



# The Baker County Press

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## Crowd turns out to support forest access

### • ANNUAL FOREST ACCESS FOR ALL BANQUET A HIT

BY TODD ARRIOLA  
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Over 130 people attended another successful Annual Forest Access For All (FAFA) Banquet and Auction, held in the Sunridge Inn Restaurant's Blue Mountain and Sunridge rooms, on Saturday evening, May 20, 2017. The event, in its fourth year, featured guest speakers, live and silent auctions, and prime rib and halibut dinners, from the staff of the Sunridge.

Guests mingled during Social Hour, which began at 5 p.m., and viewed the live and silent auction items, the latter displayed in the Sunridge's Library room, the former within the combined area of the Blue Mountain and Sunridge rooms (the wall between the two rooms is removable).

At 6 p.m., FAFA member and emcee John George said, "I want you all to know how much we appreciate you being here...It's been a great deal for us, the last three years prior..." He emphasized the pivotal role donors play as a driving force behind



Todd Arriola / The Baker County Press

Emcee and member John George with auctioneer Mib Dailey (seated).

FAFA's efforts, as he noted their recognition in the middle two pages of the event program (the design and printing of which was donated by Rock Creek Developments, LLC, managed by Lorrie Harvey), and their presence at the event, which was followed by applause, after they stood. "We appreciate everybody... who's donated," George said.

In preparing guests for the lively atmosphere, George joked about them discovering and using guest speaker and Grant County Sheriff Glenn Palmer's bid number during the auctions, and he said, "I don't know how

many folks here have ever watched (auctioneer) Mib Dailey do an auction before, but it's probably one of the funnest evenings you'll have in a long time." Dailey said, "Maybe."

George introduced and recognized the elected official guests, including Oregon State Republican Representative Greg Barreto (a guest speaker), Baker County Commissioner Mark Bennett, Baker County Commissioner Bill Harvey (a guest speaker), and "the hooligan from Grant County," Palmer, all of which was separately followed by applause.

SEE FAFA BANQUET PAGE 3



Todd Arriola / The Baker County Press

FAFA President Tork Ballard talks with Oregon State Rep. Greg Barreto from Cove, who was a guest speaker during the evening's event.

## City's new fee ordinance passes first reading

### • CITIZENS TURN OUT TO EXPRESS THEIR CONCERNS, OPPOSITION

BY GINA K. SWARTZ  
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Mayor Downing called the Tuesday evening City Council meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. He then led the Pledge of Allegiance and provided the invocation. Robin Nudd, Community Development Coordinator filling in for City Recorder Julie Smith called roll. All were present, with the exception of Councilor Abell who arrived at 7:30 p.m.

Next Mayor Downing turned to the consent agenda. Councilor Joseph moved to approve the agenda with a second heard by Councilor Nilsson followed by a unanimous vote.

Next Mayor Downing called for citizen participation, hearing none, Council then moved forward with the agenda.

#### Ordinance # 3354 Public Safety Utility Fee

City Manager Fred Warner addressed Council briefly stating that the ordinance before them had been reworked as they had directed at the last council meeting. He also stated that this new ordinance was based on the \$3 residential and \$6 commercial amounts the Budget Board had agreed on in the final budget meeting Wed. May 17th as a revenue enhancement.

By imposing this amended amount, cuts to fire and police services were averted.

However, this ordinance must be passed by City Council and then added to the City's Fee schedule by resolution before the of June.

Failure of the Council to pass this ordinance would require Council to then revisit the approved budget, making cuts where necessary before adopting the final budget



Gina K. Swartz / The Baker County Press

Citizen Tom Muller addresses Council.

before June 30, 2017.

The Ordinance had been reviewed by the City's legal counsel Warner advised.

The ordinance specifically stated that the revenue collected would go into the general fund for the city, shall be reviewed and set annually and has a sunset clause of June 30, 2020.

It also outlines an appeal process that directs the City Manager to review and decide appeals in lieu of a public safety committee.

SEE CITY'S NEW FEE ORDINANCE PAGE 3

## Speelman pleads guilty

On May 18, 2017, Beth Marie Speelman, (DOB 5/22/1984) of 1695 Auburn #3, Baker City, OR pled guilty to Criminally Negligent Homicide, a Class B Felony and Unlawful Possession of Methamphetamine a Class C Felony.

One count of Manslaughter in the Second Degree was dismissed as part of a plea agreement with the District Attorney's Office.

Speelman was sentenced by visiting Circuit Court Judge Lane Simpson.

Judge Greg Baxter recused himself due to a conflict of interest. Speelman was sentenced pursuant to the sentencing guidelines to optional probation. The Court had the option to sentence Speelman to prison for 22 months or probation with jail time.

Speelman was sentenced to 6 months in the county jail with three years probation. Once Speelman has completed her jail sentence she will transfer to an inpatient drug treatment program to complete drug and alcohol treatment. If Ms. Speelman's probation is ever revoked, she would serve 22 months in prison. She must complete drug and alcohol treatment while on probation.



Photo courtesy of the Baker County Sheriff's Office.

Beth Speelman

SEE SPEELMAN PAGE 5

**Friday** Mostly sunny skies with mild conditions. highs near 70. Friday Night: Mostly clear and cool. Low near 40.

**Saturday** Mostly sunny skies with mild conditions. highs in the mid 70s. Saturday Night: Mostly clear. Lows in the upper 40s.

**Sunday** Mostly sunny skies with warm conditions. highs near 80. Sunday Night: Mostly clear. Lows in the upper 40s.

#### Your weekend weather forecast for Baker County.



Official weather provider for The Baker County Press.

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