

NATION BRIEFING

NRA declares bankruptcy, plans to incorporate in Texas

AUSTIN, Texas — The National Rifle Association announced Friday it has filed for bankruptcy protection and will seek to incorporate the nation's most politically influential gun-rights group in Texas instead of New York.

The announcement came months after New York's attorney general sued the organization over claims

that top executives illegally diverted tens of millions of dollars for lavish personal trips, no-show contracts for associates and other questionable expenditures.

The coronavirus pandemic has also upended the NRA, which last year laid off dozens of employees. The group canceled its national convention and scuttled fundraising. The NRA's bankruptcy filing listed between \$100 million and \$500 million in assets and between \$100 million

and \$500 million in liabilities. Still, the NRA claimed in announcing the move that the organization was "in its strongest financial condition in years."

Feds back away from claim of assassination plot at Capitol

PHOENIX — Federal prosecutors who initially said there was "strong evidence" the pro-Trump mob that stormed the U.S. Capitol last week aimed to "capture and assassinate

elected officials" backed away from the allegation after the head of the investigation cautioned Friday that the probe is still in its early stages and there was no "direct evidence" of such intentions.

The accusation came in a court filing by prosecutors late Thursday in Phoenix in the case against Jacob Chansley, the Arizona man who took part in the insurrection while sporting face paint, no shirt and a furry hat with horns.

"Strong evidence, including Chansley's own words and actions at the Capitol, supports that the intent of the Capitol rioters was to capture and assassinate elected officials in the United States Government," a prosecutor wrote in a memo urging the judge to keep Chansley behind bars. But at a hearing for Chansley later in the day in Phoenix, another prosecutor, Todd Allison, struck the line from the memo.

— Bulletin wire reports

Misinformation

Continued from A1

When asked why she retweeted the misinformation, Adair said her actions were from two months ago, and she hadn't looked at what she retweeted.

She followed up by saying she was upset about how the vote was stopped in six states. "The only thing I know for sure is that the vote was stopped," she said.

These claims are false and have been debunked, according to fact checkers at PolitiFact, which is run by The Poynter Institute.

When asked whether or not she believed what she retweeted was misinformation, Adair said, "I'd have to go back and look at it."

When asked what he thought about the official Facebook account of the Deschutes Republicans organization spreading misinformation about voter fraud in the election, Knopp said in an email, "I

would encourage people to put their efforts into ensuring ballot and election security in the 2021 Oregon Legislature. Oregon has had election ballot issues in the past and we can do more to make sure every legal vote counts."

Knopp also defended a social media post in which he condemned the violence at the nation's Capitol but focused on investigating the death of Ashli Babbitt, who was shot by an officer at the riot.

He said the same critics of his post were the people who "cheered the protests and violent riots in Portland or were silent in condemning them." He compared the social justice protests in Portland over the summer to the insurrection at the Capitol.

"The violent protests in Portland and other American cities were participating in sedition, insurrection and violence," Knopp said in an email. "I stood against them as I stand against those who are doing the same now. I challenge any



Knopp



DeBone

critic to show where they stood on the Portland riots. I believe the lack of prosecution of the violence in Portland led to others believing that violence was acceptable."

DeBone initially said he had no comment when asked a similar question, but then questioned why the question was newsworthy.

"You're asking my opinion about somebody else's opinion," DeBone said.

DeBone then followed up by saying what gets posted on the Deschutes Republicans Facebook page is likely not decided by the leadership or membership body of Deschutes Republicans, and said even though he is a registered Republican he

does not follow the page.

"I may be connected to it through a Facebook connection, but I'm not reading those posts," DeBone said.

Mike Kusinska, Deschutes Republicans chair, did not respond to a request for comment.

Adair, when asked about this misinformation coming from the Deschutes Republican page said she believes questions about the election will be clear "when it comes out in court." When asked more specifically about what court cases she was referencing, she said she was "honestly not sure."

"I haven't really been focusing on that," Adair said.

When it comes to his own thoughts on election fraud nationally, DeBone said he supports election clerks who he imagines are there to serve the people.

"Good people run for office and work in public service," DeBone said.

When asked more specifically about his own reserva-

tions about election integrity, DeBone mentioned questions about some aspects of the election, including states switching from in-person polling to mail-in ballots too quickly.

"There could be something out there. I have no first hand knowledge," DeBone said. "It does make you wonder: Hmm, were a lot of things moving really fast?"

He also supports the decision of Rep. Cliff Bentz, R-Ontario, to split his votes when Congress was certifying the presidential election Jan. 6. Bentz, who was recently elected to represent the state's 2nd Congressional District, opposed the GOP objection to the 11 Electoral College votes for Biden sent by Arizona but sided with Republicans to object to the 20 Electoral College votes from Pennsylvania.

