

Roger Swigart's family voices plea for justice

Eyewitnesses decline follow up interviews to clear ambiguities

■ PATRICK SHELBY
Managing Editor

SUNNYSIDE — There appears to be unreliable and reluctant accounts untold for family members and friends seeking answers from a Sunday afternoon, June 16,



Swigart family photo provided

OUTDOORS MAN — John "Roger" Swigart.

verbal confrontation between two opposing neighbors, John "Roger" Swigart and Mark Lessly Allen, which rapidly escalated into a physical clash on Jensen Quarry Road in Klickitat County. The encounter left Swigart with a fatal bullet into the right side of his head.

During an interview with Roger's older brother, Terry Swigart and his wife, Terri, along with his sister, Brenda Farthing, family members voiced their plea of justice for their slain brother and to cooperatively speak on his behalf about challenging the self-defense claim issued by Allen after leaving the scene.

They disclosed their biggest frustration with the

Klickitat County Sheriff's Office KCSO investigation has been the unwillingness of Roger's former girlfriend Janece Smith and her friend Joleene Hart, eyewitnesses at the scene, to take part in timely, follow up interviews with Detective Sergeant Erik Anderson.

"It was back on July 1, that he (Anderson) requested that they (Smith and Hart) do a follow up interview and as far as I know, that has never happened," the elder brother acknowledged.

"We've asked her to do it. She even wrote one up, she said," Terri recalled. "She told us that she wrote up her statement. Her lawyer had her do that. And, we asked her if she would please just submit it to them (KCSO) but she won't cooperate, I guess."

In the subsequent days after Swigart's deadly confrontation, mountain property owners and friends provided KCSO with detailed commentary about the combative and alarming situation which identified Allen's behavior to be habitually threatening and dangerous on Jensen Quarry Road.

"Aside from the initial statements at the scene, both witnesses have declined to provide any further information," Anderson said in a phone interview on Thursday, Oct. 3. "Limited witness statements and physical evidence don't contradict Marc Allen's account of events."

The 25-year veteran indicated witnesses typically are in shock at the time of the incident and follow up questioning is generally conducted to gather additional details or new information which may

see **ROGER SWIGART**, page A3



Patrick Shelby/Sunnyside Sun

FALL'S FIRST FROST

Near the intersection of North Outlook Road and Van Belle Road, Thursday, Oct. 10, icicles formed when water dripping from barbed wire fencing and irrigation wheel lines froze as overnight temperatures hit a record low of 22 degrees Fahrenheit, according to National Weather Service meteorologist Jim Smith at the Pendleton, Ore., weather station.

General Election ballots go out this week

■ DEB BRUMLEY
Reporter

YAKIMA COUNTY — Yakima County voters new to the county and wanting to register to vote, can both register and vote in the upcoming Nov. 5, General Election, on election day. State law allows Washington voters to come in person to the Yakima County Election's Department to register and vote the same day, with identification and proof of address.

According to Nancy Tongate, Yakima County

Election's Office Voting System Representative, the ballots "... are due out Oct. 18. . .," to the post office. All ballots must be returned to the Election's Office before 8 p.m. on Election Day, Tuesday, Nov. 5.

On September 25, the Sunnyside Sun sent an email invitation to all General Election candidates in our service areas, inviting the finalists to submit a response to two questions — "Why should voters vote for you and what are the top issues for your community?"

The following are the responses the Sun received by deadline, Friday, Oct. 11.

City of Granger, Mayor Jose Trevino

Voters should cast their ballots for me because, I have worked very hard, very smart, and with great fiscal responsibility.

Since becoming Mayor, we have operated our budget with no deficits; that means no loans or increases in local rates and taxes.

We are investing in our local infrastructure so we can



Jose Trevino

the Parks and Rec Department with organized youth activities.

Safety and security of our community is my top priority; that is why this year, we partnered with the school district to bring back the SRO

see **ELECTION**, page A5

Upcoming 2020 budget looks nearly unchanged

Small pluses and minuses equal little change for 2020

■ DEB BRUMLEY
Reporter

GRANDVIEW — Matthew Cordray, City of Grandview's Treasurer,

had the floor for the full 60 minutes of the first city council preliminary budget hearing. The council considered the close out of the 2019 budget and the number projections for the 2020 budget on Monday, Oct. 7.

