



Bill Would Honor Local Soldier — 9



Middle School B-ball Tournament — 7



Snake River Econ Alliance meets — 8

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COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS SESSION

Brownfields project at Lime, Sheriff appointment discussed



Submitted Photo.

The dilapidated site at Lime has been a topic of discussion for some time, but now plans are moving forward to clean up this Brownfields project.

By Todd Arriola
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The Baker County Board of Commissioners held its regular bi-monthly session on Wednesday, March 4, 2015, at 9 a.m., with between 20 and 30 in attendance.

Present from the Board were Commission Chair Bill Harvey, Commissioner Mark Bennett, Commis-

sioner Tim Kerns, and Executive Assistant Heidi Martin.

There was a discussion concerning Oregon's Low-Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS), which is set to expire at the end of 2015. Senate Bill 324, which was passed by the Oregon House this week, will significantly revise and indefinitely extend that program, and the result will be an

increase in gas prices, with estimates over a dollar per gallon higher, and a reduction in the "carbon intensity" of fuels, another controversial topic.

Harvey said that the impacts of this legislation, at the very least, an increase in fuel prices via a gas tax, are far-reaching and negative, and he voiced his opposition to it. Wanda Ballard, who was

present, asked Harvey if there would be any economic benefits associated with the proposed legislation.

Harvey responded that, "There's no benefit whatsoever to the citizens who are paying the prices. It's going to hurt everybody across the board."

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Mark Witty to be new 5J Superintendent

BETTY PALMER TO BEGIN AS ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF CURRICULUM



Submitted Photo.

Mark Witty accepted the offer to become 5J's new Superintendent after this school year.

By Brian Addison
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Mark Witty, 51, becomes the Baker School District's new superintendent after agreeing to a two-year contract that pays him \$124,500 per year. The school board gave Witty the unanimous nod during a special meeting Thursday, Feb. 26.

Betty Palmer, principal of South Baker Intermediate, will assume a new role for herself and for the District as Assistant Superintendent and Director of Curriculum and Instruction. The board voted unanimously to create the new position offered Palmer.

Palmer takes over director of curriculum duties from current director of curriculum Anthony Johnson.

Johnson is expected to remain in his position until the end of this school year, when he will retire June 30.

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BHS mock trial team competes in Vale



Submitted by Rachel Burk.

BHS's Mock Trial team competed in Vale last weekend at regionals, bringing in second place.

By Kerry McQuisten
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Last Saturday Baker High School's Mock Trial team traveled to Vale to compete in regional competitions. The team finished with a respectable second place win, closely behind La Grande.

Twenty-one local students in grades 9-12 faced off, after weeks of daily practice before and after school, against teams from La Grande, Vale, and Grant-Union.

Stephani Rasmussen coached the team alongside Kris Pepera. The coaches organized practices both at the school and inside the Baker County Circuit Court room.

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Deputy Hoopes submits letter for interim Sheriff position

By Kerry McQuisten
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On Monday morning, Deputy John Hoopes tossed his hat into the ring for the interim Baker County Sheriff position.

Last week, Lt. Travis Ash was endorsed by outgoing Sheriff Mitch Southwick, who has resigned effective April 30, 2015.

Now the two will compete in the appointment process to fill this position until the next election in 2016.

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Submitted Photo.

John Hoopes.

Correction: In a front page story last week, Mark Witty's last name was inadvertently changed to Whitley. We apologize for the error.

Friday Sunny. Mild, highs in the mid to upper 50s. Lows around 29 at night.

Saturday Sunny. Highs around 60 degrees. Lows at night right around the freezing mark.

Sunday Mostly sunny with highs in the low 60s and nighttime lows around the freezing mark.

Your weekend weather forecast for Baker County.



Official weather provider for The Baker County Press.

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