

Gunman fired more than 100 rounds

By **JOE SIESS**
and **ANNA KAMINSKI**
The Bulletin

BEND — The gunman who shot and killed two people and himself at the eastside Bend Safeway on Sunday, Aug. 28, fired more than 100 bullets and had with him four 30-round magazines of ammunition for the AR-15-style rifle used in the attack, Bend Police said Tuesday, Aug. 30.

Law enforcement also recovered 25 shotgun shells from the shooter's home at the Fox Hollow apartments behind The Forum Shopping Center, plus 150 rounds of 5.56mm ammunition and more shotgun shells in his vehicle, a

1997 Ford F-250 parked in the parking lot of the apartment complex.

Law enforcement was still searching for shell casings from the Safeway and the surrounding areas where the attack took place. They confirmed the attacker had legally purchased the three guns recovered by law enforcement himself, Sheila Miller, spokesperson for the police department, said in a release on Tuesday.

The shooter had worked as a courtesy clerk at the Safeway he attacked. The United Food and Commercial Workers Union Local 555 confirmed he worked at the eastside Safeway and quit in March of 2021. The police investigation



Dean Guernsey/The Bulletin
A memorial with flowers and kind notes sits outside the eastside Safeway in Bend, where a gunman fatally shot two people Sunday, Aug. 28, 2022, before killing himself.

determined he began the attack by firing into his own vehicle parked at his apartment at Fox Hollow before walking across

the street into the parking lot of The Forum Shopping Center.

The shooter began firing at stores and customers only min-

utes later, at 7:04 p.m., firing shots into the Big Lots store before walking to Safeway.

After the shooter entered Safeway, he started firing, according to witnesses.

Video footage from inside the store showed that upon hearing gunshots, Safeway employee Donald Surret Jr., one of the two victims killed in the attack, used a produce cart to hide himself from the shooter, though he had ample time to flee. Surret waited for him to look away, then attacked him with a produce knife he kept on his hip, the police department said. Police said Surret's actions likely saved lives.

The gunman, Ethan Blair

Miller, 20, then shot and killed Surret before ending his own life as officers stormed the Safeway.

The footage also showed two other people inside the store during the attack went back inside after seeing the first victim, Glenn Bennett, injured on the floor near the store's entrance. The two individuals took Bennett out of the store where he received medical attention and was taken to St. Charles Bend. He was pronounced dead upon arrival.

Several bouquets of flowers and two handmade signs that read, "Thank you Donald" sat on a table Tuesday afternoon at the edge of the police line in Safeway's parking.

A kindly hero, remembered

By **SUZANNE ROIG**
and **BRYCE DOLE**
The Bulletin



Surret

BEND — Every week over a span of several years, Donald Surret Jr. would ask his co-workers in the floral department of Bend's eastside Safeway to set aside the nicest, biggest bunch of stargazer lilies so he could take them home to his wife.

The floral staff would set them aside in the walk-in cooler, and before he'd leave for the night, he'd pay for those flowers. It's a fond memory for Lisa Morrison, who worked with Surret for nearly three years at the Safeway store before retiring in December.

Now, it's a memory Morrison is holding onto tightly.

Surret was one of two people killed the night of Sunday, Aug. 28, when a 20-year-old gunman from Bend walked into the grocery store near NE 27th Street and U.S. Highway 20 with an AR-15-style rifle and opened fire on innocent shoppers. The 66-year-old Surret was shot as he tried to disarm the gunman, but police say his actions likely prevented further bloodshed. Moments before his encounter with Surret, the gunman also fatally shot Glenn Bennett, 84, of Bend.

What Surret did in his final moments was no surprise to those who knew him, especially after police called his actions heroic.

"Video surveillance shows that upon hearing gunshots in the Safeway, victim Donald Surret Jr. had ample time to flee the scene but instead moved a produce cart into position to hide from the attacker," Bend Police spokeswoman Sheila Miller said in a news release Tuesday, Aug. 30. "When the suspect approached, Surret waited for the suspect to look away, then attacked the suspect with a produce knife he kept on his hip."

Still, none of this is easy for Morrison to reconcile. An active shooter was her worst nightmare, a scenario that had prompted her to plan escape routes when she worked at Safeway.

