

LOCAL: Kadie Cosby featured speaker at Christian women's event. PAGE 7



OUTDOORS: Moose poached, wasted in Wallowa County. PAGE 7



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Planning begins for full solar eclipse in 2017

• TOURIST INFLUX EXPECTED IN BAKER COUNTY

BY KERRY McQUISTEN
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The full solar eclipse coming across North America next August 21 has been described as a celestial event of Biblical proportions by some. And that event's path

of totality just happens to cross over Baker County, making the area perhaps the best location in the world from which to view it.

Last Thursday afternoon, Scott Fairley, Regional Solutions, Eastern Region Coordinator, Office of Governor Kate Brown, hosted a meeting with community leaders from around Baker County to address the tens of thousands of tourists anticipat-

ed to arrive over the course of a mere day or two for the eclipse.

The purpose of the meeting was "to coordinate 2017 Eastern Oregon solar eclipse planning efforts between event promoters, local and state law enforcement and emergency responders, and federal and state agencies."

The exact amount of tourists to expect? "That's a hard number to pin down," said Linea Gagli-

no of Travel Oregon, who called in to the meeting. "Eastern Oregon is a place people are really seeking out."

Gagliano said residents in nearby urban areas such as Seattle, Boise, Eugene and Portland are likely to travel to Baker County.

"50,000 is not an exaggeration," she said.

SEE SOLAR ECLIPSE PAGE 5



Kerry McQuisten / The Baker County Press

Scott Fairley, center, representing the Governor's Office held a meeting on the solar eclipse last week. At the left, Jason Yencopal of Baker County Emergency Management.

Police K9 fundraiser brings in \$28K



Kerry McQuisten / The Baker County Press

Sgt. Wayne Chastain lets Capa demonstrate his skills to the crowd. L-R: Sgt. Mike Regan, Vivien McQuisten, Kara Regan and Ida Newman.

BY KERRY McQUISTEN
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"This turned out greater than I ever thought it would," said volunteer Tori Brown.

Brown, along with event organizer, Shawna Patton, teamed up with Phoebe Wachtel who works the front desk of the Baker City Police Department, as well as other members of that department, to pull off the first annual fundraiser Saturday afternoon and evening to support the care and feeding of Capa—Baker City's second drug dog.

Capa came on board in late October of last year after Turbo, the prior drug dog, had to be retired early due to the legalization of marijuana. A canine trained to hit on marijuana scent was no longer effective.



Kerry McQuisten / The Baker County Press

L-R: Volunteers Tori Brown and Shawna Patton with Phoebe Wachtel of the Baker City Police Department.

Capa is trained to focus on other illegal substances, including cocaine, heroin and methamphetamine.

A community-driven fundraising campaign brought in the money to purchase Capa, a Belgium Malinois and German

Shepard mix. The dog was born in Germany, but transported to Florida for highly specialized training. Then-handler, Officer Colton Smith, attended training with the dog in Florida; however, handler duties transferred to Sgt.

Wayne Chastain after Smith later resigned from the handler role.

Said Chief Wyn Lohner, "Capa is not an item in the general budget."

SEE K9 FUNDRAISER PAGE 5

Manslaughter charges brought in co-sleeping death

On December 13, 2016 Beth Marie Speelman, (dob 5/22/84) of 1695 Auburn Ave #3 Baker City, Oregon was arraigned on an Indictment in Baker County Circuit Court.

Speelman was indicted by the grand jury for Manslaughter in the Second Degree, Criminally Negligent Homicide and Unlawful Possession of Methamphetamine.

The charges stem from an investigation conducted by the Baker County Major Crime Team in early September of 2016.

The charges relate to allegations that Speelman was co-sleeping with her baby Tracin Givens causing his death. Speelman's bail was set at \$215,000.

The baby had died, confirmed by an autopsy, due to asphyxiation while sleeping with his mother. In the past eight or so years, at least half a dozen other infants have also died locally due to positional asphyxiation, though no charges were filed. Charges against other mothers whose infants have died in such a way have typically indicated the mother was impaired or intoxicated at the time. Officials, however, have not yet confirmed or denied those details in the Speelman case.

More information will be released at a later date.



Photo courtesy of the BCSO.

Beth Speelman.

Relay for Life needs volunteers

BY GINA K. SWARTZ
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Looking for an opportunity to serve as a volunteer but haven't found the right fit? Heather Farnworth, the community manager for the Relay for Life with the American Cancer Society, would like you to consider volunteering with The American Cancer Society.

SEE RELAY FOR LIFE PAGE 3

Friday Chance for snow showers, otherwise partly sunny and cold. Chance of precipitation is 20%. Highs in the upper teens. Lows near 0.

Saturday Mostly sunny and cold, highs in the upper teens. Saturday Night: Partly cloudy and cold, lows near -5.

Sunday Partly sunny with a slight chance for snow showers. Highs in the upper teens. Chance of precipitation is 20%. Lows near 5.

Your weekend weather forecast for Baker County.



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