

Storm snarls Oregon traffic; 2 dead

By PAUL MANLEY of The Oregonian staff

Blizzard conditions Thursday closed schools and highways in Eastern Oregon and Eastern Washington while lesser amounts of snow piled up at higher elevations in the Willamette Valley. Rain, meanwhile, deluged the Oregon coast.

Portland was pelted with snow for the fourth time in a week, and accumulations of 5 inches were unofficially reported in the Mountain Park and Sylvan areas by nightfall Thursday.

Two weather-related traffic deaths were reported in the Pendleton area, and motorists were warned against traveling Friday in the La Grande area.

The National Weather Service predicted the snowfall would taper off gradually to showers of rain mixed with snow Friday, with the exception of mountainous areas, where heavy snow showers were forecast.

Overnight accumulations of 2 to 4 inches of snow were expected to greet motorists Friday morning at lower levels of metropolitan Portland and the Willamette Valley, with 1 to 3 inches in the southwest Washington hills.

Tri-Met public information spokesman Phill Colombo said the agency's buses were to be chained overnight and ready to roll in any weather conditions Friday morning. If the chains were not needed, "we'll drop the chains as the buses leave the yard" at garages, Colombo said.

Hardest hit by the snowstorm in Oregon was Union County, where the sheriff's office reported that "a couple" of people stranded by the storm were temporarily housed in a shelter set up at La Grande's First Nazarene Church. All motels in La Grande were reported filled for the night, but it seemed unlikely the La Grande armory would be needed as a shelter.

Interstate 84 was closed for several hours Thursday between La



SNOW MUCH FUN — While many Oregon commuters may have been complaining about snow-related traffic problems Thursday afternoon,

these children enjoy the white stuff during an impromptu snow fight outside Lakeridge High School in Lake Oswego.

Grande and Baker after winds up to 35 mph blew snow over the road and reduced visibility to near zero. The freeway was reopened in midafternoon, but Rich Huggins, Union County emergency management director, warned of further hazards. "People should probably not travel for the next 48 hours," Huggins said late Thursday. "Travel is very risky; the road may blow shut behind or in front of you, and you may not be

found for several hours or a day. If people insist on traveling, they ought to be prepared to survive in their cars."

Leslie A. Mansker, 32, Pendleton, died Wednesday night when his pickup slammed into the rear of a tractor-trailer rig about 13 miles southeast of Pendleton in blizzard conditions on I-84. Richard S. Higgins, 18, also of Pendleton, died Thursday morning when his car veered off slushy U.S.

395 into a ditch and back onto the road, where it was struck broadside by a pickup truck.

In Washington the state patrol blamed the weather for one traffic death early Thursday. Arthur W. King, 72, Spokane, died when his car slid on ice in the southbound lanes of Interstate 5, just north of Washington 512.

Forecasters blamed the snow on cold, moist air from a low-pressure

system just off the Pacific Northwest coast. Bob Roe, a National Weather Service specialist, said the snow was propelled into lower elevations of Portland by cold air from the Gulf of Alaska.

The U.S. Coast Guard closed the Columbia River bar to all navigation Thursday night because of heavy swells.

Additional details, photos on Page E2.

Jurors convict Lissy

By KATHLEEN MONJE Correspondent, The Oregonian

EUGENE — Michael David Lissy was convicted Thursday of hiring a hit man to kill his wife and immediately was sentenced to life in prison.

The nine-man, three-woman jury deliberated for 5½ hours before deciding that Lissy, 35, was guilty of aggravated murder in the July 5 death of Kathryn Ann Martini-Lissy, 26, to whom he had been married for six months.

Lissy, a former Portland scuba store owner, showed no visible reaction when the jury delivered its unanimous verdict, but his mother, Patricia Lissy, burst into tears.

Lissy waived his right to a presentence investigation, which usually delays sentencing for four to six weeks, saying in a steady voice, "We can go ahead." When Lane County Circuit Judge William A. Beckett asked Lissy if he wished to say anything before he was sentenced, the defendant replied, "Not at this time."

Beckett sentenced him to life in prison with a 30-year mandatory minimum sentence. Lissy was returned to the Lane County Jail and was to be taken to the Oregon State Penitentiary. Defense attorney Ronald R. Sticka said the verdict would be appealed and said he was "not especially" surprised at the speed of the jury's decision.

Martini-Lissy's father, Walter J. Martini, contacted at his home in Ormond Beach, Fla., said he and his wife, Eleanor, were pleased by the verdict.

"We hoped he'd get the maximum and he did," Martini said. "We wished he could have gotten the death penalty."

"With all the wonderful people in Oregon, it's too bad she had to meet the worst."

