

State police identify cops involved in shooting

Police were confronted by Stacy Clark, who was armed

East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Oregon State Police have publicly identified the officers involved in a shooting in rural Umatilla County last month.

The officers were Umatilla County Sheriff's Deputy Jason Post, 33, and Milton-Freewater Police Officer James Farr, 31, police said in a news release issued Thursday.

Post and Farr responded after dispatch received a call at 11:44 p.m. on Feb. 24 for a report of shots fired on Woodrow Street in Umapine. According to the release, they were confronted at the door by Stacy Clark, 45, who was armed. The officers used force during the confrontation, and Clark was transported to a local hospital for undisclosed injuries suffered in the confrontation. He remains in the intensive



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Gunfire erupted outside this Umapine home where an officer-involved shooting took place on the evening of Feb. 24, 2020, that sent a suspect to the hospital.

care unit.

Post started as a reserve deputy with Umatilla County in 2010 and was hired full time in December 2013. Farr became a police officer in 2013 and was hired by Milton-Freewater in April 2015.

Both officers remain on paid administrative leave

pursuant to Senate Bill 111 and their respective department policies following the incident.

The major crime team detectives assigned to the case have completed interviews and continue to work to get a complete case to the Umatilla County District Attorney for review.

Neighbors to the Woodrow Street residence where the shooting occurred said they were jolted awake by the sounds of multiple gunshots coming from an automatic weapon. Alan Benz said he heard three separate sets of multiple shots occur about three to four minutes apart from one another.

Eastern Oregon to receive flood recovery funds

Emergency board will convene Monday to allocate money

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

UMATILLA COUNTY — Democrats may be throwing in the towel on this year's legislative session, but Eastern Oregon will still get its flood recovery funding from the state.

Democrats ended the session three days early on Thursday after Republicans signaled they did not plan to return from their walk-out unless cap and trade was taken off the table. But Umatilla County Commissioner John Shafer said he received a call from Gov. Kate Brown in the afternoon letting him know that the legislature's emergency board would convene Monday to allocate money from its emergency fund for flood recovery.

"There was no hesitation on leadership's part on either side to give those funds," Shafer said.

The money in Brown's proposal includes \$4 million for the "expedited purchase and installation of manufactured homes" to replace homes destroyed in Febru-



Staff photo by Ben Lonergan

Rock that once made up the bank of the Umatilla River eroded, leaving the road surface along Bingham Road in rural Umatilla County dangerously damaged.

ary's flood; \$1 million in "rapid rehousing funds" for immediate needs; \$500,000 for low- or no-interest loans for damage costs not covered by flood insurance; \$1.5 million to help affected businesses reopen; and \$2 million to be released after a community plan is developed. The city of Pendleton had already been allocated \$1.8 million for repairs to its levee.

"A lot of people lost their homes to this flood, and with this money they will have an

opportunity to have a place to call home again," Shafer said.

Commissioner George Murdock said the county would work with numerous partners, including affected cities and the Community Action Program of East Central Oregon, in putting the money to good use. He echoed Shafer's point that many Umatilla County residents are still living with friends and family or in other "pretty shaky" housing situations.

He also said the money from the state would not take the county's focus off of also pursuing federal disaster relief funds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency with the assistance of Rep. Greg Walden, Sen. Ron Wyden and Sen. Jeff Merkley. The county's road department has been hard at work making area roads and bridges usable again, but there are still tens of millions of dollars in damage to be repaired.

BRIEFLY

Hermiston man arrested on felony forgery charges

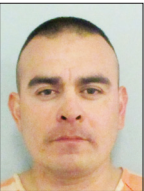
HERMISTON — A Hermiston man is facing seven felony charges for forgery after being arrested for using a counterfeit \$100 bill at a Dutch Bros on Sunday.

The Hermiston Police Department received a report of the counterfeit and arrested Benjamin Muniz, 41, near Rogers Toyota on North First Street in Hermiston, where he was subsequently found in possession of meth and identified as a suspect in a report of

a counterfeit being used at a Dairy Queen.

