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'We don't want any other parents to go through this'



Contributed photo

Boy dies from rare flesh-eating bacteria days after bike crash

By Kathy Aney
EO Media Group

Liam Flanagan seemed a typical 8-year-old boy.

The Pilot Rock second-grader rode his bike, scarfed down molasses cookies after school and roughhoused with his three stepbrothers. He loved to wear camo and feed the animals on his family's farm.

But life, as the saying goes, can turn on a dime.

On Jan. 13, Liam wrecked his bike as he rode down a hill on his family's Spring Creek property. Blood seeped from a thigh wound where the end of the handlebar sliced through his jeans. An emergency room doctor stitched him up and the incident seemed destined to fade from memory as just another foible in the life of an active young boy.

Several days later, however, Liam found himself fighting for his life.

Flesh-eating bacteria, which likely entered his wound from the soil, attacked the boy's soft tissue. In the days to come he would endure four surgeries to remove infected tissue.

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EO Media Group/E.J. Harris

Scott Hinkle and Sara Hebard of Pilot Rock lost their son, Liam Flanagan, 8, pictured in the cellphone photo, on Jan. 20 after an eight-day battle with a flesh-eating bacteria. ABOVE: Liam Flanagan lies in his hospital bed during his battle with necrotizing fasciitis.

Camo for Liam

By Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

The Grant Union Prospector boys basketball team took time after their Friday night win over the Enterprise Outlaws in John Day to show support for young Liam Flanagan, who lost his life Jan. 21 to a flesh-eating bacteria.

The entire team dressed in camouflage, Liam's favorite.

Liam, a second-grader from Pilot Rock, came down with the infection, known as necrotizing fasciitis, just days after a bicycle wreck.

Prospector head coach Kelsy Wright graduated from Prairie City High School with Liam's mother, Sara Hebard.

"Sara is a long time friend and classmate of mine," Wright said. "I told the team the story about her son Liam."

He added, "They wanted to show support and honor Sara's request to wear camo today to help raise awareness for necrotizing fasciitis. Their compassion for others is amazing, and I'm very proud of them. They are fine young men."

Hebard said her son's pain level was higher than she expected for the size of the injury.

Other signs to look for, which may start a few hours after the injury, include the wound being warm to the touch and red or purplish areas of swelling that spread rapidly, according to the Centers for Disease Control. Later symptoms can include fever, chills, fatigue and vomiting.



The Eagle/Angel Carpenter

The Grant Union Prospector basketball team, coaches and assistants wear camo after Friday's game in John Day in a show of support for second-grader Liam Flanagan of Pilot Rock who died Jan. 21 of a flesh-eating bacteria known as necrotizing fasciitis. Camouflage was a favorite of Liam's, and supporters were asked to wear camo on Friday in his memory. Grant Union head coach Kelsy Wright, second from left, is a friend and former classmate of Liam's mother, Sara Hebard, both Prairie City High School alumni.

Finicum family seeks \$70M in wrongful death suit

By Sean Hart
Blue Mountain Eagle

The family of refuge occupier LaVoy Finicum, who was killed by police during a traffic stop en route to John Day, has filed a wrongful death lawsuit seeking at least \$70 million.

The suit against federal, state and local governments, government agents and others was filed in U.S. District Court two years after Finicum was shot and killed by officers while traveling from the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in Harney County to a community meeting in John Day.

FBI agents and Oregon State Police officers attempted to stop two vehicles on Highway 395 Jan. 26, 2016. The occupants of one vehicle, including occupation leader Ammon Bundy, were taken into custody when the vehicle was stopped.

Finicum, driving the other vehicle, refused to comply



Eagle file photo

LaVoy Finicum's widow, Jeanette Finicum, encourages attendees at a meeting in John Day in January 2017 to get involved however they can. The Finicum family has filed a wrongful death lawsuit for LaVoy's January 2016 death.

with the officers' demands, stating he was going to meet with Grant County Sheriff Glenn Palmer. Continuing

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Blaze engulfs home on Pine Creek Road

Jensens lose home to flue fire

By Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

Prairie City rural volunteer firefighters responded to a home fully engulfed in flames Thursday afternoon on Pine Creek Road between Prairie City and John Day.

"Jim and Mary Jensen lost their home," said Prairie City Fire Chief Marvin Rynearson, but no one was injured in the blaze.

After investigating the fire with State Fire Marshal Dave Field on Friday, Prairie City Fire Chief Marvin Rynearson said the cause was a flue fire.

"It started by the heating device, a wood stove with a double-walled metal flue," he said.

It was undetermined if any pets perished in the fire, but Rynearson said a dog and two cats were missing and



The Eagle/Angel Carpenter

Jim and Mary Jensen's home on Pine Creek Road in the Prairie City Rural Fire District is a total loss after a fire Jan. 25.

were presumed to have been in the house.

John Day dispatch received the call at 12:17 p.m., Prairie City firefighters arrived on scene at 12:30 p.m., and John Day Rural Fire Department was called in for mutual aid and arrived soon after.

Rynearson had been out of town when the call first came in, and Prairie City

firefighter Chris Camarena was first on scene.

John Day Fire Chief Ron Smith said he was right behind Camarena.

"It's a two-story house," Smith said. "The roof was pretty much gone, and it was fully involved. Some of the walls were gone, and some were still standing."

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