

**BUSINESS:** A look at the Haines Sell-Rite store. New local saddle shop opens. **PAGE 3**



**OUTDOOR REC:** Two win rifle, handgun during Republican raffle. **PAGE 7**



# The Baker County Press

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## Predatory sex offender returns to Baker City, switches addresses

BY KERRY McQUISTEN  
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“Throughout my career, I’ve seen very few predatory sex offenders come into our community,” said Baker City Police Chief Wyn Lohner on Wednesday. “It has been quite some time. But when it happens it creates an alarm because of the threat level.”

Convicted predatory sex offender, Travis Scott Jones, age 43, returned to Baker City a few days

ago, immediately creating community-wide concern not only about his presence, but his seemingly ever-changing address.

After being released from prison July 16, 2015, Jones relocated from New Mexico back to Baker City where he spent at least some of his youth and attended grade school. He still has familial ties throughout the area. One of his brothers lives in Union County—the other in Utah. His father lives in Wallowa County. His mother, Nancy

(Duncan) Berdahl lives here. Several other relatives reside in Baker City.

Jones was initially listed as residing at an address attributed to his mother and stepfather at 1769 Valley Avenue in Baker City, according to Oregon State Police. That residence is visible from just about every north-facing window in the police department building one street over, parallel on Auburn. However, the home is also near the Leo Adler Pathway area along the river, which

is frequented by children.

Late in the day Monday, Lohner said officers spoke with Berdahl, age 63, who was adamant that Jones did not actually reside with her and her husband Alfred, age 79, at the Valley Avenue address.

Jones’s grandmother, Betty Duncan, resides at 3010 Elm Street, which is where Officer Shannon Regan was able to locate and speak directly with Jones. Jones confirmed he was temporarily residing at that address. He also claimed

he was traveling out of town by bus to Boise and back, and would return.

Then on Tuesday afternoon, his grandmother told police of yet another change in Jones’s address. His belongings, said Lohner, were removed from the home on Elm Street and returned to the Valley Avenue address.

Jones’s history as a sexual predator is long—dating back as far as a felony sexual abuse conviction in 1986, then similar convictions in 1987 and 1996.



Photo courtesy of the BCPD.

Travis Scott Jones.

His most recent conviction was in 2010 in New Mexico for possession of child pornography.

The 1996 conviction was closer to home in Malheur County, for first-degree sexual abuse.

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Todd Arriola/The Baker County Press

Allen Mullins, 33, is on a quest to raise \$500,000 in donations for the VFW post in Warm Springs.

## Captain America’s visit

• MAN ON TREK TO RAISE FUNDS FOR WARM SPRINGS VFW BUILDING

BY TODD ARRIOLA  
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The word “superhero” brings to mind images of super human strength, x-ray vision, and the ability to stop bullets. While not in possession of any of the aforementioned traits, what Allen “Captain America” Mullins does have is the ability to communicate a strong message about our nation’s homeless military veterans, during his continuing journey on foot across America.

His ultimate goal: to collect \$500,000 in donations or to log 500,000 miles by 2020, in order to help make improvements on and build new facilities for the oldest

Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) post in the U.S., established in 1952—VFW Elliott Palmer Post 4217, located in Warm Springs, Oregon.

On the latest leg of Mullins’ trek, he traveled from Pendleton to La Grande along I-84 east bound to North Powder, arriving in Haines last Friday afternoon, where this reporter was able to speak with him, seated at the Haines Sell-Rite on Front Street.

Mullins, 33, first explained that he’s been often mistaken for a veteran (he said he has not served), because motorists would see him walking along the interstates and highways, and sometimes, law enforcement would receive reports that he was a veteran. “You have to understand, people are going by fast, and all they see is the blue, and all the patriotism, and the first thing that comes to mind is, ‘He’s a veteran.’”

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## New School Board Chair elected

BY TODD ARRIOLA  
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The Baker School District 5J held its regular Board meeting on Tuesday, July 21, 2015, 6 p.m., at the District Office, 2090 4th Street. The highlight of the meeting included the election of current Board Vice Chair Kevin Cassidy for the position of Chair, and current Board member Melissa Irvine as Vice Chair. Outgoing Chair Andrew Bryan, having already served two consecutive years in that capacity, was ineligible for chair again.

Present from the Board were Bryan (via telephone), Cassidy, Irvine, Richard McKim and Chris Hawkins, Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Doug Dalton, Superintendent Mark Witty, Assistant Superintendent Betty Palmer, and Executive Secretary Norma Nemeec. There were around 15 attendees.

The meeting was called to order, and the Pledge of Allegiance recited, followed shortly by the approval of the agenda.

Witty introduced two guests, Mr. and Ms. Li, from China, visitors to Baker City for about two weeks, who came to learn about and to experience the local culture, and to share theirs.

SEE SCHOOL BOARD PAGE 10

## County travel management group convenes

• NEW COUNTY COMMITTEE MEETS TO PROTECT THE FOREST

BY BRIAN ADDISON  
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There are thousands of miles of forest roads within Baker County. Many of these roads were built for purposes of commerce and business, and many provide recreational and tourism opportunities within the county. This includes roads constructed by timber companies for the transport of timber, roads used by miners providing routes from mines to market, roads used by ranchers for movement of livestock, roads providing access to fight forest fire, and roads leading to culturally and historically significant sites.

SEE TRAVEL MANAGEMENT PAGE 5

**Friday** Sunny and warm, highs in the mid 80s. Mostly clear and cool at night with lows in the upper 40s.

**Saturday** Mostly sunny with highs in the upper 80s. A chance of showers and thunderstorms overnight otherwise partly cloudy with lows in the lower 50s. Chance of precipitation is 30%.

**Sunday** Partly cloudy with a chance of morning showers or a thunderstorm. Highs in the lower 80s, chance of precipitation 20%. Lows in upper 40s.

Your weekend weather forecast for Baker County.



Official weather provider for The Baker County Press.

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