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Morrow County man sentenced to 62+ years in prison for child sexual abuse

On October 14, District Attorney Justin Nelson and Attorney General John Kroger announced a 62.5-year prison sentence for a Morrow County man convicted of sexually molesting two children. A

Morrow County Jury had convicted Joseph Edward Pergande of rape, unlawful sexual penetration, sexual abuse, and coercion

"We all have a moral obligation to protect children," said Attorney General Kroger. "I want to thank the Morrow County District Attorney's office for their excellent work on the case."

Edward Joseph Pergande, 33, was sentenced Thursday, October 13 by Circuit Court Judge Eva J. Temple to 62.5 years in prison for the repeated sexual abuse of two minor children. Members of the victims' family listened to the sentencing in real-time from the Circuit Court in Hermiston.

The defendant was convicted by a unanimous Morrow County jury on September 2 of 1 count each of Rape in the First Degree and Unlawful Sexual Penetration in the First Degree, and 2 counts each of Sexual Abuse in the First Degree and Coercion. The jury deliberated for approximately ninety minutes at the conclusion of the four day trial in Heppner.

Under Jessica's law, the Defendant faced a mandatory 25 years in

prison on each of the Rape and Unlawful Sexual Penetration counts. Under Ballot Measure 11, the mandatory minimum sentence on each of the Sexual Abuse charges is 75 months. Judge Temple imposed consecutive sentences, finding that the defendant had committed multiple

criminal sex acts against multiple victims.

The facts at trial showed that the defendant repeatedly sexually assaulted two minor children during 2006 and 2007. The defendant knew the child victims through a personal relationship. The child victims were between four and seven years old during the time of the abuse.

The case was initially investigated by the Morrow County Sheriff's Office with the assistance of the Guardian Care Center in Pendleton.

The Oregon Department of Justice (DOJ) has been prosecuting the case in cooperation with the Morrow County District Attorney's office since March 2010. DOJ temporarily ran the office in 2010 when

the District Attorney position became vacant. Upon

his appointment in July of 2010, District Attorney Justin Nelson asked DOJ to continue to prosecute certain cases involving serious person crimes in order to minimize disruption to crime victims and their families. Senior Assistant Attorney General Dan Wendel and Deputy District Attorney Richard Tovey prosecuted the case.

"Child sexual abuse crimes are among the most devastating crimes that can occur in a community. Crimes like these inflict severe physical, emotional, and psychological trauma on their victims. As Morrow County District Attorney, I am proud of the successful prosecution of this case and the teamwork between the Oregon Department of Justice and the Morrow County District Attorney's Office that led to the conviction. Assistant Attorney General Dan Wendel and Morrow County Deputy District Attorney Richard Tovey did an impressive job prosecuting this case," said District Attorney Nelson.



Edward Joseph Pergande

HEPPNER

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Gazette Times

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Scientist to present Morrow County meteorite in Heppner

On Tuesday, November 1, scientist Dick Pugh will present photos of the Morrow County meteorite at a public program at the Oregon Trail Library District's branch library in Heppner. The program will begin at 6:30 p.m.; all ages are welcome.

This fifth meteorite ever to be discovered in Oregon was found in Morrow County in 1999 and identified and dated by scientists just months ago. The meteorite was found in a ditch along a rural road after traveling millions of miles and billions of years through space before falling to Earth and landing in Morrow County.

Pugh will give a lively, updated program about searching for meteorites and the discovery of "Morrow County," as the meteorite is named. He will also bring \$10,000 worth of meteorites for attendees to pick up and handle.

The Morrow County meteorite weighs more than 40 pounds and is about the size of a beach ball. The cone-shaped rock was picked up by Donald West-

son and his wife Debbie while driving past open wheat fields.

"That wheat country in Morrow County is ideal for looking for meteorites such as this one," Pugh said. "We think there could be several more out there, including meteorites lying on the ground out there from the fireball that shot overhead across northeastern Oregon a few years ago."

"That one likely left a stream of meteorite debris as it exploded above the region," he added.

The program will help area residents know what to look for when searching for meteorites. The extraterrestrial rocks are often pitted, cone-shaped and have a burnt surface from traveling through space.

Meteorites are quite valuable and belong to the person on whose property they are found. To date, only six meteorites have ever been found in Oregon, yet scientists believe there is at least one lying on every half square mile

within the state.

The only other meteorite found yet in eastern Oregon was also identified last year and was found at Lakeview. Both discoveries from eastern Oregon attracted the attention of scientists and media worldwide.

Funding for meteorite programs in eastern Oregon this year has been made to the PSU Cascade Meteorite Laboratory from NASA and are sponsored by Libraries of Eastern Oregon (LEO) and its member libraries.

Program attendees are encouraged to bring in rocks that they'd like to have identified. For further information, contact Oregon Trail Library District director Marsha Richmond at 541-481-3365 or LEO director Lyn Craig at 541-763-2355.

To learn more about the PSU laboratory and Pugh, who recently won an international award for his efforts for meteorite identification and education, see www.meteorites.pdx.edu.

ZeaChem named in Cleantech 100

ZeaChem, a Boardman-based developer of biorefineries for the conversion of renewable biomass into sustainable fuels and chemicals, was named in the 2011 Global Cleantech 100. The prestigious list is produced by Cleantech Group, a leading research firm focused on global cleantech innovation. The Global Cleantech 100 program is produced

in collaboration with the UK's Guardian News and Media.

