

State bans guns from Capitol

Bill also mandates the safe storage in homes

By **ANDREW SELSKY**
The Associated Press

SALEM — Legislators have brought guns into the Oregon State Capitol for personal protection. Protesters have carried semi-automatic rifles onto the grounds and into the building.

Later this year, doing so will be outlawed under a bill signed Tuesday, May 1, by Gov. Kate Brown that was earlier passed by the Legislature, with Democrats in favor and minority Republicans opposed. The new law also mandates the safe storage of guns.

"Today, I am signing SB 554 with the hope that we can take another step forward to help spare more Oregon families from the grief of losing a loved one to gun violence," Brown said on Twitter.

The bill was named for Cindy Yuille and Steve Forsyth, who were slain in a shooting at a Portland-area shopping mall in 2012 by a man who stole a friend's AR-15 rifle. A third person was seriously wounded.

Among those who testified in favor of the measure was Paul Kemp, Forsyth's brother-in-law.

"I will never forget the screams I heard when we had to tell my teenage nephew that his father had been killed at the mall," Kemp said.

Backers of the new law, which takes effect three months after the Legislature adjourns this summer, said it will prevent accidental shootings by children, suicides and mass shootings.

It requires that firearms be secured with a trigger or cable lock, in a locked container or gun room.

Opponents said a delay in accessing a firearm for self-defense could cost lives.

Jim Mischel, of Sheridan, provided written testimony to lawmakers describing how his wife woke up when he was away one night in 1981. She heard a noise, went to investigate and saw a stranger in their home.

She tried to get a pistol that was in a locked gun box in the nightstand out but was unable to before the man got into the bedroom and threatened her with his gun, Mischel said.

"She has never recovered," he said.

The bill also bans guns from the Oregon Capitol, changing a law that allowed concealed handgun licensees to bring firearms into the building.

In a related development, an interfaith movement plans to present signatures May 2 to the staff of Oregon Secretary of State Shemia Fagan, a step in an attempt to get two initiative petitions onto the ballot.

IP 18 would ban the sale of assault-style weapons in Oregon. IP 17 would ban the sale of large-capacity magazines and require a permit to purchase any gun and a completed background check before a firearm is purchased.

The movement has gathered the signatures of 2,000 voters for each initiative petition and will hand deliver them to Fagan's staff, said Pastor Mark Knutson of the Augustana Lutheran Church in Portland.

"We hope to get the go ahead by early fall, which will give us almost 10 months to get 140,000 signatures to ... place them both on the November 2022 general election ballot," Knutson said.

The debate over guns is being resurrected as the number of mass shootings climbs again in America, with increased efforts to ban assault rifles and large-capacity magazines.

Hermiston man died a classified death in World War II

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
Hermiston Herald

HERMISTON — Kermit Belles' parents never knew how he died.

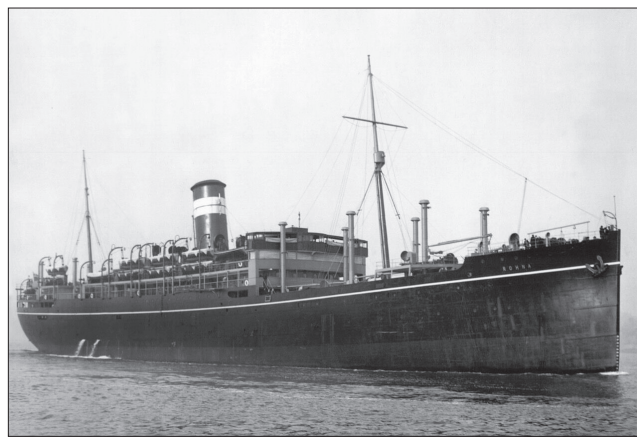
The Hermiston man, serving his country during World War II, died in one of the worst naval calamities in United States history. But the sinking of the HMS Rohna was classified, and so details of its demise didn't become public knowledge until the 1990s.

Instead, the Hermiston Herald reported on Jan. 6, 1944, that Mr. and Mrs. Claude Belles had received the following telegram:

"The Secretary of War desires me to express his deep regret that your son, Pvt. Kermit A. Belles, has been reported missing in action since November 26 in the North African area. If further details or other information are received you will be promptly notified."

Further details were not forthcoming.

Robert Sutton said over time, the family decided he must have been killed in the sinking of the USS Liscome Bay, which a Japanese submarine torpedoed in the Pacific the same week. Sutton's mother,



Jack Ballo/Contributed Photo

The sinking of the HMS Rohna, pictured here, is the subject of the "Rohna: Classified" documentary. A Hermiston man, Kermit Belles, was one of the more than 1,000 American troops who lost their lives on the ship on November 26, 1943.

Gloria Belles, was Kermit Belles' younger sister. She died in April 2000 — just six months before Congress officially acknowledged the sinking of the Rohna for the first time.

"It was pretty devastating to her to lose her big brother," Sutton said, noting she was just 12 when he died.

She didn't talk about it much, he said. It was too painful.

After his mother's death, Sutton discovered that Belles was not on the Liscome Bay but on the Rohna, a transport ship

that was part of a convoy moving Allied troops off the coast of northern Africa.



