

Baker City event will raise money to combat human trafficking

By LISA BRITTON
Baker City Herald

BAKER CITY — A community event this spring in Baker City will help raise awareness about the issue of child sex trafficking and raise money to combat the problem.

Baker County Soroptimists is sponsoring an inaugural Walk for Awareness, a 5K walk or run, on Saturday, May 14, starting at the Baker Sports Complex.

The Complex is north of the Baker High School track. Access is via Fifth Street.

Registration starts at 9 a.m. that day, and the event begins at 10 a.m.

Participants can pre-register at walk-for-awareness.ticketleap.com/registernow.

Entry is \$30 with a shirt (register by April 14 to guarantee shirt size), or \$10 without a shirt.

A family can register for \$25.

Shirts will be sold at the event for \$25.

All proceeds will be donated to Shared Hope International, which was founded in 1998. This organization aims to end sex trafficking by raising awareness about the problem, provide services to survivors of sex trafficking and help states improve laws for this crime.

Shared Hope representa-



Linda Smith, founder of Shared Hope, a group that fights human trafficking, speaks at a rally. Baker County Soroptimists is sponsoring an inaugural walk Saturday, May 14, 2022, to raise awareness about the issue of child sex trafficking and raise money to address the problem.

Shared Hope/Contributed Photo

tives will be at the Walk for Awareness, as well as local law enforcement. Local cheerleaders will be selling hamburgers.

"We want everyone to be a part of it and help fight this fight," said Sheryl Blankenship of Baker City, who is spearheading the event with her daughter-in-law, Macey Blankenship.

Information about the run/

walk is posted on the Baker City Soroptimist Club's Facebook page, www.facebook.com/SoroptimistBakerCity/.

Anyone who would like to help sponsor the run/walk can contact Sheryl, 541-519-5060.

Shared Hope

Macey learned about human trafficking in India, where poverty and lack of

education drive the problem. "(Shared Hope) is the organization that opened my eyes to this problem," she said.

She's shared her passion with her mother-in-law, Sheryl.

In the United States, victims of sex trafficking are often at-risk youth, those in foster care and runaways.

According to sharedhope.org, age is the biggest factor

with pre-teen or adolescent girls the most common victims. Common ways that traffickers target youth is through social media sites, schools, malls, parks, bus stops, shelters and group homes.

Shared Hope works with law enforcement and lawmakers to create harsher punishments for those involved in trafficking.

"You have to start at the root," Macey said.

Shared Hope "grades" each state on its laws about trafficking. These report cards were revised in 2020, and Shared Hope raised the standard for states to achieve an even higher rating.

The report cards are available online at reportcards.sharedhope.org.

A volunteer army

Jo Lembo, director of National Outreach & Faith Initiatives for Shared Hope, said the organization has a "volunteer army" — called Ambassadors of Hope — of 1,400 people across the country.

"Our ambassadors come back to us from the field," Lembo said.

For instance, an ambassador can request posters that detail the warning signs of sex trafficking, or literature about Internet safety.

The key, Lembo said, is

to educate the public about human trafficking. This knowledge is especially important for juries who are presented with a possible trafficking case.

"Until we know, we can't know," Lembo said. "It's all about education."

The Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 established methods of prosecuting traffickers, preventing human trafficking, and protecting victims and survivors of trafficking.

Lembo said that as of 2020, every state had a law that makes human trafficking a federal offense.

Years ago, when Lembo first met Shared Hope founder Linda Smith, she heard something that she will never forget:

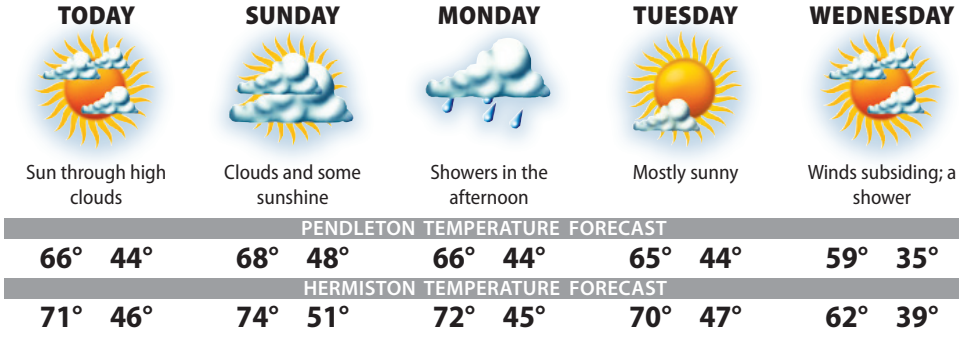
"The more people who know the signs of trafficking, the smaller the world is for those who buy and sell our children."

Events such as the Walk for Awareness in Baker City, she said, help educate everyone about human trafficking.

"When I talk to people and educate them, they talk to people. And kids are safer," she said.

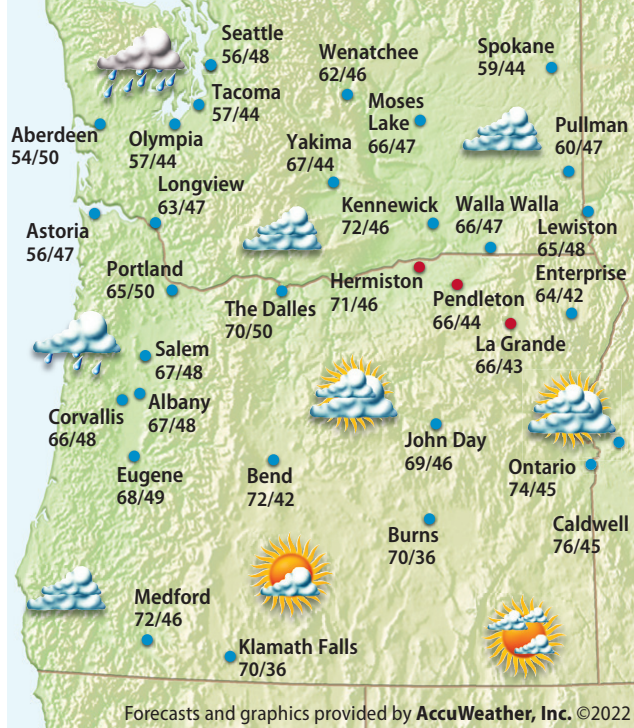
Anyone who suspects sex trafficking can contact the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children at 1-800-THE-LOST or online at www.cybertipline.com.

