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5J's four-day school week to continue

BY SAMANTHA O'CONNOR
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On Thursday, April 20, the Baker School District 5J voted unanimously to adopt the 2017-18 Interim School Calendar, keeping the existing four-day school week, adopted five years ago.

During the public comment at the meeting, community members presented their findings, concerns,

and opinions regarding keeping the school week at four days or changing them to five-day weeks.

William Irvine was the first to speak, presenting his findings on his analysis of the Baker School District's performance on standardized testing since the schools began their four-day weeks.

"I thought of this idea after reading that a parent quoted research supporting a four-day week at your

last school board meeting," explained Irvine. "It occurred to me that I did not actually need to look at research to understand the advantages and disadvantages of a four versus five day calendar. Anyone can look up Baker 5J District and individual school performance on the Oregon Department of Education website. I shared this data with Mr. Witty about one month ago. In summary, students at Brooklyn

Primary School, South Baker Intermediate School, Baker Middle School, and Baker High School have seen significant decline in some student performance in standardized testing in English, Math, and Science since the change to the four-day calendar. This includes every grade and every subject."

Irvine explained in his findings that English scores have decreased 12.1% in English, 9.3% in math, and



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Promise students of the month Hyrum Bradford and Hollie Mays.

6.8% in science.

"I want to note that there are many things that the data does not explain," Irvine explained in a pamphlet given out at the meeting. "The data does not explain whether the

students with a decrease in test performance are from an isolated group, or if the decline in test performance stretches across all students."

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A free day on the Oregon Trail



Samantha O'Conner / The Baker County Press

Ranger Jeremy Martin performs as Joseph Meek on stage at the Interpretive Center.

BY SAMANTHA O'CONNOR
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On Wednesday, April 18, the National Historic Oregon Trail Interpretive Center offered a Free Admission Day. Featured at the free day was Park Ranger Interpreter Jeremy Martin portraying mountain man and fur trapper Joseph Meek.

Martin began working with the Interpretive Center in 2013. He began looking into human history after working with National Parks and found he could relate to the fur trapper.

Joe Meek is not very well known but there is enough material for Martin pull from—and he has taken Meek's infamous adventures on the road.

Martin does other activities and presentations with the Interpretive Center. According to a handout given at the center, Martin does presentations including "Lost Gold," where he explains why people returned to the "Old Emigrant Road."

Martin also does the "Black Powder Demo" where he demonstrates how to properly load and fire black powder weapons used on the frontier.

He also portrays the "Father of the Pacific Fruit Indus-

try" Henderson Luelling in a presentation called "The Million Dollar Wagon."

Martin also discusses what it would take for people to make it across the Great American Desert in "Surviving the Oregon Trail."

Free admission days are a requirement for public lands that charge an entrance fee.

When the Interpretive Center opened, it was a no-fee site. Historically, across the nation, there were Fee Demo Sites, where they would see how the fee system would work and go into place.

The Interpretive Center became a fee site in 1997 and has since been required to offer free admission days.

"We have maybe eight free days a year," explained Park Ranger Kelly Burns. "In the summer months, not so much, but in the fall, winter, and spring we have a free day every month."

Future free days are May 25th, which is their 25th Anniversary, June 3rd when they have their Run to the Ruts Fundraiser. The Center will not have free days in July and August.

September 30th, October 7th, November 11th, and December 7th are the other free days the Center will offer this year.

Baker City businesses burglarized

BY KERRY McQUISTEN
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Over the weekend of April 22nd, several Baker City businesses were burglarized, with four additional attempted burglaries, apparently by the same individual or individuals, said Baker City Police Chief Wyn Lohner earlier this week.

Then during Tuesday night or Wednesday morning, more businesses experienced break-ins.

Officers were first called to several locations on 10th Street and 11th Street after owners came to work Monday. Those businesses included Long's WaterWorks with \$750 and miscellaneous items stolen, Rushton Podiatry with \$75 stolen, Farmer's Insurance (Tom Van Diepen) with \$30 taken, and Baker County Custom Meats with \$80 stolen. The attempted burglaries were at the Animal Clinic, Forty Winks and a Splash, Elkhorn Chiropractic and Ne-Hi Signs, according to Lt. Dustin Newman.

On Wednesday morning, calls came in from the Campbell Street area with businesses such as Carquest, Paradise Truck Wash and Gene's Mobile Truck repair hit. Carquest lost \$3,200 in cash and several miscellaneous items.

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Rental scam plagues Baker City

BY KERRY McQUISTEN
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Renters browsing Craigslist and other online classifieds beware—another scam is making the rounds locally. This one involves rental properties.

"Imagine my surprise when my real estate agent told me someone contacted her and said they had spoken with me about renting my house, and that they had wired me money and were awaiting the keys. It took both my agent and me by surprise, as I hadn't spoken to anyone about renting my house, and it wasn't me to whom she had sent money," said property owner Elizabeth Estabrooks on Monday.

According to Baker City Police Lieutenant Dustin Newman, on April 11 a Baker City woman reported a \$1,400 loss to Dispatch after wiring that amount of money to a man she believed to be the owner of a house she was interested in renting.

SEE RENTAL SCAM PAGE 5

	Friday	Mostly cloudy with a few showers. Chance of precipitation is 30%. Highs near 50. Friday Night: Mostly to partly cloudy with low temperatures near 30.
	Saturday	Mostly sunny and milder. Highs in the upper 50s. Saturday Night: Partly to mostly cloudy with a few rain showers. Lows in the upper 30s.
	Sunday	Mostly cloudy with a few scattered showers. Chance of precipitation is 40%. Highs in the upper 50s. Sunday Night: Mostly cloudy with a few showers. Lows in the mid 30s.

Your weekend weather forecast for Baker County.



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