

# Outdoor Rec / Local

## Preparing for Old Man Winter



**THE OUTDOOR COLUMN**  
By Todd Arriola

The forthcoming deer and elk rifle hunting seasons inspire visions of freezers filled to capacity with big game meat, and of walls, sheds and barns full of antlers, all of which will, with any luck, help to brighten moods and to thwart the depressive efforts of Old Man Winter, as he sits ready, once again, to leap at the Valley's neck, like an unbound cougar. He's ready, but, are we?

For some, winter means a magical time, filled with days of never-ending fun, out on the slopes, at the lodge, or at home, retelling the stories of conquering the slopes and the lodge.

On a more practical level, for some, it means less difficulty with breath-

ing, as a welder had explained at one point. And for some, winter feels like Purgatory, with Hell soon to follow.

For those of the population who enjoy the season, and who also have developed a sense of love for the area, there isn't a difficult formula to work through, in order to come to the conclusion that they appear to be happy Utopians, whether some of the fundamental issues—a working heater, for example—have been given serious consideration. Everything takes time, and recent returnees to the Valley, electing to believe that this or that issue will most likely be resolved in a matter of weeks, pre-winter, have developed a clear case of amnesia while absent, as progress here is sometimes measured in months—or even years.

The middle ground includes those who may display some form of

fondness for either the season or the locale, or maybe, neither one, and they may or may not be more prepared than die-hard locals in the aforementioned group. After possibly enduring many moons of northeast Oregon winters, the Quasi-Neutrals interestingly seem quite tolerant, neither complaining too much, nor praising too much.

At the extreme other end of the spectrum are the Purgatoryans, who may have experienced and fully understand the seasonal change, but who nonetheless dread the idea of it, like an impending plague. Receiving the majority of votes in the “Least Likely to be hired to Represent Baker County Tourism” category, they just might possibly be the most prepared, whether out of fear of cold wind and snow, or a dip in the temperature, below 70 degrees.

Whatever the scenario, most of these people aren't immune to the effects of the unpredictable winter season, unless they happen to live in a toasty blanket for months. In a lot of cases, preparation for, and protection against, the colder weather comes down to one major thing:

how much money can be allocated to address the problem.

It's difficult to think about the issues caused by winter, during the warm summer months, when less gas and electricity are consumed (generally speaking), winter clothing sales aren't uncommon, and the weather causes less of a headache (again, generally speaking), because we've evolved to the point to where we basically don't want to think about problems, unless we're forced to address them immediately. To err is human; to procrastinate is also human.

In my own case, any procrastination caused by the disarming, tolerable weather of summer has been limited, and preparation is progressing, including the installation of better wall insulation, and a less frustrating plumbing system.

A return home from the Great Outdoors is much more enjoyable when water still flows, the house is flood-free, and there is something between the interior walls, and the unforgiving wrath of Mother Nature ...

### HELP WANTED

**Baker School District** is currently looking for **CLASSIFIED SUBSTITUTES** for the 2016-2017 school year. For a complete description of the position and the application process go to [www.baker.k12.or.us](http://www.baker.k12.or.us), or please contact Cathy Martin at 541-524-2261 or email [cathy.martin@bakersd.org](mailto:cathy.martin@bakersd.org) for information and complete details to apply. <sup>10.14</sup>

Do you have a Bachelor of Arts or a Bachelor of Science degree or higher, and love to work and teach students? Baker School District is currently looking for **CERTIFIED SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS** for the 2016-2017 school year. A teaching degree is not necessary to apply. For a complete description of the position and the application process go to [www.baker.k12.or.us](http://www.baker.k12.or.us), or contact Cathy Martin at 541-524-2261 or email [cathy.martin@bakersd.org](mailto:cathy.martin@bakersd.org) for information and complete details to apply. The current salary for a substitute teacher is \$197.46 per day. <sup>10.14</sup>

## Ladies golf and bridge scores

Following are the Quail Ridge Ladies golf and bridge scores for September 28:

- Golf Winners: Circle 9  
1st Flight Linda Taylor; 2nd Flight Karen Wollard; 3rd Flight Carol Irvine; Birdies Jennifer Godwin.  
Bridge Winners:  
1st Lavelle Raley; 2nd tie Glenda Cole, Sandy Grover; 3rd Margo Kenworthy.

## City Planning to hear tennis court issue

The Baker City Planning Commission will hold a public hearing at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, October 19th, 2016, in the Council Chambers at the Baker City Hall, 1655 1st Street, Baker City, Oregon, to discuss two matters:

A. An alleged violation of Conditional Use Permit CUP-04-002, which originally approved the use of four grass tennis courts for tournament play in the Medium-Density Residential (R-MD) Zone. The original CUP-04-002 approval was contingent on four conditions of approval. In 2012, one condition of approval was modified by City Council to read:

1. Use of the tennis court lights shall be restricted to only tournament nights; shall be turned off by 10:00 p.m. on the ten (10) selected Friday and Saturday nights; and shall be turned off by 9:00 p.m. on all other tournament nights;

- a. All “flood” style lights shall be replaced with “shoe-box” style lights;
- b. Cut-off shields shall be added to the lights so that light shall not extend over the property line;

On September 22nd, 2016, the Baker City-County Planning Department received a complaint and photographs asserting a violation of the condition listed above.

