

# Local

## Hay for John Day donations

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Williams said, “I thought maybe—maybe—we’d get a one and half or two loads donated. So far, we have four loads, and it keeps trickling in.”

Hamsher also unloads and stores the hay donations in John Day as they come in and is coordinating needs in the area.

Williams got in touch with Currin after seeing a post on Facebook and has been coordinating donations from the Baker County area.

Currin said it was just after hearing about the Canyon Creek Complex fire near John Day and the homes destroyed that she began to wonder what could she do to help.

She figured there would be many donations of clothes and such things, and wanted to do something different. She thought it might be nice to get a load of hay together and take down.

Currin got together with Hamsher of Prairie City and asked if he’d like to collaborate on a hay drive. He agreed. Currin said she went down to meet with him and was very impressed at how organized Hamsher has things and how much he is doing to meet needs.

Currin asked him if he’d like to have a page set up for donations and he said that would be good, so on the way home, as her friend drove, Currin set up “Hay for John Day.”

Currin said Hamsher is incredibly humble and would not mention it, but all he’s done for the community goes above and beyond the call of duty. He has put in an incredible amount of time to help those affected by the fire.

Currin said, “All I’m doing is posting what he tells me.” She laughed as she said she is basically Hamsher’s secretary in this undertaking. She has also used donations to purchase hay and delivered it to John Day.

Currin explained, “These people lost their homes, pastures, and winter hay. We want to provide for their needs now through Spring.”

She said everyone has been incredibly generous and all the donations so far are appreciated. Help is still needed, as more needs come in and more people are evacuated.

Hamsher, also the mayor of Prairie City, is coordinating needs on the John Day end of things. Grant Western Lumber



Meghan Andersch / The Baker County Press

Mike Williams stands in front of one load of hay. More loads are already collected and ready to go.

Company has donated space for storing the hay.

Hamsher said it is hard to figure the exact need as it keeps growing.

He said some ranchers have had to pull their cattle off the summer pastures and start feeding now instead of November as they usually would.

Others have lost pastures and barns. Some wind events in the past few days have led to growth and new evacuations.

Hamsher said as of a meeting Tuesday night, the fire was figured at about 24% contained.

Some ranchers have been coming in and getting hay in small amounts to feed their stock, but until the fire gets under control, their places may still be in danger.

Hamsher shared stories of people who lost everything, including a man with a kidney transplant who lost his house and everything else. Hamsher said the appreciation and smile on the man’s face when he was able to get some hay was good to see.

He said the man didn’t even pick out the greatest bales. He was just grateful for the assistance.

Hamsher said instead of having to buy hay, folks may be able to pay for other needs, like clothing or toward rebuilding their homes. Hamsher said, “If we can take one little worry off of people, it’s worth it.”

Hamsher encouraged folks to like the Hay for John Day Facebook page. He said after he did a drive to get more likes on the page, within one day he was contacted by a lady from Salem, and a gentle-

man there has donated 20 tons of hay.

A caravan of 16 rigs from Sandy is coming up Saturday with food and another 8 tons of hay. Hamsher said the news media from Portland may come up with the crew from Sandy.

Hamsher was also contacted by someone in Central Oregon who put him in touch with the Oregon head of the Humane Society. This individual helped Hamsher with a grant application, resulting in a grant of \$5000, which will be put toward more hay.

Donations have also come in from Union, Baker, Grant, Harney, Crook, Jefferson, and Deschutes Counties. Hamsher said it, “restores faith in humankind, to see people willing to drop what they’re doing and lend a hand.”

Hamsher said he also could not say enough thanks to Mike Williams of Baker City.

Williams, although haying himself, has been making phone calls, stockpiling hay, and coordinating delivery from Baker County to John Day.

Gary Smith of Gary Smith Trucking has donated the hauling of the hay.

Hamsher said Williams and Smith have gone above and beyond what he could ever have hoped. He complimented the generosity of Baker County.

Williams keeps telling him stories about such things as finding 45 big bales of hay anonymously dropped off at the collection point.

Williams estimated current donations at about 120 tons of hay.

Wards Ranch donated space to collect the hay and Williams donated the equipment, including a tractor.

Williams said, “We’ll do this as long as we can. We’ve only been at it a week!”

Williams said many people have been asking about also donating for Baker County.

Jake Bingham, Baker County President of the Oregon Cattlemen’s Association said he has not heard of any immediate needs in Baker County and that it seems John Day has a greater need right now.

Bingham said a lot of local producers are still trying to figure out where they’re at and may be using secondary or fall pastures at this point.

If there are any needs in the area, he said he would like to hear about them and help coordinate assistance. He can be reached at 541-403-1735.

To donate hay or to arrange pick up or delivery of hay for those affected by the Canyon Creek Complex fire, contact Jim Hamsher at 620-2861.

Monetary donations can be made at [gofundme.com/px2fmevw](http://gofundme.com/px2fmevw) or Old West Federal Credit Union in Baker City or John Day.

The Facebook page for Hay for John Day is [facebook.com/pages/Hay-for-John-Day/142983646039346](http://facebook.com/pages/Hay-for-John-Day/142983646039346).

For hay donations in the Baker County area, contact Mike Williams at 519-8718.

Hay is being collected at the Wards’ potato cellar on Highway 30.

## Huntington Food Bank vandalized

• TWO FREEZERS FULL OF MEAT, VEGETABLES LOST AS A RESULT

BY EILEEN DRIVER

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On Friday, August 7th between the hours of 11 p.m. and 6 a.m., the Huntington Food Bank was vandalized, culminating in the loss of two large freezers full of food.

