

Former VFW quartermaster charged with theft

David Earl Bosley accused of stealing from Hermiston Desert Post 4750

By JESSICA POLLARD
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — The former quartermaster of a local Veterans of Foreign Wars post has been indicted for the theft of thousands of dollars from the organization, according to court documents.

David Earl Bosley, 73, of Hermiston is facing five charges of first-degree theft of \$1,000 or more, two misdemeanor theft charges of \$100 or more, and one charge of aggravated theft in the first degree of \$10,000 or more.

“There’s some disparity between what the victims are saying was stolen and what we can prove,” said

Hermiston Police Chief Jason Edmiston, whose department took on the investigation last May. “We wanted to get our ‘I’s’ dotted and our ‘T’s’ crossed.”

The charges are for thefts that occurred between June 2017 and May 2019 from two different organizational bank accounts. As a Class B felony, aggravated theft carries a maximum sentence of 10 years.

Bosley was quartermaster of the Hermiston VFW

Desert Post 4750 from 2016 to 2019, according to Post Commander Ron Jardine.

According to a Veterans of Foreign Wars manual, the role of the quartermaster in a post is as “the custodian of the money and property of the Post, the guardian of its finances and the keeper of the financial records.

The Quartermaster also plays an important role in collecting and processing dues.”

In September 2019, Hermiston Desert Post 4750 stated on its website that state VFW officials would come to Hermiston the following month “to conduct matters regarding the embezzlement by ‘a past quartermaster’ and other matters important to the post.”

The post stated “all officers and any interested member should be there, ready to conduct serious business.”

Oregon Veterans of Foreign Wars did not respond to request for comment before publication.

In November 2019, Bosley was removed from his position with the organization, and on Feb. 4 a grand jury indicted him on charges. He will be arraigned on March 30.

He is not currently in custody, and if he fails to appear at his arraignment, a warrant for his arrest will be issued.

Chinook landing



Photo courtesy of Anna Tester

A unit from the Oregon Army National Guard based in Pendleton landed a CH47F Chinook on Thursday on the baseball field behind Pilot Rock High School. All Pilot Rock students were given the opportunity to learn about and tour the aircraft. Many community members also were on hand for the landing and takeoff. The crew members explained to each group of students that the aircraft was built in 2008, had a maximum gross weight of 50,000 pounds, can carry 33 equipped personnel, and has the ability to lift up to 17,000 pounds of cargo.

Manslaughter trial of Weston man starts Monday

John Mattila has pleaded not guilty to all 6 charges he faces from 2019 incident

By ALEX CASTLE
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — The manslaughter trial of a Weston man is set to begin on Monday at the Umatilla County Circuit Court in Pendleton.

The state has accused John McKenzie Mattila of driving drunk the evening of Feb. 22, 2019, and killing Adelaida Solis Torres in a car crash on Highway 11 near Weston. She was 52, worked for the Oregon Department of Human Services and was driving a state vehicle at the time.

Mattila has pleaded not guilty to all six charges he faces, which include first- and second-degree manslaughter and failure to perform duties of a driver to injured persons, all of which are felonies. Mattila is also charged with DUII, third-degree escape and interfering with a peace officer.

Both first- and second-degree manslaughter are Measure 11 crimes in Oregon, and carry mandatory minimum sentences with no possibility for reduction. If convicted, Mattila faces 10 years for first-degree manslaughter and six years and three months for second-degree manslaughter.

However, the state filed a notice in March 2019 to rely on the enhancement facts that Mattila has allegedly shown a lack of remorse and has prior convictions, indicating that Mattila could face stricter sentencing if found guilty and the enhancement facts are found to be true by the jury.

Court records show Mattila was charged with felony first-degree theft in 2013, but had it reduced to a misdemeanor and pleaded guilty.

The third-degree escape and interfering with a peace officer charges stem



Mattila

from Mattila’s alleged attempt to flee from Oregon State Police custody after a trooper brought him to see his son before taking him to jail that night. According to a search warrant affidavit filed with the court, Mattila refused to comply with police orders and was tased while trying to escape.

