



Eagle file photo

From left, Blue Mountain Hospital board member Linda Ladd, board chair Amy Kreger and CEO Derek Daly during an October work session.

Blue Mountain Hospital District pays off 20-year-bond

By Steven Mitchell
Blue Mountain Eagle

Property owners in Grant County will owe less to the tax collector this year.

Blue Mountain Hospital District CEO Derek Daly said the hospital paid off its 20-year bond before its Feb. 1 due date.

Grant County Assessor David Thunell said the total amount the total bond was for \$7 million, and the hospital will receive \$740,223.27 for the 2020-21 tax year.

Daly said the hospital district was excited about making the final \$722,000 payment because of its impact on the county's taxpayers.

Amy Kreger, hospital board chair and longtime Grant County resident, said the 2001 measure narrowly passed and caused controversy.

As both a landowner and a rancher,

Kreger said it would make a big difference for every taxpayer in the county to see the particular payment come off of their tax bill.

As a board member, she said she takes pride that the district kept the hospital building up to date with the bond money.

"We're not a 20-year-old building," Kreger said. "Our maintenance team and our staff have kept this building up to date. It's a continually moving target."

She said, currently, the district is working with a group of architects to go over the building's facility master plan and ensure it stays current.

Hospital district Chief Financial Officer Paul Rogers said paying off the bond frees up cash flow for the district.

"Cash flow is all important in a small hospital," Rogers said. "Many hospitals close their doors simply because they don't have cash flow."

Connery released, set to enter plea in vehicle theft case after murder charge dismissed

By Steven Mitchell
Blue Mountain Eagle

With murder and arson charges dismissed, Isaac Connery has been released from jail and is set to enter a plea related to unauthorized use of a motor vehicle April 8.

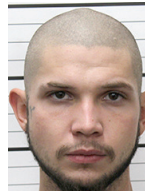
Connery, 23, who now has a Salem address, posted \$1,000 bail for the vehicle charge Feb. 26 and was released with the direction he must remain in Oregon, according to documents filed in Grant County Circuit Court.

In a secret indictment filed June 23, 2020, Connery was accused of unlawfully taking Terry Smith's 2006 Toyota Tacoma on July 18, 2018.

According to press releases from Grant County District Attorney Jim Carpenter, Connery killed Terry Smith and his wife, Sharon, before setting fire to their home on Nan's Rock Road near Mt. Vernon.

Carpenter said Connery confessed to the crimes, but the confession, and subsequent information obtained, was ruled inadmissible in court because of Miranda rights violations.

Two counts of first-degree murder and one count of first-degree arson were dismissed without prejudice — meaning the state could file charges again if further evidence is discovered — against Connery and his mother, Gabrielle Connery, 47.



Isaac Connery

McKrola posts \$33,000 bail under conditional release agreement

By Steven Mitchell
Blue Mountain Eagle

A Mt. Vernon man charged with rape and kidnapping posted bail on Feb. 23 and has no scheduled court appearances until a June 1 plea hearing.

Brogan McKrola, 22, is accused of first-degree rape, sodomy and sexual abuse — as well as second-degree kidnapping, strangulation and furnishing alcohol to a minor, according to a March 1 indictment in Grant County Circuit Court.

He posted \$33,000 bail on Feb. 23, according to a release agreement filed with the court. During a March 3 hearing, McKrola's defense attorney Kati Dunn said he successfully posted bail.

Dunn filed a demurrer Jan. 15, seeking to dismiss the charges. During a Feb. 23 hearing, she argued the state did not provide the grand jury with the correct law language under the current sodomy statute, which the state recently changed.

Baker County Circuit Court Judge Matt Shirtcliff, who heard the motion, denied the demurrer but ordered the



Brogan McKrola

state to file a new arraignment and amend the indictment.

Under McKrola's release agreement, he will have a curfew from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. and is ordered not to contact the victim.

Kurt Miller, a senior assistant attorney general with the Department of Justice, asked that the court amend McKrola's agreement to reflect a condition that would forbid him from possessing or consuming intoxicants.

Judge Gregory L. Baxter, who heard the March 3 hearing, asked McKrola's attorney to have the agreement signed and submitted to the court to amend the release agreement.

