

## HOMELESS: HUD's definition doesn't encompass couch surfers

Continued from 1A

the Salvation Army. Flyers hung around town had urged anyone who was homeless to come to the Salvation Army in Pendleton for lunch and an anonymous survey. When Richards and Bowman arrived, they finally got to ask their questions. One-by-one, men and women sat down for short interviews, then looked through a selection of giveaways such as lip balm, socks, water bottles, granola bars, hats and other items.

Michelle Hensley shucked off a heavy coat, gloves and hat before sitting down with Bowman.

"Are you currently homeless?" Bowman asked.

The 47-year-old nodded. "Where are you staying tonight?"

"I live in a tent by the Columbia River," Hensley said.

She told Bowman she was laid off from her job and camps near Umatilla with her dog — a Rottweiler/Shar Pei cross. Before the layoff, she said, "I always had a really nice house."

Down the table a ways, Richards interviewed a couple who answered her questions with sad and serious expressions on their young faces.

Richards, who helped organize the count and is a case manager for CAPECO's Moving Forward Program, said HUD's definition of homeless is narrow.

"People considered



Owen McLaughlin, who has struggled with homelessness for years, stuffs a new pair of socks into his backpack he was given Wednesday after he participated in the annual Point In Time Homeless Count conducted by the Community Action Program of East Central Oregon and other agencies.

homeless live in emergency shelters. They camp or sleep outside," she said. "They sleep in vehicles or motels. They stay in places not meant for human habitation such as garages and sheds."

The definition doesn't encompass couch surfers or others who temporarily bunk with others. CAPECO, however, collects that information for its own purposes.

"There are people who are truly homeless who don't meet the HUD definition," Richards said.

For all this data collection, Richards said they are really only getting a glimpse of the problem. This kind of surveying obviously is not

an exact science. Past counts revealed a fluctuating number of homeless in the county — 235 in 2011, 195 in 2012, 171 in 2013, 239 in 2014 and 86 in 2015.

The drop in 2015 had more to do with HUD clarifying its definition, she said, and the fact that the count occurred on a day that was unseasonably warm. The county's warming stations were closed. This year, both warming stations opened despite warmer temperatures to attract more homeless for the count with the promise of a dinner.

At the Salvation Army, Sally Susser said she's not homeless now, but was without a home for eight

years. Susser said she's seen more homeless this year.

"Some of them are sitting at the library, some are in restaurants and some are walking the streets," Susser said. "They sleep by the river. They sleep curled up behind buildings and in the woods."

Warren May said he currently lives in someone's garage. He said many homeless just stay off the radar.

"They hunker down," he said. "They are lonely."

Some have mental illness. A man who said he had PTSD is angry about his life. When a Salvation Army worker advised him where he could get a shower voucher, he spoke in frustrated tones saying he has already used his quota. When she offered to pray with him, he lashed out.

"If there was a god, would I be freezing every night?" he snapped. "Would my feet be black?"

Those kinds of sentiments are difficult for Richards and Bowman to hear since CAPECO's programs help some, but not all. Accurate data could help make the picture clearer.

"We're not just looking for information," she said. "We really do care."

Richards said she will have preliminary numbers from this count in mid-February. The state will release formal numbers later in the year.

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## PUC question utilities about renewable power plan

By HILLARY BORRUD  
Capital Bureau

SALEM — Oregon's two largest utilities presented the case for legislation to phase out coal energy for their customers in the state, during a special meeting of the Oregon Public Utility Commission Friday.

Skeptical commissioners pressed utility representatives to explain whether the bill would effect the operations of their coal plants in other states, and how the companies would maintain a reliable power supply during a major transition to variable sources such as solar and wind.

Lawmakers plan to ask the Public Utility Commission to weigh in on the costs and benefits of the bill, which the Legislature will consider during the 35-day session that begins Monday. The first hearing on the bill is scheduled Tuesday.

House Bill 4036, which resulted from negotiations between PacifiCorp, Portland General Electric and the politically active nonprofit Renew Oregon, would require the utilities to use renewable power sources such as wind and solar to serve at least 50 percent of energy demand in Oregon by 2040. That is double the current state mandate of 25 percent renewable energy by 2025. Renew Oregon represents a coalition of environmental groups, renewable energy companies and other businesses.

Under the deal negotiated with Renew Oregon, PacifiCorp would stop using coal power for its Oregon customers by 2030 and Portland General Electric would do so by 2035. The environmental groups agreed to drop their efforts to get voters to pass several new renewable energy mandates in November, including an initiative that would eliminate coal power, if lawmakers and the governor approve House Bill 4036.

Oregon's largest utilities are state-regulated monopolies, and the Public Utility Commission is the entity that enforces those regulations and sets utility rates. On Friday, the commissioners aired their suspicions the utilities might have inserted provisions into the bill to get around previous commis-

sion decisions with which they disagreed.

"I guess one of our concerns is we already allow the utilities to make proposals as to when costs associated with the (renewable energy mix standard) can come into rates," said Susan Ackerman, chair of the commission. Ackerman said part of House Bill 4036 appeared to re-state that. "Just the fact the language seems to say what we already do makes me suspicious, frankly."

The Public Utility Commission already raised concerns about the legislation privately, in emails with staff in Gov. Kate Brown's office that were obtained and reported by The Oregonian.

"We (at the public utility commission) have some deep concerns about these negotiations because we think they will not be effective in reducing carbon emissions, but they will be expensive to consumers," Ackerman wrote in a Dec. 15 email to Gov. Kate Brown's chief of staff Kristen Leonard and energy adviser Ruchi Sadhir.

Commissioner John Savage listed similar concerns. "It won't alter one bit what coal plants run and what are shut down regardless of what folks say — with or without the bill, what plants are shut down and when will be determined by what happens in other states and for other reasons (e.g. EPA regulation)," Savage wrote in a Dec. 17 email to Sadhir. When asked by the commission on Friday whether the bill would force PacifiCorp to shut down coal plants in other states, Scott Bolton, a vice president at the company, said no.

Ackerman said that state Sen. Lee Beyer, D-Springfield, asked the commission to prepare an analysis of the measure for lawmakers. The two utilities released analyses earlier this week which showed House Bill 4036 would increase the cost of power to customers by roughly 1 percent annually in the lead-up to full implementation. However, the utilities found the renewable energy requirements in the legislation would be \$880 million to \$960 million less expensive for customers than the ballot measure proposal to eliminate coal, Initiative Petition 63.

### BRIEFLY

#### U.S. declares 22 Hilary Clinton emails 'top secret'

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Obama administration confirmed for the first time Friday that Hillary Clinton's home server contained closely guarded government secrets, censoring 22 emails that contained material requiring one of the highest levels of classification. The revelation comes three days before Clinton competes in the Iowa presidential caucuses.

State Department officials also said the agency's Diplomatic Security and Intelligence and Research bureaus are investigating if any of the information was classified at the time of transmission, going to the heart of Clinton's defense of her email practices.

The department will release its next batch of emails from her time as secretary of state later Friday.

But The Associated Press learned seven email chains are being withheld in full for containing "top secret" information. The 37 pages include messages a key intelligence official recently said concerned "special access programs" — highly restricted, classified material that could point to confidential sources or clandestine programs like drone strikes.

"The documents are being upgraded at the request of the intelligence community because they contain a category of top secret information," State Department spokesman John Kirby told the AP, calling the withholding of documents in full "not unusual." That means they won't be published online with others being released, even with blacked-out boxes.

#### 1 of 3 fugitive inmates arrested

SANTA ANA, Calif. (AP) — Police arrested one of

three violent fugitive inmates on Friday after he told a woman in the same city where the jailbreak occurred a week ago that he wanted to surrender, authorities said. The other two men remained at large.

Bac Duong, 43, was taken into custody in Santa Ana, where the trio made their brazen escape on Jan. 22 from the maximum security facility, Orange County Sheriff Sandra Hutchens said.

Lee Tran, an owner of Auto Electric Rebuilders, said Duong came into the shop looking for Tran's sister, Theresa, and told her that he wanted to turn himself in.

Tran says his sister called 911 and Duong went outside to smoke a cigarette and wait for police to arrive.

He says his sister's boyfriend knows Duong and that marshals had come by to speak with her earlier this week because she might have visited Duong in jail.

#### Facebook sets stricter policy on firearms sales

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) Facebook says it's cracking down on online gun sales, with a new policy that bars private individuals from advertising or selling firearms on the world's largest social network.

Licensed gun retailers can still advertise their businesses on Facebook, but they aren't allowed to accept orders or transact sales on the site.

The new policy announced Friday drew praise from a gun-control group that says it has been urging Facebook to prohibit sales. Everytown for Gun Safety, which started with backing from former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg, says it found cases where felons who should not have been allowed to legally buy guns were able to buy one

from unlicensed sellers on Facebook.

#### Treasure hunter disappears searching for \$2 million in gold

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) — An antiques dealer who inspired tens of thousands to search the Rocky Mountains for \$2 million in hidden treasure now leads an increasingly desperate mission to find one of his fans.

Forrest Fenn has been flying out in chartered helicopters or planes, searching remote stretches of the upper Rio Grande for any sign of Randy Bilyeu, now missing in the wild for more than three frigid weeks. Fellow treasure hunters also are searching for Bilyeu, who was last seen on Jan. 5 while trying to solve Fenn's mystery.

"Every time we go out and don't find Randy it's

discouraging but we're not going to give up," Fenn told The Associated Press. "There are still places out there that I want to look."

Fenn, an eccentric 85-year-old from Santa Fe, has inspired a cult following since his announcement several years ago that he stashed a small bronze chest containing nearly \$2 million in gold, jewelry and artifacts somewhere in the Rockies. He dropped clues to its whereabouts in a cryptic poem in his self-published memoir, "The Thrill of the Chase."

The hidden treasure has inspired thousands to search in vain through remote corners of New Mexico, Yellowstone National Park and elsewhere in the mountains. Treasure hunters share their experiences on blogs and brainstorm about the clues. The mystery has been featured by national media, igniting even more interest.

## Umatilla Electric Scholarship Program



#### Umatilla Electric is offering the following scholarships for the 2016-17 school year:

**Academic Scholarships** - 12 \$2,500 scholarships are available for members of UEC and/or their dependent children who receive electric service from UEC at their primary residence, and are enrolled or planning to enroll in a full-time graduate or undergraduate program at a two- or four-year college. Apply online at [www.oregonstudentaid.gov](http://www.oregonstudentaid.gov) by **March 1, 2016**.

**Electrical Engineering Scholarship** - a \$5,000 scholarship is administered to a college student who has completed their freshman year and is interested in pursuing a degree in Electrical Engineering-Power Systems. Apply by **March 1, 2016** at [www.oregonstudentaid.gov](http://www.oregonstudentaid.gov)

**Lineman Scholarship** - a \$2,000 scholarship is available to members and/or applicants whose parent or guardian is an active member who receive electric service from UEC at their primary residence, and are interested in the Line Construction trade and will be attending an accredited Line College. Apply by **March 1, 2016**. Go to [www.umatillaelectric.com](http://www.umatillaelectric.com) to download the application.

UEC wants to help make college accessible to our young members. We hope you apply.

For more information about UEC's scholarship program, visit our offices in Hermiston or Boardman on online at [www.umatillaelectric.com](http://www.umatillaelectric.com). You can also call us for more information at 541-564-6414 or the Oregon Student Access and Completion (OSAC) at 1-800-452-8807.

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