

Suspect sought in Irrigon home invasion, robbery

Morrow County Sheriff's Office is still investigating a home invasion and robbery that frightened an Irrigon woman and sent schools into lockdown last Wednesday.

The woman told deputies that a man dressed in a gray hoodie knocked on her door just before 9 a.m. March 30 and, when she answered, he forced his way inside at gunpoint.

The suspect stole a purse and other belongings from a bedroom and ran

away, according to Morrow County Sheriff Kenneth Matlack.

Deputies notified Irrigon schools, which went into lock-out until the area was checked by law enforcement.

Boardman Police Department assisted in the searching for the suspect. MCSO reports that, as of Tuesday, the suspect remained at large, but there does not appear to be a threat to the general public.

Heppner natives join area police departments



Zachary McCarl (left) and Curtis Harper both graduated from the Oregon Public Safety Academy last month. -Contributed photo

Heppner natives Zachary McCarl and Curtis Harper graduated from the 16-week Oregon Public Safety Academy in Salem, OR on March 18.

Both men have taken jobs with area law enforcement in Umatilla County. McCarl is an officer with Umatilla Police Department, while Harper is an officer with Pendleton Police

Department.

Both men graduated from Heppner High School in 2010. Both were also members of the Boy Scout Pack and Troop #661.

After graduation, McCarl joined the U.S. Marine Corps and served a tour in Afghanistan. Harper graduated from Western Oregon University with a degree in criminal justice.

Heppner grad lives life in the fast lane

"Ladies and gentlemen, start your engines!"

Those words are the new norm for Heppner graduate Thomas Gould.

After graduating from Heppner High School in 2015, Gould made his way to South Carolina to live with family friends Terry and Stacey Premo. He was then accepted into NASCAR Technical Institute in Mooresville, NC, a school that offers NASCAR technician training.

Not satisfied with going to school full time, Gould got a job at GoPro Motor-

plex, a motorplex frequented by NASCAR drivers and amateurs alike. During his first term at school, thanks to the Premos, he celebrated four times in the winner's circle through NASCAR sponsor, Freightliner.

Gould also recently accepted an internship with the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series Bolen Motorsports team, with Jordan Anderson driving the No. 66 Chevrolet Silverado. His first real race as a co-mechanic was during

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Myren retires as Morrow County Undersheriff

By Andrea Di Salvo

New Morrow County Undersheriff John Bowles will have some sizeable shoes to fill when he takes over for retiring undersheriff Steven Myren this week. However, while Bowles is working hard to protect county residents, Myren himself doesn't exactly plan on putting his feet up and calling it quits.

Myren, 53, officially retired last Friday, April 1, beginning life as a so-called retired person this week. However, he admits that, after 36 years in public safety—23 of those in law enforcement—he's not quite sure what this retirement thing is all about.

"I'm petrified," Myren says honestly. "I was 18 when I was first drafted into the fire department and I've been in uniform ever since. So I'm a little bit apprehensive."

He was born in Silverton, OR and grew up on a 60-acre farm near Scotts Mills, OR, where he attended elementary school before attending Silverton High School.

Warm weather to continue into April

March's warm weather will continue into April, according to information from the National Weather Service in Pendleton.

According to preliminary data received by NOAA's National Weather Service in Pendleton, temperatures at Heppner averaged slightly warmer than normal during the month of March. The average temperature was 45.6 degrees, which was 1.4 degrees above normal. High temperatures averaged 55.3 degrees, which was 0.4 degrees above normal. The highest was 64 degrees on

the March 2. Low temperatures averaged 35.9 degrees, which was 2.4 degrees above normal. The lowest was 26 degrees, on the 18th.

There were six days with the low temperature below 32 degrees.

Precipitation totaled 1.59 inches during March, which was 0.07 inches above normal. Measurable precipitation of at least .01 inch was received on 15 days with the heaviest, 0.36 inches, reported on the 21st.

Precipitation this year has reached 3.18 inches, 0.93 inches below normal.