With a full council present to consider the numbers the council reviewed data on

the 2019 city annual budget of \$18,056,860 and learned the budget will grow slightly in 2020 to \$20,580,575, according to Cordray, "... the increase can be attributed to a sewer main construction project." The council had few questions for Cordray, due to the organization and conciseness of the presentation

given by Cordray in his first in a series of five finance meetings.

Actual and projected 2019-2020 Revenue and Expenditure highlights covered during the meeting included lower than anticipated revenues from the

see **BUDGET**, page A2

Newhouse announces plans to submit water supply bill

Infrastructure funds would aid Roza Irrigation District

■ JULIA HART
Reporter

PROSSER — Against the backdrop of a sunny, crisp Yakima Valley fall day with the soft gurgle of water flowing down a nearby Roza Irrigation District lateral, Thursday, Oct. 10,

Congressman Dan Newhouse (R-Sunnyside) laid out his plan to submit a new bill to address Washington State aging water supply infrastructure which he hopes will receive bipartisan support back in Washington D.C.

Standing in a North McDonald Road vineyard, owned by longtime Roza farmer Jim Willard, Newhouse introduced his plan for a "Water Supply Infrastructure Rehabilitation

and Utilization Act," which would help local water operators and managers maintain and repair critical Bureau of Reclamation water supply infrastructure.

"I have made it a priority to address these important issues for Central Washington and rural communities across the West that have Bureau of Reclamation projects in their regions," Newhouse

see **WATER SUPPLY BILL**, page A2



Congressman Dan Newhouse, right, chats with Roza Irrigation District Board member Jim Willard prior to the start of a press conference Thursday, Oct. 10, at which Newhouse announced his plan to introduce new legislation - Water Supply Infrastructure Rehabilitation and Utilization Act when congress returns to Washington, D.C.

Julia Hart/Sunnyside Sun

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Patrick Shelby/Sunnyside Sun

BIRTHDAY BASH FUN

Dorothea Hanan of Silverdale, celebrates her 85th birthday by competing as a member the Grape Candy Skulls team at the 10th annual Grape Stomp "Catch the Crush" at the Harvest Party sponsored by Coyote Canyon and Martinez & Martinez wineries on Saturday, Oct. 12. Last year, Hanan participated for the first time in the stomp and attributed her youthfulness as part of an enthusiasm for wine.

SVID to shut down city canal, Oct. 18

SUNNYSIDE – The Sunnyside Valley Irrigation District (SVID) will be shutting down the Sunnyside Canal starting on Friday, Oct. 18 – Friday, Dec. 20. Some laterals and deliveries

may have water for a few days beyond the turn off date as the canal is draining and dewatering. Sites 35.22, 36.52, 36.74 and 51.87 will be turned off on Wednesday, Oct. 16. The

early shut down is to allow work to commence on this year's piping projects. For additional information or questions about the project and affected areas, contact SVID at 509-837-6980.

ROGER SWIGART

continued from page A1

reflect a change from what was observed after the traumatic event occurred.

When asked if it was common for eyewitnesses with a personal attachment to one another not to participate any further in the investigation, "... it's not uncommon for witnesses not to take part, who don't want to get involved," Anderson noted.

"The KCSO case is completed," the lead detective stated. All investigatory records have been turned over to the District Attorney's Office. "... the door is open for new information, but I don't anticipate any," Anderson pointed out.

Klickitat County Chief Deputy Prosecutor David Wall confirmed both Smith and Hart had been asked to take part in separate follow up interviews by Sgt. Anderson and those requests were declined during a phone interview on Tuesday, Oct. 8.

He was questioned about the lack of eyewitness participation in the case. "... generally, it's a bit unusual," Wall remarked. He also mentioned the importance of receiving full cooperation immediately, and the passing of time makes the case more difficult to prosecute.

