

Opinion / Local

— GUEST OPINION —

Standoff or standing up? You decide.

By Leo Castillo
Special to The Baker
County Press

On the street next to the Safeway in Burns, after we prayed and sang *The Star Spangled Banner*, our peaceful rally march on behalf of the Hammonds' unjust sentencing as arsonists and domestic terrorists began, despite the near zero degree temperatures. Three blocks up the hill, I looked back and the street was full of people for the entire three blocks. I estimated five- to six hundred total.

I interviewed many of them. Some, like myself, were from distant places in Oregon; others had traveled from as far away as Washington, Idaho, Arizona & Utah.

We stopped in front of the Hammond's home. We respected their privacy, and only a few people spoke to them. All of a sudden, someone broke out singing *Amazing Grace*, and everyone else followed! It was very moving, and as peaceful as peaceful gets.

Only a handful of those present, maybe twenty or so, would later move to occupy the Malheur Wildlife Refuge.

I spoke with Sheriff Richard Mack, of the Constitutional Sheriffs & Peace Officers Association. He said this should have never happened; that there is no question that the Hammonds' rights have been violated by the federal government, and that federal agents have done the same thing the Hammonds have been charged with, and received no punishment whatsoever.

At a meeting held at the County fairgrounds just outside Burns after the rally, with less than half of the initial rally participants present, it was revealed that an official Notice for a Redress of Grievances had been filed in the Hammond case December 11, convening a Common Law Grand Jury to investigate the Hammonds' case and to protect them against illegal imprisonment. To date, it has been ignored. You can read it for yourselves at: nationalibertyalliance.org

It is a lawful document and a right guaranteed under the 1st Amendment. It was sent to the Harney County Sheriff, Commissioners, Justice of the Peace, District Attorney, and the Attorney General & Governor of Oregon, on December 11, 2015. The deadline for a response from these representatives has past.

The Notice of Griev-

ance claims to hold much evidence supporting some of the following allegations; "that Dwight and Steven Hammond committed no crime in the act of performing the prescribe burn and back fire; that the U.S. Government abused the federal court system, situating the Hammond family into duress as an effort to force the Hammond's to sell their Steen Mountain property to a federal agency; that Judge Hogan controlled the narrative and did not allow full disclosure in the courtroom; that the Hammonds were sentenced for something different than what they were found guilty of; that they are being subject for the same offense and twice put in jeopardy..."

The Notice concludes: "In a commitment to expose the truth and administrate justice, We the People of these States United insist that you immediately assemble an independent Evidential Hearing Board (EHB) comprised of the people of Harney County in accordance with Common Law principals. That the Evidential Hearing Board call witnesses and investigate each of these allegations publicly. That the Evidential Hearing Board make public conclusions in writing upon their findings. That the Harney County Board of Commissioners and the Sheriff's Department enforce the conclusions of the Evidential Hearing Board in support of the United States Constitution. We further insist that the Hammond family be protected from reporting to federal prison until all allegations can be determined." It concludes by citing several United States Codes.

There is a petition in support of this Notice. As of January 2nd, it had collected more than one hundred thousand signatures! You can read the Notice and sign your support at <http://bundyranch.blogspot.com>.

In support of some of these allegations, in an October article from *Tri-State Livestock News*, "Where There's Smoke," Erin Maupin, a former BLM range technician and watershed specialist and rancher in the area, said backfires by other ranchers had burned BLM land in the past and the agency had not taken action. Maupin recalled other fires accidentally spilling over onto BLM land, but only the Hammonds have been charged, arrested and sentenced, she said. Ranchers "would call and the BLM would go

and help put it out and it was not a big deal." On the other hand, Maupin said, there were numerous instances of BLM fires spreading to private land and ranchers losing significant numbers of cattle and other property.

Maupin said she was unaware of the BLM compensating ranchers for destroyed property.

In a related January 4 article from InfoWars.com, "Hammonds Targeted Because Government Wants to Steal Their Land," Kurt Nimo cites US Geological Survey Bulletin 1740-B, which indicates there is a high potential for silver, gold, copper, mercury, uranium and molybdenum and other resources in the area. There is also a moderate estimate for natural gas and oil. He also notes that during a plea agreement on the arson charge in 2012 the Hammonds agreed to allow the BLM to obtain the first right of refusal should the family sell their private land.