The Global Cleantech 100 list is unique in the sector because it highlights the promise of private clean technology companies from all around the world, focusing on those companies which are most likely to make the most significant market impact over the next 5-10 years.

"ZeaChem is building a portfolio of advanced biofuels and bio-based chemicals derived from cellulosic biomass," said Jim Imbler, CEO of ZeaChem. "Our patented process offers the highest yield, the lowest cost, and the lowest fossil carbon footprint of any known biorefining method. As our 250,000 gallon demonstration continued page 8

Wenholz, Theisen to represent Irrigon on county charter revision committee

Former Morrow County Commissioner John Wenholz and Irrigon city council member Arnold "Joe" Theisen were appointed by the Irrigon city council Tuesday night to serve on the Mayors and City Managers' Morrow County charter revision committee. The committee will come up with a revised charter changing the number of county commissioners from the present three to five, and present the charter to voters for approval. "This will represent a major change in the way we do business," Irrigon mayor David Burns said after the council voted unanimously to make the appointments. Burns also

said he had spoken to former county commissioner Warren McCoy who told Burns he supported the charter revision effort. "We currently have two people making all the decisions (on the court)," Burns said. "They are in charge of a \$30 million budget. We feel it would be more representative if we had five people making those decisions," Burns added.

The mayors and city managers from all the cities in the county get together once per month to discuss common interests and problems. Last month the group issued a press release saying there would be two people each from

Irrigon, Boardman and Heppner, and one each from Lone and Lexington appointed to come up with a new charter, however at last week's Heppner city council meeting the council declined to participate in the process and refused to appoint anyone to the committee.

The committee will be looking at changing to what is commonly called a "home rule" form of government, which many times also includes a paid administrator as well as doing away with many elected officials such as assessor, clerk and treasurer in favor of those positions appointed by the commission.

Boardman holds interviews for chief of police

The City of Boardman is conducting interviews this week for their Chief of Police position.

The city's consulting firm, Prothman, received 26 applications for the position, which closed on September 11. Four applicants have been invited to interview with the city's interview panel, made up of citizens of Boardman, and others who work in the field of law enforcement. The candidates are Ernesto Dorame, Louis Gomez, Kevin Lynch and Richard Stokoe.

Ernesto Dorame was with the City of Ontario, CA police department for 25 years, retiring in 2007 at the rank of lieutenant. At the beginning of his law enforcement career, he also served the City of Fullerton, CA, PD and the Santa Clara County, CA, Sheriff's Department. Since retiring from the Ontario PD, he has worked for the

City of Los Angeles as an investigator conducting police and firefighter background investigations; he is currently working as an undercover robbery suppression security agent for Spyglass, LLC in Los Angeles. Mr. Dorame has an Associate of Arts degree in Police Science from Fullerton College, Fullerton, CA.

Louis Gomez has been the Police Chief for the city of Oakridge, OR, since 2001, and he also served the city as police sergeant prior to being promoted to Police Chief. He began his law enforcement career in 1993 in Newport, OR, and since then has also served in the police departments of the Oregon cities of Reedsport and Baker City. Mr. Gomez is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in Public Safety Emergency Management with Grand Canyon University, Phoenix, AZ.

Kevin Lynch has been the Police Chief for the city of Elgin, OR, since 2006. He began his career in law enforcement in the Hood River County Sheriff's Office in 1983 and was with the Hood River PD for over 20 years before going to the City of Elgin. Chief Lynch was also a special operations supervisor from 1999-2000 with the United Nations International Police Task Force in Kosovo.

Richard Stokoe has more 21 years of law enforcement experience and is currently the Police Chief for the City of Nyssa, OR. He came to Nyssa in 2009 from the Caribou County, ID, Sheriff's Office, where he served as Undersheriff for three years and Deputy Sheriff for 12 years. Early in his career, Chief Stokoe was also with the Wendell, ID, Police Department, the Council, ID, Police Department and the Adams County, ID, Sheriff's Office.

OHSU student receives hands-on experience with local doctor

Local physician Betsy Anderson, MD, shared her expertise with a visiting medical student this summer.

Last month, the Oregon Academy of Family Physicians/Foundation granted 19 scholarships to first-year OHSU medical students who lived and worked with various family physicians throughout rural towns in Oregon.

The students had numerous reasons for participating in the rural family medicine experience. Some students wished to improve upon their clinical skills without feeling rushed, others wanted to take the

opportunity to reinforce or refute their desire to go into family medicine, and others took advantage of this experience to gain understanding and empathy for those physicians working in rural settings.

Though their intentions were varied, the unmistakable common thread mentioned from these students after completing their experience was one of positivity and an unabashed respect for their physician mentors.

One student, Elyssa Ackerman, worked

alongside Dr. Anderson, a family physician in Heppner and a graduate of OHSU School of Medicine. Dr. Anderson, who works at the Pioneer Medical Clinic, has been a staple in the Heppner community since her move here in 2007.

"The warm goodbyes at the end of each visit made me feel more like I had been sitting in the patient's living room instead of a sterile, clinic environment," said Ackerman. "I thoroughly enjoyed these personal interactions and got a glimpse into the enormous impact of Dr. Anderson's work in the community."



Betsy Anderson, MD



Elyssa Ackerman

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