

FBI: Finicum’s widow rejected authorities’ conclusion

Continued from 1A

scene failed to disclose they fired two rounds.

As they looked into how many shots were fired during the confrontation and by whom, the investigators found a round in the roof of Finicum’s truck.

“We could not explain the fourth shot into the roof of the truck, or its trajectory given the placement of the Oregon State Police troopers at the time,” Deschutes County Sheriff Shane Nelson said.

The U.S. Justice Department’s Office of Inspector General said it is investigating the FBI team’s actions, working with Oregon officials.

During the news conference, Oregon officials played videos showing Finicum and others in his truck Jan. 26 during the initial stop by law enforcement. Finicum was driving one of two vehicles that were pulled over while carrying key occupation figures.

Video taken from the phone of one of his passengers shows the occupants panicking after authorities stop the truck.

With his window rolled down, Finicum shouts at the officers: “Shoot me, just shoot me! Put the bullet through me. Do as you damn

well please.”

After a conversation with others in the truck, Finicum drives off, leading authorities on a short chase. The song “Hold Each Other” by a Great Big World was on the vehicle’s stereo.

Finicum was driving over 70 mph when the truck came to a roadblock, Nelson said.

A trooper fired three shots at the truck as it approached because it was a threat to law enforcement, he said. The truck plowed into a snow-bank. Finicum got out, and someone from the FBI team fired two more shots, Nelson said.

As Finicum stood in the snow, authorities told him multiple times to lie on the ground. Instead, he reached into the inside of his jacket. The troopers fired three rounds, all of which hit Finicum. A loaded pistol was found in his jacket pocket.

Oregon investigators said Finicum posed a threat to officers by nearly running over one of them at the roadblock, and by reaching for a gun.

Occupation members in the other vehicle, including leader Ammon Bundy, surrendered.

Finicum was a high-profile part of the weekslong standoff at Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, launched

Jan. 2 by a small armed group demanding the government relinquish control of public lands and objecting to the prison sentences of two local ranchers convicted of setting fires.

His death became a symbol for those decrying federal oversight, on public lands in the West and elsewhere, and led to protests of what they called an unnecessary use of force.

Finicum’s widow, Jeanette Finicum, on Tuesday rejected authorities’ conclusion that her husband’s shooting was justified and said she is talking with attorneys about taking her family’s fight to court.

Speaking to reporters in St. George, Utah, Jeanette Finicum said she believes her husband was shot with his hands in the air trying to surrender. She argued he was reaching to his side as a reaction to the pain of being shot.

Revelations that FBI agents at the scene failed to disclose their own shots may continue to fuel debate about Finicum’s death.

“Now we know why a video with sound wasn’t released immediately,” said Lissa Casey, Bundy’s attorney. “If it was, the public would have heard the shots that the government didn’t want them to hear.”

Two of three Morrow County commission seats up for election

By GEORGE PLAVERN  
East Oregonian

Two of three seats are up for grabs on the Morrow County Court in this year’s election, with four candidates filing before Tuesday’s deadline.

Incumbent Leann Rea will seek re-election for Commissioner No. 1, a position she has held since 2008. Rea will be challenged by Jim Doherty, who runs O’Doherty Cattle Co. in Boardman.

A pair of Heppner residents — Greg Sweek and Melissa Lindsay — will vie for Commissioner No. 3 as the county prepares to abolish its long-standing judge position.

In years past, the county judge served as both a local administrator and presided over juvenile court. However, the court voted last year to hire a full-time administrator and transition to three part-time commissioners. The change will take effect after current Judge Terry Tallman retires on Jan. 1, 2017.

Since the transition hasn’t officially happened, Sweek and Lindsay still appear on the ballot as candidates for judge. After the election, they will be sworn in as a commissioner and juvenile cases will be absorbed into Sixth District Circuit Court.

Rea, 75, said she wants to remain on the court to help guide the county through the changeover. If re-elected, Rea would be the most



experienced commissioner entering her third term.

“I just felt we needed someone with some background and knowledge to make the transition flow better,” Rea said.

Doherty, 51, said he hopes to bring a new voice to the county courthouse.

“I had a lot of people pushing me to run,” he said. “I just think Boardman and Morrow County are poised to do some great things.”

