

OSP traffic stop leads to arrest, seizure of 171 pounds of pot

by Cheryl McDermott

A traffic stop for an improper lane change near Pendleton by an Oregon State Police (OSP) trooper Tuesday afternoon led to the arrest of a Washington man and the seizure of 171 pounds of marijuana valued at between \$400,000 to \$500,000, authorities reported.

171 pounds of marijuana, heavily wrapped in a dozen individual bales, was seized during a traffic stop. Troopers estimate the value at between \$400,000 and \$500,000 - OSP photo Shortly before 2 p.m., May 8, a trooper stopped a 2005 Chevrolet Impala with Nevada license plates as it traveled west near milepost 205 on Interstate 84 near Pendleton and was observed following another vehicle too closely and making an unlawful lane change.

The trooper, assisted by his drug-detecting dog, found about 171 pounds of pot in the trunk, wrapped heavily in a dozen bales. The driver produced a fake Washington drivers license and was taken into custody. According to the OSP news release, the trooper found a small amount of cocaine in the suspect's trouser pocket.

Using the Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS), the suspect was identified as 50-year old Ramon Giron Pimentel of Toppenish, Washington.

Giron Pimentel was lodged in the Umatilla County Jail and is charged with possession and delivery of marijuana, possession of cocaine, giving false information to a police officer, and possession of a forged instrument (the fake drivers license).

Other notable marijuana seizures during traffic stops by troopers include 323 pounds seized April 4, 2005 near Salem; 63 pounds seized June 29, 5005 west of Hood River; and 200 pounds seized June 4, 2006 north of Medford.

OSP Drug Enforcement Section detectives are continuing the investigation.

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