

House fire takes woman's life

Itemizer-Observer staff report

DALLAS — A Dallas woman was found dead following an early morning house fire in the 600 block of Southwest Wyatt Street in Dallas on Thursday.

No foul play is suspected, Dallas police said.

Firefighters, medics and police officers were called to a report of a house fire at about 5:35 a.m. Thursday. A neighbor who noticed the fire called 9-1-1.

Emergency crews arrived to find extensive fire involving the structure and later discovered the resident, Amy Stalnaker, 52, dead inside the home. The cause of death is undetermined, but is not being investigated as suspicious.

An investigation found the fire also was accidental, although the exact cause is unknown at this time.

"There were several possible causes of ignition," said April Welsh, a Dallas Fire Department spokeswoman.



DALLAS POLICE DEPARTMENT/for the Itemizer-Observer
Dallas firefighters and police officers monitor what remains of a home on Wyatt Street in Dallas Thursday. Emergency crews found an occupant of the home dead inside.

Stalnaker's two dogs, both labs, one a puppy, were able to escape the fire. Dallas police and fire de-

partments were assisted in the investigation by the Oregon State Fire Marshal's Office, the Polk County Medical

Examiner's Office, the Oregon State Police Arson Unit and the Polk County District Attorney's Office.

Accident on Hwy. 22 snarls Friday traffic

Itemizer-Observer staff report

POLK COUNTY — A three-vehicle crash on Highway 22 at milepost 14 east of Kings Valley Highway on Friday afternoon had traffic down to one lane of travel for about an hour.

Danny Lee Robertson, 46, of Dallas was traveling westbound on Highway 22 in a green BMW when he swerved into the eastbound lane, striking a Mack semi-truck, driven by Timothy James Brian, 30, of Monmouth. Robertson's vehicle spun into a Kia Sedona, driven by Anthony James Hadley, 43, of Willamina.

All three vehicles were towed from the scene.

Hadley and his three passengers were transported to West Valley Hospital by family friends after being evaluated by medics on scene.

Robertson was extricated

from his vehicle and transported to Salem Hospital with serious injuries. On Monday, Salem Hospital's public information officer said Robertson had been treated and released.

No citations were issued.

Dallas Fire District and Emergency Services responded, as well as Polk County Sheriff's Office, the Oregon Department of Transportation and Oregon State Police.

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WOU bomb threat forces evacuations

By Emily Mentzer
The Itemizer-Observer

MONMOUTH — A handwritten note detailing a bomb threat at Western Oregon University on Friday had three buildings evacuated and streets closed on campus.

After buildings were searched, nothing of concern was discovered, said Rebecca Chiles, director of WOU public safety, in an email to students.

The note was found at about 3 p.m. on Friday, although the exact details of how it was discovered are unclear, said Lisa Catto, public relations specialist for WOU.

"The note specified that there was a bomb threat for the Natural Sciences Building and the Health and Wellness Center, so we evacuated those buildings and called Monmouth Police Department," Catto said. "The note specifically detailed those buildings."

Bellamy Hall, north of the Natural Sciences Building, also was evacuated because of its proximity to the potential targeted buildings, Catto said. Monmouth Avenue and Jackson Street were also closed off for about two hours.

About 50 people were impacted by the evacuation, she said.

"Friday afternoon, it's so slow on campus, most classes are Monday through Thurs-

day," Catto said. "I was standing out there trying to help out, and there was a dozen students who were wanting to get to the library or the student union."

No evening events were affected. By 5:30 p.m., a campus-wide email went out to all students detailing that the bomb threat had occurred and nothing had been found.

The campus alert system was not used. Catto said that was because there was a danger of cellphones triggering an explosion.

"You don't want cellphones going off in a bomb situation," she said. "So if we sent out an alert, if their (students') cellphones went off if they were walking nearby, it's possible it could have set off that device."

Oregon State Police was on standby in case a bomb was found, Catto said.

Monmouth Police Department responded to the incident at about 3:15 p.m., Sgt. Kim Dorn said. The responding officer was on scene for about two hours.

Monmouth's Everbridge community notification system did not send out any alerts of the situation because Monmouth PD was assisting WOU, Dorn said.

"They (WOU) have the ability to notify their staff and students if they feel it is necessary," Dorn said.

MINET raising TV rates

By Emily Mentzer
The Itemizer-Observer

MONMOUTH — MINET, Monmouth-Independence Networks, is changing its rates for cable television and data packages, effective April 1.

Corporate Finance Officer Mark Thoenes said the company will not be able to pay its debt obligations in June, in spite of the rate changes.

He said given MINET's current cash position, if the company paid the debt service payment owed in June, there would be no money left for operations.

The two most popular cable television packages — the expanded package and the digital package — each will see increases of less than \$10 a month.

The MINET finance committee recommended the increases to television services because broadcasters had been increasing subscriber fees exponentially, said Marilyn Morton, office administrator.

"Some broadcasters upped their rates 308 percent in one year," she said. "That's a hefty raise. We have to pay per subscriber."

Broadcasters include channels such as the Discovery Channel, History Channel or Military Heroes Channel. Often, if a viewer wants access to just one of those channels, he or she must subscribe to all of them, Morton said.

The other change in rates

affects data customers. Those who were subscribed to receive 20 megabits of data will now get 30 Mbps for \$40, down \$1, Morton said.

New to the data offerings is 75 Mbps speed, she said. MINET has added 75 Mbps and decreased the monthly cost of 100 Mbps plans.

"It used to be \$164," Morton said. "We've dropped it to \$80."

The reorganization of rates and data plans is part of MINET's plan to increase customers by offering a wider range of services and decrease the loss the company was seeing in television revenue.

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