Forecast for Pendleton Area



OREGON FORECAST

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



ALMANAC

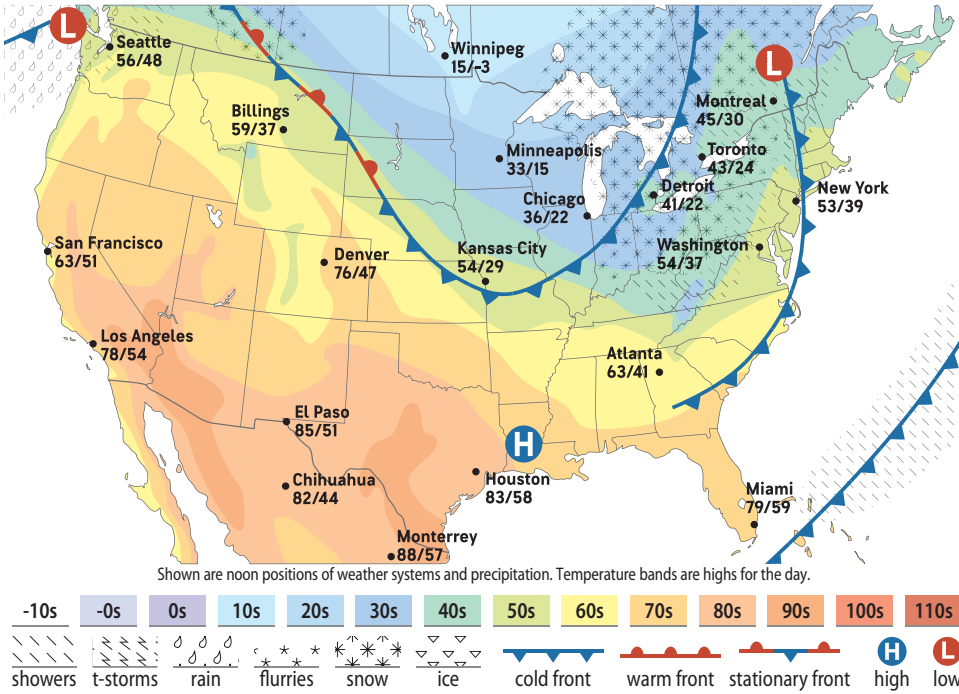
Table with weather statistics for Pendleton and Hermiston, including temperature, precipitation, and moon phases.

NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)

High 96° in Zapata, Texas Low 3° in Crested Butte, Colo.

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



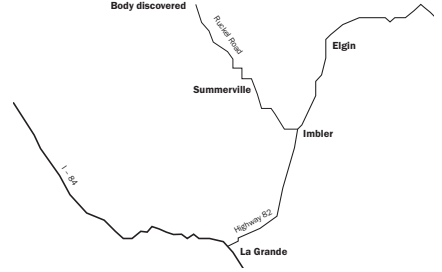
Finley Creek Jane Doe

Discovered in 1978, near Elgin, Oregon

Age: 17 to 25
Height: 5'1" - 5'3"
Weight: 115 - 125 lbs
Hair: Sandy brown

Pregnant, possibly due to give birth within the next month or two

On Aug. 27, 1978, a pair of hunters came across her skeletonized remains in the woods near Elgin, Oregon, in Union County. Officials estimated that she had been dead from 2-5 years.



Reward offered for information about 1970s homicide near Elgin

The Observer

LA GRANDE — A cash reward of up to \$2,500 is being offered to help identify the body of a pregnant woman found by hunters 10 miles northwest of Elgin in August 1978.

The skeletal remains of the woman and a fetus, knotted coaxial cable, zippers, a white bra or halter top, red Catalina-brand pants in the size 15-16 range, scraps of white cloth with red hearts and ankle-high boots were discovered in and near a shallow grave straddling a wooded game trail near

Finley Creek. The woman was estimated to be between 5-foot-1 and 5-foot-3 and weighed between 115 and 125 pounds. She had light-colored hair, possibly blonde or sandy brown. The fetus was estimated to be close to full term.

Investigators believe the woman had been killed in the early to mid 1970s. Redgrave Research Forensic Services has provided a composite sketch of what the woman may have looked like.

More information about the unidentified woman can be found at www.facebook.com/finleycreekjanedoe.

Volunteers with the Finley Creek Jane Doe Task Force have led the effort to identify the woman and her unborn infant. Crime Stoppers of Oregon is offering the cash reward of up to \$2,500. Tipsters may remain anonymous.

Anyone who would like to submit a secure and anonymous tip regarding any unsolved felony crime in Oregon, can visit www.crimestoppersoforegon.com or download the P3 Tips app for their smartphone or tablet. Crime Stoppers of Oregon is funded entirely by community donations.

IN BRIEF

Construction project set to begin on I-84 between Meacham, Spring Creek

UNION COUNTY — The Oregon Department of Transportation announced on Wednesday, March 23, that construction work on Interstate 84 between Meacham and Spring Creek will begin next week.

The work is set to take place between mileposts 241 and 248.5. