

STANDOFF: Refuge will remain closed for weeks

Continued from 1A

federal authorities in Nevada. He’s accused of leading supporters who pointed military-style weapons at federal agents trying to enforce a court order to round up Bundy cattle from federal rangeland. The charges include conspiracy, assault on a federal officer, obstruction of justice and weapons charges. Federal authorities have not said why they chose to arrest the 69-year-old now. They may have feared Bundy’s presence would draw sympathizers to defend the holdouts. At the court hearing, the elder Bundy asked for a court-appointed attorney. U.S. Magistrate Judge Janice Stewart said she wanted to see financial documents first. She set a detention hearing for next Tuesday, and Bundy will stay in jail until then. Bomb squads planned to go through the refuge’s buildings to make sure no explosives were left behind, said Greg Bretzing, the agent in charge of the FBI’s Portland division. The refuge will remain closed for weeks as specialists collect evidence and try to determine whether the occupiers damaged any tribal artifacts and burial grounds sacred to the Burns Paiute Tribe, he said. Videos posted online showed members of the armed group exploring buildings at the site and criticizing the way tribal artifacts were stored there. The last four occupiers had been living in a rough encampment on refuge grounds.

The videos sometimes showed group members living in tents or gathered around a campfire, driving vehicles and setting up barricades. They erected a canopy next to a pickup truck and an old car and put camping chairs and coolers around it. The area appeared strewn with plastic water bottles, cardboard boxes, clothes, packages of bullets and beer cans. The last four occupiers were scheduled to be arraigned Friday in Portland. They are 27-year-old David Fry of Blanchester, Ohio; Jeff Banta, 46, of Elko, Nevada; and married couple Sean Anderson, 48, and Sandy Anderson, 47, of Riggins, Idaho. The FBI began moving in Wednesday evening, surrounding their encampment with armored vehicles. Over the next several hours, the occupiers’ panic and their negotiation with FBI agents could be heard live on the Internet, broadcast by a sympathizer of the occupiers who established phone contact with them. The Andersons and Banta surrendered first on Thursday. Fry initially refused to join them. “I’m making sure I’m not coming out of here alive,” he said at one point Thursday, threatening to kill himself. “Liberty or death, I take that stance.” After ranting for a while, he too gave up. Federal authorities were criticized during the occupation for not acting sooner to end it. But some experts said the FBI’s strategy of letting tensions die down before moving in ensured there would be no bloodshed. “This was beautifully

executed,” said Brian Levin, a criminal justice professor at California State University, San Bernardino. “This siege and the way it was handled will go down in law enforcement textbooks.” The standoff began when Ammon Bundy and his followers took over the refuge south of Burns, demanding that the government turn over the land to locals and release two ranchers imprisoned for setting fires. Federal agents, Oregon state troopers and sheriff’s deputies monitored the occupation to avoid a confrontation. As the weeks passed, there were growing calls for the FBI to act, including from Oregon’s governor. They did, on Jan. 26. On that day, Ammon Bundy and other occupation leaders were heading for the town of John Day to give a talk on federal overreach. FBI agents and Oregon state troopers stopped the group’s two-vehicle convoy. Robert “LaVoy” Finicum was shot dead in that confrontation. The FBI said he was reaching for a pistol inside his jacket pocket. A total of 12 people were arrested that week, including Ammon Bundy. Most of the occupiers fled the refuge after hearing they would not be arrested if they left quickly. Four stayed behind, saying they feared they would be arrested if they left. Oregon elected officials rejoiced at the end of the long occupation but said it will take a while for the rural area to recover. Gov. Kate Brown called the episode “very traumatic.”