"In Washington State, we have a 'no duty to retreat,'" Wall said. As stipulated in the Revised Code of Washington RCW Title 9A, Chapter 16.020, allows a person to use reasonable force to defend themselves when they are being attacked or have a reasonable belief they are about to be attacked. A person may not use more force than is necessary given the situation.

The law does not impose a duty to retreat. This means it is lawful for a person who is in a place where that person has a right to be and who has reasonable grounds for believing that they're being attacked, to

stand their ground and defend against such attack using lawful force.

"Mark Allen has provided a detailed and consistent story throughout the investigation," Wall responded. The Prosecutor's Office is waiting to incorporate results from Swigart's primary autopsy report into a memorandum before making a final decision on the case.

The Swigart family said they have spoken to Smith on the phone about the poor audio quality of a recorded interview she had given to KCSO officials at the scene. They notified her the information was undistinguishable and couldn't be heard as a result of the gusting wind.

"I told her that. I said with you refusing to give your side of it, the audio interview isn't very good, and I can't make out a lot of it. So, it doesn't give the prosecutor much to go on," Terry Swigart conveyed.

In those conversations, Smith had provided the family with a detailed account of what

she witnessed, offering them hope that Roger's voice would be heard. They recognized she had been in shock at the time of questioning.

"She gave us so much more information over the phone which is what she supposedly wrote down in her statement. And, we feel like her not giving that statement to authorities is helping Mark Allen and his self-defense case," Terri expressed.

Family members thought Smith's later story could help the Prosecutor's Office and present an accurate version of what really happened on that tragic Father's Day. They implored Smith to come forward. "... we believe Klickitat County officials are taking Allen's word and there's no voice for Roger," Farthing affirmed.

Editor's note: Janece Smith was contacted for this story and did not respond with comment by press time.

Patrick Shelby can be contacted at 509-837-4500, ext. 110 or email PShelby@sunnysidesun.com

HOLLYWOOD & THE HOME FRONT TINSELTOWN'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO WWII

A Yakima Valley Reads event, presented by Yakima Valley Libraries

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Maynard 'Friday' Koen mystery solved after 26 years

Prosser remembers 81-year-old treasure

■ JULIA HART
Reporter

PROSSER — Bud Hamilton and his sister Joyce Melton grew up embracing Maynard 'Friday' Koen as an adopted family member, working by their father's side as a loyal farmhand.



Photo provided by Joyce Melton

Maynard 'Friday' Koen, seen here at a family birthday, who disappeared 26 years ago, is fondly remembered by the Hamilton family, who considered him friend and family. His skeletal remains were recovered Oct. 21, near Hat Rock State Park on the Columbia River in Oregon.

The 81-year-old Friday disappeared Sunday, Aug. 15, 1993, after leaving Prosser around 7 p.m. Melton intensely recalled how weather conditions had turned nasty with thunder and lightning on that fateful evening.

They both knew a phone call disclosing the whereabouts of the man affectionately revered as their "Grandpa" would come someday.

On Monday, Oct. 21, authorities contacted Hamilton and informed him that the skeletal remains of a man identified by his driver's

license as Koen, had been recovered.

A scuba diving couple near Hat Rock State Park on the Columbia River in Oregon, located a submerged red Ford Ranger truck and reported their discovery to the Umatilla Police Department.

"It was still a shocker when the call came," Hamilton conveyed. "It's a bittersweet thing, but we're glad we

know for sure what happened to him."

The Prosser community all felt they knew Friday and embraced him as their own. Everyone joined in on the early search for him, Melton, a Burbank High School teacher warmly reminisced.

She spoke from outside her classroom remembering how he attended her wedding and was always taking part in their family

functions.

As word spread throughout Prosser that Friday would be soon coming home, a sense of closure was found.

"We always thought of him as ours, only to find out many community members also claimed him," Hamilton stated. "It's nice to know we weren't the only ones who missed him."

Maynard Koen already had a headstone in the Prosser Cemetery. "We placed it there many years ago," Melton acknowledged. It reads — "He was a great man. Whom the whole community loved."

