

# Baker County locals want 'constitutional county'

By JAYSON JACOBY  
Baker City Herald

**BAKER COUNTY** — Several Baker County residents attended a work session Wednesday, Jan. 12, to again urge county commissioners to approve a resolution declaring that Baker County is a "constitutional county" where state and federal governments must comply with the U.S. Constitution.

The work session was scheduled after the commissioners' Dec. 15 meeting.

During the earlier meeting, Jake Brown of Halfway, a representative from Baker County United, asked commissioners to approve the resolution.

Commissioners moved the Jan. 12 work session from the usual meeting room at the Courthouse to the much larger Baker County Events Center, in the former National Guard armory at 2600 East St.

During the Dec. 15 meeting, with about 30 people in the audience, commissioners didn't comply with Gov. Kate Brown's executive order requiring the wearing of masks in indoor public spaces. That includes the courthouse, where signs are posted outside citing the mask requirement.

The county's notice for



Samantha O'Conner/Baker City Herald

**Baker County Board of Commissioners during a work session Wednesday, Jan. 12, 2022, at the Baker County Events Center heard from residents who urged them to declare the county is a "constitutional county."**

the Jan. 12 meeting stated: "Baker County must comply with all federal, state and local laws, or face penalties and fines. Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR 333-019-1025, Masking requirements for indoor spaces) states that individuals five years of age and older, regardless of vaccination status, are required to wear a mask, face covering or face shield

when in an indoor space. All individuals in attendance at meetings under the control of Baker County are expected to comply with this rule, unless actively eating, drinking, speaking or presenting in the meeting."

Most audience members during the Jan. 12 did not wear a mask.

Commission Chairman Bill Harvey and Commis-

sioner Mark Bennett attended the work session in person. Commissioner Bruce Nichols attended remotely.

In a comment Nichols posted online for the work session and that was read aloud during the session, he wrote: "We commissioners have no legal means to override the Governor's executive orders. As a commissioner I swore an oath for about the

third or fourth time in my life to support the constitution and to follow the laws of the state of Oregon. To choose to openly defy the Governor's executive orders is a violation of the oath that I swore I would comply with. I too do not like mandates, forced vaccinations, and the ongoing never-ending rules. Yet I represent all of the people in the county so my personal feelings are secondary to those that do not agree with me.

"Civil disobedience is sometimes necessary to make a point yet with COVID cases continuing to rise now is not the time in my view," Nichols wrote. "I value all points of view and even those that disagree with me. Yet in protecting our rights we all must be careful to not trample on the rights of others. It is our duty to protect our own rights but also the rights of others as well."

Although the work session was scheduled to continue the discussion, and to take public comments about, the proposed "constitutional county" resolution, several residents who spoke referenced both the mask and vaccine mandates, as well as how the pandemic has harmed the local economy and had effects on local residents, including students.

Curtis Martin of North Powder called the mandates "totally unconstitutional" and urged commissioners to approve the resolution.

Doing so, Martin said, would "make a bold statement" that the county will "not be silent" and will not comply with the state mandates.

Harvey called the mandates "stupid" and said the county is not complying with all of them, including requiring audience members to wear masks.

Penny Rienks of Baker City said that if commissioners don't approve the "constitutional county" ordinance, "obviously you guys are not standing up for the constitution of Oregon or the constitution of the United States."

Bennett said he has worked as a public servant for 50 years and he takes his oath of office, to uphold both the state and federal constitutions, seriously.

"I promise you that I will uphold the constitution and I will uphold my oath office," Bennett said. "We can't have all of us randomly interpreting the constitution. We're a legislative body, we're not a judicial body. If you feel that your constitutional rights are being violated, there is a path, and that's the Supreme Court."

