

Harney County searches for new normal as Hammonds come home

Some believe occupation was not helpful

By CONRAD WILSON
Oregon Public Broadcasting

In late November 2015, a man wearing a cowboy hat and clutching a pocket-sized Constitution stood before TV cameras to ask the world to aid two Harney County ranchers.

"The Hammonds need your help," Ammon Bundy said.

Dwight and Steven Hammond were slated to return to prison on charges of arson on federal land after a judge threw out their initial sentences as too lenient. Bundy and his followers wanted them to refuse to turn themselves in — and ended up seizing control of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in a 41-day takeover that drew national and international attention.

After the Hammonds turned themselves in, the tone of the occupation shifted away from the family and toward complaints about federal government overreach. The Hammonds did get a presidential pardon, but that was just this month, and many in Harney County wonder if the occupation ended up doing the ranchers more harm than good.

"I think they used the Hammonds' name to come here. They were looking for a circumstance to raise the dickens," Harney County rancher Scott Franklin said recently while working in heat of the vast high desert. "... They put the Hammonds in the tough spot. I'm sure there was that thought that you can't reward the Hammonds with the pardon and early release and have those militia think that they did it, because my gosh, what other places would they go and raise hell?"



Conrad Wilson/Oregon Public Broadcasting

Harney County rancher Scott Franklin has about 40 cattle and calves on this plot of land. In the distance is the headquarters of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge.

Days after the Hammonds were pardoned, occupation leaders and their supporters returned to Burns for a public celebration. Not everyone welcomed them.

"I just never wanted those people to come back to Harney County again," Franklin said. "We don't need them here."

Among the celebrants this month was Pete Santilli, a conservative internet talk show host who gained prominence during the 2016 occupation.

"We're reuniting and celebrating reuniting an American family," Santilli told a crowd in Burns and on social media during a post-pardon rally. "Thank you, President Trump."

Occupation supporter Brand Thornton also came back to celebrate. He told documentary filmmakers Sue Arbutnot and Richard Wilhelm that the pardons sent a powerful message: that the occupation worked.

"So now we get the presidential pardons, which really

underscores everything that we've done and shows that we were always on the right side," Thornton said. "And so it's extremely gratifying."

Some Harney County leaders disagree with that interpretation.

"In order to justify their own actions, they have to get people to think that they have credit for the pardons," said Harney County Sheriff Dave Ward, who was the public face of law enforcement during the occupation. "The fact is they deserve no credit."

Ward said he's glad that the Hammonds are home. Like many in the community, he wrote the U.S. Department of Justice to support having the Hammonds' sentence commuted.

"The Hammonds were released because a lawful system was followed," Ward said. "They probably sat in jail longer because people came in and did a hostile takeover in a small community, broke the laws and waved the guns around."

For many in Harney County, Trump's pardon of the Hammonds closes the book on the occupation and a debate that strained and divided the community.

Former county judge Steve Grasty was the county's top elected official during the occupation. On a recent evening, he sat on the porch of his house as the sun set over acres of sage brush.

"I'm pretty happy to see this saga in our community end," he said. "I think the Hammonds coming home, out of prison, all of that over, helps that saga end."

Grasty said there's more to talk about in Harney County than the occupation. Enrollment is up at local schools. More business are moving into the industrial park. And there's a newly renovated hotel open in Burns.

"I want to see this community truly vital and self-sustainable," he said. "Guys like the occupation and all their guns they brought didn't do anything to help that."

Federal judge blocks release of blueprints for 3D-printed guns

By MARTHA BELLISLE and MATTHEW DALY
Associated Press

SEATTLE — A federal judge on Tuesday stopped the release of blueprints to make untraceable and undetectable 3D-printed plastic guns as President Donald Trump questioned whether his administration should have agreed to allow the plans to be posted online.

The company behind the plans, Austin, Texas-based Defense Distributed, had reached a settlement with the federal government in June allowing it to make the plans for the guns available for download today.

The restraining order from U.S. District Judge Robert Lasnik in Seattle puts that plan on hold for now. "There is a possibility of irreparable harm because of the way these guns can be made," he said.

Washington state Attorney General Bob Ferguson called the ruling "a complete, total victory."

"We were asking for a nationwide temporary restraining order putting a halt to this outrageous decision by the federal government to allow these 3D downloadable guns to be available around our country and around the world. He granted that relief," Ferguson said at a news conference after the hearing. "That is significant."

Eight Democratic attorneys general had filed a lawsuit Monday seeking to block the settlement. They also sought the restraining order, arguing the 3D guns would be a safety risk.

Congressional Democrats have urged President Donald Trump to reverse the decision to publish the plans. At a news conference Tuesday, Connecticut Sen. Richard Blumenthal said that if Trump does not block sale, "Blood is going to be on his hands."

Trump said Tuesday that



AP Photo/Matthew Daly

Sen. Edward Markey, D-Mass., left, and Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Ct., display a photo of a plastic gun Tuesday.

he's "looking into" the idea, saying making 3D plastic guns available to the public "doesn't seem to make much sense!"

Trump tweeted that he has already spoken with the National Rifle Association about the downloadable directions a Texas company wants to provide for people to make 3D-printed guns. The guns are made of a hard plastic and are simple to assemble, easy to conceal and difficult to trace.

"We don't agree with President Trump very much," Washington state Assistant Attorney General Jeff Rupert told Lasnik, "but when he tweeted 'this doesn't make much sense,' that's something we agree with."