The article is concluded by a statement from Property Rights Alliance: "Much of the land targeted for government takeover (across the nation) holds great oil and natural gas resources which could provide jobs in the energy industry and a flow of resources from our own American supply. Once those lands become 'monuments,' access to those natural resources is limited and in the hands of the federal government."

Not limited to Oregon, the list of government crimes in land abuses alone is long. In 2012, a man in Eagle Point was sentenced to 30 days in jail and paid a \$1,500 fine for collecting rainwater on his own property. The Sucker Fish has almost suckered Klamath Basin farmers out of their livelihoods. Some claim their water was stolen at gunpoint in 2001. In eastern Oregon, we are no strangers to the Feds trying to restrict our land access and use. For decades.

One of the allegations made against the government in this case is that under the Constitution, Article I, Section 8, clause 17, the Feds within a state are allowed jurisdiction only over "forts, magazines, arsenals, dock-yards, and other needful build-



Submitted Photo
Leo Castillo is the host of World Gone Crazy on 1490 KBKR Sunday evenings.

ings." That's actually what it says. So why have they seemingly taken control of so much of our land? Could it be because we let them? It appears a small group of people has stopped letting them in southeast Oregon.

The atmosphere at the Refuge seems calm. Many there see clearly the demonization, the media attacks, the federal response to their attempts; they know the odds they face. Perhaps when someone has made up their mind to live free or die and means it, a sense of peace comes to them. Perhaps in the myriad distractions and pleasures of our daily lives we have forgotten what, with God, severed the bonds of tyranny and carved a wild land into a mighty and free nation. Perhaps we have forgotten the bedrock and the calling of our birth. Perhaps we have forgotten God. Perhaps we have forgotten valor. What then? Where stand you?

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Expired tags now renewable online

Just realized your car's registration stickers expired? Maybe it's a weekend or evening, and you need to drive but can't wait to renew by mail or go to a DMV office.

Under a new Oregon law that took effect Jan. 1, when you renew your registration online at OregonDMV.com you can print the online receipt and drive immediately. Law enforcement can accept the online receipt as proof of registration payment in a traffic stop up to 30 days after you renew. New tags typically arrive by mail within 3-5 business days.

"We heard from many people that they took time to renew their registration in person at a DMV office because they couldn't wait for tags via the mail," said Tom McClellan, DMV Administrator. "So DMV asked the Legislature to consider a law change allowing people to provide proof of payment of registration with an online receipt."

If you or someone you know can create a PDF of your online receipt and download it to a phone, the law also allows police to accept the PDF displayed on a phone instead of a paper copy.

"Nearly one-third of vehicle registration renewals are still done in person at DMV offices – often because people are afraid of getting a ticket for expired tags," McClellan said. "Now customers can hit the road right after they renew from the convenience of their homes and skip the trip to DMV."

For anyone worried about getting a ticket for failure to display current registration stickers—even with an online receipt for proof—the new law also allows you to bring the receipt to court. The court may accept that proof and dismiss the violation.

An average of nearly 800 people use Oregon DMV's online vehicle registration renewal service each day. Introduced in January 2004, the service saves customers from either writing and mailing a check or getting in line at a DMV field office.

If your vehicle is eligible for online renewal, your registration renewal notice will provide you with a temporary four-digit renewal access code to complete the transaction. DMV mails renewal reminders 45-60 days before vehicle tags expire.

To renew online, you need Internet access, a printer or mobile device, your renewal reminder, a credit/debit card, and your car insurance provider's name and your policy number.

If you have lost your registration renewal reminder, and it is within 75 days of your tags' expiration date, you can get a replacement renewal access code – just call DMV Customer Assistance by calling your local DMV phone number. If your tags have been expired for more than 75 days, your temporary online renewal access code will also have expired, and you will need to renew by mail or in person.

For more information about online registration renewal—or to renew online—go to OregonDMV.com.

Any time you need DMV services, DMV suggests that you first check www.OregonDMV.com before visiting a field office in person to make sure you have everything you need. If you do need to visit DMV in person, you can check wait times for many offices during normal business hours at OregonDMV.com.

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Published weekly every Friday.
Subscription rates per year are \$29.95 all areas, e-mail delivery. \$39.95 print issue, home delivery, Baker City city limits only. \$49.95 print issue, mail delivery, outside Baker City city limits only. Payment in advance.

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