Prosecutor Brian R. Barnes, who was not available for comment, argued during Lissy's 16-day trial that Martini-Lissy was the victim of her husband's desire to collect the \$190,000 in life insurance payable if she died while on business for the FNB Financial Co. of Portland.

Martini-Lissy, a commercial loan officer for the First National Bank of Boston subsidiary, was found dead in her room July 6 at the Valley River Inn in Eugene, where she had traveled on business.

She had been elected president of the Portland Business and Professional Women's Network shortly before her death.

Prosecutors argued that Lissy, who admitted on the witness stand that he was a habitual liar, thief and frequenter of prostitutes, was trying to accomplish "the biggest fraud of all" when he hired another man to travel to Eugene and kill his wife.

Several witnesses, including Margo Stark, the wife he divorced to marry Martini-Lissy, testified that Lissy had said he married Martini-Lissy only to use her banking connections to salvage his two failing Valley Scuba stores.

Portland prostitutes and street people who testified told the jury that Lissy had approached them in June and asked their help in finding a hit man to kill a young woman and others.

The prosecution played police-recorded conversations between Lissy and former prostitute Tina R. LaPlante, who was granted immunity from prosecution and testified that she arranged for Lissy to meet David Dean Wilson, 31, of Beaverton, and then carried information about the murder between the two men.

During the conversations, Lissy suggested drug-deal stories Wilson could tell police to persuade them he was the sole killer and promised to pay Wilson \$25,000 if he "took the fall" for the crime.

"The utter callousness of the defendant is illustrated on those tapes when she asks him, 'Are you sorry?' (and Lissy responds) 'No, are you?'" Barnes said in closing arguments.

Wilson is scheduled for trial March 5, and Gretchen Marie Schumacher, 21, of Aloha, who allegedly drove him to Eugene from Portland, is scheduled to be tried beginning Friday. Both face aggravated murder charges.

Defense attorney Sticka claimed that Lissy was perhaps "morally despicable" but was "a victim of his own mouth" because one of his fantasy plots to murder wives and relatives backfired on him.

Four guilty in murder of priest

By TYLER MARSHALL LA Times-Washington Post Service

TORUN, Poland — A Polish court Thursday convicted four secret police officers of murdering one of the nation's most popular Roman Catholic priests but rejected possible death penalties and sentenced all four to long prison terms.

Capt. Grzegorz Piotrowski, 33, described as the chief organizer of the killing, and 47-year-old Col. Adam Pietruszka, the most senior of the accused men, both were sentenced to 25-year prison terms, the longest possible under Polish law. Both men also were deprived of their basic civil rights for an additional 10 years.

Two junior officers, Lt. Leszek Pekala, 32, and Lt. Waldemar Cxmielewski, 29, were given prison terms of 15 and 14 years respectively.

All four were convicted in connection with the kidnap and killing last October of the Rev. Jerzy Popieluszko, widely respected in this staunchly Catholic nation for his outspoken condemnation of the Communist government's repressive measures and his support for the outlawed Solidarity free trade union movement.

"They wanted to kill, and they implemented their plan," Chief Judge Artur Kujawa said in a 75-minute statement explaining the verdict. "The intention to kill existed before the abduction."

Kujawa also noted that during the few hours between the time the 37-year-old priest had been pulled from



Associated Press

STANDING FOR JUDGMENT — Col. Adam Pietruszka (center, standing) and Capt. Grzegorz Piotrowski (right) stand in courtroom in Torun, Poland, Thursday as judge announces their convictions in killing of a pro-Solidarity priest in October 1984.

his automobile near here and when his body was thrown into a reservoir, he had been treated with "exceptional cruelty and ruthlessness." Popieluszko was severely beaten before he was dumped in the trunk of a secret police vehicle and taken to the reservoir.

Kujawa said the court had rejected the death penalty, which the prosecution requested for Piotrowski, because "according to Poland's Socialist penal law, punishment imposed by the court is not and should not be revenge. Punishment," he added, "is supposed to educate and deter."

The defendants are expected to appeal the sentences to the Polish Supreme Court, a process that could take months.

Popieluszko's murder stunned and outraged the Polish public and presented the government of Premier Wojciech Jaruzelski with a major crisis.

In an apparent attempt to dampen public anger and to discipline the country's increasingly independent state security apparatus, Jaruzelski took the unprecedented step of ordering a public trial for the secret police officers.

The subsequent proceedings, conducted in the stark district courthouse of this medieval industrial town, were given saturation press coverage, presenting the Polish public and foreign observers here with a rare look inside a Communist country's security apparatus.

