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Yamhill County's

News-Register

Friday July 18, 2025 **$2** KEEPING YOU CONNECTED SINCE 1866 **McMinnville, Oregon** *160th year, No. 83*

Racing the clock to save lives

First responders train for active shooter situations

Law enforcement officers neutralize an active shooter in a digital simulation in Sheridan. From left, Sgt. Andrew McMahon with the Yamhill County Sheriff's Office, Bureau of Prisons Lt. Bradley Holbrook with FCI–Sheridan, and Evan Burt, K9 handler with the McMinnville Police Department, make first contact with the "shooter" as instructor Pete Kelting with C3 Pathways looks on. Rachel Thompson/News-Register

By EMILY BONSANT
Of the News-Register

Sergeant Will Lavish, with the Yamhill County Sheriff's Office, chased down an active shooter to a parking garage on July 15.

Eleven people were injured by three active shooters at the airport and nearby train station. Lavish and two other officers made contact with the second shooter at the garage and pursued him to the top level. A fire fight ensued, and two words rang out on the radio: "Officer down."

A frustrated Lavish then pushed his chair back from a desk in the main gym of Faulconer-Chapman School in Sheridan. The laptop screen before him went black, as he was kicked from the simulation — his avatar was dead.

This week, July 15-17, FCS was the setting of an Active Shooter Incident Management training for local and regional first responders. The ASIM training was conducted by C3 Pathways instructors, all of whom are retired first responders.

The training centers on integrated communication, focusing on

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Joseph Ferrara, director of training for C3 Pathways, reminds first responders that every active shooter incident has two villains: the shooter and the clock. Rachel Thompson/News-Register

As it reviews 20-year plan, county board ponders park funding ideas

Commissioners Johnston and Starrett emphasize need for revenue-generating activities

By SCOTT UNGER
Of the News-Register

The Yamhill County Board of Commissioners generally supported a 20-year parks system plan presented by consultants Thursday, but members had differing opinions on how to generate income for the county's 18 parks and natural areas.

The Yamhill County Parks System Plan has been in development since last May. The Parks Advisory Board and consultants from Design Workshop approved an 85% draft of the plan in May and presented it to the BOC Thursday.

County parks were historically maintained through a partnership with the Department of Community Justice; however, that responsibility was shifted to the Public Works Department in 2023. The system plan is needed to address deferred maintenance, aging infrastructure and limited staff capacity through the development of a sustainable funding plan.

The county has 272 acres of parks and natural areas, including 16 with waterway access. The plan aims to preserve natural resources and connect communities to nature and water through improved access and transformation of community parks into destinations for residents and tourists.

"What it's intended to do is be that

See **PARKS,** A3

McMinnville Water & Light to raise electric rates

By SCOTT UNGER
Of the News-Register

The McMinnville Water & Light commission supported a 4.5% rate increase for electric service across all rate classes in each of the next three years, but continued its public hearing on the issue until Aug. 19 to allow for more public feedback.

The utility normally conducts cost of service analyses every two years to set rates. However, the most recent analysis considers a three-year window to align with the expiration of MW&L's 20-year contract with Bonneville Power Administration in 2028.

Utility Financial Solutions President Mark Beauchamp said that while the utility is in good shape with no debt and fairly up-to-date infrastructure, the increase is necessary to offset rising power costs and maintain the utility's cash reserves at a healthy amount to transact business.

"These adjustments are needed to keep

See **RATES,** A3

COMMUNITY EVENTS

CONCERTS & FAMILY FUN 27th Annual Rock of Ages Fun Festival, Sat. Aug. 9th. Hot air balloon rides, R/C aircraft, car show, kid's games, bouncy house, and music! Food is available for purchase. Your donation of canned food for the local food bank is appreciated. For more info, visit www.rockofagesvalleyview.com.

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS No diets, no weigh-ins, no fees. Meets Sundays, 2:00pm, McMinnville Cooperative Ministries (544 NE 2nd St.) For more info, or details about Tuesday Virtual meetings, call: 971-267-0058.

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VINTAGE PHOTOS **B6**

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Left: **YCSO Sgt. Will Lavish (center) sits among fellow first responders during ASIM training at Faulconer-Chapman School.** Below: **Yamhill County Emergency Manager Brian Young (front) steps into the role of public information officer during a training scenario, leading a simulated press conference. YCSO PIO Lt. Don Stackpole assists as part of the incident command team. The ASIM training placed participants in roles outside their usual duties, offering a broader view of a potential response and preparing them for future assignments they may be called to fill.** Rachel Thompson/News-Register

Training

Continued from A1

efficient communication and beating the second villain in an active shooting, the clock.