"This is so surreal," said Morrison, 62. "I feel like I'm trapped in a nightmare. Don was a kind and caring man."

It was just a week ago when Morrison checked in with Surret while shopping. Since retiring, she's made weekly trips to the store for groceries. She always sought out Surret and they'd chat, sometimes about his wife, Jacky, who was on disability.

Morrison worked for seven years in the store's floral department. Surret worked in the produce department, a job he took after working at the U.S. Forest Service at

Newberry National Volcanic Monument from 2013 to 2017. After that, he worked as a custodian at Central Oregon Community College for six months, in 2017 and 2018, forging ties with people there who would often drive across town to visit with their friend.

Surret would train the newly hired produce clerks in the produce department at Safeway, Morrison said.

"He had a lot of patience to train them on how to do the job well," she said. "He had ideas on how to make the produce department run smoother and cared about doing a good job. His motto was, work smarter, not harder."

An Army veteran, Surret was proud of his military experience, Morrison said. He'd wear military and union buttons on his hat.

Surret's actions have prompted an outpouring of community support to help his wife. A GoFundMe account set up by Surret's sister-in-law, Jerilynn Morra, had an initial goal of \$8,000 but by early evening Tuesday had grown to more than \$56,000.

And 140 Safeway and Albertsons stores in Oregon and Southern Washington will be collecting donations at check-out stands through Sept. 5 for those impacted by the tragedy in Bend, according to a company spokeswoman.

The outpouring of support is a testament to Surret's character, said Gail Whelan, who worked with Surret at the national monument. In fact, when Whelan and Surret were on the same schedule at the Lava Lands Visitors Center, they'd eat lunch together at a picnic table.

They called the table the Lava Lands Cafe.

"He was an all-around good person," Whelan said. "He was a kind person. He was funny. He liked everyone. He bent over backward to help people."

Surret enlisted in the Army out of high school, serving as a combat engineer during his 26 years in the military, according to his ex-wife, Debora Jean Surret.

He moved to La Pine more than a decade ago and became involved in the local chapter of the Disabled American Veterans, serving as treasurer and secretary. Veterans across Deschutes County remember Surret, in the brief moments they met him, as a dependable, hardworking man.

Robert Cusick, a 75-year-old member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars who worked

with Surret, said he wasn't surprised by Surret's heroics. It was what he was trained to do, said Cusick.

"If it wasn't for him, there'd probably be a whole lot more dead people," Cusick said. "I feel he died too young."

On Sunday, about an hour before the shooting, Naomi Landon, a 38-year-old nutrition specialist for Bend-La Pine Schools, was shopping at the Safeway with her 5-year-old son. In her weekly visits over the past nine years, she has grown close with the grocery store staff, who are always asking about her three growing boys.

Among them was a man she would always see rushing to meet customers' needs: Surret.

It was no different Sunday. Landon and her son were discussing what kind of apples they should buy when Surret chimed in. Placing apples on display one by one, he told them that his favorites were the yellow ones. He named the different types, and he said he was sad because Safeway was about to discontinue the sweetest apples there are.

He told them that the secret to making a great apple pie was mixing a whole variety of apples together. His wife, he said, makes the best apple pie in Bend.

"It was just an innocent, passing conversation," Landon said.

Now, Landon is trying to help her son understand what happened to that nice man who spoke to them about the apples he loves. She tells her son that he was brave, that he sacrificed his own life to save others.

"He totally was a hero, and it makes me sad to think of what happened," she said, crying. "He didn't deserve that."

It's no surprise that Surret's friend, Morrison, is thinking about the stargazer lilies the Safeway staff regularly set aside.

In the coming weeks, she and other Safeway workers plan to take a big bunch of stargazer lilies over to Surret's home in La Pine as a tribute to him.

No one wants Surret's widow to think her husband has been forgotten, Morrison said.

A familiar face, now gone

By **BRYCE DOLE**
The Bulletin



Bennett

BEND — It was 1 p.m. on Friday, Aug. 26, when Joe Gibson, an employee at the Expressway Market and Deli, walked by the tall, bespectacled man who always sat in the same seat in this convenience store in southeast Bend.

Wearing blue jeans and a white T-shirt, he was someone Gibson and other employees looked forward to seeing every day for years.

