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OR46 gets collared

BY TODD ARRIOLA
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In late January of this year, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) placed a VHF collar on what is believed to be the alpha male, designated OR46, of the Minam Wolf Pack, giving the agency the ability to once again monitor the pack via radio for the first time since August 2015, said Wolf Biologist and Acting Wolf Program Coordinator Roblyn Brown.

The Minam Pack, discovered in 2012, included a breeding pair, with the

81-pound female, designated OR20, monitored with a GPS (Global Positioning System) collar that was placed on May 16, 2013, the first radio-collared wolf of the pack, according to ODFW.

At the time, the pack included at least five wolves, and, in following the sequential order of collaring, OR20 was the 20th radio-collared wolf in Oregon (ODFW is monitoring 48 wolves currently).

In May 2015, according to Brown and the 2015 Wolf Conservation and Management Annual Report, OR20's collar failed,

and another radio-collared female from the Minam Pack, OR35, dispersed in late August, leaving the Minam Pack, now at 11 members, without a radio-collared wolf, until this January. OR35 relocated to the Sled Springs Unit in early May 2016.

Brown said, "I'm not sure what happened to OR20. She hasn't shown up on any of our trail cameras, but, we do a lot of monitoring with trail cameras (which she said continued, even without radio-collar monitoring); not just radio collars, airplanes, and helicopters.

We haven't got a picture of her this year (yet)."

Brown said that the decision to go with a VHF (very high frequency, 30 megahertz, MHz, to 300 MHz) collar for OR46, instead of a GPS (ultra high frequency, UHF, 300 MHz to 30 gigahertz, GHz) collar, was prompted by the difference in life expectancy of the collars—on average, six-and-a-half years for a VHF collar, compared to two weeks to three years for a GPS collar—and the significant difference in price.

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Photo courtesy of ODFW.

OR-27, another wolf in the Minam Pack, collared previously.

5J gets check for 'Promise of Oregon' scholarship program



Samantha O'Conner / The Baker County Press

L-R: Kevin Cassidy, Chris Hawkins, Dave Krumbein, Andrew Bryan, and Melissa Irvine.

BY SAMANTHA O'CONNOR
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Thursday, February 16, the Baker School District 5J Board met for their work session and board meeting. The work session featured an Audit Report by Mitch Saul. The Audit Report explained:

"The purpose of our audit is to issue an opinion as to whether or not the financial statements of the district are presented fairly in conformity with the accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America." The Audit Report "provides accountability to district taxpayers" and "satisfies the requirements set forth in state statutes."

Beginning the board meeting, Kristen Miles and Dave Krumbein from the Oregon School Boards Association presented the board with a check for \$5,000 to give students in scholarships for the Promise Scholarship Program. Other schools awarded are Athena-Weston, Jefferson 14J, Multnomah Education Service District, Nyssa, and North Santiam School Board.

In a press release given, OSBA's Director Steve Kelley stated; "This program helps students both by providing scholarship funds and investing in board member training. Stronger boards are better prepared to face today's education challenges."

Tracy Smith presented Hunter Clucas the "Promise of Baker Student of the Month" from Eagle Cap. Amanda Wilde presented Kodi Bates the "Promise of Baker Student of the Month" from Keating.

Doug Dalton began the discussion with the CFO/Business Manager's Report.

He explained that the high school boiler is running well, and they are fixing smaller kinks.

Dalton also explained that the school board received a \$5 million grant for the high school seismic retrofit. The Seismic Retrofit Grant is where they assess the seismic strength of each separate building and the high school gym had the highest score for how it would do during an earthquake.

They have engaged an architect firm and they are halfway through the process of the design for the gym. They are planning to talk as a group about the next step of the process to engage a construction manager and general contractor to talk about that process.

They are trying to determine if construction firms will be able to get the job in this summer or next summer. Dalton suspects they will know more by the next board meeting.

Superintendent Mark Witty gave a presentation on the Facilities Planning. In his presentation, Witty gave an overview for the Facilities Master Planning. He explained the goals for the FMP Committee were to become familiar with appropriate legal requirements and guidelines, create a process for the FMP, request supporting data for process, and provide technical input to district leadership utilizing data from process.

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Firemen raise over \$2K for local Special Olympics



Gina K. Swartz / The Baker County Press

Fire Chief Tom Wills and Stephanie Tweit of the local Special Olympics.

BY GINA K. SWARTZ
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Barley Brown's was swarmed with Baker City Firefighters on Thursday, February 9, 2017. It was however, for a good cause; the local chapter of the Special Olympics.

Serve It Up Hot is a local fundraising event that raises money for the local chapter with local firefighters waiting tables, then donating all the tips earned.

The event, which was scheduled to begin at 5:00 p.m. was already drawing patrons as early as 4:30 p.m.

"People know it gets packed," said Stephanie Tweit who serves as treasurer, fundraising coordinator and a ski coach for the local Special Olympics. "It was a busy night and a lot of fun."

After the busy week the fire department had prior to the fundraiser, on the scene of a roof collapse of a building downtown and a house fire across the street from South Baker Elementary the day before, the event seemed to serve as a stress reliever for some of the firefighters

"We've been busy lately," firefighter Jason Bybee said. "We brought stickers and some fire hats for the kids."

In reference to the Department's recent workload, Tweit said, "Let's just hope nothing happens to pull them away tonight."

The night went off without a hitch and the firefighters raised \$2,090. All monies raised and/or donated stay local and will be used in part to assist in funding local athlete Mandi Durfee as she travels to Austria to compete in the Special Olympics World Winter Games.

Those games begin March 18th and close March 25th.

The groundwork was set over 10 months ago to take Durfee to the games.

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Friday Partly sunny with highs in the mid 30s. Friday Night: Increasing clouds and cool. Lows in the upper teens.

Saturday Partly sunny and not as cool. Highs in the upper 30s. Saturday Night: Mostly cloudy. Low in the upper 18.

Sunday Scattered snow showers. Highs in the mid 30s. Chance of precipitation is 60%. Little to no accumulation expected. Sunday Night: Scattered snow showers. Lows near 20.

Your weekend weather forecast for Baker County.



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