Aggressive attempts to elude capture last Friday night-- including attempting to ram a pursuing deputy -- have resulted in attempted Assault charges against a Clatskanie man.

John Phillip Rasler, 39, Clatskanie was lodged in the Columbia County Jail and charged with Attempted Assault I x 2, Attempted Assault on Public Safety Officer x 2, Attempt to Elude (felony), Attempt to Elude (misdemeanor), Reckless Driving, Reckless Endangering, Criminal Mischief, Unlawful Possession of Methamphetamine, and DWS Misdemeanor. He was also wanted on a warrant for his arrest for similar charges out of Columbia County Circuit Court.

The pursuit began at 8:47 p.m., after a deputy on routine patrol found Rasler's brown, 1978 Chevrolet pickup truck partially blocking the roadway on Anliker Road. When the deputy stopped to investigate, the driver sat up in the seat, spun gravel, and accelerated toward Deputy Dews as he was still in his patrol car. The driver narrowly missed hitting Deputy Dews and his patrol car as he sped away.

The deputy gave chase as the driver fled and went up Canaan Road. Officers from the Clatskanie, Rainier, St. Helens and Oregon State Police departments responded to assist. As the deputy continued to follow at speeds of 50-60 miles per hour, the pursuit continued to the area of Clark Road / Whitney Road.

At one point, the suspect spun out on the gravel road. When he got the truck going again, he attempted to drive into the driver side door of the deputy's patrol car. The suspect continued to flee into a large wooded area off of Whitney Road. A short time later, the deputy found the pickup abandoned up a small, muddy road. The deputy called out to the suspect who came out of hiding and was held at gunpoint until help could arrive from responding police.

Several police vehicles sustained minor damage due to the driving on rough terrain.

Rasler is currently in custody in the jail with security release set at $55,750.