

Investigators perplexed by death, mutilation of cow

By SIERRA DAWN MCCLAIN
Capital Press

HAMPTON — Authorities are investigating the mysterious death and mutilation of a cow on a remote ranch at the border between Oregon’s Lake and Deschutes counties.

The range cow, a breeding animal worth about \$850, was found dead and mutilated — her genitals, udder, tongue and heart cut out — at Bar DR Land and Cattle, a property in Hampton owned by ranchers Clancy and Stephen Roth.

The cause of death is unknown.

Lake County Sheriff’s Office Deputy Tom Roark launched the investigation Sept. 18, 2019. The Bureau of Land Management is also on the case. Four months later, Roark said he still has no leads.

“It’s creepy, gives me chills,” rancher Clancy Roth said. “There’s no evidence of who did it or how they killed her. It’s so sad.”

This isn’t the first time the Roths have had their cattle maimed. About 20 years ago, Roth said, her father-in-law and her husband, Stephen, found multiple cattle mutilated in the same way with the same body



A cow was found dead and mutilated at Bar DR Land and Cattle, a Deschutes County ranch in Hampton.

parts removed.

And the Roths aren’t alone.

In August 2019, a similar incident involving five bulls had occurred at Silves Valley Ranch in Eastern Oregon.

According to FBI records, thousands of killings and mutilations of cattle have happened across the U.S. since the 1970s. The animals typically are found with the

same body parts missing.

Kenyon Morehouse, the Roth’s ranch hand, found the cow dead when he visited the pasture to fill the water tanks, as he did every morning.

Roark said it’s hard to discern how the cow died. By the time he arrived on site the morning after getting a call, which he said was “a good hour-and-a-half” trip from the sheriff’s office, it

was past the 24-hour window during which a necropsy could have been performed on the body.

There were no bullets, no strangulation marks, no recent lightning storms, no rope burns on trees, no tire tracks, no shoe prints — and no spilled blood.

Roth said the lack of blood is what troubles her most about her cow’s death. “The blood was gone,”

WHO TO CALL

Those with information about the case should call the Lake County Dispatch Center at 541-947-2504.

she said. “It looked like someone snipped her artery and drained her.”

On the ground beside the cow’s foot were agitated hoof marks, as though she had struggled in her last moments.

Roark said the missing body parts could not have been taken by scavengers.

“When a pack of coyotes or birds gets to a carcass, not much is left — just bones and hide, unevenly chewed,” said Roark. “This was clean-cut, like it was done with a blade. If somebody was hungry, they would’ve whittled up a chunk of back meat and taken it home. This wasn’t done for food. It was something sinister.”

Roth speculates that her cow may have been poisoned.

She said after the killing, her husband and his friend found tiny scraps of fiber, resembling feather tips, caught in nearby sagebrush and on the ground. She said she believes the fiber was a

fletch — part of a poisonous dart.

Analysis, however, did not confirm the fiber’s origin or point to a suspect.

But why, Roth said she wonders. Who would do such a thing?

The crime site was remote — about a 45-minute drive to the nearest paved road and about 100 feet off the dirt road.

In cow mutilation cases, theories abound about who’s responsible: aliens, demons, cults, black market organ traders. In the thousands of cases since the 1970s, no culprit has ever been caught.

Roark said he thinks a cult is using the body parts for some kind of “bizarre medicinal practices.”