In the race for Commissioner 3, Sweek is no stranger to county government. He served nine terms as assessor and tax collector before retiring in 2013. Just when he thought he was done, Sweek said he found himself regularly attending court meetings to share his ideas and concerns.

In particular, Sweek said he is focused on new revenue streams coming into the county from wind energy development and the nearly-completed Carty Generating Station next to the Boardman Coal Plant.

“I want to make sure that money is used for improving infrastructure within the county,” he said.

Lindsay, 48, is the president of Turner Ranch Inc., a 6,000-acre farm that grows mint, garlic, wheat and grass seed. She said she was excited to hear about the creation of a third commission seat, and saw it as an opportunity to become more involved.

“I just want to put my energy to work,” Lindsay said. “I’m interested in economic development across the entire county.”

For the first time this year, candidates for Morrow County commissioners won’t run on party affiliation. Instead, voters passed a measure in 2014 that lumps all candidates into one primary, with the top two vote-getters moving on to the November general election.

But if a candidate receives at least 51 percent of the vote in the primary, they would be declared the winner. This year’s primary will be held on May 17.

In other Morrow County races, a number of incumbents will run unopposed for their seats. They are: Stephen Haddock, treasurer; Ann Spicer, justice of the peace; Bobbi Childers, county clerk; Gayle Gutierrez, treasurer; and Ken Matlack, sheriff.

SMITH: ‘This is an issue that found me’

Continued from 1A

eyes always had a sparkle in them.”

Inside, however, he ping-ponged between “euphoric highs to lows filled with darkness and depression.”

After a particularly rough week, he gave away prized possessions and penned a poignant goodbye note to his family. On the day before his 22nd birthday, Garrett swallowed sleeping pills and whiskey.

Smith looked emotional as he read part of his son’s goodbye letter.

“I can’t handle life anymore. I can no longer look at my own reflection. I just look forward to going to sleep and never having to wake up again.”

Gordon Smith’s personal tragedy fueled his efforts to battle the stigma of mental illness and keep other families from the pain of suicide. Yet the former senator has a cheerful temperament and can count his bad days on one hand.

“This is an issue that found me,” he said. “I didn’t find it.”

Smith has become one of the country’s leading advocates for mental illness prevention. In 2004, Congress passed the Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act on what would have been Garrett’s birthday, authorizing \$82 million for youth suicide prevention and mental illness screening. The senator and his family attended the signing ceremony at the White House. He said passage of the bill was nonpartisan.

“Mental illness doesn’t register Republican or Democrat,” he said. “It’s simply human.”

The Garrett Lee Smith Memorial library opened

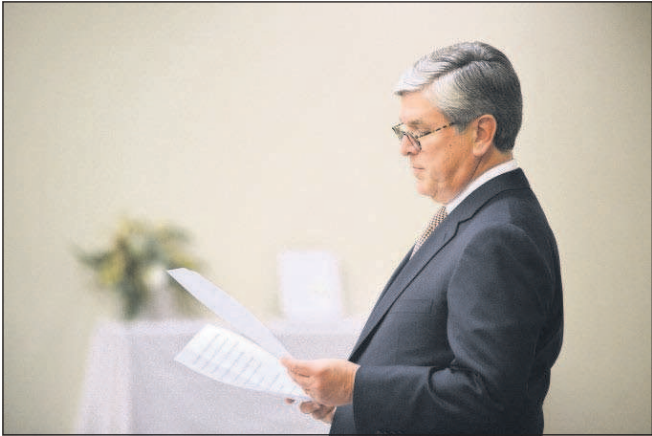


Photo by E.J. Harris

**Former Sen. Gordon Smith reads, during the EO Forum on Tuesday at BMCC in Pendleton, the note left after his 22-year-old son, Garrett, committed suicide while away at college in 2003.**

at St. Anthony Hospital in 2005 and moved across town in 2015 to Blue Mountain Community College. The library is the cornerstone of BMCC’s Health & Wellness Resource Center. One book in the collection is “Remembering Garrett: One Family’s Battle with a Child’s Depression,” written by Smith.

As president and CEO of the National Association of Broadcasters, Smith launched a multimillion-dollar television and radio campaign called “OK2TALK” to encourage young people to talk about depression and other mental health challenges.

