

“With La Clinica coming over, we will continue the great service we provide and hopefully enhance it.”

ANNA D'AMATO

Executive director, Southern Oregon University Health & Wellness Center



Photos by JULIE ANDERSON / Daily Courier

Anna D'Amato, executive director of the Southern Oregon University Student Health & Wellness Center, says costs are outpacing revenue at the center. “It’s not a reflection on the staff,” she says. “There really was a financial need.”

Health From 1A

more than 15 years of experience caring for college students.

“It’s not a reflection on the staff. There really was a financial need. Costs are outweighing revenue,” D’Amato said. “This way, we can keep staff and low costs for students. It was a good outcome — otherwise I would have had to raise fees and lay off staff.”

Students pay mandatory fees of \$187 for each of three terms during the normal school year, plus about \$120 for the summer term to help cover health clinic costs, she said.

Visits cost \$15 each, D’Amato said. The fees per term will stay the same, and the per-visit fee will remain at \$15 or less under La Clinica’s management, she said.

D’Amato said students can get physical and mental health care for everything from respiratory infections to eating disorders at the campus health center, which also offers low-cost medications.

“They just have to walk across campus. They don’t have to look for a



Marcy Elliott, a licensed professional counselor at Southern Oregon University, stands outside her office at the on-campus health center, where she provides therapy for students.

doctor,” D’Amato said.

For more serious conditions, the health center can refer students to outside doctors or a hospital emergency department, she said.

With La Clinica operating the health center starting in September, students can more easily access La Clinica’s other services, like dental care, that aren’t available on campus,

Travertini Windbigler said.

“With La Clinica coming over, we will continue the great service we provide and hopefully enhance it,” D’Amato said.

Travertini Windbigler said La Clinica is excited about serving college students at a campus clinic.

She said students of all ages are more likely to seek physical and mental health care, get diagnosed and get treated if they have access to a health clinic at school.

“The more we bring services to students, the more likely they are to use them. College students are learning how to be adults. They’re learning how to take care of their health,” she said.

La Clinica was founded in 1989 to provide medical care to seasonal and migrant farmworkers. In 2001, in response to a growing need for affordable health care, the organization expanded its scope to serve everyone.

All services are offered regardless of a patient’s ability to pay, and on a sliding scale for uninsured and low-income patients, according to La Clinica.

Reach reporter Vickie Aldous at 541-474-3813 or valdous@thedailycourier.com.

Prosecutors say Idaho man planned church attack in support of Islamic State

By Rebecca Boone and Mead Gruver
Associated Press

BOISE, Idaho — An 18-year-old man planned to attack churches in a North Idaho city using a metal pipe, butane fuel, a machete and, if he could get them, his father’s guns, according to federal prosecutors who charged him with attempting to provide material support to the Islamic State group.

Authorities said Alexander Scott Mercurio adopted the Muslim faith against his Christian parents’ wishes and was in contact with FBI informants posing as Islamic State group supporters.

Mercurio was arrested Saturday, the day before investigators believe he planned to carry out the attack. Phone messages left for a relative and for his defense attorneys at the Federal Defenders of Eastern Washington & Idaho were not immediately returned Tuesday. Mercurio did not immediately respond to an email through a jail inmate email system.

Mercurio told one informant he intended to incapacitate his father with the pipe, handcuff him and steal his guns and a car to carry out the attack in Coeur d’Alene, according to an FBI agent’s sworn statement in the case unsealed Monday in U.S. District Court.

The guns included rifles, handguns and ammunition his father kept in a locked closet, but Mercurio still planned to attack with the pipe, fire and knives if he couldn’t get the firearms, alleged the sworn statement by FBI task force officer John Taylor II.

If he could get the key and access the closet, Mercurio said in an audio recording he gave the informant, “everything will be so much easier and better and I will achieve better things,” according to the statement.

The recording was to accompany a photo the informant took of Mercurio in front of the IS flag holding up a knife and his index finger in a gesture commonly used by the group, the statement alleged.

After attacking the church, Mercurio told the informant he planned to attack others in town — as many as 21 — before being killed in an act of martyrdom, according to the statement.

Mercurio talked with confidential informants over a two-year span and at one point tried to build an explosive vest to wear during the attacks, the statement alleged.

Mercurio told a confidential informant that he first connected with IS during the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, when schools were closed, Taylor said, and investigators later found several files on his school-issued laptop detailing IS’s extremist ideology.

Law enforcement moved to arrest Mercurio after he sent an audio file pledging his allegiance to the IS, the statement alleged.

If convicted, Mercurio could be sentenced to up to 20 years in prison. Mercurio has not yet had an opportunity to enter a plea.

Veto From 1A

“will result in the production of new housing within an acceptable timeline.”

With Oregon facing a deficit of homes, housing production was Kotek’s top priority for this year’s legislative session that ended in March.

Corrigan said Shady Cove was given until Friday to provide information to the governor’s office justifying the funding. It sent information, including mapping and engineering from developers who are proposing housing projects.

Corrigan said the infrastructure money would spur housing development.

“We feel the funding will enable the city to deliver a reliable water source for homes and apartments. Without funding, development comes to a standstill,” he said.

With about 3,100 residents, Corrigan said Shady Cove is the largest city in Oregon without a municipal water system.

Some privatized systems supply water, while other homes and buildings are served by a hodgepodge of wells, according to Corrigan.