Lavish sat with two other officers who had been side-by-side with him during the simulation. They arrived third on scene and were designated Contact 3.

Contact 3 put down the shooter. Meanwhile, another contact team, sitting at the next table over, neutralized the third shooter.

That's when the real work began.

ASIM training is not focused on eliminating or subduing the shooter, which is usually the focus of law enforcement training. They work to manage the incident and have agencies collaborate in a high-stress environment, while focusing on reducing the time it takes to transport survivors to safety and the hospital.

"We don't want victims, we want survivors," Joe Ferrara, C3 Pathways director of training, told participants in orientation on day one.

Rather than a staged scenario with actors, C3 Pathways provides a digital simulator, resembling first-person shooter video games like Call of Duty, that allow repetition and provide multiple scenarios. A staged mock incident, in comparison, requires first responders to reserve a building, hire actors, have fire trucks and ambulances on site. Putting on multiple scenarios comes with a high price tag.

"So much can go wrong in a (physical simulation)," Instructor Peter Kelting said, noting participants can be injured or actors can be unreliable.

The goal is for first responders to get into autopilot through the repetition and adhere to the procedure of "threat, rescue and clear."

During the three-day training, first responders completed 11 simulations, a mix of single locations, multiple locations, multiple shooters, hostages and explosives.

The simulations require participants to rotate through multiple roles. Law enforcement work in contact teams, rescue task force, securing the perimeter and command roles.

The training brought together services such as law enforcement, fire, EMS, dispatch, emergency management and PIOs.

"We don't get this opportunity often," YCSO Lt. Don Stackpole said regarding the multi-agency presence. "I don't know if we've ever trained with dispatch."

"In this training you can't hide," instructor Walter Andino said. "You move from different commands, to different stations (…) seeing the full response."

Andino said the participants are expected to initially fail some concepts, but learn from their mistakes.

"The reality is the first person on scene begins as the incident command manager," Andino told the News-Register. "For someone who just came off PTO or probation, that can be daunting, but that's what happens in these real-life scenarios."

To begin a scenario, each participant is assigned a role. One of the instructors at C3 Pathways then uses a laptop to play the active shooter. He was the only one other than dispatch that started on the simulator.

Just like in real life, dispatch reported the call of an active shooter and three or four law enforcement officers would respond.

YCSO Sgt. Andrew McMahon sat at the simulator across the table with two other officers. They would make first contact: Contact One. Each participant had a radio next to them to communicate with dispatch and anyone else arriving on scene. The simulator started with each officer in their patrol cars. Before they could engage in the shooter, they had to speed to the scene.

Thirty seconds, 60, 1:30, officers were arriving at the airport, but didn't know where the shooter was. They could hear

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YAMHILL COUNTY
YOUTH LIVESTOCK AUCTION
SATURDAY AUGUST 2

The Junior Livestock Auction is a time-honored tradition at the Yamhill County Fair that celebrates and supports urban and rural youth across the County.

BUYER CHECK-IN AND LUNCH
11:00 a.m., Scale House

LIVE AUCTION
12:00 p.m.

Congratulations to our *2025 YCLA Scholarship Winners*
Lillie Brooks from Dayton High School
Madison Gregor from Yamhill Carlton High School
Cooper Yocum from Amity High School
Alexis Wertz attending University of Nevada

To obtain a buyer packet or ask a question, contact
yamhillcountylivestockauction@gmail.com

Like us on Facebook
Yamhill County Youth Livestock Auction

Above: **YCOM dispatchers Garrett Hardwick and Daisha Crickmer gather intel during the active shooter simulation at the incident command station. First responders and dispatch were thrust into a variety of roles at the three-day active shooter training.** Below: **Melissa Linck, a Yamhill Communication Agency dispatcher, was just one of many dispatchers relaying information to all aspects of the active shooter response, keeping EMS, triage group and contact teams informed.** Rachel Thompson/News-Register

Training

Continued from A8

shots, but were they echoes or was the shooter just around the corner?

Meanwhile, a sixth civilian was shot at the airport. With a click of his mouse, the instructor playing the active shooter switched to acting as a second shooter now at the train station.

After engaging and shooting the first assailant, Contact One called in another team. One deputy secured the area as others began triaging.

Then they were fired upon again.

As more first responders were requested, additional participants launched into the simulation. The rescue task force was formed with fire, EMS and law enforcement personnel prioritizing "threat, rescue and clear."

They checked the status of the injured and began moving them to a safe location. The shooters remained active.

As the incident response grew, so did incident management. When all the laptops were filled with ground response, others stood at white boards at different parts of the room.