There were reports of two intoxicated males in their mid-20s yelling and fighting in the park around 2 a.m. that morning, but it is unknown if the vandalism was caused by them or others, and they have yet to be positively identified.

The food bank building, which is located in Lion’s Park, has always been open and available for City events since it has the only public restroom in Huntington.

Although the canned and dry food is locked in a separate room and frozen food kept in locked freezers, this year during Pioneer Days, person or persons unknown broke into two of the freezers and left them open all night, leaving the food to defrost, rendering it inedible.

According to food bank coordinator Allan Driver, “Nothing appeared to be stolen, but the contents of both freezers had to be thrown away for safety’s sake.”

This vandalism resulted in the loss of one freezer of frozen vegetables and one freezer of meat products.

Kathy Hughes, bookkeeper for the food bank, said, “We don’t receive a lot of meat in the first place, so the loss of what we did have is quite a blow.”

The broken freezers appear to be fixable but that takes money out of the food budget to pay for repairs. The Huntington Food Bank serves over 70 families in the Huntington, Durkee and surrounding rural areas of Baker County and has more signing up every month. The low/ fixed income people in this area depend on the food bank to make it through the month and now will receive less food due to the vandalism. The food bank is asking if anyone would be willing to donate meat or funds to help with replacement cost to contact the Food Bank through the Chamber of Commerce at [huntingtonchamber@gmail.com](mailto:huntingtonchamber@gmail.com).

## Sumpter mayor contests recall vote results

• VOTES STILL BEING CERTIFIED, RECALL APPEARS TO HAVE PASSED BY 8 VOTES

BY MEGHAN ANDERSCH

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Voting is over in Sumpter’s mayoral recall election. Unofficial results are 48 “yes” votes to recall and 40 “no” votes. Karen Phillips, Recording Deputy, explained that results will be certified by County Clerk Cindy Carpenter within 10 days.

Mayor Findley stated, “As much as the individuals who were ringing the school house bell and speeding down our street honking their horns may think this is over, it is not. I have been holding information showing the recall was not handled correctly by Mr. Patton and am therefore protesting the vote. The Secretary of State’s office has been notified as of this morning.”

“In the interim, until the vote is certified in the next 10 days I am still Mayor and will continue business as usual.”

Recall ballots include the reason for demanding a recall as submitted by the chief petitioner and justification statement by the public office. The chief petitioner in this case was Alan “Dan” Patton, who cited “Failure to abide by the City Charter and Ordinances.”

Mayor Melissa Findley’s response stated, “The allegations against me are false. The individuals initiating and supporting this recall cannot point to one example of my knowing or intentional disregard of the City Charter or ordinances. I am new in the position of Mayor and have had much to learn in a short time. Along the way, I may have stumbled, but never intentionally. With the exception of my husband, Councilor Armbruster, the other members of the Council and staff have made almost no effort to help me learn the ropes. The reason is because they want to keep things the same as before and continue to support their favorites, disregard the niceties of the law, and take undisclosed actions, all with your money. It has been and will continue to be my intent to work with the community in an open, fair and accountable manner. I intend to apply those standards not only to myself, but also to all those involved with the City, even though they may not like it. If you want to return to the world of cronyism and financial irresponsibility, recall me. If you want truth, fairness, accountability and openness, vote “NO” on this recall.”

According to page 9 of the Recall Manual published by the Oregon Elections Division, “If the recall election is successful the position becomes a vacancy in office and is filled in accordance with state statute or local charter or ordinance.”

The Head of Council, Toni Thompson, resigned her position earlier this month, stating the resignation was for reasons other than the recall. Recall elections on two other City Councilors, G. LeAnne Woolf and Ada Oakley, will proceed with ballots going out this week and due back by 8 p.m. on September 15th.

## Tickets to see Pope available

WASHINGTON— U.S. Representative Greg Walden announced Wednesday that his office is now accepting requests from residents of Oregon’s Second District for tickets to take part in His Holiness Pope Francis’ address to the U.S. Congress on September 24, 2015.

Baker County is part of Oregon’s Second District.

“The visit of Pope Francis to the U.S. Capitol—the first time a pope has ever visited the Capitol and addressed the Congress—will be historic for our nation. My office has been allocated a limited number

of tickets so that Oregonians may participate in this historic event.

If you are resident of the Second District interested in requesting tickets, please visit my website at [walden.house.gov/pope](http://walden.house.gov/pope) to sign up,” Walden said.

Ticketholders will be able to watch the Pope’s address via a live broadcast in a location on the West Front of the U.S. Capitol. The Pope has expressed an interest in making a brief appearance on the West Front after his remarks.

All of the tickets are standing room only, although there will be a

limited seating area for those with disabilities. While a clear line-of-sight cannot be guaranteed for all attending the broadcast, the space provides an opportunity for guests to be part of the visit.

Residents of the Second District looking to request tickets should fill out the form online at [walden.house.gov/pope](http://walden.house.gov/pope). The deadline for requests is Tuesday, September 8, at 5:00 pm Pacific time. Walden’s office has received a limited allocation of tickets, and those receiving them will be contacted for further details.



Submitted Photo.

U.S. Representative Greg Walden

Ticket holders are responsible for their own transportation to and from the Nation’s Capital, lodging, and other trip expenses.

Tickets may not be sold or given away.

Oregonians with questions may call Walden’s office at 202-225-6730