City Hall, the public library and a community center limp along with a shared well that supplies only 2 to 3 gallons per minute. The school system has had to combine multiple wells to get adequate water, he said.

“The biggest issue is the housing. People come into City Hall and ask, ‘Where can I get water?’” Corrigan said, noting it can cost tens of thousands of dollars to drill a new well.

Some wells are running dry, and others have been labeled by the state as unsafe for drinking water because of arsenic, he said.

Shady Cove could potentially buy water rights from Lost Creek Lake,

then team with private water providers to build water lines around town, he said.

Gold Hill is also providing information to the governor’s office to try and hang on to the \$1 million it won from the Legislature.

An unreliable water system has put housing development on hold there, according to the city of Gold Hill.

Officials with the community of Butte Falls didn’t respond to questions from the Daily Courier about whether it’s submitting additional information to avoid a governor’s veto of \$1.5 million for sewage treatment funding.

Jackson County Commissioner Colleen Roberts said the Board of Commissioners plans to approve a letter during its Thursday meeting asking the governor not to veto the three projects.

“We want to send a letter from the board in support of Shady Cove, Butte Falls and Gold Hill expressing how

valuable that funding is to their infrastructure — and for what Gov. Kotek wants to do with her homebuilding efforts. Hopefully it will help,” Roberts said.

She said the small towns reached out to county commissioners asking for their support when they learned of the potential vetoes.

“It was such a shock. They were counting on that money,” Roberts said. She said the funding from the Legislature will encourage home-building projects in all three towns.

The seven infrastructure projects that could get vetoed total \$14 million. In addition to the funding for Gold Hill, Shady Cove and Butte Falls, the other funding at risk is:

- \$3 million to the Oak Lodge Water Services Authority in the Portland suburbs for wastewater treatment facility upgrades.
- \$3 million to the city of Siletz for wastewater treatment plant upgrades.

- \$3 million to the Tualatin Valley Water District for upgrades to a Beaverton pump station.

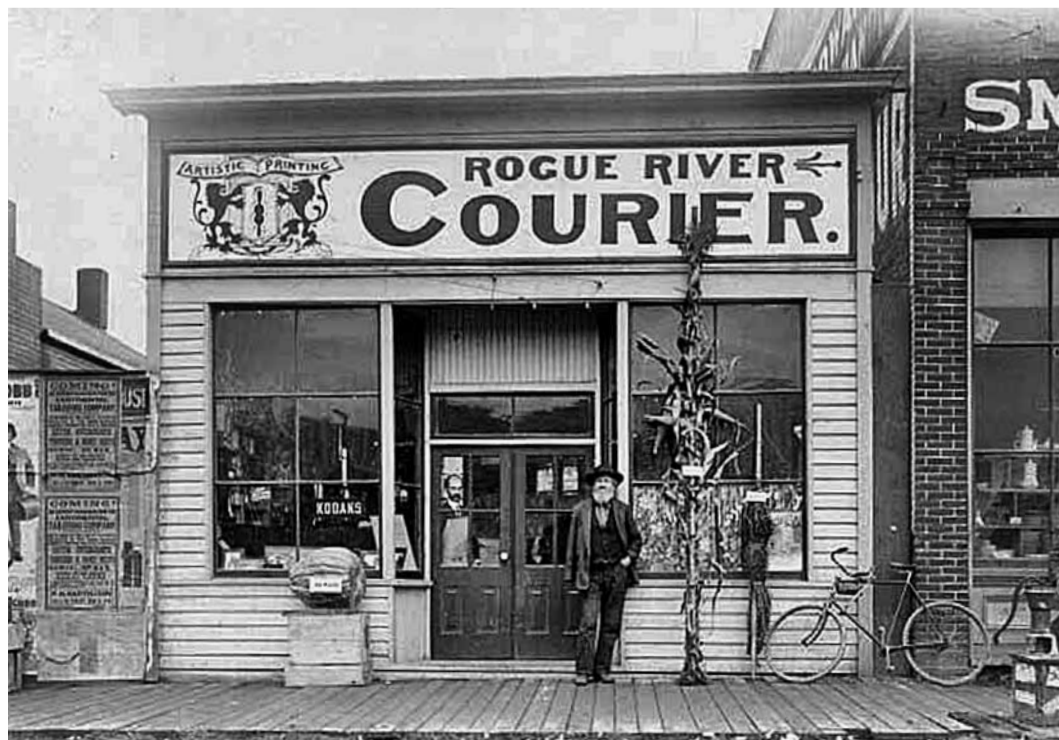
- \$1 million to the city of Creswell in Lane County for wastewater treatment facility upgrades and connections to a regional treatment facility.

Separately from the infrastructure funding, Kotek is seeking more information about \$2 million allocated by the Legislature to revitalize a downtown Portland neighborhood, or she could veto that as well.

Kotek will announce her final decision on the vetoes by April 17, according to her office.

No projects in Josephine County got funding from the Oregon Legislature, although Grants Pass and Cave Junction submitted requests to fund infrastructure projects that could spur housing development.

Reach reporter Vickie Aldous at 541-474-3813 or valdous@thedailycourier.com.



The Courier building in 1903. On display outside are a 125-pound squash, a 13-foot corn stalk and a 6-foot alfalfa bunch. — Photo: Daily Courier archives

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