Miller confirmed he would be the prosecuting attorney, not Grant County District Attorney Jim Carpenter.

In a Dec. 23 press release, Carpenter said the charges stem from events at a party in the 400 block of Southwest Brent Street in John Day, Dec. 19, involving numerous minors and alcohol.

COPS AND COURTS

Arrests and citations in the Blue Mountain Eagle are taken from the logs of law enforcement agencies. Every effort is made to report the court disposition of arrest cases.

Grant County Sheriff

The Grant County Sheriff's Office reported the following for the week of March 3:

Concealed handgun licenses: 10

Average inmates: 8

Bookings: 6

Releases: 7

Arrests: 1

Citations: 0

Fingerprints: 2

Civil papers: 20

Warrants processed: 4

Assistance/Welfare check: 0

Search and Rescue: 0

Grant County Justice Court

Violation of basic rule: Douglas J. Norris, 52, Mead, Washington, Feb. 5, 79/55 zone, fined \$265.

Exceeding speed limit: Kayla D. Lambeth, 26, John Day, April 25, 75/65 zone, fined \$165; Brenda L. Thompson, 38, Canyon City, Feb. 8, 82/65 zone, fined \$265.

Driving while suspended: Shawn C. Kite, 52, Prairie City, Feb. 5, fined \$440.

Driving uninsured: Sean McGee, 24, John Day, Jan. 16, fined \$265; Shawn C. Kite, 52, Prairie City, Feb. 3, fined \$265.

Careless driving—accident: Jonathan R. Haskins Jr.,

18, Prairie City, Feb. 19, fined \$340.

Failure to install interlock ignition device: Shawn C. Kite, 52, Prairie City, Feb. 5, fined \$440.

No operator's license: Sean McGee, 24, John Day, Jan. 16, fined \$265.

Christopher S. Compton pleaded guilty March 1 to a count of driving while suspended. Compton was sentenced to 18 months of probation, 20 hours of community service and ordered to pay \$1,185 in fees and fines.

Zachary L. Deiter entered a diversion agreement Feb. 1 for a count of aiding in a wildlife violation. Deiter pleaded guilty to a count of aiding in a wildlife violation and a separate charge was dismissed. Deiter was ordered to pay \$600 in fines and fees and \$500 in a punitive compensatory fine to the Oregon Hunters Association Turn in Poachers Fund. His hunting license was also suspended for three years.

Oregon State Police

March 1: A state trooper responded to a reported rollover crash near milepost 66 on Highway 395B. The investigation revealed the vehicle was northbound, negotiating a downhill curve at a stated 40 mph, when an oncoming commercial motor vehicle (in its own lane) startled the driver. The driver swerved to the right and got into a muddy shoulder. The driver was unable to

control the vehicle, which hit a rock wall, rolled on its side and slid to a rest in the middle of the northbound lane. The driver was not injured, and the vehicle sustained substantial damage. The vehicle was removed by Frontier Towing. Grant County Sheriff's Office and Oregon Department of Transportation assisted at the scene.

March 3: A state trooper stopped a known suspended driver and knew the driver had a cite-and-release arrest warrant out of Umatilla County. Bryan P. Martin, 43, of Mt. Vernon was issued a citation for driving while suspended and failure to install an interlock ignition device. Martin was issued a citation in lieu of custody for a warrant out of Umatilla County for failure to appear.

March 4: A state trooper was driving through the Riverside Mobile Home Park in John Day when he saw Steven M. Warrington, 31, of Granite. The trooper knew Warrington had two misdemeanor warrants for his arrest. The trooper contacted Warrington and took him into custody. Dispatch confirmed both warrants. Warrington was transported to the Grant County Jail where he was lodged on a Grant County warrant. Per the request of the Linn County Sheriff's Office, the trooper issued Warrington a citation in lieu of custody on their warrant.

March 5: Oregon State

Police saw a vehicle drive from Apple Road, which accesses Rocky Mountain Dispensary. As the trooper followed the vehicle, he saw it weaving within the lane and crossing over or driving on the center line. The trooper stopped the vehicle at about milepost 158. After contacting the occupants, the trooper learned that the two occupants in the vehicle were on parole out of Crook County, with a "no marijuana" condition to their parole. When asked, the passenger admitted that he just purchased marijuana. During a probable cause search, the trooper seized four containers of marijuana, totaling about 4 grams of marijuana. The trooper attempted telephone calls to their parole officers, but was unable to reach them.

