

3 dead, including gunman, in Bend Safeway shooting

BY **BYRCE DOLE**

The Bulletin

BEND — Police identified the man who killed two people at the Safeway grocery store on U.S. Highway 20 in Bend Sunday night, Aug. 28, as Ethan B. Miller, 20, of Bend.

Police say he killed a customer, Glenn Edward Bennett, 84, of Bend, and a Safeway employee, Donald Ray Surret Jr., 66, of Bend. Police spokesperson Sheila Miller said Surret attempted to disarm the shooter and may have prevented additional deaths during the attack.

Two other people were injured.

The shooter lived at the Fox Hollow Apartments near the Forum shopping center where the attack took place. Police searched the apartment on Monday, Aug. 29. They also searched his vehicle, where they found two Molotov cocktails.

Sheila Miller said police entered the Safeway while shots were still being fired. They discovered the shooter dead from a self-inflicted gunshot wound. Near him was an AR-15-style rifle and a shotgun.

Miller appeared to have left behind a series of violent threats on the online social reading platform Wattpad, but they have been removed. One post said an attack was initially planned at Mountain View High School on the first day of school. He also wrote of needing to make bombs.

Miller said the incident began about 7:04 p.m. Sunday near Costco. Miller fired shots into the Big Lots store next door to Safeway.

Molly Taroli, 40, said she was shopping for dinner with her husband in the frozen foods aisle when the shooter came in through the westernmost door of the grocery store and went through every aisle “spraying shots,” she said. Taroli removed her own handgun from her purse and her husband ran out the front door to get his own gun.

Taroli said she heard a child screaming. She threw her shopping cart in front of her and started running toward the back of the store. Employees were yelling “go, go, go!” and getting shoppers through the stock room and out the back door.



Ryan Brennecke/The Bulletin

Emergency personnel respond to a shooting at the Forum shopping center in Bend on Sunday, Aug. 28, 2022.

Molly Sanden, a Safeway employee, told The Bulletin that a person walked into the grocery store and opened fire with a gun, firing multiple shots.

Jake Daniels, another Safeway employee, said he heard three shots followed by another six. He said he saw a person running out of the

store, pursued by police.

Daniels said after the first shots, he started grabbing people and running out the store doors.

About a dozen Safeway workers huddled outside a nearby business at the Forum shopping center, clearly shaken.

Gov. Brown declares statewide emergency over wildfire danger

BY **GARY A. WARNER**

Oregon Capital Bureau

Oregon is under a statewide emergency declaration due to wildfire danger, Gov. Kate Brown announced Sunday, Aug. 28.

The declaration came as the Rum Creek Fire in a remote portion of southwestern Oregon grew to over 10,500 acres as of 8 a.m. on Monday, Aug. 29. The fire is centered near Galice in Josephine County.

“With wildfire behavior increasing across the state, and with the threat of fire not likely to recede in the near future, it is imperative that we act now to prevent further loss — of life, property, business, and our natural resources,” Brown said in a Sunday statement announcing the emergency declaration.

The Rum Creek Fire accounts for nearly half of the 21,181 acres burned by the 28 active fires in Oregon, according to the State of Oregon Fires and Hotspots Dashboard.

Brown said in a statement that she issued the order due to widespread drought and other conditions in the state that could ignite wildfires.

The declaration also comes as Oregon approaches the two-year anniversary of the massive 2020 Labor Day fires that burned over 1.1 million acres, killed 11 people, and destroyed more than 3,000 structures.

According to Brown’s announcement, “The Governor’s declaration authorizes the Or-

regon Department of Forestry and the Office of the State Fire Marshal, in coordination with the Oregon Department of Emergency Management, to utilize personnel, equipment, and facilities from other state agencies in order to respond to or mitigate the effects of the wildfire emergency. The declaration allows state agencies to temporarily suspend any rules that impair the response to wildfires, if needed, and also allows the state to request assistance from other states through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact if necessary.”

Brown said the National Guard would be used if other resources are depleted.

The Rum Creek Fire was at about 1,200 acres on Friday, according to state fire officials. It grew to 4,700 acres on Saturday and was reported at 8,400 acres by mid-day Sunday.

Logan Taylor, of Talent, was killed Thursday by a falling tree while battling the fire. Brown has ordered flags to be flown at half-mast on Monday to honor Taylor.

One house and two mining structures have been destroyed by the Rum Creek Fire, according to the National Interagency Fire Center.

Firefighters have reached about 10% containment of the state’s second largest blaze, the Cedar Creek Fire west of Waldo Lake, which has burned about 7,300 acres, according to the state wildfire dashboard.

the fire camp.