The Baker City Development Code (BCDC) requires a violation of a Conditional Use Permit to be heard before the Planning Commission, who makes a decision on the matter.

B. The appeal of the Planning Director's decision on a complaint regarding modifications made to a shop at 3060 College Street. The appellant, Larry W. Pearson, has appealed the Director's decision to the Baker City Planning Commission.

Diane M. Woffard owns property at 3060 College Street. Modifications to an existing shop were made during the fall and winter of 2015. A complaint was filed with the Planning Department on December 31st, 2015, stating that the shop at 3060 College Street had been remodeled and did not meet the required setback from the rear property line. The Planning Department investigated the complaint, and the Director issued a decision on September 8th, 2016, concluding that the shop was originally constructed at a time when the Development Code required lesser setbacks, qualifying the structure as a pre-existing, non-conforming development. As a pre-existing, non-conforming development, the Planning Director determined that the shop was allowed to remain on the property, but the modifications made during the fall and winter of 2015 had to be removed and the shop returned to the size it was prior to the modifications. An appeal was filed on September 22nd, 2016/

The Baker City Development Code (BCDC) Section 1.5.400 (B) states that the Planning Director is responsible for recording, investigating and taking action on complaints. Normally, decisions on complaints are not eligible for appeal, but due to the circumstances associated with the case, the Planning Director's determination included an option for an appeal to the Planning Commission. The hearing will be “de novo,” meaning the appeal will be considered as a new application which allows additional evidence, testimony or argument concerning any relevant standard, criterion, condition, or issue to be considered.

The public is invited to attend this hearing and to submit comments. Testimony and relevant evidence, both in support of or in opposition to the proposal, must be based on the applicable review criteria and submitted to the Planning Department by 5:00 p.m., on the hearing date, Wednesday, October 19th, 2016, or in person during the hearing. Both staff reports will be available for inspection on or before October 12th, 2016 at the County Courthouse. Please contact the Planning Department for more information at 541-523-8219. The meeting will be held in Council Chambers at Baker City Hall, 1655 First Street.

## Rail Fire timber salvage planned

The Rail Fire started July 31 approximately five miles west of Unity. As of September 26, 2016 it is an estimated 95% contained and has burned 41,708 acres primarily on lands managed by the Wallowa Whitman National Forest and Malheur National Forest, with a small amount on private lands. The fire on the Whitman District of the Wallowa Whitman National Forest has been contained, approximately 27,115 acres.

The Whitman Ranger District was in the process of preparing an environmental analysis to record and disclose the environmental effects of the Rail Project in this area. The area being evaluated was approximately 29,688 acres that are now mostly within the boundary of the

Rail Fire. The Rail Project was designed in response to Forest Plan goals for maintaining historic plant communities and maintaining ecosystem function, minimize insects and disease damage; minimize the risk of fire damage, and timber management consistent with resource objectives, environmental requirements and efficiency. The action would have resulted in the reduction of hazardous fuels and improved forest health while also improving public and fire fighter safety and providing wood products to local economies.

As a result of the Rail Fire, the Rail Project as it was being designed has been cancelled. Currently, the Whitman District is assessing options for this area, including opportu-

nities for salvage of fire killed trees. The fires impacted the Forest Road system, resulting in numerous dead trees immediately adjacent to roads and areas of concentrated public use. These danger trees have the possibility of reaching the road right-of way and are a potential hazard to Forest users and Forest Service personnel. The Whitman District is proposing the following:

- 1) Danger trees would be removed along open Forest roads, considered primary routes for public and administrative access in the fire area;
- 2) Danger trees would be removed along ATV trails on old roads for public safety;
- 3) 250 acres of burned timber would be salvaged, allowing economic recov-

ery of fire killed timber.

At this time it is anticipated that these projects can be categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement. A project file will be prepared to document the environmental effects of these projects. Submitting written comments during this scoping period would establish eligibility to object to these projects under 36 CFR 218.5, should an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement be prepared.

You are invited to comment on the proposed actions. Your comments will help identify issues to be considered in the environmental review. Please submit your written comments by within 30 days of this publication. Comments will be placed in the project file and shall become a matter of the public record (36 CFR 215.6 (b) (2)).

Please submit your comments to: Jeff Tomac, Whitman District Ranger, 1550 Dewey Ave, Suite A, Baker City, OR 97814, Ph: 541-523-1327, Fax: 541-523-6394. Those submitting hand-delivered comments may do so during the regular office hours of 7:45 to 4:30 Monday through Friday except legal holidays. Please be sure to include Rail Fire Danger Tree Removal and Salvage as the subject for your written comments. Electronic comments must be submitted in a format such as an email message, rich text format (.rtf), Adobe Portable Document Format (.pdf) or Microsoft Word to [comments-pacific-northwest-wallowa-whitman-whitmanunit@fs.fed.us](mailto:comments-pacific-northwest-wallowa-whitman-whitmanunit@fs.fed.us). Comments received, including the names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record for this proposal and will be available for public inspection.

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