SHS teacher Wayne Cone collapses on campus

Popular AP Chemistry teacher cared deeply for students' well-being

■ JULIA HART
Reporter

SUNNYSIDE — Sunnyside High School students were saddened to hear that popular AP Chemistry teacher Wayne Cone, 55, of Prosser, died as a result of a medical emergency Monday, Oct. 28.

According to SHS Principal Ryan Maxwell, Cone collapsed at school just before morning classes

were to begin and later died at the Astria Sunnyside Hospital.

The School District issued a statement Tuesday, Oct. 29, saying counselors would be available to talk with students, staff, and families, as needed.

"We are saddened to inform you of the passing of Sunnyside High School teacher Wayne Cone," the official announcement read.

see **SHS TEACHER**, page A2



Patrick Shelby/Sunnyside Sun

A COLORFUL PRIZE

Dressed up as Glenda the Good Witch from the "Wizard of Oz," Daenerys selects a skeleton bucket of tart tasting Granny Smith apples as her cake walk prize during the 91st annual Outlook Elementary School Carnival on Saturday, Oct. 26.

Smith tells her side of the Swigart story

Eyewitness provides account of incident

■ PATRICK SHELBY
Managing Editor

KLICKITAT COUNTY — In an emotional interview, Janeece Smith, an eyewitness to the June 16, homicide of Roger Swigart, who was also his girlfriend for three-and-a-half years, revealed her explicit reason for not taking part in any follow up investigation with the Klickitat County Sheriff's Office on Thursday, Oct. 17.

"I can't trust them," Smith frighteningly expressed as she painfully began to provide a first-hand narrative about the horrific Jensen Quarry Road confrontation between Swigart and Mark Allen with dramatic detail. "I didn't want to leave the scene. I wanted to walk through it, and they wouldn't let me," as her voice quivered with anguish.

According to Smith, she ran toward the gun fire and was less than 15 feet away when she felt something hit her chest and stopped. She saw the gun on the dash of

Allen's truck while Swigart was on Allen's back behind him.

"He (Allen) looked over his head and then wretched his arm over and shot him in the head after looking at me. And, then got up off the ground and looked at me and goes, 'I killed your (expletive) boyfriend. You should call 9-1-1. I killed your boyfriend. I killed your boyfriend,'" Smith graphically stated.

Smith pointed out there was no blood on Allen, no

see **SWIGART**, page A2



Janeece Smith courtesy photo

PAST MOUNTAIN CELEBRATION — Janeece Smith next to Roger Swigart with Mark Allen in the background during a New Year's Eve party at her cabin. According to Smith, the picture was Roger's last post on Facebook.

PMH mammography facility is new standard

Self-referral is available for exams

■ DEB BRUMLEY
Reporter

PROSSER — Women of the valley wanting to schedule their annual mammography screening, need drive no further than Prosser for the best care.

That excellence became available for the first time on Saturday, Oct. 5, when Prosser Memorial Health held its annual Fall Health Fair by offering mammograms using its

new high definition, 3D equipment.

The state-of-the-art equipment is the perfect accompaniment to the highly skilled staff in the mammography department.

Verlaine Schneider, Mammography Technologist, R.T. (R)(M), who has been serving patients for more than 40 years in the X-ray and Mammography fields, is passionate about the ability to enhance their department's care and outcomes, using the newly installed Hologic Genius 3D mammography equipment.



WELCOME HOLOGIC GENIUS 3D — Verlaine Schneider, Mammography Technologist, R.T. (R) (M), is shown sterilizing the new, state-of-the-art mammography equipment, the only one of its kind, available for women's mammography between Ellensburg and Walla Walla.