March 5: OSP stopped a vehicle for speeding in Prairie City. Upon contact, the driver showed signs of impairment and admitted to smoking marijuana minutes earlier after leaving the dispensary in John Day. The driver consented to a standardized field sobriety test and performed poorly. Anthony E. Menchaca, 28, Caldwell, Idaho, was arrested for driving under the influence of intoxicants and was transported to the Grant County Jail where he consented to a breath test, with a final result of 0.00%. The driver was cited for driving under the influence of intoxicants—drug, and the vehicle was released to a friend.

March 6: A John Day Fish and Wildlife trooper encountered a crashed and abandoned vehicle at milepost 32.5 on Highway 395B. The southbound Toyota pickup left the roadway and struck an embankment before rolling and coming to an uncontrolled stop, on its wheels, in an irrigation ditch. The driver was later contacted at his residence, and he said that he swerved to avoid a coyote in the road.

Dispatch

John Day dispatch worked 121 calls during the week of March 1-7, including:

• John Day Police Department

March 3: John Guthridge, 57, of Prairie City was cited during a traffic stop on Highway 26 near milepost 163.

March 6: Warned a driver for speeding on Highway 395C near milepost 1.

• Oregon State Police

March 1: Along with the Grant County Sheriff's Office, responded to a noninjury crash on Highway 395B.

March 3: Advised of a driving complaint on Highway 395S.

• Grant County Sheriff's Office

March 1: Arrested Thomas E. Pfeifer, 51, of Prairie City on a Grant County warrant on North Cozart Avenue.

March 3: Received a report of criminal mischief on North McHaley Street.

March 3: Received a report

of a felon in possession of a firearm on North McHaley Street.

March 6: Received information about a motor vehicle crash on Highway 395C near milepost 32.

• John Day ambulance

March 3: Responded for an elderly man on Bragga Way.

March 3: Responded for a woman with pain at a hotel on West Main Street.

March 4: Responded for a patient with severe abdominal pain on North Johnson Avenue.

March 6: Responded for a 74-year-old woman with difficulty breathing on North McHaley Avenue.

March 6: Responded for a 60-year-old woman with difficulty breathing on East Fifth Street.

March 7: Responded for an 87-year-old man who fell and injured his head on Juniper Lane.

March 7: Responded for a 77-year-old man who fell and was complaining of hip pain on Valley View Drive.


• John Day fire

March 1: Along with Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative, advised of a power line throwing sparks in John Day on the corner of South Canyon Street and Southwest First Street.


March 4: Dispatched for a report of a cat stuck in a tree on West Main Street.

• Mt. Vernon fire

March 7: Along with GCSO and John Day rural fire, responded for structures on fire on Highway 26.



ATTORNEYS



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We want your voice to be a part of the conversations shaping Oregon's future.

Share your opinion. Earn money. Join the OVBC Panel.

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS FOR FIRE CONSULTANT

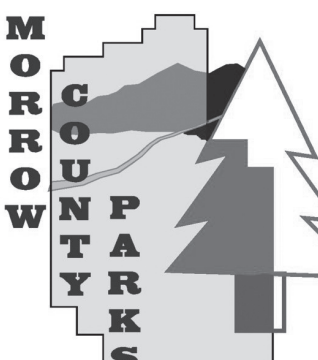
Morrow County Public Works Projects - Morrow County, Oregon

Morrow County, Oregon, requests proposals for a qualified Fire Consultant to provide services for Morrow County Parks. Contractors submitting qualifications shall be considered based upon the following general evaluation criteria:

1. Fee schedule.
2. Experience.
3. Method of approach.

Copies of the Request for Qualifications may be obtained from Morrow County Public Works, P.O. Box 428, 365 W Hwy 74, Lexington, Oregon 97839, (541) 989-9500, spointer@co.morrow.or.us

Complete proposals will be accepted at the same address no later than 4:00 p.m., March 4, 2021. Any questions or concerns may be addressed to Sandi Pointer.



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