The decision has received some pushback, with Bend city Councilor Anthony Broadman, Deschutes County District Attorney John Hummel and Tammy Baney, the current

executive director of the Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council and former Republican Deschutes County Commissioner, all signing onto a letter earlier this week asking Bentz to disavow his vote regarding the Pennsylvania elections.

"He's a lawyer. It boils down to the law," DeBone said. "I have to extrapolate that with the information he was given he made the best choice possible."

DeBone did express concerns about how different people are receiving different kinds of information, which he attributes to people spending more time on social media.

"It's not a healthy environment," he said.

When asked about whether he had any opinions about a fellow Commissioner Adair sharing misinformation about the election on Twitter, DeBone said he had no comment.

■ Reporter: 541-633-2160, bvisser@bendbulletin.com

Deputy

Continued from A1

The man who was shot, Steven Eugene Newburg, 53, is now in custody in Washington, where he faces a parole violation charge in an older kidnapping case. Hummel said Newburg has recovered from the injury to his trapezius muscle, which was a "through-and-through" bullet wound listed as a minor injury.

Hummel said he would pursue charges against Newburg for his role in the incident.

On the morning of Dec. 15, Mangin and fellow sheriff's deputy Clint Baltzor were tasked with serving an arrest warrant on Newburg on

behalf of the U.S. Marshals Service. Newburg was said to be suicidal and determined to not return to prison.

The deputies located Newburg at the first house they tried, but he ran out a back door, prompting a six-hour manhunt in the scrubland east of Bend that was ultimately unsuccessful.

The next morning, Mangin and Baltzor headed for a camping area Newburg was known to frequent. There they found a man matching his description. It was Newburg and police say he pulled out a knife and disregarded commands to give himself up.

Officers tried several less-lethal methods to stop Newburg, including a bean-bag launcher, police dog and a



Newburg

top of the shoulder.

Despite his injury, Newburg still did not give up. He held the knife to his throat, creating a depression visible to the deputies.

Two Bend Police officers arrived on scene around this time. One began recording the incident on his cellphone. (Though both the sheriff's office and Bend Police Department are in the

process of adding body cameras to their ranks, none of the officers was wearing one at the time.)

Hummel released the 8-minute clip Friday. It shows a deputy toss several gauze pads to Newburg, who is sitting on the ground about 10 feet away. Hummel said the deputy intentionally tossed them a ways away from the man to get him to stand and abandon his weapon.

The ruse worked and as Newburg stood to retrieve the gauze, officers tackled him and took him into custody.

"I didn't want to fight you guys," Newburg said as officers restrained him on the ground and began treating his wound. "Thank you for the job you do."

During the investigation, the sheriff's deputy union did not allow Mangin to turn over blood and urine samples, which Hummel had requested to help determine if the deputy was in any way impaired at the time of the incident. Hummel stressed he did not have reason to suspect Mangin was impaired, and he was "disappointed" the Deschutes County Sheriff's Employee Association did not provide the evidence.

Mangin was hired by the office in 2012. He has returned to active patrol duty, but a sheriff's office spokesman said he was not available for comment Friday.

■ Reporter: 541-383-0325, gandrews@bendbulletin.com

Rules

Continued from A1

Aaron Corvin, an OSHA spokesperson, declined to comment on details of the inspection as it is in progress.

During a previous inspection for mask violations in July, owners Kevin and Krista Lauinger told OSHA inspectors they would not comply with the mask mandate, according to an OSHA inspection narrative reviewed by The Bulletin.

The coffee shop has served as a lightning rod for controversy on various social media websites and restaurant rating sites such as Yelp. Commenters have both attacked and praised the shop for its defiant stance against COVID-19 rules.

The attention has not forced Kevista to change its stance. A sign on the door Friday declared the shop was having a "peaceful protest" against Gov. Kate Brown's orders to wear masks.

At the coffee shop Friday, dozens of patrons, from small children to seniors, were seated, not wearing masks. Baristas, similarly, wore no masks. The owners were unavailable for comment.

Current COVID-19 regulations permit businesses to serve customers for take-out only, with indoor seating banned. Businesses in Bend are largely complying with the rules, although many are hurting financially.

The sight of so many patrons without masks is jarring for some now used to living under COVID-19 policies for more than six months.

Michi Sato, a St. Charles Health System nurse who treats COVID-19 patients, recently visited Kevista and was upset by what she saw.

"I was shocked when I went into this coffee shop, then I was a bit angry," said Sato in a letter to The Bulletin. "Now I am sad and disappointed that we have members of our commu-

"I was shocked when I went into this coffee shop, then I was a bit angry. Now I am sad and disappointed that we have members of our community who obviously do not care about the impact that Covid is taking on our town."

— Michi Sato, a St. Charles Health System nurse who treats COVID-19 patients

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Katy Brooks, chief executive of the Bend Chamber of Commerce, acknowledged that it is increasingly difficult for businesses in Bend to operate under the governor's restrictions and that the system is hurting some businesses at different levels, but she continues to

support state health guidelines.