PLAYERS: Internet shock jock Peter Santilli chronicled the standoff

Continued from 1A

The Bundys

Cliven Bundy — The 69-year-old Bunkerville, Nevada, rancher for years has refused to pay grazing fees or follow regulations on federal land where he runs cattle. Federal authorities are widely seen as having backed down from enforcing rules on him in 2014. They were rounding up Bundy’s cattle when he put out a call and armed groups showed up. Bundy was arrested Wednesday after arriving at the Portland airport. **Ammon Bundy** — Cliven Bundy’s son Ammon led an armed group in the Jan. 2 takeover of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge. The 40-year-old Emmett, Idaho, resident demanded that officials free two ranchers jailed for arson and relinquish the 300-square-mile refuge to local control. He owns a truck maintenance company in Arizona. **Ryan Bundy** — Ammon’s older brother Ryan planned to open the refuge to cattle grazing this spring, though exact details were never spelled out. The 43-year-old Bunkerville, Nevada, man was arrested with his brother Jan. 26. Both are charged with felony conspiracy to interfere with federal workers. **Other ranchers** **Robert “Lavoy” Finicum** — The 54-year-old Arizona rancher became a recognizable spokesman for the occupiers before authorities shot and killed him in a Jan. 26 traffic stop. Finicum was driving one of two vehicles carrying occupation leaders. He sped away but swerved to avoid a roadblock and got stuck in a snowbank. The FBI said he was reaching

for a gun when he was shot. **Dwight and Steve Hammond** — The Oregon father and son said they lit fires on federal land in 2001 and 2006 to protect their ranchland from wildfires and invasive plants. They were convicted and served time — Dwight, 73, three months; Steven, 46, one year. In October, a judge ruled their terms were too short under federal law and ordered them back to prison for about four years each. Protesters gathered Jan. 2 in Burns, Oregon, and Ammon Bundy and others broke away to occupy the refuge. The Hammonds distanced themselves from the armed occupation.

Law enforcement

Harney County Sheriff David Ward — He took his oath of office last year and is up for election in November. The Army veteran served combat tours in Somalia and Afghanistan, the county’s website says. Ward and Harney County Judge Steve Grasty voiced strong opposition to the occupation. **Greg Bretzing** — He is special agent in charge of the FBI in Oregon. Bretzing narrated an aerial video showing the traffic stop that led to Finicum’s death amid claims the rancher did nothing to provoke officers. Bretzing said the video shows Finicum reaching into his jacket, where authorities later found a gun. **Sympathizer** **Peter Santilli** — The 50-year-old Internet shock jock from Cincinnati, Ohio, and occupation sympathizer often chronicled the standoff with live video feeds to his 60,000 followers. He is charged with felony conspiracy to interfere with federal workers. His attorney is mounting a First Amendment defense.

EDUCATION: Funding is now about where it was in 2009

Continued from 1A

with a dose of reality. The state has endured years of anemic higher education funding. The improvement is like a brisk rain after years of drought — one heavy rain shower won’t completely transform the landscape. Blue Mountain Community College President Camille Preus sees the bump in funding as an important sea change, but she knows universities and community colleges still have a ways to go before completely regaining ground lost during years of a down economy. “We are now about where we were in 2009,” Preus said. “We’ve had a lot of inflation. Milk, bread and eggs don’t cost the same. The only thing less expen-

sive in 2016 is gas.” Ben Cannon, executive director of the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, welcomed the news with restrained enthusiasm. “The State of Oregon’s recent investment in public higher education represents an important turning point for our public universities and community colleges, following years of state disinvestment and enrollment increases,” Cannon said. “While the Grapevine analysis does not take into account state funding per student — where Oregon has ranked among the lowest nationally — this year’s funding increase will translate into degrees, certificates and promising futures for thousands more

Oregon students.” In another news release, Gov. Kate Brown celebrated the progress. “I am committed to supporting and empowering more Oregon students to be successful and complete their degrees,” Brown said. “I’m proud to have taken much-needed action to make a college education more affordable for Oregon students and families.” Preus puts the increase in perspective. The last decade, she said, was a time of whittling budgets, staffs and programs as enrollment and tuition rose. At a recent presentation to the BMCC Board of Education, Preus shared a PowerPoint that helped board members see years of data compressed into colorful bar graphs

and charts. From 2009 to 2014, they learned, state appropriations fell by almost 25 percent as enrollment rose 17 percent (from 2,241 full-time-equivalent students in 2009 to a high of 2,537 in 2011). Tuition increased 61 percent as state support dropped from \$2,562 per FTE student in 2009 to \$1,696 in 2011. In 1989, tuition provided only 20 percent of revenue, along with property taxes (50 percent) and state

support (30 percent). By 2012, tuition had risen to 47 percent of revenue. Preus praised President John Turner for leading BMCC through the crisis. “John Turner deserves a lot of credit,” Preus said. “He managed BMCC during that dark period while many colleges closed programs.” The financial headaches are easing, but Preus isn’t yet uncorking the champagne. She’s trying not to focus on inflation and hikes in Public

