

Grant County man watches arrests of standoff leaders

Blue Mountain Eagle

Stranded for hours as authorities blocked the highway, a Grant County resident watched as some of the leaders of the refuge occupation were arrested Tuesday.

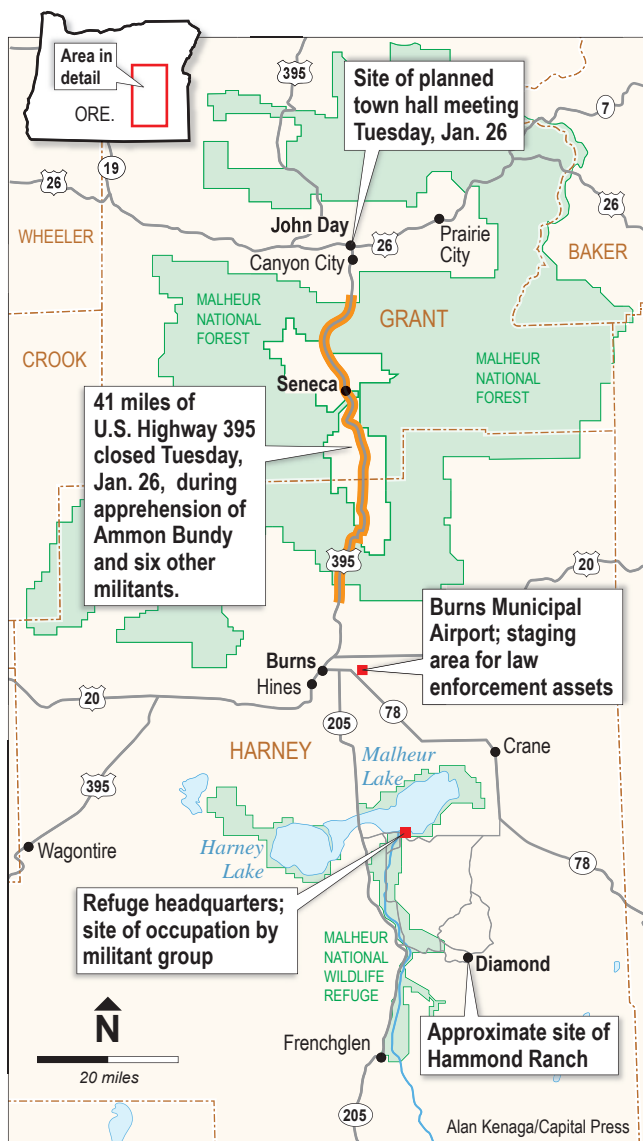
The FBI and Oregon State Police closed a portion of U.S. Highway 395 between John Day and Burns to apprehend the occupation leaders traveling north to John Day for a community meeting. Ammon Bundy and four others were arrested, and one suspect died after being shot by police.

Dave Hannibal, of Dayville, did not see the exchange of gunfire, but he was one of the first witnesses on the scene. He was driving north on U.S. Highway 395 near the Devine Ridge summit, 50 miles south of John Day, Tuesday afternoon when he came across four vehicles of FBI agents. An FBI agent had a conversation with Hannibal, telling him he couldn't pass until they were finished. Only later did he realize that the FBI was waiting for the Bundy caravan to come by on Highway 395.

Hannibal was on a side street, parked at a 90-degree angle from the highway, as the FBI waited for the Bundy group to show up. When the FBI pulled out onto the highway, he pulled out behind them.

He watched the detainment of the people who were traveling in the rear vehicle of the Bundy caravan.

He pulled onto the highway behind the last FBI suburban,



which was blocking both lanes. The FBI asked Hannibal and the vehicles behind him to back up south. There was a snowmobile behind Hannibal; he backed up a good distance.

Then Hannibal sat on the side of the road and watched from afar, taking photos.

He saw law enforcement arrest two people in the rear vehicle. There was no fight, from what he saw. The detainees were handcuffed and sat on the highway. He saw two people he had seen on the news, but he couldn't name them with certainty.

Hannibal stayed there well into the night; they eventually let him drive through the scene. He was told there was a dead body ahead.

He saw a vehicle about a quarter or half a mile up the road and the passenger-side window appeared to have been shot out. That vehicle had left the highway and probably traveled 50 feet up into the snow.

"There was a ton of people there last night," both FBI agents and many state troopers, he said.

He was held up from 3:30 p.m. to about 11 p.m. before driving out.

Hannibal said, although he agrees government overreach can be oppressive, he believes solutions can be found through "collective participation" rather than "taking up arms and taking over buildings."

"I'm pleased that the situation has been resolved," he said. "... To take up arms against the government in today's world is a losing proposition at best. It is sad someone died over this."

John Day resident Kim McKrola was also trying to return home Tuesday evening, but the road was closed. She said no hotel rooms were available.

"Every hotel was full mostly by government officials, and one hotel manager told me 200 more police were coming over today (Wednesday)," she said.

Erick Bengel of The Daily Astorian contributed to this story.

Three more taken into custody as Bundy urges refuge occupiers to leave

By KEITH RIDLER and TERENCE PETTY
Associated Press

BURNS — Three members of an armed group occupying an Oregon wildlife refuge surrendered to authorities, officials said, hours after their jailed leader urged the remaining occupiers to go home.

The three arrests Wednesday came a day after the arrests of leader Ammon Bundy and seven others and the death of another occupier in a confrontation with law enforcement.

The group, which has included people from as far away as Arizona and Michigan, seized the headquarters of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge on Jan. 2. They want federal lands turned over to local authorities.

