

Local

What it's like to be a ...
Butcher in Baker City

With college students choosing majors and high school students deciding between college or the workforce, this series will highlight one career path each week in August and September.

This week, we introduce you to **Duane Henry** who has been a butcher for 22 years. He began in Union. He worked for Hills Meats in Pendleton, worked out of a shop in Prineville and has had his own shop in John Day before coming to Baker City and joining owners Dale and Jana Woodcock at Baker County Custom Meats located at 2390 11th Street.



Gina K. Swartz / The Baker County Press

BY GINA K. SWARTZ
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The BCP: What made you want to become a butcher?

Duane: I’ve always been interested in how animals came apart (laughing). When the neighbors would have the butcher come out and I had to be at school, I was always mad because I didn’t get to see it.

The BCP: What are the qualifications to become a butcher? Is schooling required, certifications by the state?

Duane: It’s on-the-job training. You need licensing for the truck (mobile butchering) and on the shop, yes. As far as just cutting meat, no. If you work for a shop that has a union then there are levels that you work up until you are a journeyman.

The BCP: Then in theory without those union standards could say someone like yourself go into a retail chain store that isn’t union and get a job as a butcher?

Duane: I could probably because of the level of experience I have, but someone just starting out would begin in the meat department and have to work their way up.

Duane Henry of Baker County Custom Meats has been in the business for over 20 years.

The BCP: How long have you been a butcher?

Duane: 22 years. I started in the meat department of the local grocery store in Union, Oregon.

The BCP: So how long does it take to become a butcher?

Duane: Well, it depends on the individual and path that they take. I’ve had people that I’ve trained and in a year they are ready to go and can do most of it. There are a few that you are like, ‘You’re not going to get it.’ You either are or aren’t going to get it.

The BCP: What advice would you give anyone looking to head down this path as a career?

Duane: You’ve got to be willing to work weird hours, long hours during the busy season, which is generally from the end of July to mid-December. During the slow time it is hit or miss.

Of course, you’d have to have an interest in it, not mind all the blood and guts. It gets pretty smelly.

I like to go to different meat shops and work for a day because no one person knows everything. You can learn new tricks, work with different equipment, get tips, that sort of thing.

The BCP: What do you do with all the left-over waste you don’t use?

Duane: We have a cooler out back we keep the parts, bones, hides stuff like that in—and once a week, Darling International, Inc. the rendering plant in Kuna, ID comes and picks it up to dispose of. It’s actually kind of neat.

The BCP: You offer mobile services—do you get called out on emergencies, like say a cow was hit on the road, how are those things handled?

Duane: Well, they have to wait about an hour at least because I have to put water on the truck, then drive out to them. Most are within a half hour of here. I have been called out for cows being hit; it gets ugly. It depends what hit it too. If it’s a semi, it’s a mess.

The BCP: Do the County Sheriff or State Police ever call you to assist with clean up or disposal on the roads after an animal has

Halfway fair winds down



Carmelita Holland / The Baker County Press

Grand Marshals, Cheryl Thomas (riding the horse with white on it) and Lynda Bird (riding the bay) again take a place with honors at Halfway in the Baker County Fair parade.

BY CARMELITA HOLLAND
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This year’s Baker County Fair held at Halfway was well organized and well attended, with people coming from long distances to spend time enjoying the entertainment. Many spent precious time with family members. This year’s parade was very good, spiced up with local Fire equipment and several U.S.Forest Fire trucks, at the end, sounding off sirens.

Stands were well filled with spectators enjoying the Panhandle Rodeo and mule races each day, and many enjoyed dances in the evening

Activity at the Fairgrounds in Halfway began on Friday, September 4, at 3 p.m. when the Exhibit Hall opened for entries. Each person bringing produce, sewing, photographs, or other various items knew they would be facing talented competition.

A free breakfast, courtesy of Graven’s Enterprises was first on Saturday, and were followed by Let’R Buck breakfasts on Sunday and Monday. More exhibits were received Saturday at the Exhibit Hall until 10 am. Meanwhile livestock conformation judging was underway as well as judging of dairy cattle and goats.

Jack Pot Team Roping began at 8 am at the Pine Valley Fairgrounds Rodeo Arena, and Miki Whitney reports the leader of the team that won was John Hagler of the Idaho Cowboy Association (ICA).

Mutton Busters on woolly mounts preceded the ICA Panhandle Rodeo, Saturday, Sunday and Monday. Mule races were conducted during the rodeo all three days.