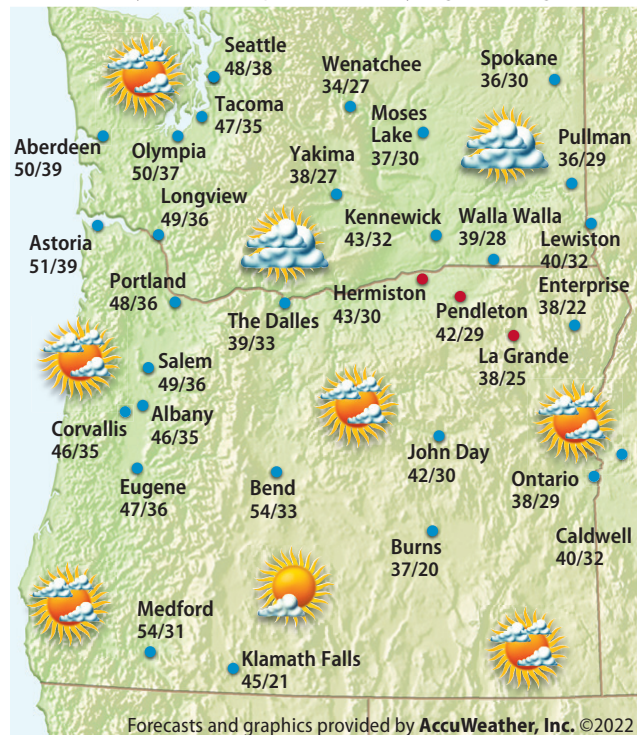
## Forecast for Pendleton Area

PENDLETON TEMPERATURE FORECAST				
TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
42° 29°	38° 30°	46° 36°	49° 36°	49° 38°

HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST				
TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
43° 30°	40° 29°	42° 30°	51° 32°	47° 39°

## OREGON FORECAST

Shown is today's weather. Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows.



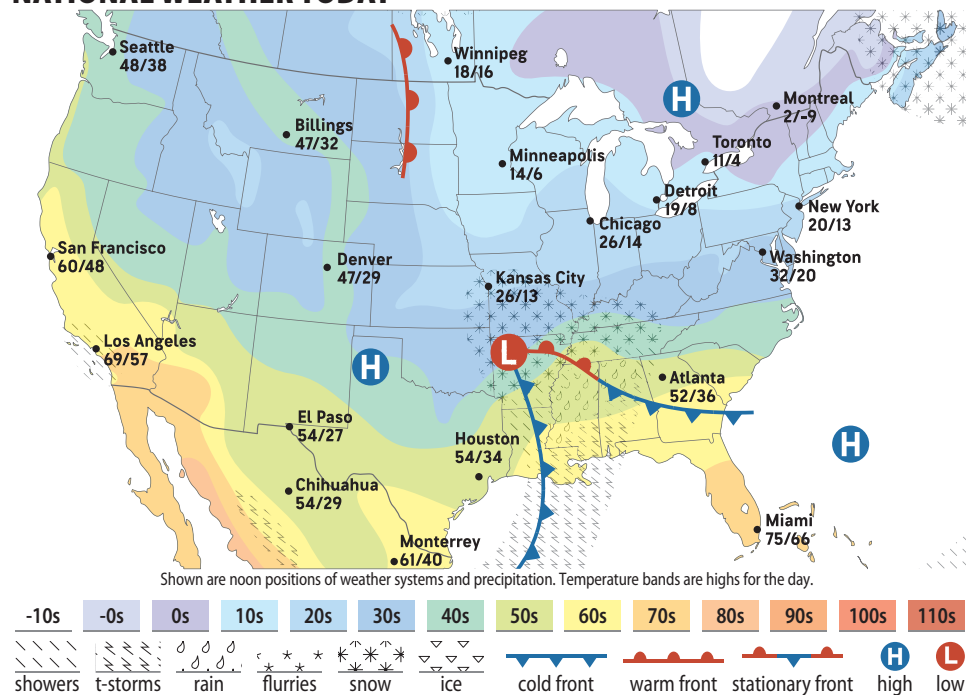
## ALMANAC

PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yest.		
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	53°	33°
Normals	42°	28°
Records	62° (1961)	-9° (1930)
PRECIPITATION		
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.03"	
Month to date	1.36"	
Normal month to date	0.73"	
Year to date	1.36"	
Last year to date	0.43"	
Normal year to date	0.73"	
HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.		
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	37°	27°
Normals	43°	29°
Records	65° (1994)	-5° (1930)
PRECIPITATION		
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.04"	
Month to date	0.81"	
Normal month to date	0.54"	
Year to date	0.81"	
Last year to date	0.34"	
Normal year to date	0.54"	
WINDS (in mph)		
Today	Sun.	
Boardman	S 3-6	W 3-6
Pendleton	NNW 4-8	NW 4-8
SUN AND MOON		
Sunrise today	7:32 a.m.	
Sunset tonight	4:37 p.m.	
Moonrise today	2:28 p.m.	
Moonset today	6:09 a.m.	

## NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)  
High 85° in Laredo, Texas Low -17° in Boulder, Wyo.

## NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



## Reward of \$16,500 in killing of wolf

Wallowa County Chieftain

**WALLOWA COUNTY** — Conservation groups announced Thursday, Jan. 13, that they are offering a \$16,500 reward for information that leads to an arrest and conviction in an illegal wolf killing last week in Wallowa County.

A 2-year-old collared female wolf was found dead southeast of Wallowa and reported just after 10:30 a.m. on Jan. 8. Oregon State Police reported the killing on Jan. 11. The wolf, designated OR-106, was found on Parsnip Creek Road in the Sled Springs game management unit. OSP said the wolf had dispersed from the Chesnimnus Pack in northern Wallowa County.

"Illegally killing Oregon's few wolves out of hatred or spite must stop," Kelly Peterson, Oregon senior state director at the Humane Society of the United States, said in a press release. "The death of OR-106 at the hands of a

poacher is heartbreaking and infuriating, especially after eight of Oregon's wolves were illegally poisoned and killed just last year. While this reward cannot bring back these iconic animals, we hope it brings these cruel actors to justice and helps to put an end to the illegal slaughter of our wolves once and for all."

In addition to the Humane Society, the Center for Biological Diversity, Predator Defense, Western Watersheds Project, Cascadia Wildlands, Oregon Wild, Speak for Wolves and Northeast Oregon Ecosystems are pledging funding to the reward.

The killing is among more than 30 poaching incidents in Oregon since wolves were reintroduced, according to Stephanie Taylor, president of Speak for Wolves.

"When poachers get away with breaking the law, it only leads to more poaching and lawlessness," Danielle Moser, of Oregon Wild,

said in the release. "This is a result of wolves losing their endangered species protections coupled with a culture of poaching permissiveness. For far too long, poachers have been emboldened by those who excuse and celebrate their criminal acts without fear of consequences."

The shooting comes on the heels of the poisoning of wolves in Northeastern Oregon in 2021, the release noted.

In addition to the amount offered by the conservation groups, The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's Turn in Poachers division is offering a potential \$300 reward for information regarding illegal wolf killings.

Those with information may contact Oregon State Police Sgt. Isaac Cyr through ODFW's Turn in Poachers (TIP) hotline at 800-452-7888, \*OSP via mobile, or via email to TIP@state.or.us Monday to Friday.

## IN BRIEF

### DEQ issues air quality advisory for Southern, Eastern Oregon

**PORTLAND** — The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality on Thursday, Jan. 13, issued an air quality advisory for Southern and Eastern Oregon, including Baker County, according to a press release.

The advisory is due to stagnant air conditions trapping smoke and other air pollutants near the ground where people breathe, the release said.

Also affected are Douglas, Harney, Jackson, Josephine, Klamath, Lake and Malheur counties.

The advisory is in place at least until Jan. 17, the release said.

### Fugitive in jail in Pendleton also faces Walla Walla case

**WALLA WALLA** — A Walla Walla man accused of stealing two credit cards from a mailbox and using them to make more than \$1,000 in purchases at Home Depot has been released to Oregon law enforcement on a fugitive warrant.

Dylan L. Cantrell, 19, is now being held at the Umatilla County Jail under investigation of two counts of probation violation and failure to appear. His Oregon bail is set at \$120,000.

Meanwhile in Walla Walla County, he faces charges of second-degree burglary, second-degree theft and two counts of second-degree stolen property possession.

A trial date for his Walla Walla County charges is set for Feb. 23.

According to the Oregon warrant, Cantrell's probation violations are connected with charges of stolen vehicle possession, unauthorized use of a vehicle and second-degree criminal mischief.

Cantrell's girlfriend, 19-year-old Yasmeen Dalan, also was arrested in the investigation and faces the same charges in Washington as Cantrell. She was due in court Thursday, Jan. 13, for arraignment.

The two were arrested Dec. 24 after a man who lives on York Street just outside Walla Walla contacted the Walla Walla County Sheriff's Office on Dec. 18 reporting he found his mailbox open and all the mail missing.

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