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Local LEO receives Oregon Medal of Valor

BY KERRY McQUISTEN
with Press Release text
from Chief Wyn Lohner
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On June 5, 2017, Officer Blake Hawkins of the Baker City Police Department (BCPD), walked in a direction that would be counterintuitive to most—into a smoke-filled apartment.

There, Hawkins assisted a disabled citizen out of that burning apartment

complex at 1490 Resort Street in Baker City.

As a result of his actions, Hawkins is receiving the Medal of Valor from the Oregon Peace Officers' Association (OPOA) next month at their awards ceremony in Pendleton. The Medal of Valor may be awarded to individuals who, while serving in an official capacity with their law enforcement agency, distinguish themselves by reacting to a situation in a

positive and professional manner, and thereby reduce the risk of loss of life or injury to citizens. According to the OPOA, their intent is never to give out many of these awards—only for rare service.

Hawkins was nominated for the award by Sgt. Wayne Chastain after details of Hawkins' actions were brought to the attention of the department by Hawkins' partner, Officer Chris Sells, and Baker City

citizens who were also on scene at the fire.

Hawkins said although he is very appreciative of the award, he feels that he was just doing his job. He thinks, "police officers are often put into extraordinary circumstances that necessitate immediate action and that this was no different."

Hawkins has been with the BCPD for almost exactly three years.

SEE VALOR PAGE 5



Photo courtesy of the BCPD.

Officer Blake Hawkins will receive this prestigious award next month.

Pair produces 'Paint your Wagon' podcast



Samantha O'Conner/The Baker County Press

L-R: Andy Lindberg and Doug Kenck-Crispin on site at the Geiser Grand.

• PODCASTERS COMMEMORATE LOCALLY FILMED MOVIE

BY SAMANTHA O'CONNER
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Podcasters Doug Kenck-Crispin and Andy Lindberg traveled to Baker County to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the film "Paint Your Wagon" with a special segment for their "Kick Ass Oregon History" podcast.

"Paint Your Wagon" is a famous Western musical film starring Lee Marvin, Clint Eastwood, and Jean Seberg. The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band also appear in the movie. Several of the stars stayed in the Geiser Grand Hotel, so the podcasters followed suit. Shooting on that film began in the spring of 1968—coming up on that half-century mark.

The two went to the film site and camped there for a few nights before coming to Baker City. That site is located in the Eagle Cap Mountains nearest East Eagle and Jack Creek, and for years was marked with a sign. No Name City was built on this site but torn down after production ended. Stars were often seen walking on Main Street in Baker City during lulls in filming.

Kenck-Crispin explained that they were looking into

what that film has meant to Oregon, film history and Oregon history in general.

"Paint your Wagon," at the time, was the most expensive film ever made and it was made outside of Baker City with a lot of folks from Baker City as extras, as construction workers," explained Lindberg. "The expectation that we kind of had was that everybody in Baker City would have a 'Paint Your Wagon' story. But that's not necessarily what we're finding and that's interesting because, at one time, it was a huge deal. But maybe 50 years is long enough that people forget."

Kenck-Crispin and Lindberg are both from Portland and began their podcast in 2011.

Kenck-Crispin said that a podcast is like a radio show—except on the internet.

Podcasts often do not have a set time slot they are aired or have a set time limit, allowing podcasters to discuss a topic for ten minutes or an hour, depending on the story.

Other stories can take several podcasts to tell. They have traveled all over Oregon in places such as Copperfield, Astoria and McDermott.

They have had segments on Jean Baptiste Charbonneau the son of Sacagawea, Oswald West in Copperfield, and Bobbie the Wonder Dog that walked from Indiana to Silverton, Oregon.

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Bennett files to run again

BY KERRY McQUISTEN
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Unity rancher and County Commissioner incumbent Mark Bennett filed last week for a chance to be re-elected to his present commission seat.

The seats held by Bennett and Bruce Nichols are each part-time positions.

Said Bennett, "I am running for re-election simply because I care about the people of Baker County, and to insure that the customs, culture, and the economic stability of the county continue for the future generations."

Bennett, who has ranched since 1989, was first appointed to Commissioner to fill the term vacated by Dr. Stiff in May 2013. He was first elected in 2015.

Locally, he worked previously in the Baker County Sheriff's Office as a Captain under then-Sheriff Terry Speelman.

He says his key roles as Commissioner are: Boardman to Hemingway Lead since 2006; BLM Resource Management Plan; and the Governor's Sage Grouse Association of Oregon Counties Representative.



Submitted Photo.

County Commissioner Mark Bennett filed to run again for the same position in the next election.

Higher power rates in Nov.

After reviewing the final "Cost of Service" report and assessing revenue needs to sustain the Cooperative, at the September 26 meeting, OTEC's Board of Directors approved a rate increase of 4.62 percent to recover cost increases passed through from BPA. OTEC's wholesale power supplier, as well as to recover increased distribution costs. Although BPA increased rates to OTEC as of October 1, 2017, members will not be impacted by the rate increases until November 1.

For the non-profit's more than 23,000 residential members the increase will be \$4.00 per month, raising the monthly delivery charge from \$25.50 to \$29.50. The residential energy rate (per kilowatt hour rate) will remain unchanged.

"The board voted to increase the monthly delivery charge to \$29.50 to move closer to full recovery of the actual cost to provide electrical service to a location," said OTEC's General Manager Les Penning.

SEE OTEC RATES PAGE 4

Friday Sunny and mild with a high near 70. Friday Night: Mostly clear and cool. Lows in the mid 30s.

Saturday Mostly sunny and seasonable with a high in the lower 60s. Saturday Night: Mostly clear and cool. Lows in the mid 30s.

Sunday Mostly sunny and seasonable with a high in the upper 50s. Sunday Night: Mostly clear and cool. Lows in the lower 30s.

The Fire, Weather & Avalanche Center forecast:

Our forecast made possible by this generous sponsor:

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