Belles

According to an account by the Naval History and Heritage Command, Germans attacked the convoy on November 25, 1943, and again the next day, using new Hs-293 radio-controlled, rocket-boosted glide bombs.

Forty-one of them missed their mark, thwarted by smoke, radio jamming and extensive anti-aircraft fire. But one was a direct hit.

"The bomb hit Rohna's port side, penetrated deep

into the ship on delayed-fuse, and blew holes in the starboard side, quickly causing the ship to list to starboard," the account states.

Most lifeboats were destroyed or trapped under debris. Others made it into the water but were quickly swamped by troops and sunk. As neighboring ships attempted to rescue soldiers hanging on to debris on rough seas in the dark, some were sucked under ships or were unable to survive the exposure for the hours it took to be rescued.

Altogether, by the U.S. government's count, 1,050 U.S. soldiers and more than 100 Allied troops from other countries were killed in the sinking or died from their wounds afterward. The exact number of survivors is unknown but thought to be somewhere between 900 and 1,000.

Not wanting the Germans to know that their new radio-guided missile technology had worked, the Army classified the entire event indefinitely, ordering survivors and rescuers to stay quiet under threat of court martial. Gold Star families like the Belles were simply told their loved one was

missing in action.

According to the Rohna Survivors Memorial Association, a few survivors began to start sharing the story of the Rohna with their local newspapers in the early 1990s. It gained wider public attention in 1993, when CBS commentator Charles Osgood shared the story on his nationally syndicated radio program, "The Osgood File."

People who heard the broadcast began to wonder if that was what happened to their relative, and slowly an unofficial database of survivors and victims began to take shape. In October 2000, Congress passed a resolution publicly acknowledging the sinking of the HMS Rohna. The resolution stated that the men who died on the Rohna had been "largely forgotten by the Nation" and acknowledged that "many families still do not know the circumstances of the deaths of loved ones who died as a result of the attack."

Sutton said after he found out, it was strange to realize his uncle had been killed by Nazis and not Japanese soldiers as he had grown up believing.

WANTED

Miracle-Ear Hearing Centers are looking for qualified people to test their latest product,

The Miracle-Ear Ready-Fit **RISK FREE!**

Here's the catch: You must have difficulty hearing and understanding in background noise and your hearing must fall in the range of the hearing aid. People that are selected will evaluate Miracle-Ear's latest advanced digital hearing solution — the Miracle-Ear Ready-Fit.

You will be able to walk in to our office and walk out knowing how much help there is for you.

Candidates will be asked to evaluate our instruments for 30 days (risk free*). At the end of the 30 days, if you are satisfied with the improvement in your hearing and wish to keep the instrument, you may do so at tremendous savings. But this is only for a limited time! Schedule your Appointment Now! Don't wait until it's too late!

SOME FEDERAL WORKERS AND RETIREES MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR HEARING AIDS AT NO COST!

**That's Right...No Co-Pay! No Exam Fee!
No Adjustment Fee!**

BCBS federal insurance pays the total cost of 2 Miracle-Ear Audiotone Pro aids. Most federal government employees and retirees are eligible. You may even be covered if you have other non-federal insurance coverage. Special factory pricing is available for non-qualifiers. See store for details & accurate coverage.



Save on one of our smallest custom digital hearing aids!

Now Buy One Get One Free!

Miracle-Ear®

HURRY! OFFER ENDS 6/11/21

Valid at participating Miracle-Ear locations only. Limit one coupon per purchase. May not be combined with other offers and does not apply to prior sales. Cash value 1/20 cent. Cannot combine with any other offers.

Another Great Way to Save Make your appointment today!

**BUY 1 GET 1
50% OFF**

Save on our full line of digital hearing solutions. Don't miss out on this amazing offer.

HURRY! OFFER ENDS 6/11/21

Good only from participating Miracle-Ear representatives. One coupon per purchase. No other offers or discounts apply. Discount does not apply to prior sales. Offer valid on ME-5, ME-4, ME-3, ME-2 Solutions. Cannot combine with any other offers. Cash value 1/20 cent.

AT THESE PARTICIPATING LOCATIONS ONLY!!

LA GRANDE
111 Elm Street
La Grande, OR 97850
541-605-2109

BAKER CITY
2021 Washington Ave.
Baker City, OR 97814
541-239-3782

ENTERPRISE
113-1/2 Front E. Main St.
Enterprise, OR 97828
541-239-3877

**MENTION
CODE:
21JUNEWANTED**



Risk Free Offer - The aids must be returned within 30 days of delivery pursuant to terms of your purchase agreement and 100% of the purchase price will be refunded. **Hearing test is an audiometric test to determine proper amplification needs only. These are not medical exams or diagnoses. Blue Cross Shield, the Blue Cross, the Blue Shield, BCBS, and Federal Employee Program are a registered trademark of Blue Cross Blue Shield Association. Blue Cross Blue Shield Association and its independent licensees are not affiliated with, nor do they endorse or sponsor, the contents of this advertisement. Trademarks referring to specific providers are used by Miracle Ear for nominative purposes only, to truthfully identify the source of the services about which information is provided. Such trademarks are solely the property of their respective owners.