Seat-belt bill gains approval of Senate

By JEFF MAPES of The Oregonian staff

SALEM — Legislation requiring Oregonians to buckle their seat belts passed the Senate on a 19-11 vote Thursday after a debate over whether the measure was a restriction on personal freedom or was needed to save lives.

Supporters said the bill, which now moves to the House, could save 100 lives and prevent 1,000 injuries annually in Oregon by forcing drivers and passengers to fasten their seat belts.

While a majority of Oregonians have said in surveys that they support such a law, only about one-fifth of them regularly use their seat belts, said Sen. Rod Monroe, D-Portland, sponsor of the bill.

"They haven't been able to form the habit themselves, so they want government to help them out," he argued on the Senate floor.

But opponents said they have been besieged with telephone calls and letters criticizing the idea as an intrusion on personal freedom.

"At what point does government end?" asked Sen. L.B. Day, R-Salem, who added: "I can't really imagine we want our law enforcement agencies kept busy seeing if everybody is buckled up."

Sen. Jane Cease, D-Portland, countered that drivers and their vehicles are already highly regulated.

"You're not allowed to drive unsafely, you're not allowed to drive without brakes, without headlights when you need them," she said.

On a more narrow 17-13 vote, the

Senate rejected an attempt by Sen. Eugene Timms, R-Burns, to send the measure back to committee so it could be changed to allow a statewide vote on the issue.

"My constituents send me to Salem to make the hard decisions about managing state government, not their lives," argued Timms.

One of the key votes against the Timms proposal, however, was cast by freshman Sen. Bill Olson, a conservative, 31-year-old Republican from Medford.

Olson, giving his maiden speech in the Senate, quoted from the Oregon Constitution's pledges of "peace, safety and happiness" and reminisced about his one-time work as a hospital orderly.

"I want to speak about the freedom that comes from wearing a seat belt and avoiding head, neck and spinal injuries," said Olson. He was later congratulated by several of his colleagues and praised by Monroe, who was once Olson's high school history teacher.

The legislation would require that drivers be responsible for buckling themselves and anyone else in the car age 15 or under. Older passengers would be responsible for themselves and violations would be punishable as a traffic infraction.

Monroe, who said the mandatory seat-belt requirement would save \$13 million annually in medical costs, noted that persons could obtain medical exemptions from wearing belts and that those owning cars too old to have been outfitted with belts would also be exempt.

State ordered to compensate non-smoking employee

By JOHN HAYES Correspondent, The Oregonian

SALEM — A state worker who suffered coughing spells because of co-workers' cigarette smoke is entitled to state compensation, a Workers Compensation Board hearings officer ruled Thursday.

The ruling, apparently the first of its kind in Oregon, held that Marlene W. Ritchie, 43, Salem, an administrative assistant in the state Executive Department, had suffered a bona fide occupational illness because of secondhand cigarette smoke in the department's central offices.

Ritchie had filed a worker's compensation claim, backed up by medical reports, saying the "smoke routinely sent her into paroxysms of coughing and had given her chronic sinusitis and bronchitis.

State hearings referee Donald Seymour ruled that the SAIF Corp. had erred in denying Ritchie compensation for lost work days and medical expenses. His ruling is subject to appeal to the

Workers Compensation Board and from there to the Oregon Court of Appeals.

"I'm elated," Ritchie said. "It's not only winning for me, it's winning for everybody else. I just didn't feel I should have to quit my job because of somebody else's habit."

Salem lawyer Brian R. Whitehead, who represented Ritchie, said the ruling was the first of its kind and was a victory for both Ritchie and other state workers who have been afraid to complain about secondhand smoke in the work place.

"Now they know they don't have to just sit and take it," he said. "It appeals me to pay my taxes to an organization that spends so much money to deprive someone of their rights."

The order rejected the state's assertions that no compensation was due Ritchie because she was unusually sensitive to smoke and was a "chronic complainer" about her health.

"She has reason to be a chronic complainer about her health owing to the fact that she actually is having health problems caused by on-

the-job cigarette smoke," Seymour wrote in his order.

Her unusual sensitivity to smoke was not a valid argument against compensation, Seymour said. "An employer takes an employee as the employee is found," he added.

The Executive Department had not been officially informed of the ruling by the end of the day Thursday, and the SAIF Corp. attorney who represented the department was attending a training session and was unavailable for comment.

"We haven't received the opinion, and I won't make any statement until we do," said Tom Monterossi, Executive Department director.

Robert H. Fairing, the head of the division where Ritchie is employed, said the department would study the ruling and seek legal advice before deciding whether to appeal.

Since Ritchie's claim was filed July 13, the department's managers have held no discussions on banning smoking in the work place, Fairing said. "We were waiting for the outcome of the case," he added.

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