Eastern Oregon's rates of screening are even lower.

The rate of new colorectal cancer diagnoses in Morrow County is 43.2 percent, he said, as compared to a state rate of 37.1 percent. He said the rate of mortality in Eastern Oregon communities from 2009 to 2013 was 18.9 percent, as compared to 14.5 percent statewide.

A list of the locations where free screening kits can be picked up is below:

Morrow County:

Columbia River Health Services Clinic, 450 Tatone St., Boardman

Pioneer Memorial Clinic, 130 Thompson St., Heppner

Ione Community Clinic, 365 W. 3rd St., Ione

Irrigon Medical Clinic, 220 NE Main Ave., Irrigon

Gilliam County:

Arlington Clinic, 120 On-The-Mall, Arlington

Gilliam County Courthouse, 211 S. Oregon St., Condon

Sherman County:

Sherman County Medical, 110 Main St, Moro

Grass Valley City Hall, Second Street, Grass Valley

Rufus City Hall, 304 W. Second St., Rufus

BRIEFLY

Pendleton City Council adopts $80M budget

At a meeting Tuesday, the Pendleton City Council unanimously adopted an $80.1 million budget for the 2018-2019 fiscal year.

The budget includes a $16.5 million for water and sewer projects, $1.3 million for street projects, $500,000 for a new fire engine, and $100,000 for a 22-passenger bus.

The city has not disclosed how much money it expects in marijuana tax revenue, but given that the city council is earmarking 50 percent of revenue for street repair, one can deduce that the city is expecting $200,000 over the next fiscal year.

The fiscal year runs from July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019.

Umatilla County adopts $79M budget

PENDLETON — The Umatilla County Board of Commissioners adopted the $78.7 million budget for 2018-19. The county's fiscal year begins July 1.

The board held the budget hearing Wednesday morning at the county courthouse in Pendleton. Board chair George Murdock said the two days of budget committee meetings in May did not use the typical line-by-line budget readings and instead focused on department needs and building for the future. He also said managers tend to like the county's approach to start looking at the next budget in October.

In addition to adopting the budget with a tax rate of $2.85 per $1,000, the board approved three positions for the sheriff's office — a dispatcher, corrections staff and a criminal deputy. The new budget includes the funds for the positions.

Keep your eyes peeled when on the river

SALEM — The Oregon Marine Board advised paddlers, rafters and tubers to look out for trees and other river obstructions.

While the trees benefit fish, they can prove a risk for people on the river, according to the written statement from the Marine Board, and some obstructions will become more dangerous as river levels drop, requiring people to portage around them.

"We urge every boater to plan ahead, prepare carefully, check the online resources, and scout each section of river before boating through it," said Randy Henry, boating safety manager for the Marine Board. "Life jackets are crucial, but may not help if a boater gets entangled in a submerged tree."

Henry urged several more precautions, including using the Marine Board's obstruction web page to see where there are reported obstructions, and filling out a float plan and providing copies to let others know where you are boating and when to expect your return.

Check out the Marine Board's "Paddling Oregon Safely" brochure for more tips and information at boatoregon.com.

Pollinator workshop in Irrigon

UMATILLA — A conservation group will teach people how to protect and attract monarch butterflies in their own yard during a free workshop next Saturday.

The Xerces Society, a group that focuses on the preservation and health of invertebrates and their habitats, will hold a workshop at the Umatilla National Wildlife Refuge in Irrigon Saturday, June 16. Participants will go on a field trip to find monarchs and milkweed, and learn about how to help conserve the pollinating insect. They will hear presentations from monarch butterfly researchers, and there will be activities for children.

Space is limited for the event and participants must sign up in advance, at www.fws.gov/pacific/register. They can also contact Lauren Richey at the Xerces Society, at 503-232-6639, ext. 123, or at lauren.richey@xerces.org.

DRONES: UAS is integral to the survival of the airport

Continued from 1A

there is an immediate need for that infrastructure.

"We have the cookies but we don't have the jar," he said.

Chrisman said the airport is currently renting out 50,000 square feet of space to various companies, many of them UAS businesses. And there are enough drone companies waiting for space that airport management could easily fill three new hangars.

While Chrisman said there was "nothing tremendously special" about the old Airport Road industrial park concept at the council workshop, he added on Wednesday that building the road was still a "wise investment." It would take an additional $5.6 million to extend utilities to that site, which has been empty since the city purchased the 40 acres of land for $500,000 in 2011.

Chrisman argued that further success at the UAS range could spur development off Airport Road because drone companies could look for land to buy near the UAS range, something they cannot legally do on airport property.

"(Taxpayer) investment (on Airport Road) will not go for naught," he said. "We're just shifting the development."

Mayor John Turner, Chrisman and City Manager Robb Corbett agreed that the opportunity the UAS range offered was too immediate to pass up.

That means the range now bears the responsibility of being an economic development engine, a prime source of income for the airport, and a way to pay back more than $2.5 million in airport debt.

Turner said he often tells residents that job creation is not the most important measurement of success for the UAS range. With its potential to generate revenue for the city, Turner stressed the importance of "sending money down the hill" to other operations like street repair and utility replacement.

Chrisman did highlight a few jobs created at the range, saying they were two to three times the average salary in Pendleton. According to the U.S. Census, Pendleton's per capita income is $22,281 per year and its annual median household income is $46,913. Turner said permanent, local jobs were no longer the most important aspect of drone range development. He said the range can help reduce the airport debt and increase the local economy, even if a large manufacturing or assembly business never decides to locate full-time in the area.

Due to airline deregulation, the rise of the Tri-Cities and Walla Walla airports and the decline in hobbyist aviation, Chrisman said UAS is now integral to the survival of the Pendleton airport.

Although operational and rental fees from drone companies may make it easier to sustain the airport, it will eventually be expected to pay back the loans it receives from other city funds. As a part of the 2018-2019 budget adopted by the council on Tuesday, the city will pay back $200,000 next fiscal year.

When the airport will take over debt repayment is the "million dollar question," Turner said.

In the meantime, Turner, who traveled to Washington, D.C., to lobby on the city's behalf, said the U.S. Economic Development Administration is giving the city "the wink" that it could receive grant funding.

"I would be disappointed if we didn't get close to $3 million out of this," he said.

Turner said the city should know if the wink turns into a nod in the next 90 days.

Contact Antonio Sierra at asierra@eastoregonian.com or 541-966-0836.

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