

Veterans court may be collateral damage in immigration fight

Dozens of specialty courts in Oregon risk losing federal funding

By ANDREW SELSKY
Associated Press

EUGENE — Three decades ago, Lori Ann Bourgeois was guarding fighter jets at an air base. After her discharge, she fell into drug addiction. She wound up living on the streets and was arrested for possession of methamphetamine.

But on a recent day, the former Air Force Security Police member walked into a Veterans Treatment Court after completing a 90-day residential drug treatment program. Two dozen fellow vets sitting on the courtroom benches applauded. A judge handed Bourgeois a coin marking the occasion, inscribed “Change Attitude, Change Thinking, Change Behavior.”

The program Bourgeois credits for pulling her out of the “black hole” of homelessness is among more than three dozen Oregon specialty courts caught in a stand-off between the state and federal government over immigration enforcement.

The Trump administration in 2017 threatened to withhold law enforcement grants from 29 cities, counties or states it viewed as having “sanctuary” policies that limit cooperation with federal immigration agents. Today, all those jurisdictions have received



AP Photo/Andrew Selsky, File

In this photo taken March 7, 2019, Lori Ann Bourgeois stands in front of the courtroom where the Veterans Treatment Court is held at the Lane County Circuit Court in Eugene.

or been cleared to get the money, except Oregon, which is battling for the funds in federal court.

The Veterans Treatment Court in Eugene and 40 other specialty courts, including mental health and civilian drug programs, risk losing all or part of their budgets, said Michael Schmidt, executive director of Oregon’s Criminal Justice Commission, which administers the money.

The commission has managed to keep the courts funded through July, Schmidt said. Unless the

Trump administration relents or is forced by court order to deliver the money, or the Oregon Legislature comes up with it, the commission must make “horrible, tough decisions” about where to make the cuts, Schmidt said.

Speaking in her office in the Eugene courthouse, specialty courts coordinator Danielle Hanson said if the veterans court budget is cut, the vets would have to start paying for drug treatment, and they would be deprived of housing resources and travel funds

to go to residential treatment facilities as far as 330 miles away. Some veterans might even be turned away.

“It would impact the program substantially,” Hanson said.

Two dozen former servicemen and women are currently going through the rigorous program that lasts a minimum of a year, and usually up to a year and a half. They must attend group sessions three times a week, come to court at least once a week — presided over by Judge Valeri Love, who acts as their commanding officer — submit to regular urine tests, and show progress. Graduates can have convictions cleared and avoid prison.

“The Veterans Treatment Court creates a routine and a regimen that many vets can thrive in. It pulls them out of isolation,” said Michael Hajarizadeh, who represents the vets as a public defender.

Many have post-traumatic stress, but the common thread is substance abuse, said Hajarizadeh, who is an Army veteran of the Afghanistan war. He said the support structure and the bond vets feel for each other make the system work.

Bourgeois wore a radiant smile as she accepted the coin on March 7 and shook Love’s hand. It was a sharp contrast to when Bourgeois was arrested in a homeless camp on Aug. 31, 2017 — her 50th birthday.

“This is my first time not being homeless in seven years,” Bour-

geois said. “It is a BIG milestone.”

Bourgeois served in the Air Force Security Police, now called Security Forces, for four years, until 1991. A back injury resulted in dependence on prescription painkillers, escalating to other drugs.

In November, the Lane County Circuit Court entered her into the veterans court after finding her guilty of possessing meth. If she completes the program, the circuit court will discharge Bourgeois and dismiss all proceedings against her. She had faced a year in jail.

She is on probation and staying in a house for people recovering from addiction.

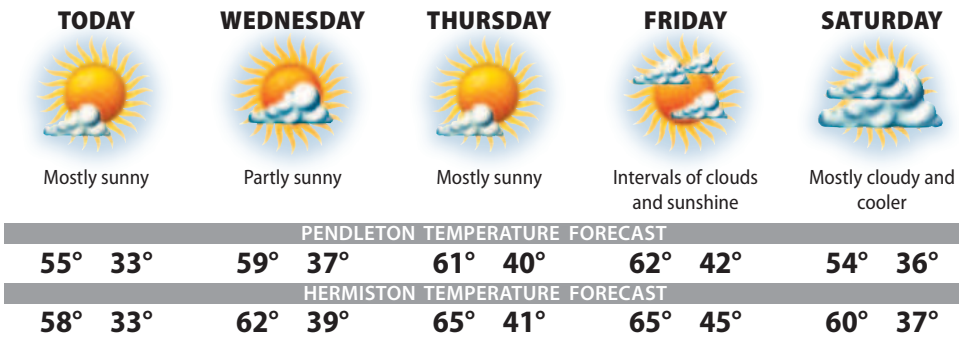
“Without this, I’d still be out on the streets,” Bourgeois said. “I’m very grateful to be back and start again.”