The Triage Group established casualty collection points; another group set up a staging area. Ambulances were called and perimeters were formed with officers limiting access to the surrounding areas.

The command center formed, with PIOs, emergency managers and chiefs in the hallway to simulate a mission control several blocks down the road. From there, they communicated with the intelligence section about the incident and began reunification services for the families of the injured.

They also prepared for a press conference.

The Sheriff PIO Lt. Don Stackpole and County Emergency Manager Brian Young were in reverse roles for the simulation.

Stackpole briefed Young on the details of the incident.

"We believe there are five shooters, but say at this time there are multiple shooters, as we are still gathering data," Stackpole said. "Let everyone know we will be having another press conference at 4:30 p.m. as more information comes in. At that time, we should have progressed further in reunification services."

Young quickly wrote a script, as the scenario ticked toward the 25-minute mark.

The pair then walked back to the gym

and stood before a backdrop and podium for a press conference. They kept their briefing short, with limited details, and deflected questions about terrorism or political action, then returned to the command center.

This was the seventh simulation, which received a B. C3 Pathways grades each scenario and provides data points during the debrief, such as response times and ways to improve.

There were 11 casualties and one officer fatality in this incident. It took 34 minutes for the final victim to be transported from the scene.

"We're planting seeds and forcing repetition," Andino said. "When we debrief, everyone can speak. We are all equal and no one is standing on higher ground. The goal is to get better and have everyone come home."

During a debrief, the transport group was tasked with getting casualties to the hospital, said they needed clearer communication from the rescue task force on the status of victims. They understood the task force was busy supplying aid and moving victims to the ambulance exchange point, but this is an opportunity to reduce time.

Members of the rescue task force said it was difficult to watch victims' health decline, signifying bleeding out, as they waited for ambulances to arrive.

When the victim avatars died, a cross would appear above them.

Stackpole said the training and placement in a command role was difficult for many law enforcement and first responders.

"Most of us are problem solvers, hands-on, get down to it," he said. "But unless we were on contact teams, we were not on the scene."

Rather than being the first officer on the scene, Stackpole and others were in the command center. He reflected on how he's no longer the first in the door; rather, he's got the 10,000-foot-view of allocating resources to assist his officers and help them accomplish their mission.

Unlike the scenarios that seem to have near unlimited response resources, Yamhill County doesn't have 50 officers or 20 ambulances to respond to an incident.

Stackpole said local responders are problem solvers, so they will be able to take the lessons learned at the training and implement them to their day to day responses.

C3 Pathways Director of Training Joe Ferrara said by day two, "the light bulb goes off" for participants. The process of integrated teams and communications become second nature. They realize the response model is more efficient and saves time, and lives — even if they are just virtual ones.

"Cops are well-trained in law enforcement, and EMS with medical skills, but they don't train together," he said. "We create these silos."

Stackpole said Yamhill County's small-town nature has more synergy than larger areas.

"Our firefighters know me, because we've been on scene together. I know Chief Law, of Dayton Fire, and what he can do," he said. "Our dispatch knows me by my voice and can even pick up by my tone that I'm struggling."

It is not common to train with dispatch, but in each scenario dispatchers run communications, as they do on the job.

"The older I get, the more I have to think about how am I gonna help all my cops," Stackpole said. "It's not the easiest transition. There becomes this stretching when you get comfortable at what you're good at."

Yamhill Emergency Manager Brian Young described the training as a safe place to make mistakes.

There were several officer casualties throughout the training; but, in reality, "No one died today," he said. "The training affords mistakes."

Young thanked the Sheridan School District's hands-on partnership with the training and for allowing the use of FCS.

YCSO officials were also grateful for the time, effort and sacrifices participants and districts made to attend the ASIM training. Some attended training after working a night shift.

"Some departments have first responders working overtime this week to send someone to this training," Stackpole said. "I hope us being here has illustrated our dedication to public services in the county."

Ferrara said integrated training needs support from elected officials, and was impressed that County Commissioners Kit Johnston and Mary Starrett stopped by. Starrett was in attendance for many hours over the three days.

"That's what we need," he said.

The ASIM training was funded by a $60,000 Department of Homeland Security grant obtained by the county's Emergency Management department.

Local law enforcement agencies included YCSO, Yamhill County Emergency Management, Yamhill County Sheriff's Office Volunteer Response Unit, Carlton, McMinnville, Newberg and Yamhill police departments.

Fire agencies included Grand Ronde, Dayton, McMinnville, Sheridan, Yamhill and Tualatin Valley districts.

Dispatch was provided by Yamhill Communications.

The Federal Corrections Institution in Sheridan and private sector Helicopter Pilot Jerry Trimble also participated.