



# The Baker County Press

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TheBakerCountyPress.com

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Friday, June 17, 2016 • Volume 3, Issue 25

## Former Halfway couple killed in Utah crash

• PICKUP ROLLS DOWN 600-FOOT DROPOFF

BY KERRY McQUISTEN  
News@TheBakerCountyPress.com

Husband and wife, Lance and Jade Simpson, both Pine Eagle graduates formerly of Halfway, were killed last Friday afternoon when their pickup left a dirt road and plunged more

than 600 feet down into a ravine, Hobble Creek Canyon, in Utah.

Jade is the daughter of Tom and Melody Huff, and Lance is the brother of Marianne Diggs, all of Halfway. The community at large has been rocked by the tragic accident, and news of that accident quickly hit the television and radio airways across Utah.

The couple had been residing in Elk Ridge, Utah

at the time, and had lived previously in Washington State.

According to the Utah County Sheriff's Office, bicyclists first came upon the scene and saw debris but were unable to see the vehicle. Skid marks were also visible.

Investigators said that the pickup had rolled numerous times, and though evidence at the scene opened up the possibility for alcohol to have been a

factor, a definitive cause for the accident has not yet been determined.

Seatbelt use was also unable to be determined due to the severity of the accident.

Tami's Pine Valley Funeral Home in Halfway will be handling the arrangements for the family, and has a guest book online in which members of the community, friends and family can pay their respects.



Lance and Jade Simpson.

Submitted Photo.

## Bookmobile gets a graphic makeover



Submitted Photo.

The bookmobile's new look was completed last weekend as the vehicle underwent a makeover.

BY KERRY McQUISTEN  
News@TheBakerCountyPress.com

From cleaning through completion, the Baker Library District's bookmobile underwent a makeover—18 hours total—at the hands of Oregon Sign Company last weekend.

The project actually began last Thursday, with Donn and Beckey Christy donating a shop at Superior Towing so that the crew would have space to work.

Said Oregon Sign Company owner Christina Witham, "The passenger side of the bus is always facing the south sun when parked at the library and it shows, the old graphics were baked on and cracked. We had to remove

those graphics with tools called vinyl wheels. Basically a rubber wheel on a grinder, one air powered and one electric. Strip by strip the graphics slowly came off.

"Any small pieces, smudged adhesive and areas that we couldn't reach with the wheels had to be heated with a heat gun and scraped off and the entire area gone over again with adhesive remover, scraped again and cleaned with shop towels. Very time consuming and hard work."

The bookmobile has become something of an icon in these parts.

SEE BOOKMOBILE PAGE 5



Submitted Photo.

Graphics experts place the wrap.

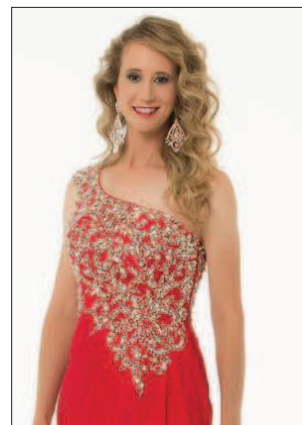
## McNeil crowned Mrs. Oregon United States 2016

On June 11th, Baker City's Lori McNeil was crowned Mrs. Oregon United States 2016. McNeil represented eight counties across 35,000 square miles last year with 6-8 appearances per month as Mrs. Eastern Oregon America promoting Literacy. This honor comes with hard work and dedication as a representative for Marriage and Families Nationally. McNeil's passion for promoting Literacy as an educator of almost 18 years, has also led to the publication of her first book, "Charlie's First Day," a children's book that focusses on five main strategies for teaching reading skills.

McNeil will continue her advocacy work in literacy this next year as she donates a copy of her book to each of the 36 County Libraries in Oregon and continues to work with schools, libraries and communities to promote and teach Literacy.

As Mrs. Oregon United States, McNeil will be competing for the National title August 1-4 in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Eastern Oregon has never in history, had a representative compete at the National level in the United States system.



Submitted Photo.

Lori A. McNeil.

## Man shot on Elm Street

On June 14, 2016, James Lanning (DOB 12-08-1969) of 5633 NW Cayner Ave. Redmond Oregon was arrested on charges of Attempted Assault First Degree, Assault in the Third Degree and Menacing.

The charges relate to a shooting that occurred on Elm Street in Baker City at approximately 11:00 p.m. on June 13th, 2016.

Lanning is charged with firing a handgun at 34-year-old Scott Bradley (no fixed address) while Bradley was seated in a vehicle.

The case is still under investigation. The investigation is being conducted by the Baker County Major Crime Team.

The case will be submitted to a grand jury later in the week.

**Friday** Partly sunny with a chance for showers. Chance of precipitation is 40%. Highs in the mid 60s.

**Saturday** Mostly sunny and pleasant. Highs in the upper 60s. Partly cloudy at night with lows in the mid-40s.

**Sunday** Mostly sunny and warmer. Highs in the mid 70s. Partly cloudy at night with lows in the lower 40s.

Your weekend weather forecast for Baker County.



Official weather provider for The Baker County Press.

Our forecast made possible by this generous sponsor:



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