

Local

Library gets by—with a little help from its friends

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July 14th through the 23rd, the Baker County Library had its second book sale of the year, hosted by the Friends of the Library. For the last day, they had a special bag sale where people could fill a brown paper bag full of books for five dollars a bag.

According to the library’s website, Friends of the Library is a non-profit organization that “coordinates activities and fundraisers in support of the mission and services of the Baker County Library District of Oregon.”

Barbara Haynes, the current president of Friends of the Library, and who has been with Friends of the Library for almost five years, explained that the books sold at the book sale are donated by members of the community.

She explained that each book is checked to see if the library needs it or if any other library branches need it.

“They are checked to see if they are in any better condition than any of the books that are already in the library,” explained Haynes. “And if the library doesn’t need them, and it



Samantha O’Conner / The Baker County Press

Library patrons shopped for books right up through the last day of the sale.

isn’t a real special book, then it’s sold by Friends of the Library as a fundraiser and those funds are used to support children’s programs and buy different media things and things that are outside the library’s normal budget.”

Haynes explained the book sale is now inspired by the huge number of donation books that the

library receives.

She said that the books have to be moved through the library and out otherwise there would be too many books for the library.

Friends of the Library has a Board of Directors and community volunteers who help with their events.

Haynes explained that they use up to fifty people at a time, it depends on

who is available at any time they have an event and they call on community members.

Every year they have two book sales.

This year, they will have another book sale during the time of the Eclipse. The Literacy Coalition will be using donation books to put on a yard sale at the library.

TLTC holds meeting, hears local marketing updates

BY TODD ARRIOLA
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The Baker County Transient Lodging Tax Committee (TLTC) held a regular meeting on Thursday, July 20, 2017, 10 a.m., in the Commission Chambers of the Baker County Courthouse, which included approvals of \$5,000 in additional funding for the Visitors Bureau, and a two-year contract between the Bureau and the County.

Present from the TLTC were Chair Chelsea McLagan, Beverly Calder, Lea Gettle, and Tori Brown. Attendance also included Baker County Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau Executive Director Shelly Cutler, Chamber and Visitors Bureau Board of Directors President Jeff Nelson, Baker County Tourism Marketing Director Tim Bishop, Baker County Accounting Coordinator Shelly Christensen, Baker County Commission Chair Bill Harvey, Chamber and Visitors Bureau Director Jerry Peacock, Baker City Manager Fred Warner, Jr., and Blue Mountains Community College Baker County Director Dan Koopman.

McLagan called the meeting to order, and the minutes from the June 22, 2017 meeting, and the agenda for this meeting were approved.

Bishop provided a Tourism Marketing update, and he said that June through

July has been a busy period, but visitor numbers for the Hells Canyon Motorcycle Rally and the Sumpter Flea Market were down.

Though the 4th of July was mid-week, events still saw strong numbers of attendees.

He said that tourism website traffic is up by about 25%, mostly driven by Total Solar Eclipse searches, and Facebook “... continues to be a workhorse for us.”

There’s more of a music scene this year, including the Powder River Music Review in Geiser-Pollman Park, and other events which are being heavily promoted, and there’s significant preparation in anticipation of the Solar Eclipse event, and the East-West Shriners football game prior to that.

Bishop said that applications for Travel Oregon grants haven’t been submitted yet, but those are in the works.

Calder asked Bishop how he maintains all the different platforms for tourism marketing, including social media posts, live feeds, tagging photos (photos are a major component), etc., all of which is a major workload, and Calder suggested that there could be an extra person recruited to assist with that, which Bishop said would be “...a worthy goal.”

Cutler provided a Visitors Bureau update, and she said, “We’re doing great;

our travelers are stopping... and we’re having an opportunity to send them downtown ...We’re thankful for that ...”

She said that during the Friday of Miners Jubilee weekend, the vendors felt well supported, with the numbers of locals and visitors in the park, but she became emotional as she spoke about Saturday’s parade, during which seven-year-old Dylan Scott Thomas had fallen from a YMCA-sponsored float, and was killed.

“We still are proud of what we’ve done...We’re so happy with the park, and the set up... Folks came out, and they were buying... Saturday occurred, and... Aside from that, I’m very thankful for this community, and the way we all rallied around each other. We had a lot of phone calls, and words of support...So, we’ve had some really tough days...”

She said that, in spite of the tragedy, not one vendor provided a negative review of their experience this year as part of Miners Jubilee, and praise for the Chamber’s efforts was provided, as well as from the TLTC.

Cutler said, “We’re trying to do a good job...” with organization of the parade, which she said may continue, but, “It’s just the emotional toll that it’s taking right now.”

Calder said she understands that, and that Miners Jubilee showcased the part-

nerships in the community, including the Chamber and Baker City Downtown, and the rallying of support.