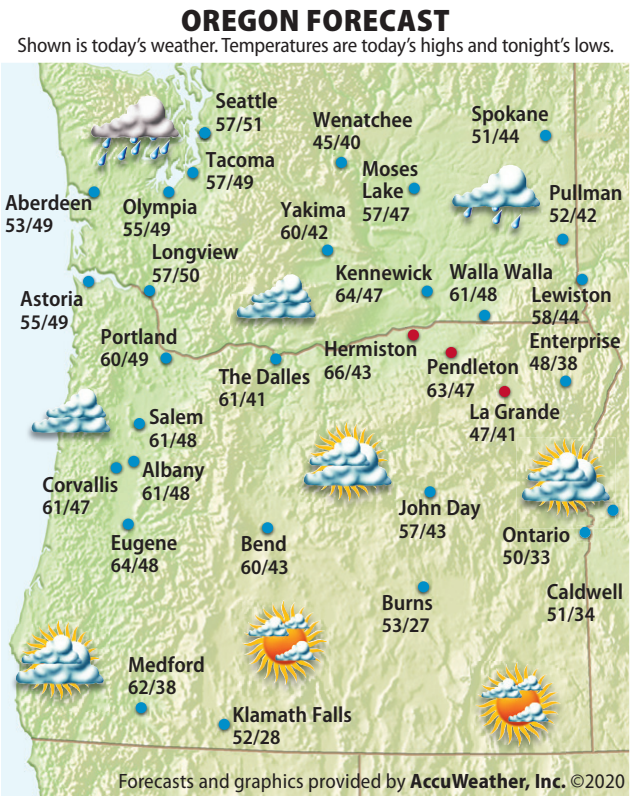
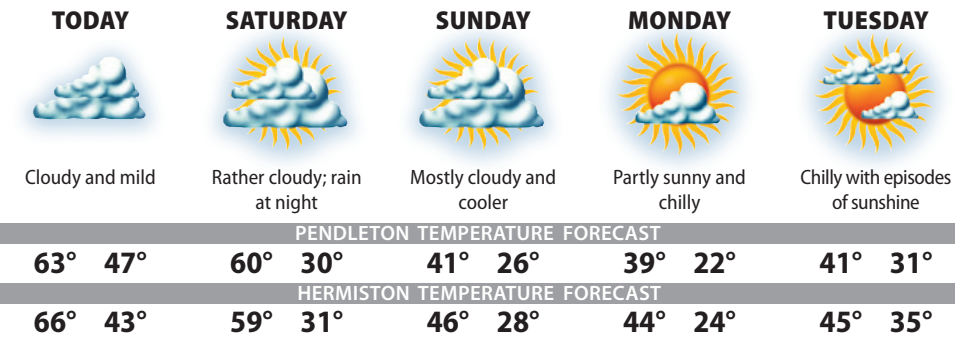
The Roths said they also suspect a cult is involved.

“We think it’s a satanic thing,” Roth said. “They’re probably taking the reproductive organs and using or selling them for satanic rituals.”

She also said she wonders if the practice of cow mutilation is tied to certain times or numbers. The number on the cow’s ear tag, Roth said, was doubly unlucky: 1313.

“I’ve seen too many crime scenes,” said Roark. “But this one’s got no evidence. Nothing. It’s really bizarre.”

Forecast for Pendleton Area



ALMANAC				
PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yest.				
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW		
Yesterday	51°	32°		
Normals	43°	28°		
Records	65° (1971)	-15° (1950)		
PRECIPITATION				
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.04"			
Month to date	2.02"			
Normal month to date	1.35"			
Year to date	2.02"			
Last year to date	2.07"			
Normal year to date	1.35"			
HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.				
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW		
Yesterday	41°	29°		
Normals	44°	29°		
Records	64° (1967)	-19° (1950)		
PRECIPITATION				
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	Trace			
Month to date	0.24"			
Normal month to date	1.24"			
Year to date	0.24"			
Last year to date	1.53"			
Normal year to date	1.24"			
WINDS (in mph)				
	Today	Sat.		
Boardman	SW 7-14	WSW 8-16		
Pendleton	SSW 8-16	SW 8-16		
SUN AND MOON				
Sunrise today	7:19 a.m.			
Sunset tonight	4:59 p.m.			
Moonrise today	10:37 a.m.			
Moonset today	11:58 p.m.			
	First	Full	Last	New
	Feb 1	Feb 8	Feb 15	Feb 23

NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)

High 79° in Thermal, Calif. Low -18° in Clayton Lake, Maine

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



Walla Walla’s air travel high in 2019

Flight schedule changes could be challenging

By VICKI HILLHOUSE
Walla Walla Union-Bulletin

WALLA WALLA, Wash. — A report on 2019 air service at the Walla Walla Regional Airport shows deplanements (those disembarking from planes) were up, enplanements (people boarding planes) were down, and the 2020 flight schedule may face some highs and lows of its own.