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown and Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum sued President Donald Trump in November to get \$4 million in grants from fiscal years 2017 and 2018 restored, saying Oregon was “unlawfully deprived” of the funds. The lawsuit accuses Trump of an “unconstitutional attempt” to compel Oregon to enforce federal immigration policies.

“As we have seen, these efforts have frequently been both inhumane and dangerous,” Rosenblum said.

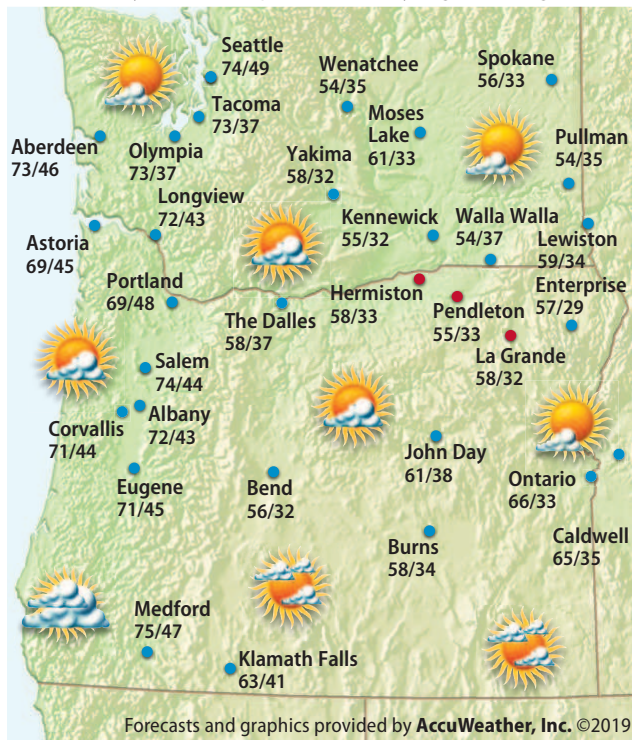
Furthermore, the administration is violating the separation of powers by invading Congress’ spending authority, the lawsuit says.

Forecast for Pendleton Area



OREGON FORECAST

Shown is today's weather. Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows.