The FBI and Oregon State Police said that 45-year-old Duane Leo Ehmer of Irrigon, Oregon, and 34-year-old Dylan Wade Anderson of Provo, Utah, turned themselves in around 3:30 p.m. Wednesday. And 43-year-old Jason S. Patrick of Bonaire, Georgia, did the same a few hours later.

After Bundy made his first court appearance in Portland on Wednesday, his attorney, Mike Arnold,

read this statement from his client: "Please stand down. Go home and hug your families. This fight is now in the courts."

It was unclear whether the rest of Bundy's followers still holed up at the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge south of Burns were ready to heed his advice. Occupier David Fry said in a live stream from the refuge that five activists remained and they were in touch with the FBI.

Meanwhile, details began to emerge about the confrontation Tuesday on a remote highway that resulted in the death of Robert Finicum.

Bundy followers gave conflicting accounts of how Finicum died. One said Finicum charged at FBI agents, who then shot him. A member of the Bundy family said Finicum did nothing to provoke the agents.

An Oregon man who says he witnessed the shootout says he heard about a half-dozen shots but didn't see anyone get hit, and that the shooting happened quickly — over maybe 12 or 15 seconds. Raymond Doherty told Portland TV station KOIN-TV that he was about 100 feet back and couldn't see who specifically was shooting. But, he added, "I saw them shooting at each other."

AN ANALYSIS

There or not, Donald Trump drives the GOP debate

GOP debate is tonight at 6 on Fox News

By STEVE PEOPLES
Associated Press

MARSHALLTOWN, Iowa — Once again, Donald Trump steals the show.

The billionaire Republican's decision to tangle with Fox News and skip the final presidential debate before Iowa's kickoff caucuses all but ensures that he — and he alone — will dominate the conversation in the closing moments of campaigning in 2016's leadoff state.

It's a move that for any other candidate would probably be viewed as un-presidential. But for Trump, it's more likely to serve as fresh evidence that he's successfully redefining the art of presidential politics.

"This takes guts, and is the kind mentality our country needs in order to Make America Great Again," Trump's campaign charged in a statement that cited his campaign slogan and confirmed the finality of his decision.

Instead of appearing on the

debate stage Thursday night, Trump said he will host an event at the same time to raise money for wounded veterans.

The move puts the other seven Republican participants in an awkward position. Attack the party's absentee front-runner, and provide him with even more attention? Or ignore him, and leave voters wondering what they think of the national front-runner's hardball play just days before the Feb. 1 caucus?

"I think, you know, the media's been handled by him," New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, one of Trump's rivals for the GOP nomination, said in an interview Tuesday night on Fox News. "And I think, you know, folks have allowed him to do things that no other candidate's ever been allowed to do in American presidential history."

Trump's presidential run has been defined by such moments. He's questioned whether Arizona Sen. John McCain is worthy of being called a war hero, graphically criticized Fox News anchor Megyn Kelly and unveiled a widely condemned plan to bar Muslims from the United States.

Each led his rivals, political



Paul Sancya/AP Photo

Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump speaks with University of Iowa football players before a campaign event at the University of Iowa Field House, Tuesday, in Iowa City, Iowa.

professionals and pundits to predict his undoing. But instead, Trump has maintained his support in the preference polls he loves to tout — a reflection of his ability to capture the feelings of a Republican electorate deeply skeptical of the party's establishment and the country's news organizations.

"I think in some ways, we've got to start pushing back. And I think he's just demonstrating that, pushing against the liberal media," said Yvonne Galusha, 57, a Trump backer who works at the University of Iowa and

attended his Tuesday night rally in Iowa City.

For the past several days, Trump had sought Kelly's removal as a moderator of the Thursday night debate. His back and forth with the network reached a tipping point on Tuesday afternoon, when Fox News mocked Trump with a sarcastic statement that said the leaders of Iran and Russia "both intend to treat Donald Trump unfairly when they meet with him if he becomes president."

His rivals tried to paint his reaction — "Let them have their debate and let's see how

they do with the ratings," Trump said — as the latest example of why he's unfit for the White House.

"If he doesn't want to be there, that's OK with me," Christie told Kelly on her show Tuesday night. "But I'll tell you this: the American people should wonder if you're not willing to show up when everything isn't going your way and exactly the way you want to."

That's an argument yet to dent Trump's standing among his supporters, who view such actions as a reminder of what they like most about him: Trump plays by his own rules, even if that means taking on his party's leadership and his party's favorite television network.

"With me, they're dealing with somebody that's a little bit different," Trump said. "They can't toy with me like they toy with everybody else."

Republican officials tried to hide their disappointment, if not their concern for the tremendous power Trump wields in the 2016 primary contest.

"Every candidate has the right to decide not to participate in a sanctioned debate," said Steve Duprey, the official

in charge of the Republican National Committee's debate efforts. "Time will tell whether this works to his benefit or hurts his campaign."

Trump's campaign manager, Corey Lewandowski, said Wednesday that "Mr. Trump doesn't play games. ... He walks away from bad deals."

"At the end of the day," he said on MSNBC, "Mr. Trump is going to have the last laugh."

Debates have long been considered critical moments for voters and candidates alike, and Fox News was more pointed than the RNC in its response to Trump's decision to sit their event out. "We're not sure how Iowans are going to feel about him walking away from them at the last minute," the network said in a statement.

Marc McGee, a graphic artist who lives in Cedar Rapids and was at Trump's rally Tuesday night, said Trump made the wrong call.

"You should show up and go through the motions, you know," he said. "If I was mad at work, I don't just stay home, you know."

Still, the 52-year-old voter said the decision didn't really bother him, describing it more likely an attempt to draw attention than anything else.



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