That was the gist from airport Manager Jennifer Skoglund during a presentation Tuesday at the Port of Walla Walla’s Economic Development informational meeting.

Passenger traffic made giant strides in September and October after weather and cancellations led to a rough 2019 start for air travel.

Total outbound passenger numbers ended 0.5% behind 2018’s record year. The highest December on record for passengers flying out of the airport served 4,791 travelers, compared to December 2018’s 4,473 passengers.

The total number of outbound passengers for the year was 49,414, compared with 2018’s 49,663 outbound passengers.

Inbound numbers fared better. December delivered 4,069 passengers to Walla Walla, compared with the previous year’s 3,843 inbound travelers. Last month’s numbers were 34 passengers shy of the busiest December for inbound traffic, which was in 2016.

The year-end total for passengers touching down here was 48,691, a 0.6% increase from 2018.

Skoglund told attendees of the meeting Tuesday that growth for the year came through load factor numbers. That benchmark measures the percentage of available seats that are filled by passengers. It is the number the airline uses to measure profitability for the airline in its markets.

In 2019, year-end load factors from Walla Walla to Seattle averaged 77.26%, up from 73.38% in 2018. The total average load factor for inbound flights was 76.34% compared with 73.77% the previous year. The data helps make a case

for Walla Walla when it comes to lobbying for more flights with commercial carrier Alaska Airlines, which saw a 76% spike in profit between 2018 and 2019, according to *The Seattle Times*.

Skoglund said Walla Walla’s load factor “bump” in 2019 may be partly attributed to a longer stretch through the year with more flights. In 2019, Alaska operated 10 months of the year on a three-flight schedule four days a week, rather than a two-round-trip schedule that came during much of the last quarter of 2018.

For now, the current schedule is two round-trip flights between Walla Walla and Seattle. That timetable will be in place through March 20. After that, Walla Walla is poised to return to three flights four days a week.

Skoglund said Tuesday the community is expected to have another flight reduction at some point in May. She said potential expansion of service to Portland — a request of numerous business travelers in the area — would likely have to come through a different carrier.

Officials ID body found Wednesday as missing College Place man

WALLA WALLA, Wash. — A man missing from College Place since December is the person found dead by a kayaker Wednesday morning at the mouth of the Walla Walla River.

Arcane J. “AJ” Wilkinson, 20, was reported missing “under suspicious circumstances” to College Place police in mid-December. 2019 He was identified as the dead man late Wednesday afternoon by the Walla Walla County Sheriff’s Office, according to a release.

The man apparently had ties in Washington, Oregon and Louisiana, according



Wilkinson

BRIEFLY

to his family.

Authorities haven’t said how or why Wilkinson died, but an autopsy is scheduled for Monday, according to Walla Walla County sheriff’s deputy Richard Schram.

A kayaker told authorities he saw a body at 8:11 a.m. Wednesday near an inlet where the Walla Walla River meets the Columbia River and led them to the spot at about 8:40 a.m., Walla Walla County Undersheriff Joe Klundt said.

Sheriff’s office deputies, Columbia Basin Dive Rescue and Walla Walla County Fire District 5 crews pulled the body from the river, Klundt said, and took it to Madame Dorion Memorial Park, which had the closest boat launch to the scene.

It was unknown how long the body had been there, Klundt said, or from where it came. He also said the kayaker’s identity was unknown.

— Walla Walla Union-Bulletin

CORRECTIONS: The *East Oregonian* works hard to be accurate and sincerely regrets any errors. If you notice a mistake in the paper, please call 541-966-0818.

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