

Pendleton man now in prison also faces sex crimes

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Brandon Kliever of Pendleton faces sex crime charges in connection to a 15-year-old girl whose infant was stillborn.

The case came to light the night of Jan. 21, when a 911 call requested an ambulance to the Go Fish RV Park, 1500 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton, for the teen who had seizures and was four months pregnant, according to a Pendleton police search warrant affidavit for Kliever's DNA. A Pendleton ambulance crew found the girl in the upper bunk of a fifth-wheel travel trailer. She was unresponsive and had a racing heart rate. Paramedics had to intubate her because she had difficulty breathing.

According to the affidavit, one paramedic saw no signs of trauma on the girl, but he found a package of sausage under her shirt and taco shells down her pants. Several men in their 20s were in the trailer as well.

One of those males claimed to be the girl's brother but turned out instead to be Kliever. He told paramedics they smoked marijuana but did not use other drugs.

The ambulance crew took the girl to the emergency department of St. Anthony Hospital, Pendleton. Medical staff there told Pendleton police the girl had a stroke and the fetus was in jeopardy. Police also learned the girl had marijuana in her system as well as methamphetamine and other substances.

Police arrived at the hospital, and staff reported the fetus was dead. The hospital transferred the girl to Oregon Health Sciences University, and while she remained sedated and intubated gave birth to a stillborn infant.

The police wanted to know who the father was, and while the girl refused to identify him, according to the affidavit, the evidence pointed to Kliever. Police pieced together evidence indicating they lived together when she was no

more than 14 and he was 22. Police also have a record of multiple calls for service from 2017-19 involving the girl and Kliever.

Pendleton police handed its case to the Umatilla County District Attorney's Office, which presented evidence to a grand jury on April 9. The grand jury handed up the indictment for charges of third-degree rape, third-degree sodomy and three counts of second-degree sexual abuse, according to state court records. The district attorney's office set May 7 as the date to charge Kliever.

But he did not make the arraignment. Kliever at the time was in the Marion County Jail, Salem, for violating probation in an attempted assault case. The circuit court there on May 9 sentenced Kliever to three years in state prison. According to the Oregon Department of Corrections, he now is at the Coffee Creek Intake Center, Wilsonville, awaiting placement in the state's prison system.

LOCAL BRIEFING

State OKs barbed hooks on Columbia River

SALEM — The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife adopted temporary rules to allow anglers to use barbed hooks when fishing for salmon, steelhead and trout on the Columbia River.

The change went into effect Saturday. The regulatory agency reported it adopted the rule so Oregon's fishing regulations will remain concurrent with Washington in the jointly managed Columbia River.

The rule will remain in effect until further notice, according to the announcement from ODFW, or until it expires in late November.

The rule can become permanent only if the state's Fish and Wildlife Commission approves a rule change, which it plans to consider in the future.

The state has required anglers to use barbless hooks when fishing for salmon, steelhead and trout in the Columbia River since 2013. The Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission in March adopted a recommendation to make the use of barbless hooks voluntary, and Washington Fish and Wildlife implemented the rule to begin June 1.

Rules requiring the use of single-point barbless hooks when fishing for sturgeon in the Columbia River remain in effect for anglers in both states.

a Portland hospital. The crash occurred Sunday around 3:16 a.m. on Interstate 84 near milepost 175, according to state police. The preliminary investigation revealed Veronica Andrade, 39, of Boardman, was driving east in a silver 2003 Cadillac CTS when she veered off the road onto the right shoulder and rolled.

Andrade and two children, one 3 and the other 7 months, were in the car. The crash ejected the 7-month-old, who suffered fatal injuries.

Ambulances rushed Andrade and the 3-year-old child to Good Shepherd Medical Center, Hermiston. An air ambulance then flew the child to Randall Children's Hospital at Legacy Emanuel, Portland.

State police Monday morning reported the child remains in the hospital and was stable.

Good Shepherd staff treated and released Andrade, and Oregon State Police arrested and booked her in the Umatilla County Jail, Pendleton, for first-degree manslaughter, first-degree assault, driving under the influence of intoxicants, reckless driving and reckless endangering.

State police also reduced I-84 to one lane for approximately three hours for the crash investigation. The Morrow County Sheriff's Office, the Boardman Police Department and the Oregon Department of Transportation assisted state police.

Morrow County District Attorney Justin Nelson said his office is reviewing the probable cause affidavit from state police and he anticipated bringing initial charges against Andrade at 3 p.m. Monday. He said he also would ask the court to set bail and set a preliminary hearing for next Monday, June 10. That would provide enough time to

present evidence to a grand jury for recommendation of formal charges.

Bledsoe case has trial dates

PENDLETON — The manslaughter case against Lemman Louis Bledsoe of Milton-Freewater is moving to trial.

Bledsoe, 77, has been in the Umatilla County Jail, Pendleton, since his arrest Aug. 15, 2018, for driving drunk through a road construction zone on Highway 11 near Weston and crashing into and killing flagger Tyresa Monaghan. Bledsoe had a hearing in mid-May to change his plea, according to court records, but that did not happen.

Kara Davis, Bledsoe's defense attorney, said they did not take the offer from the state.

"This is an incredibly difficult case," she explained. "When considering the different issues for the case and Mr. Bledsoe's advanced age and ill health, it is an incredibly difficult case to come to mutual resolution on."

The court set Bledsoe's trial for Aug. 5-9. The Umatilla County District Attorney's Office is seeking to bring in 10 out-of-state witnesses to testify.

State court records also show Bledsoe on May 13 asked for release from the jail. Circuit Judge Christopher Brauer the next day denied that request.

Bledsoe faces first- and second-degree manslaughter, hit-and-run involving an injured person, driving under the influence of intoxicants, reckless driving and several counts of recklessly endangering others.

The next proceeding in the case is a motions hearing on June 28, then a trial readiness check on July 10.

East Oregonian welcomes new Hermiston reporter

Jessica Pollard recently graduated from Portland State University

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — The East Oregonian has a new face in its Hermiston office.

Jessica Pollard started Monday as the paper's newest reporter. She will cover education and public safety on the west side of Umatilla County for both the East Oregonian and Hermiston Herald.



Pollard

Pollard recently finished up a bachelor's degree in geography from Portland State University and said she is looking forward to getting to know the rest of Oregon and experiencing life in a more rural area.

"I'm really excited for the change of pace," she said.

She said she already appreciates the difference

between Hermiston traffic and Portland traffic.

While at PSU Pollard wrote for several school publications, including acting as managing editor of the Pacific Sentinel, and completed an internship for the Willamette Week. She said she has wanted to be a reporter since the fifth grade, based on her love of talking to people and writing.

"Now it's much more about getting information to people so they can make good decisions," she said.

In her spare time she enjoys writing poetry, hiking and biking. She hopes to learn to play the guitar this year, and said she is looking forward to exploring the Blue Mountains and high desert scenery.

At the East Oregonian, she looks forward to getting to know the school system and the area's law enforcement and fire districts.

"I'm really excited to highlight the voices of stu-

dents and teachers, and do some broader stories," she said.

East Oregonian editor Andrew Cutler is excited about Pollard's potential.

"Just based on her background and her short time on staff, she's already shown a desire to develop into a strong journalist," Cutler said. "We're thrilled to have her in our Umatilla County where we're confident she'll put her skills and motivation to good use in informing readers of both newspapers well through strong journalism and reporting."

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