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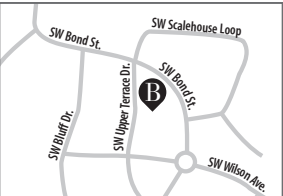
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LOCAL, STATE & REGION

Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler is seen at the scene of an officer-involved shooting Nov. 8, 2019.

Mark Graves/
The Oregonian
file



Portland mayor to declare emergency in attempt to stem summer shootings

Wheeler also assembled a team of experts to help reduce gun violence

BY MAXINE BERNSTEIN
The Oregonian

Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler plans to issue an emergency declaration to summon extra help to curb gun violence as summer gets underway.

He's also assembled a team of people who will work out of the city's new Community Safety Division to try to better coordinate community-based outreach with police enforcement efforts for an initiative called Safer Summer PDX.

"Here we are in mid-June, and we know that historically in the city of Portland, as well as in other cities around the country, gun violence escalates during the summer," Wheeler said in a statement. "We don't want to be caught off guard here in the city of Portland."

So far this year, 43 people have died in homicides in Portland, most resulting from shootings, slightly below the 51 at this time last year, when the city had a record of 92 killings. There have been 657 shootings in Portland so far this year, with 193 injuries and 3,149 casings recovered, according to Police Bureau data.

The new three-member ceasefire team includes Sha-reef Khatib, who has been hired as a program director to manage a gun violence reduction program under the mayor's emergency declaration, according to his LinkedIn page. The mayor's office says Khatib was born in England and has managed counterviolence projects in war-torn

countries of Afghanistan, Iraq, Malaysia, Mozambique, Nigeria and the Sudan.

Khatib will work with two other city employees, Julian Massenburg, a Portland native who most recently has helped form the Community Safety Division and previously was on the communication team in the city's Office of Management and Finance, and Kandel Ashley, a Portland native who has worked in the mayor's office as a constituent service director since last year after spending five years working with youths and young adults at risk of becoming involved in gang or gun violence for the Native American Youth and Family Center.

"Their goal is to work as our ceasefire team to help develop concrete, immediate strategies here in the city of Portland to start reducing the gun violence that we're seeing on our street," Wheeler said.

Under the umbrella of the Community Safety Division, led by former Fire Chief Mike Myers, the ceasefire team will coordinate efforts by the city's Office of Violence Prevention, which oversees youth and family outreach workers, with the police bureau's response to shootings and investigation of gun crimes.

"I'm glad that the voices of the community are being heard," said Sam Sachs, who founded a nonprofit called the No Hate Zone that works to promote racial justice.

Kieran L. Ramsey, special agent in charge of Oregon's FBI, said the number of shootings and "rounds that are flying are still extremely problematic"

"I am very heartened to see, though, that the alarm bell

is now fully ringing," Ramsey said. "I think finally everybody's in the same boat rowing in the same direction. Maybe we're not rowing at the same cadence, but everybody's in the same boat rowing in the same direction now, and that was not always the case, last summer even."

The police bureau's Focused Intervention Team, 12 officers and two sergeants, seized 32 guns and responded to 255 shootings this year through June 23. Four of the team's officers were involved in a shooting May 6 in northeast Portland, but have been cleared to return to work after a grand jury found no criminal wrongdoing by them. One officer is back and the rest are expected to return in the next two weeks. They seriously wounded 36-year-old Matthew Ronald Leahey after a traffic stop ended with an exchange of gunfire between Leahey and the four team members.

Leahey was indicted June 7 on seven charges, including two counts of attempted aggravated murder with a firearm, accused of attempting to shoot officers Adi Ramic and Michelle Petty with a .380-caliber handgun, according to court records. He's also charged with the attempted first-degree assault and second-degree assault of Ramic, two counts of unlawful use of a weapon and being a felon in possession of a gun.

Early this year, the mayor used his emergency powers to bolster the city's response to homeless street camping. Portland's charter gives the mayor sole power to control all city agencies during a declared state of emergency.

LOCAL BRIEFING

COVID-19 community levels for Central Oregon

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention monitors community levels of COVID-19 to help communities decide what prevention steps to take based on the latest data. Levels can be low, medium or high and are determined by looking at hospital beds being used, hospital admissions and the total number of new COVID-19 cases in an area.

Nine Oregon counties have reached high levels of COVID community spread.

The CDC listed the following levels for Central Oregon:

Deschutes County: Medium

Crook County: Medium

Jefferson County: Medium

Precautions the CDC recommends for communities with low levels:

- Stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccines.
- Get tested if you have symptoms.

Additional precautions for communities with medium levels:

- If you are at high risk for severe illness, talk to your health care provider about whether you need to wear a mask and take other precautions.

1 dead, 1 critically injured in U.S. Highway 97 crash in Jefferson County, a mile south of Culver

One person died and another was severely injured Tuesday in a two-vehicle crash at the intersection of state Highway 361 and U.S. Highway 97 in Jefferson County, about a mile south of Culver. Mario Villagomez, 31, of Prineville was driving a blue Ford Thunderbird and failed to stop as he entered Highway 97, crashing into a red Honda Gold Wing motorcycle driven by Martin Fox, 65, of Manson, Washington, according to an Oregon State Police statement.

