

Snow-covered cabin



Snow covers the hillside and an old house in the Blue Mountains south of Pilot Rock.

Photo contributed by Mike Morehead

Luring defendant has release hearing

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

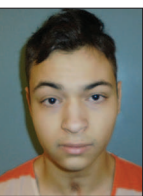
The Indiana man Boardman police arrested in a sexual luring sting has a jail release hearing.

The Morrow County Circuit Court arraigned Kai Larkins, 20, last Thursday on the single count of first-degree online sexual corruption of a child. Larkins pleaded not guilty, according to court records. Circuit Judge Daniel Hill also set bail for Larkins at \$50,000, and his public defense attorney, Dan Stephens of Blue Mountain Defenders, Hermiston, requested the release hearing. The court set that for 8:15 in the morning Thursday.

Boardman police investigated Larkins after a mother reported her young teen-

age daughter's text messages. Police Lt. Loren Dieter said he and Sgt. Mark Pratt set up a sting to catch Larkins on Dec. 19 at the Portland International Airport, Portland, after he flew in to meet the girl. The police arrested Larkins at the airport and drove him to the Umatilla County Jail, Pendleton, where he remains.

Kai Larkins' grandmother, grandfather and step-grandmother came from Indiana to attend the arraignment. John Larkins, the grandfather, said he is concerned with his grandson's mental capacity and state of mind. He said he was prepared to pay the \$5,000 bail bond to have his grandson return to Indiana but Stephens suggested



Larkins

keeping the young man in the Umatilla County Jail for a local mental health evaluation.

District Attorney Justin Nelson said Kai Larkins' mental health did not come up in the proceeding and his office objected to his immediate release. Nelson said the defendant had the ability to use money to buy an airline ticket and fly to Portland, and even someone in their 20s with the mental capacity of a 13- or 14-year-old, for example, can function. He added the jail has not sent any report that Kai Larkins needs special attention or is not safe.

John Larkins said the family visited their grandson at the jail and was relieved the corrections staff was keeping him sepa-

rate from other inmates. The visit lasted about an hour, he said, and the family set up an account so their grandson could call home.

John Larkins also said he is a retired homicide detective from the Indianapolis Police Department and a former special agent with the Federal Aviation Administration. He said he has plenty of questions about his grandson's case but he is not in the habit of second-guessing other police.

Stephens the day of the arraignment filed a waiver of extradition, which shows Kai Larkins' signature. If the court releases Larkins, he would have to return to Morrow County for court proceedings. His grandfather said Larkins is likely to stay put because traveling back and forth from Indiana would be a burden.

Parents arrested after 2-year-old fatally shoots himself

BAKER CITY (AP) — Sheriff's deputies in Baker City arrested the parents of 2-year-old boy who fatally shot himself with a handgun in the family's home.

The Oregonian/OregonLive reports that Peter Mankins and Diana Goodman were booked Saturday in the Baker County Jail, the sheriff's inmate roster shows.

Records show they face charges of second-degree manslaughter, criminally negligent homicide and unlawful possession of methamphetamine.

Police didn't immediately release details about the circumstances of the shooting in Eastern Oregon.

The Baker County District Attorney's Office said both were at home when their child, Liam Paul Lee Mankins, picked up an unsecured handgun, pulled the trigger and shot himself in the head on November 4th.

The boy was airlifted to a hospital in Boise, Idaho, but died hours later from his injuries.

BRIEFLY

Pedestrian struck and killed on Interstate 84

Oregon State Police reported a Hermiston man came forward as the driver in the fatal hit-and-run Sunday in Pendleton.

Daniel Robert Edwards, 29, came to the Oregon State Police office in Hermiston and stated he read about someone striking a pedestrian on Interstate 84 and believed he was that driver.

"Edwards is cooperating with the investigation," state police reported.

Irrigon man dies in car accident

An Irrigon man died on Saturday as he was driving on a backroad in Stanfield.

Seth Alan Doughty, 23, was driving eastbound on Echo Meadows Road from Highway 207 early Saturday morning, according to Oregon State Police Sgt. Seth Cooney.

Cooney said for unknown reasons Doughty swerved hard to the south shoulder of the road, his vehicle rolled and he was ejected from the vehicle.

Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia

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According to a new study by Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine and the National Institute on Aging, men and women with hearing loss are much more likely to develop dementia and Alzheimer's disease. People with severe hearing loss, the study reports, were 5 times more likely to develop dementia than those with normal hearing.

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Hearing tests are always free. Hearing test is an audiometric test to determine proper amplification needs only. Hearing Aids do not restore natural hearing. Individual experiences will vary depending on severity of loss, accuracy of evaluation by our Consultant, proper fit, and the ability to adjust amplification. If you are not completely satisfied, the aids must be returned within 30 days of the completion of fitting, in satisfactory condition for a full refund.