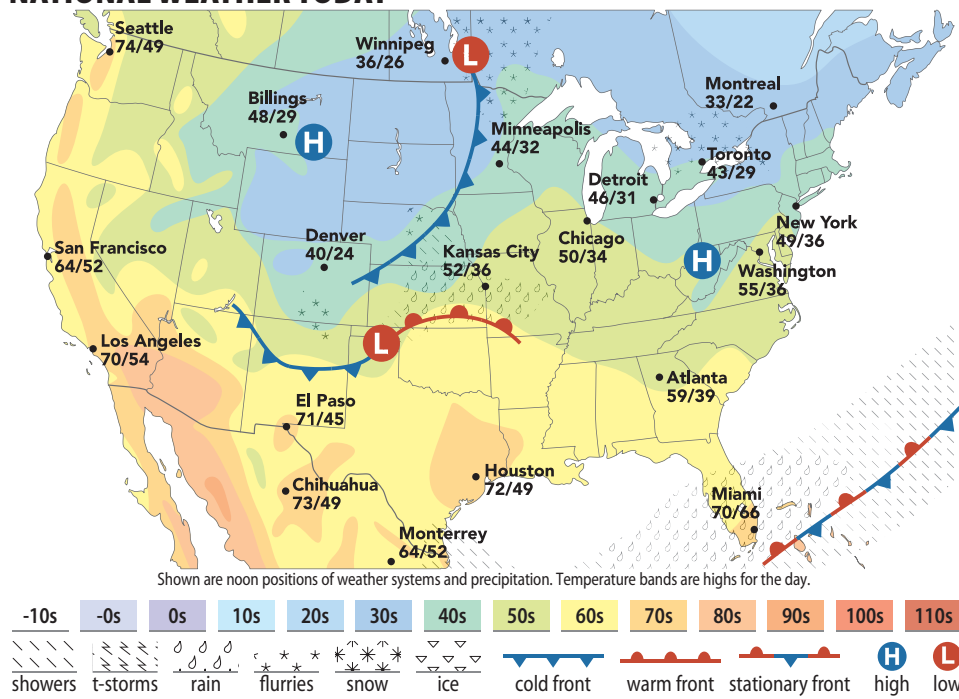
ALMANAC

PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yest.		
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	51°	28°
Normals	56°	36°
Records	76° (1934)	15° (1965)
PRECIPITATION		
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"	
Month to date	0.39"	
Normal month to date	0.76"	
Year to date	5.24"	
Last year to date	3.27"	
Normal year to date	3.27"	
HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.		
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	53°	25°
Normals	58°	35°
Records	75° (1972)	10° (1965)
PRECIPITATION		
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"	
Month to date	0.10"	
Normal month to date	0.56"	
Year to date	3.49"	
Last year to date	2.06"	
Normal year to date	2.80"	
WINDS (in mph)		
Today	Wed.	
Boardman	NE 4-8	NNE 4-8
Pendleton	NNE 4-8	NNE 4-8
SUN AND MOON		
Sunrise today	7:01 a.m.	
Sunset tonight	7:06 p.m.	
Moonrise today	5:37 p.m.	
Moonset today	6:40 a.m.	
Full	Last	New
Mar 20	Mar 27	Apr 5
		Apr 12

NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)
High 90° in Thermal, Calif. Low -10° in Farson, Wyo.

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



BRIEFLY

Nine arrested in school basketball game riot expelled

VANCOUVER, Wash. (AP) — Officials say nine students who were arrested after a riot broke out at an eighth grade basketball tournament in southwest Washington have been expelled from their schools. Vancouver School District officials said Monday that the students arrested were expelled and that officials were still investigating others who may have been involved in the Friday evening incident.

Officials say two students got into a fight in the stands at Gaiser Middle School and that security officers removed them from the gym. Officials say several students followed them and that more joined and interfered as the students were taken outside.

The deputies called for backup as they were surrounded by 60 to 70 teens who shouted racial slurs and death threats at the officers.

Nine students were arrested on charges including trespassing, failing to disperse, assault, disorderly conduct and resisting arrest.

White House proposes big cut in Hanford spending

RICHLAND, Wash. (AP) — The Trump administration is proposing big cuts to the cleanup budget for the Hanford Nuclear Reservation.

The Tri-City Herald reports the administration on Monday proposed cutting Hanford’s budget by \$416 million.

Hanford for decades made plutonium for nuclear weapons and the site is now engaged in cleaning up the

resulting highly radioactive wastes.

Hanford’s annual budget would drop from \$2.5 billion this year to \$2.1 billion next year under the budget request submitted to Congress, which sets the budget. The cut comes as a new estimate at least triples the estimated cost of Hanford cleanup.

A report released in January puts the remaining cleanup costs for Hanford at \$323 billion under a best case scenario. At worst it could be \$677 billion.

Man shot, killed by police in The Dalles

PORTLAND (AP) — Police in The Dalles say an officer fatally shot a 77-year-old man who was reportedly shooting a rifle at a neighbor’s house.

KOIN-TV reports the man killed in the Saturday incident was identified as James Young.

Police say arriving officers saw Young shooting, and at some point Young was shot and killed.

No one else was injured in the incident.

Police say the officer involved in the shooting has been placed on paid administrative leave, which is standard protocol for officer-involved shootings.

Police say the shooting is under investigation.

Oregon House approves 10-year ban on ‘fracking’

SALEM (AP) — The Oregon House approved a 10-year ban on fracking to explore for oil and natural gas.

Lawmakers voted 42-12 on Monday to prohibit

the process, which injects high-pressure liquids into underground rock to extract oil and gas. The measure now goes to the Senate for consideration.

There are currently no fracking operations in Oregon. But developers say there’s potential for coalbed methane extraction in the Willamette Valley, which this bill would also block.

Environmental advocates say fracking can contaminate groundwater and pose other environmental risks.

The Trump administration announced last year that it planned roll back federal regulations on the process, making it easier to frack on public lands.

New York, Vermont and Maryland have enacted fracking bans.

Woman pleads guilty to shoving friend off bridge

VANCOUVER, Wash. (AP) — A woman has pleaded guilty to pushing her 16-year-old friend from a bridge at a popular swimming area near Vancouver.

The Columbian reports Tay’lor Smith, 19, pleaded guilty to misdemeanor reckless endangerment Monday in Clark County District Court.

Prosecutors are recommending no jail time when Smith is sentenced later this month.

Smith pushed Jordan Holgerson off the bridge Aug. 7 at Moulton Falls northeast of Vancouver.

Video posted on YouTube that went viral shows Holgerson being pushed.

Holgerson broke six ribs and punctured her lungs in a fall of over 50 feet.

In an interview on “Good Morning America” Smith said she didn’t consider the repercussions.

CORRECTIONS: The East Oregonian works hard to be accurate and sincerely regrets any errors. If you notice a mistake in the paper, please call 541-966-0818.

EAST OREGONIAN

— Founded Oct. 16, 1875 —

211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton 541-276-2211
333 E. Main St., Hermiston 541-567-6211
Office hours: Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
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\$1.50 Tuesday through Saturday

Circulation Manager:

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