Deb Brumley/Sunnyside Sun

The technology is the first of its kind available between Ellensburg to Walla Walla. The Hologic equipment

has a "Smart Curve Paddle," which offers an unheard

see **MAMMOGRAPHY**, page A2

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UV INDEX: 2	UV INDEX: 2	UV INDEX: 2	UV INDEX: 2	UV INDEX: 2	UV INDEX: 2	UV INDEX: 1

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Leadership applications due Nov. 1

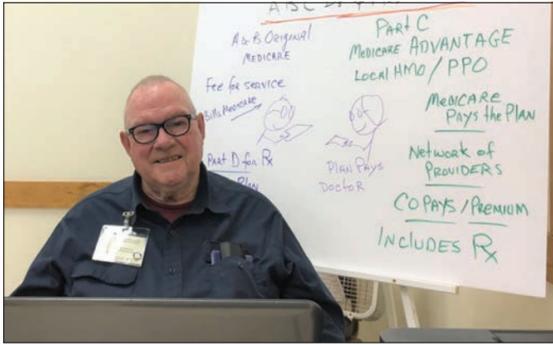
PROSSER — Applications are available now for the 2020 Prosser Leadership class. The class is open to anyone living or working in Prosser. The eight-month class meets once a month for in-depth learning about Prosser along with leadership development. Applications are available online at www.prosser.org or by calling 509-786-3600 for more information. Applications are due Nov. 1.

It's fall back your clock time

SUNNYSIDE — Individuals who need that extra hour of sleep in the morning might need that extra cup of coffee on Sunday, Nov. 3, when clocks get turned back. Although the Washington State elected officials approved leaving the hands on the clock alone, in Spring of 2019, the desire of the lawmakers needs acted on by Federal Congress before the change can happen. For now, make a note, tie a string or add a note to your timer, clocks go back at midnight this upcoming Sunday.

Reminder to return your ballot

YAKIMA COUNTY — Voters thinking about getting their ballots filled out and returned, this is your reminder: ballots are due before 8 p.m., next Tuesday, Nov. 5. Ballots can be dropped off at designated ballot boxes throughout every community in the upper and lower valley, and at the county courthouse Auditor's office or drop box in Yakima for Yakima County voters and in Prosser or Tri-Cities, for Benton County voters. General Election voters in Yakima and Benton counties will be deciding council, port and school board races along with determining new facilities and offering advisory votes on issues already approved by the Washington State Legislature. Yakima County has 119,121 voters currently registered; as of Friday, Oct. 25, 6.6 percent or 7,910 voters had returned their ballots. In Benton County, of the 114,608 voters registered and eligible to vote, 5.3 percent or 6,127 had returned their ballot on Oct. 25. Voters can find their local ballot drop off box by checking online at their county Auditor's Office, Election Department site or by calling the same.



Deb Brumley/Sunnyside Sun

MEDICARE SPECIALIST — SHIBA volunteer / Medicare Specialist Dick Anderson of Wenatchee kicked off the Medicare 2019 open season on Wednesday, Oct. 15, at the Prosser Community Center, with a by-appointment outreach to help local citizens with Medicare questions. It's a role, which Anderson said, "I'm enjoying this type of retirement."

SHIBA serves citizens using Medicare, any WA State insurance

Medicare open season began Oct. 15, runs through Dec. 4.

DEB BRUMLEY Reporter

WASHINGTON STATE — Statewide Healthcare Insurance Benefits Advisor (SHIBA) is a savvy volunteer corps which exists to aid Washington State residents who want more information about their Medicare benefits. Dick Anderson of Wenatchee, is part of this elite volunteer corps which operates without a budget for its staff, just travel reimbursements - and they are the best at what they do. Anderson a retired insurance professional, learned of the program a handful of years ago and shares the latest program updates during both scheduled SHIBA outreaches

and when he and his wife 'Snowbird' in California each winter. SHIBA is a program umbrellaed beneath the Office of the Washington State Insurance Commissioner, and is available to all residents, by phone, email or online. SHIBA reps are continuously trained in all Medicare updates, according to Anderson, and can help individuals start their plans when they are first eligible, help adjust their plans during the once a year open season or troubleshoot insurance issues of any type which are regulated within the state. To learn more, contact SHIBA at 800-562-4900 or <https://www.insurance.wa.gov/contact-shiba>.

COUNCILOR JULIA HART POSITION #5

I'm proud to say that I have lived in Sunnyside for a majority of my life. I raised my family here, I've invested many hours of community service, and I am proud to have served you on the Sunnyside City Council as your Mayor.

