

Unverified sightings but no leads on missing psychiatric patient

East Oregonian

PENDLETON — There have been a number of unverified or debunked sightings of the psychiatric patient who walked away from a residential treatment facility in Pendleton earlier this month, but the man remains missing with minimal leads, according to Pendleton Police Chief Stuart Roberts.

“There have been a series of reported sightings both in this jurisdiction and around the state of persons fitting his physical description,”

Roberts said. “But so far they have all been unverified or disproven.”

Thaddeus Ziemplak, 36, left Salmon Run, a residential treatment home under the jurisdiction of the Oregon Psychiatric Security Review Board, on a planned recreational outing to the area of Walmart and Safeway on Southwest Court Avenue the afternoon of Jan. 5.



Ziemplak

Ziemplak, who was found guilty except for insanity for shooting and killing his mother at their Eugene home in 2004, was utilizing his conditional release privileges that allowed him to take unsupervised trips into the community, but he never returned to the facility that day.

Roberts said his department has worked extensively with the security review board, Salmon Run, other local mental health providers, and relatives of Ziemplak in an attempt to locate him.

He added that the people who now occupy the home in Eugene where Ziemplak murdered his mother have been contacted as well.

Ziemplak twice pleaded guilty to escaping from facilities in the past, according to court documents, and in 2006 he fled from the Oregon State Hospital in Salem and was later found in Wenatchee, Washington.

Alison Bort, executive director of the Oregon Psychiatric Security Review Board, said the board had no updates to provide on the

search for Ziemplak.

According to the review board’s initial press release, Ziemplak is a white man who stands 5-feet-10 and weighs about 170 pounds, with sandy brown hair and green eyes. He has many acne scars. Ziemplak was last seen wearing a black, zip-up sweatshirt with a hood, blue jeans, black tennis shoes and a black, beanie-style hat. He wears wire-rimmed glasses and normally walks with his head down. He also was carrying a black backpack.

Ziemplak was stable when

last seen, the release stated, but currently is considered a danger to others. He has a history of drug abuse, which can exacerbate his symptoms. The board urges anyone who sees Ziemplak to call police immediately, but not to approach him.

Roberts said there’s been only one reported sighting of Ziemplak within Pendleton and it was verified to be false, but he doesn’t want to discourage anybody from reporting any signs of someone matching Ziemplak’s description.

Loading grain



Staff photo by Ben Loneragan

A front end loader deposits grain into a waiting semitruck at United Grain Corp.’s Helix Ground Pile near Helix on Monday afternoon. The grain pile is one of six United Grain Corp. storage sites throughout Umatilla County.

BRIEFLY

Gordmans to hold hiring event for new location

HERMISTON — A Hermiston retailer is holding a hiring event as it prepares to switch brands.

Stage, the parent company for the Bealls clothing store in Hermiston, plans to convert the store into a Gordmans department store on March 31. The company is holding a job fair for positions at the new Gordmans on Feb. 4 from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. at the current Bealls, 930 S. Highway 395, in Hermiston.

Applicants are encouraged to fill out an application online at gordmans.com/careers before stopping by the event. Full-time, part-time and temporary positions are available.

Gordmans is an “off-price” retailer that sells clothing, footwear, home decor, furniture, linens, kitchen gadgets, toys, pet accessories and more. The Bealls stores in La Grande and Hood River are also converting to Gordmans in March.

Boardman fire district to host meet and greet

BOARDMAN — Community members are invited to meet candidates for Boardman Rural Fire Protection District’s chief on Sunday.

The meet and greet event will run from noon to 3 p.m. at the SAGE Center, 101 Olsen Road in Boardman. The candidates will be formally introduced at 12:30 p.m.

Finalists are Dale Britton, Hal Bumgarner, John Clark, Adam Cole and

Michael Hughes.

According to a news release from the fire district, Britton has 27 years of fire experience and served as a lieutenant in the Tumwater, Washington, fire department for 13 years. He has an associate’s degree in fire science.

Bumgarner has 28 years in the fire service and is currently a chief officer for the Potawatomie, Kansas, fire district. He has a master’s degree in security administration.

Clark has 40 years in the fire service, with a master’s degree in safety administration. He is currently the fire chief in Baker City, where he has served since 2018.

Cole has 13 years of experience in the fire service and an associate’s degree in fire science. He is the captain and training officer in the Boardman Rural Fire Protection District, where he has served since 2007.

Hughes has 33 years of experience and is currently a volunteer firefighter. He has served as a training officer in Twin Bridges, Montana, since 2014.

Milton-Freewater pedestrian injured by impaired driver

COLLEGE PLACE, Wash. — A Milton-Freewater woman was injured Sunday night when she was struck by a car while walking in College Place.

Blandina Lara Cervantes,

69, was crossing 12th Street north at the Larch Street intersection before 7 p.m. when Jaime L. Ortega Gaytan, 27, of Walla Walla, Washington, struck her with his 2008 Dodge Charger heading west on 12th, according to a Washington State Patrol release.

Ortega Gaytan was allegedly under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol, the release stated, but the collision cause was under investigation. He was arrested for investigation of vehicular assault and taken to the Walla Walla County Jail.

According to court records, police smelled “an obvious odor of intoxicants” coming from Ortega Gaytan. He also told police he drank two Coronas at 5 p.m.

Police conducted a field sobriety test on him, records stated, and noticed several impairment signs. He submitted to a preliminary breath test, which showed 0.091 blood alcohol concentration.

He appeared in court Monday morning, where his bond was set at \$50,000.

