

No criminal case in killing of pet pig

Hunter cleared because 'Porky' was running wild

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

Janet McKague expected the law to crack down on the hunter who killed Porky, her pet pot-bellied pig. Instead, the Umatilla County District Attorney's Office dismissed the case.

"This is just eating me up because I can't get it out of my mind," McKague said. "I don't say this is justice at all. He should have got charged with something."

That hunter, Greg Osburn of Boring, said he did nothing wrong. "There was no criminal charge.

I killed a wild pig," he said. "It's 100 percent legal in this state."

Oregon considers swine feral if they meet certain conditions: They must be free roaming animals of the genus *Sus*; no one responsible for pigs has notified others within a 5-mile radius of their escape within five days; the pigs do not appear tame or domesticated; and the pigs do not meet the criteria for escaped swine.

Osburn said the black pig he shot with his bow-and-arrow on Aug. 31 looked like a wild boar and was on private land where he had permission to hunt outside Pilot Rock. He has been hunting in the Eastern Oregon region for years, he said, and this was the first time he spotted a pig at-large, so he shot it.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife pegs the state's feral swine population at 2,000 to 5,000. The animals live in two areas, according to the agency: the southwestern portion of the state along the California border, and through central and north central Oregon, including Gilliam and Wheeler counties. That's as close as they are to the Pilot Rock area.

Feral pigs on public land are "nongame and nonprotected," according to ODFW, and you can kill them if you have a valid hunting license. But most observations of feral pigs occur on private land. Hunters with permission to take other game on private land can kill feral pigs. Doing so, according to

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Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Janet McKague, of Pilot Rock, wanted justice for the killing of her pot-bellied pig, Porky, by a hunter on Aug. 31. McKague said the pig had escaped its enclosure and was loose on a neighboring property when the hunter shot the animal with a bow and arrow.

FEELING THE BURN



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Freezing fog is burned off of a ridge line by the sun along Birch Creek Road on Wednesday east of Pilot Rock. Fog and freezing temperatures will be replaced by rain and warmer temps heading into the weekend, according to the National Weather Service.

Agencies cope with more 911 calls on suicide

By JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN
East Oregonian

When a dispatcher receives a call of a person in crisis, it's not always clear exactly what's going on, but the incident usually falls into one of three categories: disturbance, mental, or suicidal subject.

In the past year, Hermiston has seen a spike for some of those types of calls. Hermiston Police Chief Jason Edmiston said from 2017 to 2018, calls for suicidal subjects have increased 36 percent, going from 90 in 2017 to 122 in 2018. Mental health calls decreased slightly, and disturbance calls saw a minor increase as well.

Pendleton's numbers were static, with 122 suicidal subject calls in 2017, and 121 in 2018.

The number of suicidal subject calls doesn't translate directly to the number of people that attempt or complete suicide.

"It is important to note that the numbers provided are reflective of how the dispatcher/call taker entered the call for service or activity at the time of the report," Pendleton Police Chief Stuart Roberts wrote in an email to the *EO*. "In most instances, the subject(s) of such calls are in some stage of crisis; however, there are a fraction of said calls that are the result of someone

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Audit says state is failing to regulate marijuana

Only 3 percent of retailers have had a state inspection

By CLAIRE WITTHYCOMBE
Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — Oregon's system for regulating legal cannabis likely fails to prevent spillover to the black market, state auditors said

Wednesday.

That increases the risk that the state could be subject to more federal scrutiny, said Secretary of State Dennis Richardson, whose audits division released a report on state regulation of cannabis.

Oregon has two systems for legal cannabis: medical, which voters approved more than 20 years ago, and recreational, which Oregon voters supported in 2014. Audi-

tors studied the controls on each program, finding there were significant gaps.

While a growing number of states are legalizing cannabis, it remains illegal federally.

In early 2018, then-Attorney General Jeff Sessions rescinded previous federal guidance on cannabis that had allowed more leeway for state-legal programs during the Obama administration. Shortly

thereafter, Oregon's top federal prosecutor, Billy Williams, made headlines when he lambasted what he claimed was a rampant problem of diversion from the state, with tons of legally grown Oregon cannabis leaking across state lines and into the black market.

State auditors waded into the fray this year, finding that state

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Hermiston gets rolling on skate park design

Same designer working on Olympic venue

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

When skateboarding debuts as an Olympic sport in Tokyo in 2020, the U.S. team will have trained at a facility designed by the same company designing Hermiston's skate park.

California Skateparks, one of the world's top skate park design companies, recently built the California Training Facility, an indoor training facility in Vista, California, that will serve as the training ground for the U.S. Olympic team, as well as other top professional skaters and foreign

Olympic teams.

Last week, consultants from California Skateparks visited Hermiston for a workshop to discuss plans for a skate park the city plans to build across First Street from Hermiston's police and fire station.

"We had about 30 interested people show up," parks and recreation director Larry Fetter said. "Most of them were skaters of some sort."

Participants watched a video exploring a conceptual model of what Hermiston's skate park could look like, using some of the most popular elements of skate parks worldwide. Afterward, they placed colored dots on a conceptual drawing to show what they liked best,



Photo contributed by the city of Hermiston

A screenshot from a video shown at Hermiston's skate park meeting shows a part of the conceptual design that California Skateparks presented.

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