On Sunday crews improved control lines on the west side of the fire, including using masticators — machines that grind up shrubs and other fuel — to reduce fuel loads along Forest Road 45.

Hendrickson said fire managers are striving to limit the width of containment lines since the fire is burning in the Vinegar Hill/Indian Rock Scenic Area.

Fire officials are bracing for more active burning this week as temperatures rise and humidity levels fall, Hendrickson said.

Gusty winds are also possible, which could cause flames to spread more rapidly, he said.

Crocketts Knob

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Dead trees killed in the 1996 fire have fallen, littering the ground with logs that add to the fuel load.

The fire is not threatening any structures, and there have been no evacuations.

The blaze grew from 1,285 acres on Saturday, Aug. 27 to 1,447 acres on Sunday.

Most of the burning on Sunday was on the north and east sides of the fire, where flames spread into stringers of timber, some including mature trees that didn’t burn in the 1996 fire, and other areas with younger trees, said Erick Hendrickson, a public information officer at

Renovations

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Construction is expected to be complete in 2023, but Sherman said it will take about four months to put the center back together because many exhibits were packed away in storage, and boxes were built around displays that stayed, such as the oxen and wagons.

Sherman estimates the center could reopen in late 2023.

In the meantime, those interested in Oregon Trail history can visit NHOTIC’s ex-

hibit inside Baker Heritage Museum.

This partnership will continue through 2023 — and hopefully beyond, Sherman said.

“Being part of the community is what we want to do more of,” she said. “We want to continue that even after we reopen.”

The museum is open Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sunday from noon to 4 p.m.

Admission is \$9 adults, \$8 seniors, \$5 for ages 6-12, and free for ages 5 and younger.

Eagle Cap

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Of the five fires burning now in the Eagle Cap, four are in the northwest part of the wilderness, and one in the southeast.

There are two pairs of separate fires in the northwest.

The Goat 1 and Goat 2 fires, on Goat Mountain west of McCubbin Basin south of Wallowa, are both around a tenth of an acre, and about a quarter mile apart. Neither fire was very active during the weekend.

The two other fires, by contrast, produced a smoke plume visible from Baker City on Sunday, Aug. 28. The Sturgill fire was estimated at about 15 acres that day, and the 324 fire is burning nearby.

The two blazes are in the North Minam River area, about 7 miles south of the Goat fires.

More than 15 miles to the southeast, the Nebo fire was estimated at 20 acres on Sunday. It’s burning in the upper part of the Lick Creek drainage, a tributary to the Innaha River.

Botello said that with hot and dry weather forecast through Labor Day, the Sturgill/324 and Nebo fires likely will continue to burn actively during the afternoons, generating smoke plumes.

Todd Pederson, an assistant fire management officer for the Wallowa-Whitman, said he expects those fires will be especially active on Wednesday, Aug. 31, when high temperatures are fore-

cast to be approach or exceed 100 degrees at lower elevations.

“We could see large (smoke) columns from both fires, Pederson said.

Forest Service officials are monitoring all the wilderness fires during daily or twice-daily flights, and a team of fire managers is available to check on the blazes from the ground, Botello said.

The smoke is a welcome sign, Botello said, that the fires are reducing the fuel loading and creating a “mosaic” pattern — a mixture of unburned, lightly burned and more heavily burned areas.

That’s a natural pattern for historical fires in the Eagle Cap, he said. The more heavily burned areas can serve as fuel-breaks during future blazes.

“We’re trying to break up the fuels,” Pederson said.

Both the Sturgill/324 and Nebo fires are burning in areas with subalpine fir trees, a common tree at higher elevations in the Eagle Cap, he said.

He hopes the fires, before they’re doused by autumn rain and snow, will thin some of the subalpine fir stands, especially in areas where those trees are encroaching on another high-elevation tree, the white-bark pine.

Whitebarks, which are a candidate for federal protection under the Endangered Species Act, are vulnerable to fires spreading from nearby subalpine firs, Pederson said. Subalpine firs burn readily, as their needs have a high concentration of combustible oils, as well as low-growing branches that make it easy for flames to spread from the ground to the trees’ crowns.

Pederson said the Nebo fire,

Peggy Pittman

April 9, 1945 - July 27, 2022

Peggy Anna Pittman was born April 9, 1945, in Gatesville, Texas, where she lived briefly before moving to Challis, Idaho, where she lived with her younger sister Melanie, younger brother Jeff, and parents Rollin William and Margaret Leaton (Van Meeteren). She graduated from Challis High School in 1963 and then shortly after graduation, moved to Moscow, Idaho, where she attended the University of Idaho.