"We absolutely support mask-wearing," said Brooks. "While we are committed to public health, some of these guidelines seem inequitably imposed."

A "willful violation," such as the one given to Kevista Coffee, exists when an employer has demonstrated either an intentional or purposeful disregard for the requirements of the Oregon Safe Employment Act or an indifference to employee safety and health.

Since March, Oregon OSHA has received about 18,800 complaints related to COVID-19 across the state. In addition, OSHA has received around 3,700 non-COVID-19 complaints. In a typical year, the agency receives around 2,000 complaints.

In addition to Kevista Coffee, six other businesses in Deschutes County were issued fines, mainly for mask violations that fell outside the category of "willful violations."

The fined businesses in Deschutes County include Fred Meyer in Redmond (\$700 fine in September); Axis Salon in Redmond (\$175 fine in September); Cascade Sundowners in Terrebonne (\$480 fine in October); BoXiT Fitness Studios in Bend (\$175 fine in September); Alfalfa Store east of Bend (\$175 fine in October); and Hammer Down Firearms (\$175 fine in November).

The various amounts are based on several factors, including the number of workers exposed and the frequency of exposure. The employer's size, good faith efforts to comply and history of compliance factor into the penalty amount.

"Repeat, failure to correct, and willful violations carry higher penalties," said Corvin. "Penalty amounts are not based on the actual outcomes but on the risks represented by the underlying violation."

Spot checks from OSHA in June revealed that Kevista Coffee employees were not wear-

ing masks or social distancing, according to an OSHA inspection narrative. Shop owner Kevin Lauinger was present in the shop at the time of the inspection.

In an interview with an OSHA safety compliance officer, Lauinger said he had researched face coverings and believed they were ineffective in stopping the spread of COVID-19 and that extended use of covering could harm the health of his employees.

Lauinger said he was aware of the governor's indoor mask requirement but told the compliance officer the order was "not just," given the low infection rates in Deschutes County.

The safety compliance officer explained the penalty scale to Lauinger and his wife, Krista, for ignoring the mask mandate. When asked if they would voluntarily comply with the order, both declined, according to the inspection narrative.

■ Reporter: 541-617-7818, mkohn@bendbulletin.com

OSU-Cascades

Continued from A1

Meanwhile, Oregon's three small technical research universities all saw enrollment drops in the fall of 2020 — including Western Oregon University, which saw a 7.6% fall in student population.

According to state law, Western, Eastern and Southern Oregon universities can only offer up to master's degree programs. But OSU-Cascades, because of its connection to Oregon State University, is allowed to offer doctorate degree programs. This fall, OSU-Cascades will launch its first doctorate program, in physical therapy.

OSU-Cascades also has a

robust graduate teaching program, in partnership with Oregon State University. That means Central Oregon school districts now mainly partner with OSU-Cascades to train student teachers — but those districts used to collaborate with Western Oregon University, Evans said.

"For the last several years, many of the school districts in the Central Oregon basin have been dramatically less willing to have Western students involved because the OSU program, through Bend, has been expanding their territory," he said.

OSU-Cascades' ability to offer a wide array of programs — while still having an intimate campus for students who don't

"We're not at all in favor of this. We get lots of benefits of being associated with a top-tier research university like Oregon State University. There would be drastic changes, but I don't think we should even spend time thinking about that, because I don't think this is going to happen."

— Becky Johnson, vice president of OSU-Cascades

want the crowded bustle of Corvallis, Eugene or Portland — has lured many potential students away from other small Oregon public universities, Evans said.

"There's no other public university its size that has the range of courses and flexibility," Evans said.

With his proposed bill, Evans said he hopes to start a di-

alogue about the advantages OSU-Cascades has, and why he believes they're unfair to Oregon's other small public universities.

"It's time we have a genuine conversation about what OSU-Cascades is, and what it's not," he said. "I think it's a true regional university in everything but name, with the advantage of having OSU as a big

brother that can get everything the other universities can't."

Becky Johnson, vice president of OSU-Cascades, said university leaders in both Bend and Corvallis have zero interest in separating.

"We're not at all in favor of this," she said. "We get lots of benefits of being associated with a top-tier research university like Oregon State University."

When asked how OSU-Cascades would change if severed from Corvallis, Johnson immediately dismissed that possibility.

"There would be drastic changes, but I don't think we should even spend time thinking about that, because I don't think this is going to happen,"

she said.

Rep. Jason Kropf, D-Bend, also said he was against Evans' proposed bill.

"I think it's a positive that it has the connection to that main campus in Corvallis. It adds to some of the options that we can offer to students in our community," Kropf told The Bulletin. "To me, it should be embraced and built upon."

The Higher Education Coordinating Commission, which oversees higher education in Oregon, did not have a comment on Evans' proposed bill as of Friday afternoon.

The Oregon Legislature is schedule to start its 2021 session next week.

■ Reporter: 541-617-7854, jhogann@bendbulletin.com