

# Local

## Rep. Bentz sponsors bill against cyber-imposters

On February 19th, Representative Cliff Bentz (R-Ontario) introduced House Bill 3092, which creates the crime of online impersonation and allows those who have been harmed the right to sue for damages from the impersonator, including damages according to the bill's language, for "humiliation."

Rep. Bentz was asked to draft legislation on behalf of constituents who had encountered this problem. Oregon does not currently have any criminal penalties for online impersonation.

Rep. Bentz's bill would make any online communication made with the intent to deceive the recipient into thinking that

the sender is someone else a Class A Misdemeanor.

Rep. Bentz said, "My staff and I have spoken with several law enforcement officials about the problem of online impersonation. They have explained that current law is so lenient it's not worth prosecuting those who have impersonated someone."

"Victims of online fraud have little or no recourse should their names be slandered and their livelihoods harmed by online impersonation. This law will give injured parties recourse, and will give our law enforcement agencies an enforcement tool to keep us safer from this damaging practice."

House Bill 3092 is currently waiting to be referred to a House Committee by the Speaker of the House.

The bill criminalizes online impersonation—including through social media, messenger and email correspondence—with a maximum of one year in prison, a \$6,250 fine, or both.

Bentz and House Rep. Jodi Hack (the sister of former Baker County Clerk Tami Green) are the bill's chief co-sponsors, but Reps. Sal Esquivel, Dallas Heard, Wayne Krieger, Bill Post, Greg Smith, Gene Whisnant, and Senator Ted Ferrioli all signed on in support.

## Local events vie for honors

Ten Baker County Events and Organizers are in the running for state-wide recognition at this year's Oregon Festivals and Events conference March 1-3 in Seaside. Each year the Oregon Festivals and Events Association recognizes outstanding events, organizers and sponsors throughout the state with their annual Ovation Awards.

Ten Baker County Events have been nominated for recognition at this year's Oregon Awards including:

- Best Marketing Campaign – Baker County Super Sixteen Event Campaign
- Event supplier of the year – Barley Browns
- Impact Award – Baker City Herald for their work on the Miner's Jubilee
- Sponsor of the Year – BELLA Main Street Market for their support of numerous Baker County events
- Sponsor of the Year – Jamis Bikes for their support for both the Baker City Cycling Classic and Anthony Lakes Mountain Bike Festival
- Hidden Treasure – Haines Harvest Festival
- Best Event Under \$150,000 budget – Hells Canyon Motorcycle Rally
- Bet Music Festival – Powder River Music Review
- Best Fundraising Event - East West Shrine Game
- Volunteer of the Year – Brian and Corinne Vegter

Winners will be announced at the Oregon Festivals and Events Conference on Monday March 2nd.

A number of Baker County events have been by the Oregon Festivals and Events Association with Ovation awards in the past including, 2013 when The Baker City Cycling Classic was named Oregon's Best Sporting Event, and The Great Salt Lick Art Auction was named Oregon's Best Philanthropic Event, and in 2014 when the Durkee Steak Feed was named Oregon's Best Philanthropic Event and the We Like'Em Short Film Festival was named Oregon's Best Fine Arts Festival.

Baker County will be well represented at this year's conference with 17 Baker County delegates attending representing 15 events. Tourism and Marketing Director Timothy Bishop is also a speaker.



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The Baker County Press wishes the guests to Baker City next week a welcome stay and a wonderful tournament!

from Kerry, Wendee, Dave, Sunny, Brian, Gina, Todd, Meghan, Chuck, Carmelita, Eileen, Tonya, Kayla and Kailyn.



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