Lara Cervantes was taken to Providence St. Mary Medical Center by Walla Walla Fire Department medics for her injuries. A hospital spokeswoman didn’t return emails or calls regarding her condition by press time. However, a probable cause affidavit stated she was “facing life-threatening injuries.”

— *EO Media Group and wire services*

Adams mayor, Debbie Sutor, resigns

By BEN LONERGAN
East Oregonian

ADAMS — For the second time since the last mayoral election, the city of Adams is without a mayor.

Donna Grimes, the city recorder for Adams, confirmed recently that Mayor Debbie Sutor resigned effective Jan. 7 and relocated to Walla Walla, Washington. Grimes said the city councilors were in the process of finding a suitable replacement.

“She did a good job throughout her time here,” said Grimes.

Sutor was appointed to the mayor’s office from her city council seat in January 2019 after her predecessor, Dane Holmes, resigned shortly after the November 2018 election. Her term was set to expire on Dec. 31, 2020.

Sutor could not be reached for comment by press time on Monday. Grimes said Sutor may be out of the country on a trip and was unsure when she would return.

City Councilor Graham Alderman, who filled Sutor’s council seat after she was appointed mayor, credited Sutor with sev-

eral advances to the city and her ability to communicate effectively with outside agencies. He said Sutor was pivotal in the city’s bid to install fiber optic internet service.

“She was forthcoming and communicative and instrumental in the projects we took on,” he said. “Overall, I think she did a pretty good job.”

Alderman said he and fellow city councilors knew Sutor’s resignation was coming. He said she had been waiting to resign until her house sold and upon doing so, no longer fulfilled the requirements of mayor.

To serve as mayor of Adams, an individual must be a resident of the city and have lived within city limits for at least one year prior to their appointment or election as well as being a registered voter in the state of Oregon, the city outlined in a post to their Facebook page.

Those interested in serving as mayor of Adams must submit a letter of interest to the Adams City Hall by 6 p.m. Feb. 7. After letters of interest are received by the city, they will be discussed at the city council meeting on Feb. 10.

The city encourages those submitting letters of interest to attend.

As of Monday afternoon, the city recorder had yet to receive any letters of interest for the position of mayor.

Jeff Rost, a city councilor and current mayor pro tem, said there were three members of the council, himself included, who had initially been interested in serving as mayor, however, they were weighing the role of mayor against their current positions as councilors.

“A lot of people out here have 9-to-5 jobs now so it’s about deciding how to give your time,” he said. “We don’t want to step into a role that we don’t have time for.”

Alderman said the council is hoping to find a dedicated candidate who is familiar with the city and has the time and drive to commit to the position.

“We want somebody who’s interested in moving the city forward and bettering the community,” said Alderman. “It should be somebody who’s familiar with the city and the council, and has the time to commit to it.”



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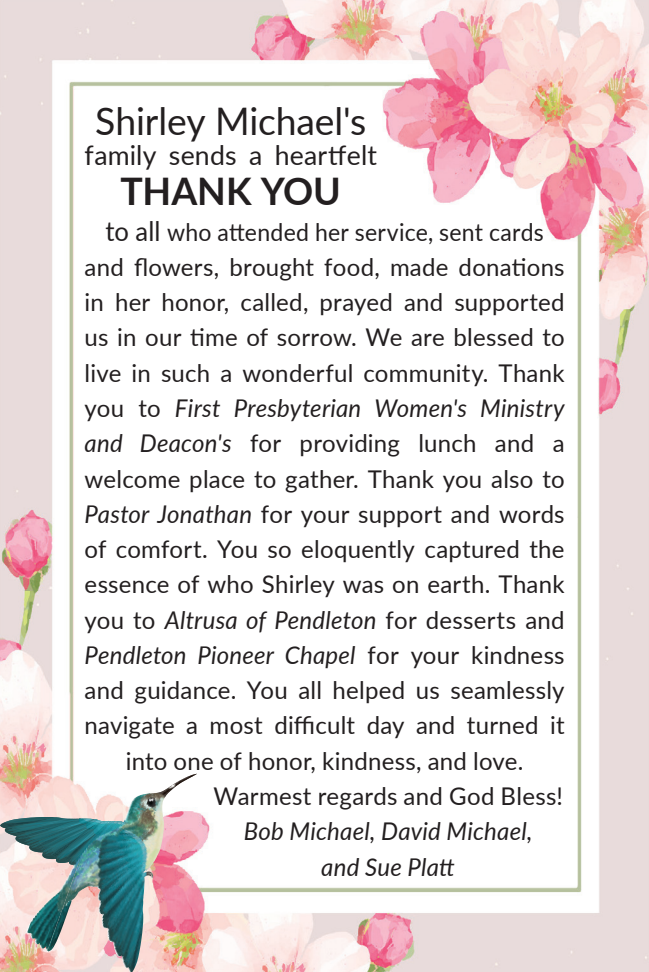
Bad Boys for Life (R)
4:20p 7:10p 9:50p

1917 (R)
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Shirley Michael's family sends a heartfelt THANK YOU

to all who attended her service, sent cards and flowers, brought food, made donations in her honor, called, prayed and supported us in our time of sorrow. We are blessed to live in such a wonderful community. Thank you to *First Presbyterian Women's Ministry and Deacon's* for providing lunch and a welcome place to gather. Thank you also to *Pastor Jonathan* for your support and words of comfort. You so eloquently captured the essence of who Shirley was on earth. Thank you to *Altrusa of Pendleton* for desserts and *Pendleton Pioneer Chapel* for your kindness and guidance. You all helped us seamlessly navigate a most difficult day and turned it into one of honor, kindness, and love.

Warmest regards and God Bless!
Bob Michael, David Michael, and Sue Platt