Since October, the water year precipitation at Heppner has been 7.02 inches, 1.15 inches below normal.

The highest wind gust was 51 mph, which occurred on the 13th.

The outlook for April from NOAA's Climate Prediction Center calls for above-normal temperatures and near- to below-normal precipitation. Normal highs for Heppner rise from 59 degrees at the start of April to 64 degrees at the end. Normal lows rise from 36 degrees to 40 degrees. The 30-year normal precipitation is 1.51 inches.



L-R: Morrow County Sheriff Ken Matlack, retiring undersheriff Steve Myren with a plaque recognizing his service to Morrow County, and new undersheriff John Bowles. -Contributed photo

He started at age 18 as a volunteer firefighter with Silverton Fire District, where he served until 1989.

Over the years, Myren says he has taken college classes here and there. More important to him, he also earned EMT (Emergency Medical Technician) and firefighter credentials.

"I've always been involved in EMS ever since I

first started as a firefighter, and I've been a volunteer firefighter most of that time," he says, adding that one of his plans for retirement is to get back into volunteer firefighting.

During his time in Silverton, he also became dispatcher for a couple of years, starting with the Mount Angel Police Department in 1987 and work-

ing there until 1989.

In 1989, Myren began the first of two stints with the Morrow County Sheriff's Office. He worked as a patrol deputy, taught the DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) program in schools for several years, was a firearms instructor and spent time on the

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School district's 'Wellness Hub' aims to create success for students

The Morrow County School District (MCSO) says it's on a mission—a mission to improve student attendance, to provide medical and dental care for students, to support families of their students and to increase student safety at all of its buildings. Thanks to the new Wellness Hub, the district believes it is succeeding.

The Wellness Hub is a "braiding" of resources that already exist in Morrow County—from dental and healthcare professionals to CARE coordinators and safety resource officers who coordinate with local law enforcement. The Wellness Hubs are an initia-

tive of the InterMountain Education Service District (IMESD), which is planning to implement more hubs in its school districts in the region.

Although Morrow County has wanted to bring this concept to fruition for the last three years, it took much coordination to secure partnerships and funding. Services now include two safety resource officers, one family support coordinator, two CARE coordinators, three community counseling counselors, one early learning care coordinator, a school nurse and dental services through Advantage Dental, all of which are services students can access

through their schools. The goal is to provide immediate, efficient services so that students don't have to miss school or can get back to school sooner.

Dirk Dirksen, superintendent of the Morrow County School District, said the school district is realizing about \$700,000 worth of employees and services, but because of partnerships with participating agencies, the district pays only \$185,000.

"The school district is getting so much support for our students, resources that reach beyond the eight hours students are in school—that's priceless. Now the care is so immedi-

ate—kids can get vaccines or glasses or dental screenings in a day or two when it took much longer before," Dirksen said.

Mark Mulvihill, IMESD superintendent, said although the concept of providing services such as these is not new, Morrow County School District has implemented the Wellness Hub admirably.

"Few districts have successfully embraced the Wellness Hub as quickly as MCSO—what the district is doing and the degree of their implementation is really transformational for their students," Mulvihill said.

Depredations lead to lethal control for wolves in Wallowa County

Four wolves of the Imnaha pack associated with recent depredations were shot and killed last Thursday by Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) staff on private land in Wallowa County.

Last week ODFW confirmed five livestock depredation incidents on private land within the past three weeks by some wolves in the Imnaha pack, despite continued efforts by ODFW, Wallowa County officials and area livestock

producers to deter wolf-livestock conflict with non-lethal measures. With the pack involved in chronic livestock depredation and as part of implementation of Oregon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan provisions, ODFW lethally re-

moved depredating wolves to reduce the likelihood of further losses.

Information from two collared wolves—OR4, the alpha male and OR39, the alpha female—indicated that they and two younger wolves had regularly used

an area of private land on the westernmost portion of their known home range.

While infrequent visits were historically made to the area by this pack, the near continual use of the

-See WOLVES KILLED/PAGE THREE

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