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Myrold to appear in court Tuesday

By **Jolene Guzman**
The Itemizer-Observer

DALLAS — The Dallas High School teacher and coach charged with sex abuse involving a 17-year-old student will appear in Polk County Circuit Court on Tuesday at 9 a.m. for arraignment.

Kirk Myrold, 36, a Spanish teacher and coach of the girls' soccer team, was arrested on one count each of luring a minor, a felony, and second-degree sexual abuse, also a felony, on Sept. 12 following a brief investigation, according to Dallas Police.

Polk County Chief Deputy District Attorney Jayme Kimberly said the District Attorney's Office is awaiting all police reports and evidence in the case. The office will review the case to determine what charges Myrold will be arraigned on during the hearing.

"I don't know what the charges will be yet," she said Tuesday morning. "We are waiting for the completion of all the supplemental reports."

Dallas officers received a report from the Dallas School District on Sept. 12 that a male teacher employed by the district was alleged to have been involved in an inappropriate relationship with a 17-year-old female student.

Dallas Detective Darren Buchholz found evidence supporting those allegations and arrested Myrold that day. He was taken to Polk County Jail and assessed \$30,000 bail.

He was released on the night of Sept. 12. Myrold was hired to coach the soccer team in 2015, and had worked at Corvallis High School previously. Longtime youth soccer coach Ron Brooks replaced him as the head coach of the soccer team (see related story on Page 11A).

Dallas Superintendent Michelle Johnstone sent a letter to parents last week informing them of Myrold's arrest.

"He has been placed on administrative leave and will not be at the school at this time," Johnstone wrote in the letter. "This is still in the hands of law enforcement and we have very little information."

She noted that the district is "prohibited from releasing information about students or ongoing employee issues."

"We remain dedicated to the mission of providing a quality education for your children," she wrote.

Anyone with information regarding this is asked to contact Buchholz at 503-831-3516.

Fatal accident at Clow Corner Road

By **Emily Mentzer**
The Itemizer-Observer

POLK COUNTY — An Aloha woman died in an accident Thursday morning at Clow Corner and Highway 99W.

The incident happened at 8:05 a.m. when Nathina Rose Montgomery, 20, of Aloha, turned northbound onto Highway 99W from Clow Corner Road. Her car was struck in the driver-side door by a dually pickup truck driven by William Claude McDonald, 41, of Toutle, Wash.

Montgomery was transported by Reach air ambulance to Salem Hospital with serious injuries. Oregon State Police was notified that she had died Monday from her injuries.

Four occupants from the pickup were transported by ambulance to Salem Hospital with minor injuries. Both vehicles were towed from the scene.

Safety restraints were worn, and airbags deployed in Montgomery's car.

Traffic was re-routed for about two hours while Oregon State Police troopers, Polk County Fire District No. 1, Polk County Sheriff's Office, Polk County Road Department and the Oregon Department of Transportation worked on scene.

The intersection of Clow Corner Road and Highway 99W has been the spot for 32 crashes in the last 10 years, said Lou Torres, spokesman for ODOT. Of those, five were very serious crashes, with one fatality.

The intersection's history of serious crashes puts it in ODOT's top 10 percent of similar roads, making it a priority, Torres said.

"It certainly has our attention," he said. "You have a high-speed rural roadway there. Typically, those are some of the toughest places to deal with traffic safety because vehicles are going to go fairly fast through there."

A busy intersection with a lot of cross traffic at 55 mph or faster presents a challenge when it comes to safety, Torres said.

See **CRASH**, Page 5A



Emily Mentzer/Itemizer-Observer
Toni Bordadora, center, helps Elaina Myrick, 6, of Monmouth, practice using her hands during a hippotherapy session on Friday.

Happy HART
Center provides horse adaptive riding therapy for people with special needs

By **Emily Mentzer**
The Itemizer-Observer

RICKREALL — Elaina Myrick, 6, doesn't say much. She has special needs that prevent her from speaking much or walking. At Horses Adaptive Riding and Therapy, it doesn't really matter.

The horse knows what Elaina needs.

Father, Dan Myrick, helps get Elaina out of her wheelchair, tightening her glasses around her head, and onto a horse in the arena at HART, located in Independence off Highway 22.

"She's done this before, but it's nice to have one closer to us," Myrick said. "Once she's riding, she has more muscle tone and core strength."

Elaina likely doesn't even realize she's getting a workout — or a therapy session — as she's led around the arena, giving the horse a tap with her hand to go, and practicing her grip.

HART is a nonprofit organization that puts people with special needs — physical, emotional, developmental, or social — together with horses and therapists. Currently, the nonprofit serves 70 clients.