As a journalist, I have spoken to you and heard your stories. As your Mayor, I have worked for you to help make life here in Sunnyside more prosperous and enjoyable. We have accomplished some great things to make Sunnyside better but there is more work that needs to be done. We need to:

- Focus on economic development in downtown Sunnyside
- Focus on public safety with innovative approaches
- Work to expand the Sunnyside Community Center
- Continue to work to bring Sunnyside into the future
- Create partnerships that will work to uplift Sunnyside

We don't need to look to our past to find our future. Past approaches have not and WILL not work. Let us instead work together to achieve a future Sunnyside that we can be proud of. Together we can reach the goals that we set.

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MAMMOGRAPHY

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of, but highly desirable adjustable fit, for women. So, Schneider and her co-worker, Mandy Hibbs, R.T., (R)(M) (CT) (BD), can produce the pictures faster, with greater quality and far more comfort than in the recent past. Schneider says while the equipment is the ultimate for anyone in her profession, it takes a highly skilled professional team to achieve a renowned level of excellence the machine is capable of.

She wants all women to know they do not need a physician's order for a regular exam. "Contact us, we can get you set up," Schneider added. But for women who may have noticed an issue or lump, they should contact their doctor first to get an order so the look during the exam is appropriate to the concern, she acknowledged. For an appointment or more information call 509-786-5596 or visit prosserhealth.org.

SHS TEACHER: Cone

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"Mr. Cone was someone who cared deeply about the success and well-being of every one of his students." District Communication Director Jessica Morgan said the district has arranged to have counselors available during the school day to assist students and faculty with the questions and grief which accompany such a difficult situation. "Experiencing, witnessing, or even hearing of a traumatic incident such as this may affect a child or adult in a variety of ways; therefore, it is very important that students and teachers be given

ample opportunity to ask questions and to talk about their reactions," Morgan suggested. "For some students a death of someone they know may remind them of some other loss in their lives. For others, this may be their first encounter with death." "We suggest you make an extra effort to listen to your child during this time. It is important you deal honestly and directly with any questions that he or she may have," she concluded. Prosser Funeral Home is in care of arrangements.

SWIGART

continued from page A1

tears in his shirt. In fact, she observed he didn't even look like he was roughed up at all. His shirt was still tucked in. ". . .He looked fricking fine." The 12-year area realtor confirmed that KCSO Sergeant Detective Erik Anderson reached out to her on July 1, but has not heard from any law enforcement official since. "There's no way in hell that I'll get anywhere near that sheriff's office. I will not! They have done nothing, nothing to protect us. They have done nothing but jeopardize my safety and the people in that community," Smith angrily communicated. The eyewitness declared she is eager to work with any other law enforcement agency. "And, I was told multiple times that the state should be contacting me because they should go through the case as well. And, that was another thing I was waiting on." Patrick Shelby can be contacted at 509-837-4500.

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Get to know... Vincent Van Bone

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Children: Bonehead and Slim
Occupation and place of work: Professional trom-bone player. I'll be here all week.

Best thing about living in the Yakima Valley is: The Trunk or Treat events everywhere!

The person I'd like to meet, sit with and talk to for an hour is: Jack Skellington.

When I was a child, I wanted to grow up to be: The Grim Reaper.

I'd love to learn how to: How to bake delicious cakes. Bon appetit!

First job I ever had was: Dog walker. Stopped because I almost lost a leg.

The furthest I have been away from home is when I went to: The Underworld. It was cold.

The most famous person I've met is: Skelly Clarkson. She was nice.

My favorite leisure activity or hobby is: Watching horror movies. They're so funny!

The best gift I ever received was: My 52" flat screen skelevision set.

If I didn't have to worry about money, I'd spend my time: Going on archeological digs at my childhood home.

The best piece of advice I ever received was: Don't ever lose your funny bone.

The one word that best describes me is: Cuddly.

My favorite food is: Boneless chicken wings.

One of my most memorable moments, besides getting married or having children was: Playing "Benny" in Halloweentown.

If I could change one thing about myself it would be: Eyes and skin would be nice.

If I could witness any event past, present, or future, I would want to see: The very first Halloween.

HAPPY HALLOWEEN

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