Court filings show the state has requested to subpoena 38 witnesses to build their case against Mattila. Witnesses range from OSP troopers and police dispatchers to Mattila’s father and uncle, and also include employees of area bars and restaurants that Mattila allegedly drank at the evening of the crash.

The prosecution is being led by Umatilla County Deputy District Attorney Daniel Pachico, who will attempt to prove that Mattila not only was driving drunk when he caused the death of Solis Torres, but that he was also “acting under circumstances manifesting extreme indifference to the value of human life.”

Court documents show the first-degree manslaughter charge against Mattila was added by a grand jury in a May 2019 indictment, which was amended again Feb. 12 to correct a written error in the original filing. Jody Stutsman Vaughan, who is serving as Mattila’s defense, filed a motion Feb. 18 to dismiss the second amended indictment and the DUII charge.

Trial court administrator Roy Blaine said on Friday that the motion had been denied and the indictment upheld by Judge Jon Lieuallen, who is presiding over

the case.

However, Vaughan has had a mix of success in filing motions to suppress other evidence the state was hoping to use to help prove the DUII and first-degree manslaughter charges.

Lieuallen ruled at an Oct. 30, 2019, hearing that statements made by Mattila to an Oregon State Police trooper were inadmissible because he had yet to be Mirandized. Those statements included Mattila’s admission he drank alcohol before the crash and some of the insults and slurs he made about Solis Torres.

Lieuallen also ruled that hospital records showing Mattila’s blood alcohol levels taken at St. Anthony Hospital that night are admissible.



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LOCAL BRIEFING

Athena water is safe to drink

ATHENA — The water in Athena is officially safe to use and is free of bacteria as of 9:40 a.m. Friday, City Recorder Nancy Parker confirmed.

The city had been on a boil water advisory since the night of Feb. 20 after tests showed the presence of coliform bacteria in the system, which is an indicator of other potential disease-carrying organisms being present.

Athena Public Works quickly flushed and chlorinated the system last week and tried to test the water on Wednesday, but a lab error rendered the results indeterminate.

The city attributed the contamination to the Umatilla River floods that impacted the region Feb. 6.

Council could finalize utility fee increase Tuesday

PENDLETON — Residents will have one last shot at publicly commenting on a proposed \$3 increase to the street utility

fee before the Pendleton City Council makes its decision Tuesday.

Nobody spoke for or against the rate hike at the council’s last meeting, where members unanimously voted to approve an ordinance that was meant to make way for the raise.

On Tuesday night, the council will vote on a resolution that will officially raise the fee by \$3, meaning most homes will pay \$8.50 per month on top of the rest of their utility bill.

The city expects the extra fee revenue to generate \$239,000 per year, and the council plans to combine it with a gas tax and a hotel room tax to create more than \$1 million in street funding revenue.

The fee hike will go into effect immediately after the council approves it, but it could also take action to limit the brunt on low-income utility customers.

The council will consider amending the city’s existing utility discount program so that all eligible customers can apply for a 15% discount.

The program is currently administered by the Community Action Program of East Central Ore-

gon and is offered to customers at 125% above the federal poverty guidelines.

The council meeting will be held Tuesday at the council chambers in city hall, 500 S.W. Dorion Ave.

Partnership gives continued access to sno-parks

LA GRANDE — Due to higher-than-average snowfall at three sno-parks in Northeast Oregon, a unique partnership between the U.S. National Forest, Oregon Department of Transportation and local snow plow contractors ensures that access to winter recreation areas remains intact, according to a press release from the U.S. Forest Service.

National Forest staff applied for additional funding, and ODOT allocated additional funds to continue plow operations and maintain access to Catherine Creek, Clear Creek, and Salt Creek Summit sno-parks. These funds are made possible by fees collected from sno-park passes.

— EO Media Group

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