Smith addressed the students in the BMCC audience, urging them to make a difference if they notice troubling behavior in their friends. College age is a vulnerable time for some with mental illness.

“Never worry about betraying friendships,” he said. “You may be the only thing between them and the grave.”

He ticked off a list of eight signs that someone is considering suicide. They might

talk or joke around about killing themselves, change their eating or sleeping habits, withdraw from friends, have difficulty concentrating, use more drugs or alcohol, neglect their appearance, focus on death or give away possessions.

He threw out some numbers. Mental illness affects approximately 20 percent of adult Americans annually.

“We know 41,000 Americans take their lives every year. On campus, suicide is the second leading cause of death.”

Smith said the government is now talking about mental health. But while it’s no longer invisible, there is a long way to go.

“We’ve made a dent, but there’s much to do,” he said. “As a nation, we need to place a high priority on mental health. If you have physical health, but don’t have mental health, you don’t have health.”

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PENDLETON: John Turner only candidate for mayor

Continued from 1A

Bob Ehmann served as a Pendleton city councilor from 1992-2000 and has served on several city committees and commissions.

A former attorney, Ehmann now works as a self-employed information technology analyst.

Under his educational background, Ehmann wrote he has a bachelor’s degree from Occidental College and a law degree from Lewis & Clark.

Retiree Rex Morehouse was the mayor and police commissioner of Spirit Lake, Idaho from 1964-1970 and has been active in opposing several city tax measures.

Incumbent Chuck Wood declined to run for re-election, giving up a seat that represents North Hill, Westgate and the airport.

**Ward 3**

The field for the Ward 3 seat doubled Monday, adding Dale Primmer and Tom

Phelan to the mix.

Primmer is the director of community justice for Umatilla County and has 19 years of experience in county government.

Primmer has an associate degree from Blue Mountain Community College and a bachelor’s degree from Western Oregon University.

Phelan is an insurance agent with ISU Insurance Services-The Stratton Agency with no prior political experience.

Primmer and Phelan join Don Bennett, a retired Transportation Security Administration employee, and Cody Cimmeyotti, a bartender and a customer service agent, in the race.

The Ward 3 seat encompasses McKay Creek, Southgate and Tutuilla Road and is currently held by Tom Young, who decided not to run again.

**At-large**

Another large field of candidates, the at-large race has been set for a month.

The candidates are Paul Chalmers, the Umatilla County director of assessment and taxation, Paul Rabitaille, a retired salesman, Rick Rohde, a retired Wal-Mart Distribution Center worker and Jim Swearingen, the co-owner of J & B Automotive.

Chalmers currently holds the seat, having been appointed over Rabitaille, Swearingen and Tibbets to fill the rest of Hill’s term.

**Mayor**

Barring a successful write-in campaign, John Turner will be the next mayor of Pendleton.

No other candidates for mayor filed by the deadline, meaning the former BMCC president will replace longtime Mayor Phillip Houk in 2017.

After three terms, Houk decided against re-election and endorsed Turner.

Contact Antonio Sierra at [asierra@eastoregonian.com](mailto:asierra@eastoregonian.com) or 541-966-0836.

COUNTY: Judge Dan Hill running unopposed

Continued from 1A

Circuit Judge Ron Pahl did not file to seek another term in position 2 for 6th Judicial District, according to candidate information on the Oregon Secretary of State website. But the race for the circuit courts of Umatilla and Morrow counties drew a late contender.

John Ballard of Hermiston filed early Tuesday. He will compete against Jon Lieuallen of Pendleton,

who filed for the election a month ago.

Lieuallen is a partner at the Milton-Freewater firm Monahan, Grove and Tucker, and Ballard has his own practice. Both also do a fair share of criminal defense work. They also have failed in previous attempts to get on the bench.

Ballard was one of 10 attorneys in 2010 that applied for two open seats in the district. Then-Gov. Ted Kulongoski selected Eva

Temple and Lynn Hampton for the positions. And Lieuallen in 2012 ran and lost against Hampton when she sought re-election.

Ballard, in that campaign, gave Lieuallen \$1,000.

Filings also show Circuit Judge Dan Hill is running unopposed, as is Umatilla County District Attorney Dan Primus. And the race for Umatilla County sheriff remains between incumbent Terry Rowan and challenger Ryan Lehnert.



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