Peggy worked a variety of different jobs in Idaho and met and married Vernon Jaye Nickens, resulting in the birth of their two children, Curtis Jaye Nickens, who was born in Idaho, and Shannon Dawn Nickens, who was born after their family moved to Oregon. Their family lived in Western Oregon where Peggy eventually landed her career job at the United States Forest Service. It was this position that ultimately brought Curtis, Shannon, and Peggy to Eastern Oregon where they finally settled in Baker City in 1985.

She met the love of her life in Baker City and just couldn’t help falling in love with John (Jack) Fredric Pittman; they married on December 3, 1992. Marrying Jack not only gave Peggy a loving partner and fishing buddy, but also blessed her by adding his three children to her life: Greg Pittman, Dee Staab, and Rhea Powell made her a proud mother of five.

In 1994 Peggy retired from the United States Forest Service which afforded her more time to spend with her husband and family doing some of their favorite things together; fishing, visiting the coast, and hunting mushrooms in the spring.

After Jack’s passing on June 25, 2012, Peggy spent more time with her children and grandchildren until her passing on July 27, 2022, at her home in Baker City.

She is survived by all of her children: Curtis (Billie-Jo Nickens), Shannon (Louis Russell), Greg (Megan Pittman), Dee, and Rhea (Jess Powell), her sister Melanie (Pete Peterson), brother Jeff (Pam Leaton), 15 of her 16 grandchildren, and all 16 of her great-grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers, the family would like to ask that you consider donating to some of her favorite charities: Operation Smile, Shriners Hospitals for Children, St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital, or Mercy Ships.

A graveside service has been planned at Mount Hope Cemetery in Baker City on Saturday, September 10, 2022 at 10 a.m.



Walter Rosslyn “Ross” Shumway

May 19, 1941 - August 5, 2022

Ross passed from this life into the arms of Jesus on August 5, 2022, at a care facility in La Grande, Oregon. He was born in Baker, Oregon, on May 19, 1941, the fifth son of Walter William and Iva Bernice (Walters) Shumway.

His parents owned a cattle ranch on Burnt River at the end of the road in the Bridgeport Valley. Ross grew up knowing how to work hard and loved ranch life. He graduated from Hereford High School and earned his associate’s degree from Yakima Junior College. Shortly thereafter he was drafted into the Army. His posting proved to be a blessing from God in three ways. He was sent to Fort Myer in Arlington, Virginia, where he was trained as a Vet Animal Specialist to care for the Caisson horses, among other duties. The skills he learned during this period proved to be invaluable in caring for the livestock on the ranch.

Ross used his free time to take correspondence courses in forestry, thinking the then poor timberlands on the ranch could be turned into a renewable income-producing crop. Ross and his brother Bill both took great interest in this. Eventually a model was created that won a state award for best private forestry practices.

The third blessing was a chaplain who befriended Ross - later their lives would intertwine in a most interesting way. The chaplain’s name was William “Bill” Jacobson.

Our dad believed he had been entrusted to steward “our” land to the best of his ability during his time on earth, and passed that belief on to his children. He had been praying, asking God how he could honor Him with this precious resource.

Sometime after Ross returned home, Bill Jacobson was directed by God to leave the military in order to join a mission that sent people to minister to remote tribal peoples. The training school “just happened” to be recently established in Baker City, Oregon. Bill moved his wife and family there to the New Tribe Mission school. The Jacobsons soon visited Ross and the rest of the family at the ranch, where their friendship continued. Eventually the Shumways joyfully allowed their ranch, including the haven of the forest, to be used for “Jungle Camp.” It was there the mission’s students learned important survival skills for beginning to work and remote places. Dad’s prayer was answered!

Ross was a kind, gentle soul, who never put himself forward. He married Patricia Ann Myers May 17, 1969. They were active members of the Unity Community Church during their years in Bridgeport, and later attended Elgin Christian Church.

He spent his life working on the ranch with three of his brothers until it sold in the spring of 2014. He and Patty moved to Summerville, Oregon, for the next few years, then to La Grande last year.

Ross is survived by his wife, Patty of La Grande, Oregon; brothers, Bill (Sally) of Surprise, Arizona; Duane (Beulah) of Meridian, Idaho; and Steve, of Council, Idaho; sisters, Marjorie (David) Pidcock of La Grande, Oregon; Esther (George) Smith of La Grande, Oregon; and several nieces and nephews.

There will be no memorial service. Online condolences may be made to the family at www.lovelandfuneralchapel.com.