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Former Grant Co. deputy-turned-State Rep visits



Kerry McQuisten / The Baker County Press

Rep. Sherrie Sprenger visited Baker City Tuesday.

• **STATE REPRESENTATIVE SHERRIE SPRENGER COMES TO BAKER CITY WITH INCREASING VOTER TURNOUT IN MIND**

BY KERRY McQUISTEN
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Oregon State Representative Sherrie Sprenger

traveled from her home base in Linn and Marion Counties, to Baker County, on a mission Tuesday.

As part of the Oregon House’s leadership team, Sprenger is in the middle of a 30-stop tour covering most Oregon counties.

“What I’m trying to accomplish is to get voters engaged,” she said.

Sprenger scheduled brief meetings with Republican party chairs and vice chairs at the county level to ask at each location for ideas on increasing voter turnout.

During the last general election, 71,000 registered Republicans who received their ballots “left them laying on the table,” she said. The precise number of Democrat ballots that were not mailed in was unavailable in time for print, but also high.

Sprenger, who says she’s an unabashed “Valley legislator,” believes correctly that eastern Oregonians often feel divided from the western side of the state.

“Why bother? That’s what I hear,” she said. “But every vote does count.”

Sprenger has eastern Oregon ties herself—having served as both a former Benton and Grant County Sheriff’s deputy before taking the plunge into politics.

“Rights come with responsibilities,” she said.

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An ornamental occasion at the Scoop ‘N Steamer



Meghan Andersch / The Baker County Press

Scoop ‘N Steamer owner Candace Madill opened up the restaurant space to local youngsters for making ornaments in Sumpter the afternoon of November 25th. Madill said when she heard kids were encouraged to make ornaments to decorate the Sumpter City Christmas tree, she wanted to make a place available for the kids to get together to have fun and make decorations. Madill also provided craft items for ornaments, and ice cream to participants. Pictured clockwise from lower left: Ashton Andersch, Daunte Andersch, Lily Warmuth, Gabriel Warmuth, Canyon Madill, and Arianah Andersch.

Bennetts to receive OCA/ODFW award

BY KERRY McQUISTEN
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“This award shows that ranchers are protecting the land,” said Unity-area rancher and Baker County Commissioner Mark Bennett. “That’s always been my message.”

Bennett and wife, Patti, were recently notified that they will receive the Riley Freeman award for stewardship at the upcoming Oregon Cattlemen’s Association (OCA) awards dinner in Bend.

“It was truly a surprise,” said Bennett.

The award is a joint effort between the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and the OCA.

ODFW officials nominated the Bennetts and their ranch. Riley Freeman, a past chairman of the Oregon Cattlemen’s Wildlife Committee, desired greater coordination and cooperation between private landowners and state and federal natural resource agencies.

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Deadlines extended in Pine Eagle lawsuit

• **LEGAL PROCESS REGARDING ACTIVE SHOOTER DRILL CONTINUES**

BY KERRY McQUISTEN
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On Monday, an order was granted to extend the deadline for discovery in the ongoing lawsuit filed by former Halfway teacher Linda Mallery McLean against Pine-Eagle School District 61; Alpine Alarm Communications and Construction, LLC; and members of the Pine-Eagle School Board regarding the 2013 active shooter drill at the school.

SEE PINE EAGLE LAWSUIT PAGE 5

Economic Development warns against \$15 minimum wage

BY TODD ARRIOLA
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The proposed \$15 per hour Oregon minimum wage, local businesses and the empty Haggen store were the key topics as the Baker County Economic Development Committee (EDC) held its regular meeting on Monday, in the Commission Chambers of the Baker County Courthouse.

The group was joined by members of the Baker High School Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), to discuss even more topics such as local employment issues and the FBLA members’ trip to Chicago.

Present from the EDC were Chair Craig Ward, Baker

County Commission Chair Bill Harvey, Baker County Economic Development Director Greg Smith and his assistant, Julee Hicks, Blue Mountain Community College Small Business Center (BMCC SBDC) Advisor Jeff Smith, Baker Technical Institute (BTI) Director Jerry Peacock, and Baker City Councilman Richard Langrell.

Also in attendance were BMCC SBDC Director Dan Koopman, former BMCC SBDC Advisor Bob Savage, FBLA members Koby Hansen, Josie Bryan, Hollis Robb, Ashlie Chastain, and Zach Tomac, and FBLA videographer Jody Tomac.

SEE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PAGE 3

Friday

Mostly cloudy and cool with a rain/snow mix, mostly. Highs near 40, chance of precipitation is 40%. Little to no snow accumulations expected. Lows in the teens.

Saturday

Mostly cloudy and much cooler, highs in the mid 30s. Mostly cloudy with a small chance of snow showers overnight. Lows in the mid-20s.

Sunday

Mostly cloudy, chance for rain showers mixing with a little wet snow. Chance of precipitation is 30%. Little to no accumulation expected. Highs in the mid 30s. Lows in mid-20s.

Your weekend weather forecast for Baker County.

Official weather provider for The Baker County Press.

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