

Drunk driver passes ambulance on median, runs out of gas

A driver in a hurry to get to Pendleton for a date ended up instead behind bars.

A Hermiston Fire & Emergency Services ambulance was eastbound on Interstate 84 and passing a semitrailer at about 9 p.m. Wednesday near milepost 190 when a white Dodge Charger passed the ambulance using the left shoulder and median. A medic in the ambulance reported the muscle car nearly crashed.

The driver of the Charger also flipped off the ambulance, the medic reported, and then sped away.

But the ambulance crew saw the Charger again — this time on the side of the road near milepost 209. An Oregon State Police trooper arrived and talked to the driver, Timothy James Dartwell, 41, of Vancouver, Washington, who



Dartwell

said the car ran out of gas.

“He admitted to driving, and stated he was trying to get to Pendleton to hopefully find some female companionship for the evening,” state police reported.

Dartwell failed a sobriety test. The trooper arrested him for driving under the influence of intoxicants and reckless driving and booked him into the Umatilla County Jail, Pendleton. State police reported Dartwell’s blood alcohol level was .15 percent, nearly twice the legal limit.

Deputy Mike Fox, transportation coordinator at the jail, confirmed Dartwell also goes by the name Byron James Smith with an age of 42.

City grant programs may spruce up Stanfield

Budget includes \$40,000 for facades, sidewalks

BY SEAN HART
HERMISTON HERALD

Two separate city grant programs may help Stanfield residents improve the city’s aesthetic appeal.

In the 2015-16 budget Stanfield City Council members will consider for adoption Tuesday, \$40,000 is allocated to facade and sidewalk grant programs.

City Manager Blair Larsen said \$20,000 was designated for each program, and they would both offer incentives for property owners to make improvements.

“I think it’s a good use of funds,” he said. “I think it will be an improvement wherever it’s put, but I really hope it goes to those properties that need it the most.”

Larsen said the City Council still needs to work out the specifics for each program, such as what projects and locations would qualify, what percentage the city would cover and how the applications would be received and judged. He said the program would need to be fair and targeted to get the “most bang for the buck” because the funds are limited.

Larsen said he would expect the city to cover about 50 percent of the project cost up to a certain limit.

“It’s not a free ride, but it could be a really good deal,” he said.



HERMISTON HERALD FILE PHOTO

Property owners could apply for grant money from the city of Stanfield to help cover some of the costs for improvements if Stanfield City Council adopts the budget it will consider Tuesday. The budget includes \$20,000 for a sidewalk grant program, as well as \$20,000 for a facade grant program.

Larsen said he hoped the properties most in need of improvement would benefit from the programs. He

said, however, because the projects are based on citizen involvement, the exact outcome would be difficult to predict.

Larsen said he would like to continue budgeting funds into the programs in the future, but it is uncertain whether or not the city will be able to afford it. Cities with Stanfield’s resources and size must be “quite conservative,” he said.

“We have been pretty frugal over the years,” he said. “It’s important to recognize that a significant portion of our revenues are cash on hand that we’ve carried over from previous years. We need to be careful about spending that because it won’t come again next year.”

Free art activities series planned for children

Free art activities for children ages 6 to 17 will take place from 9 a.m. to noon each Saturday through June 26 in the gazebo at McKenzie Park in Hermiston. Art instructor Laurie Ellis will present a variety of fun and

educational projects. All supplies will be provided, and it is a “drop in, make it and take it home” activity. The series is sponsored by the Desert Arts Council, the Miller Foundation and the Oregon Arts Commission.

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