



# The Baker County Press

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TheBakerCountyPress.com

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Friday, February 19, 2016 • Volume 3, Issue 8

## Three to run for open Commissioner seat

### • HUNSAKER WITHDRAWS FROM COUNTY RACE

BY KERRY McQUISTEN  
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The past week has seen shakeups and developments in the upcoming race for Baker County Commissioner seat number one, which is soon to be vacated by Tim Kerns.

Local rancher and Natural Resources Advisory Committee member Kody Justus filed first, followed by local CPA Bruce Nichols. Retired Bureau of Land Management employee David Hunsaker also picked up his paperwork to file, but withdrew from the race last week, citing a pending double knee surgery.

On Wednesday, Jeff Nelson of Historic Baker City and Blue Mountain

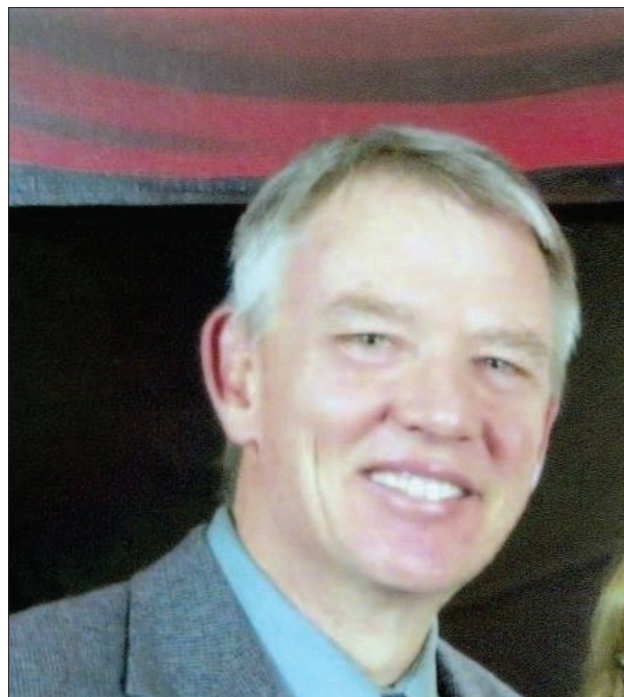
Community College's economic development program became the latest candidate to file.

All three candidates are running on the Republican ticket this May.

"As Commissioner I will continue in my pursuit of economic development, ensuring we bring family wage jobs to Baker County who support our small town community way of life. I will continue to promote local economic

prosperity and growth in small business and tourism. I am committed to protecting our rural way of life and I will fight to capitalize on our local sustainable resources to revitalize industry for Baker County. I am committed to pursuing every avenue to ensure business owners thrive," Nelson issued in a statement Wednesday.

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Submitted Photo.

Jeff Nelson of Baker City is the most recent candidate to file for Commissioner.

## Sumpter holds poker run



Meghan Andersch / The Baker County Press

Team Art Brat running to victory in the Outhouse Races.

BY MEGHAN ANDERSCH  
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Sumpter Valley Blue Mountain Snowmobile Club's Annual Poker Run and Outhouse Races enjoyed plenty of snow on Saturday, February 13th.

The weather cooperated with sunshine until mid-afternoon, though skies were leaden by the start of the outhouse races and sleet was spitting by the time the day's prizes were awarded.

Nevertheless, spirits remained high throughout the event.

Snowmobile Club secretary/treasurer Barbara Malone explained that money raised will be donated to a charity. Members will get together to decide on a charity after the final proceeds are determined.

Along with two poker stations out on the snow-

mobile trails, there were also seven stations at businesses around Sumpter: The Community Center, Bed and Breakfast, Stage Stop, Soda Mountain Pet Supplies, Rustic Realty, Depot Inn, and the Scoop N' Steamer.

Participants drew a random chip for each of their poker cards at a maximum of seven stations. The top 23 poker hands won cash prizes.

The outhouse races drew more spectators than racers, though Kurt Clarke's ultralight outhouse model drew much attention. The winners of the races were a young team dubbed "Art Brat."

At six o'clock, the crowd gathered at the grooming shed for prizes and raffle drawings was standing room only.

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Meghan Andersch / The Baker County Press

Marlene Bork manning the poker station at Soda Mountain Pet Supplies.

## Merrill to leave BHS principal position

BY BAKER COUNTY PRESS STAFF  
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Baker High School Principal Benjamin Merrill is moving to a new position within the Baker 5J School District. Merrill will take on a new principal position at Eagle Cap effective the first of July.

Merrill, a father of two, resigned from his position on City Council late last year citing personal time with his children as a key reason.

Former long-time BHS principal, Jerry Peacock will step away from the position he's held at Eagle Cap to continue on in his director role at the Baker Technical Institute (BTI), which has continued to expand since its launch. The BHS principal position will be advertised.

At the last City Council meeting, 5J officials also discussed the possibility of moving BTI efforts perhaps a step further into the realm of a community college.

## Rally area to be discussed at Council

### • STREET CLOSURES ON MAIN MAY SHIFT SLIGHTLY NORTH

BY KERRY McQUISTEN  
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On February 23, 2016, the Baker City Council will discuss the layout and street closures for the annual Hells Canyon Motorcycle Rally.

Last year after the 2015 Rally, several businesses gathered in a meeting to discuss concerns about access and the like. The result has been a proposed updated plan, which shifts closures slightly to the north per a diagram provided by the Baker City Police Department.

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**Friday** Mostly cloudy with a chance for showers. Highs in the mid 40s, chance of precipitation is 40%. Lows in the mid-20s.

**Saturday** Partly sunny and cooler, highs in the low 40s. Mostly cloudy, lows in the mid 20s at night.

**Sunday** Sunny and warmer. Highs in the upper 40s. Partly cloudy with lows near 30.

Your weekend weather forecast for Baker County.

Our forecast made possible by this generous sponsor:

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**OREGON TRAIL ELECTRIC CO-OP**

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