On Monday, Muniz was arraigned on 11 total charges, including three counts of first-degree forgery and four counts of first-degree possession of a forged instrument, all of which are felonies. Muniz is also facing one misdemeanor count for possession of meth, one count for failure to appear in court and two counts of probation violation.

Muniz is currently lodged



Muniz

at the Umatilla County Jail in Pendleton with his bail set at \$85,000, and he is set to appear in court for a preliminary hearing at 1:15 p.m. on Monday, March 9.

Hermiston to host park open house

HERMISTON — The public is invited to give recommendations on the city of Hermiston's parks master plan during an open house on March 19 from 5:30-7 p.m. at the Hermiston Community Center, 415 S. Highway 395.

The city is updating its Parks, Recreation, and

Open Space Master Plan, which helps guide the city's efforts to increase and improve parks and recreation offerings.

City staff have gathered ideas for the plan through online surveys, stakeholder interviews and "pop-up events" around town. Staff plan to finish the update in April, and next week's open house will provide an opportunity for feedback on key recommendations in the draft plan before it is finalized and presented to the city council for adoption.

Information at the event will be offered in English and Spanish.

— EO Media group



Staff photo by Alex Castle

The prosecution presents crash reconstruction reports during witness testimony on Thursday at the John McKenzie Mattila manslaughter trial.

Crash data highlights testimony during manslaughter trial

OSP trooper says accident occurred in victim's lane

By ALEX CASTLE
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — The manslaughter trial of John McKenzie Mattila picked up on Thursday at the Umatilla County Courthouse with lengthy state witness testimonies on the data and details of the crash that killed Adelaida Solis Torres and that he is accused of causing by driving drunk in February 2019.

The state brought Oregon State Police troopers Justin Goldsmith, Clinton Prevett and Kevin Fugate to the stand Thursday, all of whom either investigated the scene and vehicles, analyzed the reconstructive crash data or reviewed it.

Goldsmith testified that the collision between the vehicles occurred in the northbound lane of Highway 11, which Solis Torres was driving in on her way to Milton-Freewater on the evening of Feb. 22, 2019. According to his crash scene diagram, most debris and any physical evidence, such as fresh gouge and scrape marks, were found in the northbound lane and relatively no evidence was found in the southbound lane, which was corroborated by other testimony throughout the day.

Goldsmith also testified that the evidence shows Mattila's vehicle didn't roll, something Mattila claims. Goldsmith argued the damage done to the roof of Mattila's vehicle is the result of other structural damage and is inconsistent with other rollovers he's investigated. Instead, Goldsmith said it was an "offset head-on collision" that actually caused Mattila's truck to drive up and over the victim's.

Prevett took the stand as an expert witness on extracting and analyzing airbag control modules, which he did for both vehicles in the case. These modules held data from about five seconds before airbags were deployed, and he testified they show the victim's vehicle was driving "straight or relatively straight" until making a hard turn to the right in the second before the airbags

were deployed.

Prevett also testified Mattila's vehicle was traveling as fast as 86 mph with the accelerator being depressed about four seconds prior to the airbags deploying, when he then put on his brakes.

The module in Mattila's truck didn't record steering data, and Prevett was unable to say how Mattila's truck got into the victim's lane, only that "it's where the collision occurred."

Fugate, also an expert witness, reviewed reports from both Goldsmith and Prevett and testified there were no discrepancies between the two reports or when he compared them to photos. Fugate acknowledged they were concerned about the accuracy of speed data, though, which could be impacted by tire size and wheel slippage.

Jody Stutsman Vaughan, Mattila's defense attorney, pressed the issue of the truck's speed throughout the day and suggested that since Mattila was traveling uphill at the time, the truck may have been physically unable to travel that fast due to its weight.

Kris Theime, who inspected the two vehicles for mechanical failure and has done automotive work for 30 years, was offered as an expert witness on automotive technology and said that a steel addition to the front of Mattila's truck and the flatbed were heavy, but was adamant when Vaughan asked him if he thought the truck could surpass 75 mph going uphill.

"Yes, of course," Theime said. "Absolutely it could."

The trial resumes on Friday with the state expected to finish calling witnesses by the afternoon.

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