Employees Retirement System (PERS) benefits that could snuff out some of the gains and concentrate instead on the fact that state support for higher education seems to have shifted in a big way. “We can make investments in programs and personnel,” Preus said. “To build capacity, we don’t have to cut in other places.” *Contact Kathy Aney at kaney@eastoregonian.com or call 541-966-0810.*

WAGE: Increases will begin in July

Continued from 1A

and \$13.50 in the rest of the state by 2022. The rates are based on median income and cost of living in those regions and what it takes to be “self-sufficient” — to pay basic expenses such as food, housing and transportation, said Sen. Michael Dembrow, D-Portland, who proposed the measure. The Senate approved the measure along party lines 16-to-12 Thursday after more than six hours of debate. “It’s our task as legislators to craft a policy that takes the needs of all Oregonians into account,” Dembrow said. “I believe that this bill does that.” Republicans launched a tactical attack to stall the measure. They forced a vote to move the bill back to six different committees to consider amendments but failed at each attempt in the Democrat-dominated Senate. Republicans said the increase would kill jobs, hurt small businesses and farm small businesses and farmers and make goods and services more expensive for seniors and people with disabilities who are on fixed incomes. Sen. Kim Thatcher, R-Keizer, said the bill would harm the “very people you’re trying to help.” Dembrow responded by citing a study by researchers from Deakin University who looked at 1,500 estimates in 64 studies on the impact from minimum wage increases on employment and found there was almost “zero effect.” Republicans accused Democrats of hastily pushing the bill through the Senate without sufficient consideration to the fiscal

impact on state and local governments. Sen. Doug Whitsett, R-Klamath Falls, moved to send the bill to the Joint Committee on Ways and Means to do a thorough fiscal analysis, especially the cost of the increase to the state. “If we don’t do this, we are going to confirm people’s suspicion that Salem is the capital of unintended consequences,” said Senate Minority Leader Ted Ferrioli, R-John Day. The legislative fiscal office has reported that the cost of the measure to state and local governments is indeterminate. Part of the difficulty in estimating the cost is that the measure gradually takes effect, and several factors are unknown such as the number of jobs paid more than minimum wage that might be subject to a corresponding increase. The office also said the state could expect revenue increases from the additional income that could offset some of the costs. Sen. Richard Devlin, D-Tualatin, co-chairman of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means, said he doubted his committee could give better answers than the legislative fiscal office. Thatcher made a motion to replace the bill with an alternative proposal from Republicans failed 19-to-9. Thatcher’s proposal would have raised minimum wage by 25 cents in 2017 while exempting 20 rural and economically distressed counties and certain types of employers and workers. Employers with 50 employees or less, agricultural and timber workers, temporary employees working 720 hours or less per year and workers 19

and younger also would be exempt from the increase. The 20 counties that would have been exempt were Baker, Coos, Crook, Curry, Douglas, Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Jefferson, Josephine, Klamath, Lake, Malheur, Morrow, Sherman, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, Wasco and Wheeler. The Republican alternative also provided a network of tax credits for certain costs associated with raising minimum wage in other parts of the states, including companies with 100 employees or less. The proposal that passed Thursday hikes wages beginning in July from \$9.25 to \$9.75 statewide. The minimum gradually would climb to \$14.75 in 2022 in the Portland urban growth boundary, which includes parts of Multnomah, Washington and Clackamas counties. It will rise to \$13.50 in Benton, Clatsop, Columbia, Deschutes, Hood River, Jackson, Josephine, Lane, Lincoln, Linn, Marion, Polk, Tillamook, Wasco, and Yamhill counties, and parts of Multnomah, Clackamas and Washington counties outside Portland’s urban growth boundary. In rural areas, the minimum would increase to \$12.50. Those areas include Malheur, Lake, Harney, Wheeler, Sherman, Gilliam, Wallowa, Grant, Jefferson, Baker, Union, Crook, Klamath, Douglas, Coos, Curry, Umatilla and Morrow counties. The bill was intended to offer an alternative to ballot initiatives that would raise the minimum to \$15 or \$13.50 statewide and would repeal a ban on municipalities and counties from setting a higher wage.

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