"It's great to work with the horses," said LeeAnn Nail, certified equine assistance psychotherapist. "They're big and grounded and in the moment, and often, the client will be, too."

Physically, horseback riding gives clients more core strength and other benefits such as use of their hands in new ways and building muscle memory.

"The gait of a horse is the only animal that replicates a human's gait," said equine therapist and HART office manager Megan Newell. "When clients can't walk, or if they're working on that skill, having them ride on



Emily Mentzer/Itemizer-Observer
Elaina Myrick, 6, readies to ride with her therapist.

the back of a horse trains their muscles for the movement they'll have to do for walking."

Newell saw the results of this firsthand when her daughter, who has Angelman Syndrome, a genetic disorder, still wasn't walking at age 3.

"People kept pushing it," she said. "After three months of adaptive riding, she was walking."

Emotionally, horses are good at reading people, Newell said.

"They're very empathic," she said. "They can take your mood and personality and are really good at understanding what somebody needs."

Myrna Gulick, member of the HART board of directors, said the organization attracts horse people.

"When you know that connection, and you understand how magical that can be, and how healing that can be, you discover a program that helps anyone who has more to deal with than you do on your feet," she said. "When you work with a person and they're on a horse and their faces light up and they become stronger — it's amazing. You go home and

Check it out

What: HART Family Fall Fair.
Where: HART, 6665 Rickreall Road, Independence.
When: Sunday, 1 to 4 p.m.
Admission: \$15 general; \$7.50 children younger than 12; \$40 for family of four — two adults and two children; those 2 and younger are free. Includes lunch.
Of note: HART is seeking volunteers for a variety of tasks, from filing to fixing fences to changing light bulbs. No experience with horses is necessary.
For more information: horsesadaptiveriding.org

you feel like, 'I did something worthwhile today.'"

Often the time a client spends at HART is the highlight of their week, Gulick added.

"It's just extraordinary," she said. "When we work with someone, and there's just a tiny improvement. A child who will touch nothing holds on (to the saddle) here, and then goes home and will work with their hands."

See **HART**, Page 5A

IN YOUR TOWN

DALLAS
Oakdale Elementary School receives a visit from George Fox professors.
»Page 13A

FALLS CITY
City council to send letter to county to pave road.
»Page 3A

INDEPENDENCE
Council considers changes to city codes regarding marijuana grows.
»Page 6A

MONMOUTH
Western Oregon theater students form Candlestick Productions.
»Page 3A

ELECTION
Jim Thompson and Mike Nearman are running for House District 23.
»Page 2A

SPORTS
Central's Tony Rincon scored six goals in two matches.
»Page 11A

Firefighters put on fundraiser

Itemizer-Observer staff report
MONMOUTH — Members of Polk County and Dallas International Association of Firefighters Local 4196 will be hitting the streets for the Muscular Dystrophy Association Fill the Boot Fundraiser Friday from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Firefighters will be at the corner of Main Street and Pacific Highway in Monmouth.

Contributions go toward MDA summer camps for children, professional and public education and research.

The fundraiser began on Tuesday.

The IAFF has more than 280,000 members in the United States and Canada.

For more information about the IAFF, visit www.client.prod.iaff.org/.

For more information on the Fill the Boot fundraiser, visit www.iaff.org/MDA/history.asp and for more information on the MDA, visit www.mda.org.

THE NEXT 7 DAYS PLANNING FOR YOUR WEEK

wed
A new lecture series discussing God and three religions begins tonight at St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Dallas. 7 p.m. Free.
Mostly sunny
Hi: 70
Lo: 46

thu
Want to know more about Measure 97? Attend a public forum at the Monmouth library for both sides of the issue. 7-8:30 p.m. Free.
Mostly sunny
Hi: 69
Lo: 48

fri
Tour the new Richard Woodcock Building of Education at Western Oregon University in Monmouth. 4 p.m. Free.
Cloudy
Hi: 66
Lo: 50

sat
Catch 'em all at the community Pokemon Go event in downtown Monmouth and Independence. 1-4 p.m. Free.
Cloudy
Hi: 73
Lo: 54

sun
Listen to your favorite guilty pleasure on National One-Hit Wonder Day.
Sunny
Hi: 82
Lo: 51

mon
Do something positive for the community — and yourself — by signing up for the inaugural Glow Run, to be held Oct. 15.
Sunny
Hi: 81
Lo: 52

tue
James2 Community Kitchen serves meals to all who are hungry each Tuesday at St. Philip Catholic Church. 4:30 p.m. Free.
Sunny
Hi: 75
Lo: 49