Century Farms dominated the booths with a Blue Ribbon on Buckles, Boots and Spurs. Old-timers will remember the names of the McNutt family whose farm dates back to 1883; Lorena Estes Koopman, J. V. and Arlene Thomas, Andrew and Amanda Greener, Another Blue Ribbon winner was Alice Covey of Cornucopia Road who painstakingly hand quilted a beautiful quilt with a field of lilies design

Abbey Whitnah won the All Around, Round Robbin in the (Small)Senior Division, Gussie Cook won the Reserve

Since many awards and names of winners of events are not available at this time they will be published when possible.

County Commissioners discuss Halfway maps

BY TODD ARRIOLA
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The Baker County Board of Commissioners held its first work session of the month, for a discussion on Halfway road maps, Tri-County weed budget issues, and County property in the City of Greenhorn, Wednesday. All the commissioners were present.

Also in attendance were Baker County Road Master Jeff Smith, Baker County Weed Master Arnie Grammon, Baker County Sheriff Travis Ash, Baker County Natural Resources Advisory Committee (NRAC) Coordinator Eric Wuntz, Halfway Mayor Sheila Farwell, Dick Crow, Marion Crow, and Alice Knapp.

The Crows provided the Board with copies of maps of roads in the Halfway area, including Haze Butte Road, Four Mile Road, Officers Butte Road, Tim Goodel Wagon Road, Fish Creek Road, Shock Road, and Crow Reservoir Road.

The Crows discussed issues associated with the

roads, including locked gates and blocked access to various public and private property, and they also discussed ownership of the different properties.

Harvey asked about the ages of the maps, and Dick responded that they were produced probably in 1989 or 1990—one of the maps had printed on it 1987.

Smith said the Road Department could check and confirm the status of the roads, and Harvey said research would be conducted regarding State law, property ownership, public access, etc. He and Wuntz, among others, will continue work on map issues.

Dick asked why Parole and Probation stopped providing the Community Service program for the Halfway area, stating it was beneficial. Bennett responded that State funding decreased for that, and Ash said he sees the possibility of the program again being implemented in the spring of next year.

Farwell informed the Board that Halfway City Council meetings are held every second Thursday, and mentioned a study, in connection with some City water system upgrades, has been stalled, because American Indian artifacts had been discovered, possibly putting the project on hold until the spring of 2016. Bennett said he spoke with County legal counsel Dan Van Thiel, who may assist.

Bennett said he spoke with the local, off-road 4x4 group Locked & Loaded (L&L), and interest was expressed by L&L in adopting the Mill Creek Road. Bennett said the USFS returned jurisdiction of the road back to the County three years ago, and L&L would be responsible for minor maintenance. Smith responded there would be serious issues in the spring with the road, but he’ll work to make it possible for the group.

Grammon discussed with the Board his concerns about the lack of clarity in the Tri-County (Baker,

Union and Wallowa) Weed Management Area’s (TC-WMA) budget, and billing issues between Baker County and TCWMA. Grammon provided the Board with copies of Baker County bids and contracted work, other budget information, and the Articles of Agreement And Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) of the TCWMA.

The Board discussed the lack of a proper budget from the TCWMA, and whether one is actually required by law, though the agreement itself states that one is required. Harvey stated his confusion with the budget details, and Bennett and Kerns agreed, the budget could use much more clarity. Kerns, a member of the Baker County Weed Board, stated that a meeting, in the form of a County work session, would be a good idea, in order to discuss the matter further. He said that a decision would need to be made as to whether to even continue to be partnered with the TTCWMA.

At the start of the discussion regarding the City of Greenhorn and County property, Knapp discussed the possible effects to her mining claim, located in the Clear Creek Road area. After explaining that the City is in the process of working on water line upgrades in order to improve water quality, he said that the discussion during this session wasn’t relevant to issues with her claim, stating that County owns property in the Greenhorn.

Harvey said that the City requested that Baker County donate some property located there, along with the cemetery, which the City of Greenhorn doesn’t currently own. Harvey said the cemetery couldn’t be donated, and he mentioned a request for a heliport was also made by the City.

Bennett said the lots could be donated, with some deed restrictions, including the requirement that any profits be used for water improvement purposes. Ash said that, last

year, a gunshot victim was transported to the current helicopter landing zone in Greenhorn, and he saw no issues with the zone. Harvey said these issues, associated with the City of Greenhorn, could be added to the next regular session’s agenda, in order for the Board to make some decisions.

Harvey said he had a meeting with USFS District Ranger Jeff Tomac, Wallowa-Whitman District Supervisor Tom Montoya, and Wuntz for two hours Tuesday, to discuss the coordination process, and he said there will be ongoing meetings, including one next Monday, to discuss topics such as salvage logging and restoration. He said future meetings, including ones with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), will include requests from Baker County for private lands restoration, which Harvey said has already been emphasized.