Fox was killed in the crash, and a passenger, Susan Fox, 62, also of Manson, Washington, was critically injured and airlifted to St. Charles Bend. Villagomez was also taken to the hospital with injuries.

— Bulletin staff reports

EUGENE

Woman attacked with acid 3 times in 3 months

Police say it might be a bias crime

BY ZAEEM SHAIKH

The Oregonian

A Eugene woman has been attacked with acid three times in the past three months, with the latest attack coming on Tuesday morning, police said.

Detectives are investigating the assaults as a possible bias crime.

The 26-year-old woman suffered chemical burns when a man reportedly threw acid on her after she opened her front door at about 5:30 a.m. Tuesday, police said. The woman believes the person who attacked her was the same one who had previously done so. Police describe the suspect as a young white man wearing a hoodie and black clothing.

In March, the woman was walking her dog when an attacker threw a cup full of acid on her, according

to police. She was taken to a hospital with burns. The following month, she told dispatchers someone was attempting to open the door to her home.

The woman also suffered burns in mid-June after a man broke into her home, poured a chemical on her and tried to light her on fire, police said.

Police said the victim reported that the suspect made comments about her ethnicity.

"There is a bias element to it," Eugene Police spokesperson Melinda McLaughlin said.

Police said the victim is Native American.

The woman has also told police she was attacked in November when a person threw a cup full of glass shards at her while she was walking her dog.

Police are asking anyone with information about this case to call detective Glenn Gilhuber at 541-682-5569.

Inmates at federal prison in Sheridan stage hunger strike

Prisoners protesting extensive lockdowns, poor conditions

BY MAXINE BERNSTEIN

The Oregonian

About 80 inmates at the federal prison complex in Sheridan started a hunger strike in the past week to protest extensive lockdowns in their cells and reports of limited medical care, inadequate meals and restricted access to computers to contact their lawyers and families.

Several defense lawyers heard from their clients that they were refusing to eat and only drinking water to draw attention to the conditions.

One 37-year-old man awaiting trial on a drug conspiracy charge told The Oregonian on Monday that he's been involved in the hunger strike since June 21 with the hope it will draw the attention of supervisors at the Federal Bureau of Prisons.

The action comes as more than three dozen inmates have filed a petition seeking reduction of their

sentences at the prison citing two years of alleged unconstitutional conditions.

Oregon Federal Public Defender Lisa Hay has argued in court papers that the pandemic and Sheridan's response has led to confining people in small cells for inhumane periods, curtailing access to family, lawyers and other support systems and allowing urgent medical needs to go unaddressed.

Hay said she confirmed Monday from government officials that about 80 people held at the prison's detention center are involved in the hunger strike.

The Federal Correctional Institution in Sheridan includes a medium-security prison, currently with 980 inmates, an adjacent detention center with 215 inmates and a minimum-security satellite camp with 309 inmates.

Benjamin O'Conne, a spokesperson for the Bureau of Prisons, said Tuesday that "numerous" inmates at the detention center didn't accept prison meals "for several days" but had access to the commissary to buy food if they wanted.

The inmates are now accepting their meals, he said in an email.

DAMASCUS

Former principal gets 43 years for sexual abuse

BY ZANE SPARLING

The Oregonian

Clackamas County Circuit Judge Katherine Weber sentenced former Damascus elementary school Principal Jeffrey Hays to 43 years and nine months in state prison Tuesday in the sexual abuse of four students.

Hays, the top administrator at Deep Creek Elementary School from 2005 to 2009, marked his 68th birthday on June 6, the day he was convicted of first-degree sexual abuse and six counts of unlawful sexual penetration at the end of a five-week trial.

"This is a significant sentence because this is a significant case," said Senior Deputy District Attorney Scott Healy. "It sends a message to the community and to anyone else in a position

of power and trust who might be a pedophile."

Hays cannot lessen his sentence with good behavior or other programs while incarcerated and will be on probation for life if released from state prison at age 111, Weber ruled. While eligible for credit for time served, he wasn't in custody before the trial.

Weber didn't detail her reasoning for the sentence, but prosecutors noted Hays never admitted his guilt and denied sexually abusing anyone while on the stand.

Defense attorney Jason Thompson argued for a 25-year sentence, noting Hays has no prior convictions and that prosecutors had proffered much shorter punishments while trying to strike a plea deal. "He is a man of integrity. He is a man

with dignity," Thompson said, calling the opportunity to represent Hays "an honor." Thompson said earlier that Hays will appeal the conviction.

Appearing in court in blue-and-white jail scrubs, Hays didn't speak before the sentencing. He smiled and nodded several times at family members, but stared straight ahead as one of the students and the parent of another addressed the court.

"I went to school to be taught, but instead my innocence was taken away from me," the student said. "You are paying the price of your own choices."

The mother of another student said her daughter had lost most of her childhood and still struggled with her mental and emotional health.