

Like a good neighbor State Farm is there ... but not at my number

I get so tired of the continuous calls from telemarketers and the incredibly annoying, "This is your last chance regarding renewal of your car warranty."



Tammy Malgesini
INSIDE MY SHOES

If only. Seriously, do they really think after they've pestered me for the umpteenth time that I'm finally going to give in? I did get a short reprieve when I lied, saying I no longer owned said vehicle.

With all the robocalls and telephone scams I have a tendency to ignore calls from numbers I don't recognize. I used to readily answer calls from local numbers. However, it seems scammers are spoofing people by disguising their number — often making it look like it's a local phone number.

When John and I got rid of our landline, we still wanted a "home phone." We got an additional cell phone with an unlisted number, which we've given out to very few people. So, imagine my surprise when it began ringing off the hook one morning last week.

After the third call, I finally answered. The gentleman asked if this was State Farm. I said no and hung up. The next call went the same way.

Then the fifth call was from a dude that identified himself as a State Farm agent in Hermiston. He indicated Eastern Oregon Telecom got some wires

crossed and their office calls were being routed to my cell phone. Although their slogan says, "Like a good neighbor, State Farm is there" — it's not at this number.

He asked what my phone number was. Due to all the scammers, I didn't feel comfortable telling him. He said he understood, but again said who he was and described where his office was located, including businesses that are nearby.

Then another call came in — a female this time. She asked if I was State Farm. I told her no and let her know they were having problems with their phone lines. Then, the guy, who was in the background, spoke up. It seems they were still trying to test their phone.

By this time, Eastern Oregon Telecom had identified what number it appeared they were forwarding calls to and the State Farm agent wanted to confirm if that was my number. I hesitated. I've heard all kinds of scammer tricks, including how they will record you saying, "Yes," and then use it to make money transfers or open accounts.

Trying to ascertain if he truly was in Hermiston — I would have driven down to the State Farm office but I was in Lincoln City — I decided to play Hermiston trivia. You know, ask questions that a local would readily know. I said, "Who is the mayor of Hermiston?" Ding, ding, ding, he got it right by saying Dave Drotzmann. Then I asked which former mayor died

recently. He said he wasn't so sure and then replied, "Bob of Bob's Red Apple," referring to Bob Severson. Although the correct answer is "Who is Frank Harkenrider?," a scammer certainly couldn't have known the connection with Mayor Bob.

I called Eastern Oregon Telecom and they finally got things figured out. Oh, and I do have a couple of phone messages for Jesse at State Farm.

Tammy Malgesini is the community editor. Her column, Inside my Shoes, includes general musings about life. Contact her at tmalgesini@eastoregonian.

State police question Morrow County deputy after shooting

By PHIL WRIGHT
STAFF WRITER

Morrow County District Attorney Justin Nelson said the sheriff's deputy who shot a man early Friday is about to undergo two days of police interviews.

Nelson also said revealing the deputy's identity would wait until the investigation is complete.

The shooting occurred after the deputy stopped Friday at about 1:50 a.m. for a disabled vehicle on the west-bound side of Interstate 84 near exit 164 for Boardman, according to Oregon State Police, the lead agency investigating the shooting. The deputy encountered Efrén Hurtado Jr., 26, of Boardman, who had a firearm, according to police.

State police have not specified if the two exchanged gunfire or if the deputy was the only shooter.

Nelson said Oregon State Police detective Michael Wolf out of the Pendleton office is heading up the investigation.

"His next step is to interview the deputy," Nelson said. "The plan for the next two days is for him to be interviewed."

Wolf reviewed the deputy's body camera footage from the shooting, Nelson said, and he likely has to interview officers that responded to the shooting and watch their body cam footage as well. Police also obtained a warrant to search the suspect's vehicle, and the state police crime lab is

processing evidence from that scene.

Nelson said as far as he knows police have not interviewed Hurtado, who remains in a Portland hospital. Nelson said he did not know his condition.

While Hurtado made some statements in the ambulance, Nelson said, those might have been gibberish, and even now he may not be in a condition to talk about what happened.

Nelson added there's no way to estimate when the investigation may be complete and state police have not provided an estimate. He also said he has not decided if he would release the body camera footage with the deputy's name or make it available for public records requests.

Name of man who drowned at Warehouse Beach released

HERMISTON HERALD

The Umatilla County Sheriff's Department has identified the man who drowned at Warehouse Beach earlier this month.

Luis Toro Aguilera, 21, drowned around 6 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 9, while swimming at the beach near the Columbia River.

According to Sgt. Adam Gregory, Aguilera, an Irrigon resident, was showing

some work acquaintances how to swim when he was swept out into the water and began to struggle.

"They lost contact with him, and our deputies were notified," Gregory said. "The police boat located him via sonar."

A diving team from the Tri-Cities came down, and recovered Aguilera's body around 8 p.m. No one else was in the water with Aguilera at the time of his drowning.



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