Nelson discussed the request he had made during the Wednesday, July 19 County Commission work session to the TLTC, for additional funding to cover marketing costs associated with the Solar Eclipse, which he said would be between \$4,400 and \$6,400. \$5,000 from contingency funding was approved for the Visitors Bureau, with a motion from Calder, and a second from Gettle.

Gettle said, as long as the TLTC is able to continue down the path of strategic planning, she has no issue with recommending a two-year contract, between the Visitors Bureau and the County, which had been recently approved by the Commission, per the TLTC’s recommendation, as a one-year contract (historically, it had been a two-year contract, which Nelson expressed the need for, and requested several times).

The two-year contract was approved, with a motion from Gettle, and a second from Calder.

Calder, in reference to Miners Jubilee, said, “I just want to say, this was a really fabulous and terrible weekend, and I appreciate this community... I pray for healing for everyone.”

The next TLTC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 21, 2017, 10 a.m.

Orchestra to hold summer concert

The Baker Community Orchestra will hold its Summer Concert, Friday, August 11, at 6:30 p.m. at the Powder River Pavilion in Geiser Pollman Park. There is no admission charge and all are welcome.

The concert will feature English Composer Gustav Holst’s *First Suite in E flat* for Military Band. This classic of wind band literature, composed in 1909 premiering in 1920, is considered the first serious original composition for brass, woodwinds and percussion. And of course what would a summer concert in the park be, without a piece by John Phillip Sousa.

This year it is *Hands Across the Sea*, a classic by composer Frank Erickson, and some new original compositions will be featured as well.

The Baker Community Orchestra, under the direction of Russ Carpenter is made up of volunteer community members. The primary mission of the Orchestra is to provide community members an opportunity to make and enjoy instrumental music.

The orchestra is open to any community member who can play a band or orchestra instrument, read music and play, or learn to play, at a high school level.

There is no audition requirement, just come and play! If you have never played an instrument, would like to learn or re-learn, call us and we will be glad to help with that as well.

The Orchestra has some instruments for loan to get a person started. Come see what we do, and if it is something you would like to do, chat with a member.

For more information contact Brian Watt at (541) 523-4662. “Like” us on Facebook to keep informed of our activities.

100th birthday

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Halverson said Truman was not at all like the newspapers made him out to be, a mean old man.

Truman rented out cabins and boats on Spirit Lake on the property he had on lifetime lease from the railroad. Truman refused to evacuate and is presumed to have died at his lodge when Mount Saint Helens erupted.

Halverson was living in Cougar, WA at that time.

He built a seismograph and recalled that his wife got so mad about it going off every 20 minutes that she threw it out the back door.

He said they were getting up to 200 tremors a day before the eruption. When the area was evacuated, five people, including Halverson and his wife, remained in town.

When asked what it was like when the mountain blew, Halverson stated, “The chickens went back to roost at 8:30 in the morning.”

He remembered the state patrol driving through the area, announcing the evacuation over the loudspeakers and talked about fish jumping out of the water (due to the heat of the water).

Halverson said the mountain erupted from eight in the morning until six or seven that night. In all, the mountain erupted six times that year and every time he’d have to hose the roof off.

Halverson and his wife, Blondie, also retired from the Forest Service, moved to Sumpter in 1981 where they enjoyed the area’s many outdoor recreational activities.

Reed said her dad has always loved the outdoors and wildlife.

He enjoys having the turkeys, deer, and squirrels in his yard.

Halverson said his favorite activity of all in life has been gold mining and that he regrettably had to give it up a few years ago because he “got too damn old.”

He still owns a mining claim and gets up there with assistance.

Among other finds, Halverson discovered a 3 ½ ounce nugget named “The Man in the Moon Nugget.” He found it “where I was mining.” Unfortunately, during a break-in several years ago, the nugget was stolen.

Ron and Cheryl Borello hosted a birthday party on Saturday. In a beautiful setting under the pines, complete with ponds for fishing or swimming to entertain the kids, members of five generations and friends gathered to celebrate with barbecued ribs, chicken, and oysters.

Halverson has two sons, one daughter, and three stepsons as well as seven grandchildren and numerous great and great-great grandchildren.

Tom Moran recollected going ice fishing with Halverson.

He stated Halverson delighted in trash talking him and Borello as Halverson outfished them both. Moran conceded, “That was a few years ago, when he was only in his mid-nineties.”

Others reminisced about gathering fir cones to sell for the seeds (at \$2.50 per bushel recalled Halverson) and picking fat huckleberries for pies.

Marilyn Scott talked about snowmobiling with Harvey and Blondie.

She admired how the two raised their blended family. (Blondie passed away in 2004.)

When asked the secret of making it to 100, Halverson laughed and said, “I’d better not tell you.”

He said it’s hard to know, but having a couple shots of whiskey a day and chasing girls helps.

He still smokes, and just renewed his driver’s license.

He’s looking forward to celebrating his “first” birthday next year.