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EAST OREGONIAN

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WINNER OF THE 2016 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar

FBI agent pleads not guilty to lying about Finicum shooting

By **STEVEN DUBOIS**
Associated Press

PORTLAND — An FBI agent pleaded not guilty on Wednesday to charges that he lied about shooting at a key figure in last year's armed occupation of a national wildlife refuge just before the man was

killed by Oregon police. W. Joseph Astarita was indicted on five felony charges after the inspector general of the U.S. Justice Department last year began investigating possible FBI misconduct and whether there was a cover-up. He said nothing during a brief court hearing and was

released on his own recognition, declining to comment as he left. Robert "LaVoy" Finicum, a spokesman for the group that took over the remote bird sanctuary to oppose federal control of land in the Western U.S., was fatally shot Jan. 26, 2016. Oregon State Police opened fire

after he got out of a vehicle at a police roadblock and reached toward a handgun in an inner jacket pocket. Investigators determined the troopers were justified in shooting Finicum but also found members of an FBI

See SHOOTING/8A

Lawmakers strike deal on transportation package

By **PARIS ACHEN**
Capital Bureau

SALEM — State lawmakers have reached an agreement on sticking points of a multi-million dollar transportation package, Gov. Kate Brown said Wednesday.

The details of the proposal will be released later this week, Brown said.

Legislators have less than two weeks to finish and vote on the package. The plan includes new taxes and fees and increases in other taxes and fees to fund maintenance and improvements to roads, bridges, transit and sidewalks.

The agreement addresses issues that had previously threatened to undermine the future of the transportation plan. The plan still addresses about eight to 10 years of needs, according to the governor's office.

Those included the overall amount of taxes and spending in the package, what the money went toward and cost controls on the state's low carbon fuels standard, Brown said.

"In terms of the low carbon fuels standard, that is being institutionalized to bring stability and certainty to the system. I think there is a consensus amongst stakeholders. You'll see the consensus approach as the bill draft comes out," the governor said Wednesday.

Brown declined to say how the overall amount of the package has changed but said she is excited "about the significant investment we will be making in public transit."

"Suffice it to say there is bipartisan consensus on the levels," she added.



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Safeway cashier Mike Fitzmorris of Pendleton was recently recognized for his 45-years-and-going career with the company.

COMPANY MAN

Fitzmorris took summer job at 16 and never left Safeway

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**
East Oregonian

There's a little shine to Mike Fitzmorris' Safeway uniform these days.

The grocery store chain recently gave Fitzmorris a pin with three stones on it — two green gems, each representing 20 years of service, and a clear gem that signifies another five.

The pin is one of the few reminders that the unassuming man working the checkout counter has been at the grocery store for 45 years.

For Fitzmorris, it's a summer job that never ended.

As a 16-year-old in 1972, Fitzmorris became a courtesy clerk at Safeway in Aloha as an alternative to mowing lawns and delivering newspapers.

"I didn't have to wake up at 3 in the morning anymore," he said.

Fitzmorris met his wife, Robin, at work and when she sought to return to her hometown 10 years ago, they moved their family from the Willamette Valley to Pendleton.

Fitzmorris stuck with

Safeway the entire time, even as technology changed the way he did his job.

While he now uses a touch screen when scanning food into bags, Fitzmorris said Safeway cashiers used to have to memorize item prices when customers went through the checkout line. When item prices changed, Fitzmorris and other employees would use hairspray to remove the tag and replace it with a new one.

Fitzmorris has held other positions with the company, like produce manager, but in his

words, "that's ancient history." He likes working the checkout line, being able to greet customers and build a rapport with community members.

But Fitzmorris also has practical reasons for sticking with the job.

He said Safeway's health benefits and paid vacation package was a strong incentive to stay with the company. When Fitzmorris was interviewed Monday, he had just returned from a trip to the Redwoods

See SAFEWAY/8A

PENDLETON Fireworks show canceled due to lack of funds

East Oregonian

Pendleton residents looking for a Fourth of July fireworks show will have to look elsewhere this year.

Becky Marks, who helped organize the past three shows as a member of the Fraternal Order of Eagles, said no one took her place when she decided to take a step back from the fundraising effort. As a result, there will be no fireworks show.

Marks said there was no organized effort to raise the \$10,000 needed for the show and the April deadline to order the fireworks has long since passed. The last time Marks checked the Eagles' fireworks account, it contained only \$500.

See FIREWORKS/8A

More inside

For a list of Fourth of July events around the region see Page 3A

Irrigon homes saved from fast-moving brush fire

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

A fire fighter sprays down a hot spot while battling a brush fire off Washington Lane on Wednesday in Irrigon.

Several Irrigon families had a close call Wednesday afternoon after a fire swept through about five acres of brush surrounded by homes off Snyder Road.

One woman was transported by ambulance to Good Shepherd Medical Center to be treated for smoke inhalation and three sheds were burned, according to a news release from Morrow County Sheriff's Office. But all three houses directly bordering the burned area were saved.

Lt. Casey Zellars of Boardman Rural Fire Protection District said the fire started when a property owner was mowing the tall grass, trying to prevent a fire hazard. Instead, a spark from the mower started the grass on fire.

"He saw smoke and was unable to stop it," Zellars said. "He called 9-1-1 immediately."

Irrigon Fire Department, Boardman Rural Fire Protection District, Boardman Ambulance, Irrigon Ambulance, Morrow County Sheriff's Office, Umatilla Rural Fire Protection District and Umatilla County Fire District 1 responded. Around the edges of the flaming field where firefighters worked, groups of neighbors also helped protect homes and yards using hoses, buckets and shovels.

One of those neighbors, Preston Morris, had soot marks across his chest and stomach. He said he was sitting on his back porch when the fire started.

See IRRIGON/8A