Glenn Bennett was eating his second chicken strip. That was his regular order, chicken strips with chocolate milk. Like every Friday, Bennett told him to have a great weekend, that he'd see him Monday, same time as always.

"He didn't come in Monday," Gibson said.

The 84-year-old Bennett was one of the two people killed when a 20-year-old gunman with an AR-15-style rifle opened fire on the eastside Bend Safeway on Sunday, Aug. 28, spraying at least 100 bullets at innocent people shopping for groceries. Bennett was shot near the store's entrance before the shooter was confronted by an employee near the back of the store. The shooter killed Donald Surret Jr. before turning the gun on himself.

That night, Gibson watched in horror as the news unfolded. He knew Bennett often shopped at the Safeway on Sunday evenings. The police said three people were dead.

There are thousands of people in Bend, Gibson thought to himself. But what if it was somebody he knew?

"It turned out that it was someone I knew well," Gibson said.

At work Monday, a store manager told Gibson and the Expressway employees what happened. He walked out behind the market, where co-workers were crying. Eventually, he wept, too.

"It's just devastating, the loss," Gibson said in a low, gravelly voice, sitting just a few feet from the green chair at the market that the employees knew as Bennett's chair.

"It was something I looked forward to every day, seeing him," he said. "He always had well wishes for me. He always knew every day that I was getting off at 1 p.m. and would say, 'Go home. Get some rest. I'll see you tomorrow.'"

All week, people have come

to the market and told employees that they're sorry for their loss. One woman, who knew Bennett frequented the market, arrived on Monday, saying in a panicked voice that she saw Bennett enter the Safeway but didn't see him come out. The staff told her Bennett was gone. She burst into tears.

Bennett never told the market staff much about himself, but he was always there, sometimes trudging through the snow and ice. A GoFundMe page set up by the family says he was a medic in the Korean War whose family moved to Bend in 1974. Bennett lived in a home nearby and supported his sister, a widow on a fixed income.

The market employees have only just begun to grieve. Bennett was more than a customer. He was their friend who gave them memories.

There he was, encouraging them to restock his favorite food and drink, which they always did.

There he was, messing up their names, sometimes as a joke and sometimes because he genuinely couldn't remember.

There he was, flipping up his goofy sunglasses to reveal clear lenses underneath.

There he was, sitting in that same chair for hours at a time, watching customers walk by, as if he had all the time in the world and nowhere else to be but there, with them.

"I don't think he had a lot of people to talk to, so that was," said Amanda Gibson, a store clerk.

This week, the staff donated \$1,000 for funeral expenses and mortgage payments through a GoFundMe page for Bennett's family that has raised more than \$45,000 in total as of Wednesday evening.

"I cried for the past two days," said 17-year-old Jaymin Hale,

who bonded with Bennett during chats at the store. "I saw him more than my friends ... Every morning, right around 7 a.m., I'd think, Oh, Glenn's going to come in today. I better get some chicken strips ready. He meant so much to me."

That Safeway was another place where Bennett had developed a family over the years, said Debbie Clem, a 60-year-old Bend resident who worked at the store for 25 years. Bennett, often wearing a pink tie-dye shirt, would come into the store every week and buy cereal, multiple cantaloupes and heaping stacks of bacon, which he'd bring home to his sister. At the checkout, he'd pull exact change out of a wallet he kept together with rubber bands. He would bring Clem coffee and Christmas ornaments around the holidays. He would buy bags from her for local food drives, and she'd announce over the intercom: "Glenn Bennett helped stamp out hunger today. He purchased four food bags for our community."

One day, Clem told Bennett about the Raggedy Ann & Andy dolls that her family could never afford for her growing up and how she'd always wanted one. He walked away, bought the dolls, came back and gave them to her. It's a memory she clings to now that he's gone.

"He liked to make people smile," she said. "He liked to make people happy."

In the days since the shooting, it has been mostly quiet around the Expressway. Maddie Baker, a 15-year-old employee, is trying to grapple with what happened. She has been homeschooled specifically because of her family's concerns about school shootings.

But next fall, she starts class at Central Oregon Community College. The latest shooting, and that it happened to someone she'd see every day, makes her anxious to start class.

"Nobody deserved that," she said, "especially not Glenn."

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