After a yearslong court battle, the State Department in late June settled the case against Defense Distributed.

The settlement, which took gun-control advocates by surprise, allowed the company to resume posting blueprints for the hard-plastic guns at the end of July. Those plans were put on hold by the Seattle judge's decision.

During the hearing in Seattle, Eric Soskin, a lawyer for the U.S. Justice Department, said they reached the settlement to allow the company to post the material online because the regulations were designed to restrict weapons that could be used in war, and the online guns were no different from the weapons that

could be bought in a store.

Since the weapons "did not create a military advantage," he told the judge, "how could the government justify regulating the data?"

But Rupert said a restraining order would keep the plans away from people who have learned about the technology and want to use it to get around gun laws.

Hours before the restraining order was issued, Democrats sounded the alarm, warning about "ghost guns" that can avoid detection and pose a deadly hazard.

The company's website had said downloads would begin today, but blueprints for at least one gun — a plastic pistol called the Liberator — have been posted on the site since Friday. A lawyer for the company said he didn't know how many blueprints had been downloaded since then.

Outrage over the administration decision is putting gun control back into the election-year political debate, but with a high-tech twist.

The president seemed to express surprise. He said on Twitter he was looking into the idea of a company providing plans to the public for printing guns, and he said it "doesn't seem to make much sense!"

Democrats agreed and said Trump had the power to stop it. Some Republicans also expressed concern.

"Even as a strong supporter of the Second Amendment — this is not right," Alaska Sen. Lisa Murkowski tweeted, linking to a news story on the guns.

The NRA said in a statement that "anti-gun politicians" and some members of the news media wrongly claim that 3D printing technology "will allow for the production and widespread proliferation of undetectable plastic firearms."

In truth, "undetectable plastic guns have been illegal for 30 years," said Chris W. Cox, executive director of the NRA's political arm. A federal law passed in 1988 — crafted with NRA support — bars the manufacture, sale or possession of an undetectable firearm.

Trump spokesman Hogan Gidley made much the same point, saying the administration supports the law against wholly plastic guns, including those made with a 3D printer.

But Democrats called the law weak and said gun users can get around it by using weapons with a removable metal block that the gun doesn't need in order to function.

Democrats filed legislation that would prohibit the publication of a digital file online that allows a 3D printer to manufacture a firearm. Democrats also filed a separate bill to require that all guns have at least one non-removable component made of metal so they can be discovered by metal detectors.

People can use the blueprints to manufacture plastic guns using a 3D printer. But industry experts have expressed doubts that criminals would go to the trouble, since the printers needed to make the guns can cost thousands of dollars, the guns themselves tend to disintegrate quickly and traditional firearms are easy to come by.

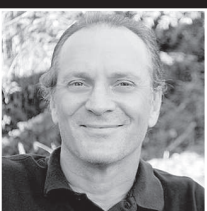
Deal reached to clean land around reactors

Associated Press

SPOKANE, Wash. — A portion of the vast Washington state site where the U.S. government created much of the plutonium for the nation's nuclear arsenal will be scrubbed free of radiation and other pollution under a final plan reached by the U.S. Department of Energy and federal and state regulators.

The plan announced Monday would spend \$200 million to finish the cleanup of nearly 8 square miles of the 586-square-mile Hanford Nuclear Reservation, where plutonium was made for nuclear weapons during World War II and the Cold War.

The land involved in the plan contains three of Hanford's nine plutonium reactors.



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Q: Muscle spasms can be a thing of the past.

A: Charlie horses in the leg, facial tics and back spasms are all deficiency symptoms — muscles are irritated and working too hard — they don't have the nutrients they need. Muscles need calcium, magnesium and Vitamin D taken together. Seventy-six percent of Americans are deficient in those nutrients. People may be OK until an injury when the increased activity in the hurt area causes the deficiency symptoms. It is easy and quick to correct. Time of day and dosage are important and need to be adjusted until the spasms stop. If you need help figuring this out, call Dr. Sears.



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Q: I don't necessarily wish to be buried in a cemetery but I've always been fond of grave stones & the enduring connection they represent to survivors & successive generations. What are my options?

A: Ever since cremation has replaced casketed burial as the dominant form of final disposition in this country, much has been written about this very topic. My recommendation is have a cenotaph designed. What is a cenotaph? The word itself derives from the Greek "kenos taphos", meaning empty tomb. Historically they were used to mark the graves of those whose body may never have been recovered (times of war, lost at sea, or in some sort of natural disaster or pestilence), often times memorializing a group of individuals who collectively met the same fate. Cenotaphs don't have to necessarily look like the traditional gravestone. Please call us for additional details.



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Q: My child's baby teeth have cavities. Why should they be filled if they are just going to fall out in a few years?

A: Children's teeth are very important to the health of the child and the development of the dental jaw and forming permanent teeth. Baby teeth not only give the child chewing function, cute esthetics, but also serve an important role in the jaw formation. Premature loss of primary teeth can adversely affect the jaw growth, position and timing of the eruption of permanent teeth, and if badly decayed or infected be a source of pain, sickness, and risk to other teeth. Please have your dentist evaluate your child's "baby teeth".



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- Call to demand payment using a specific method such as a prepaid debit card, gift card or wire transfer.
- Demand you pay taxes without the opportunity to question or appeal the amount you owe.
- Threaten to bring in local police, immigration officers etc. to have you arrested for not paying. The IRS cannot revoke your driver's license, business licenses, or immigration status. Scam artists use these schemes to trick victims.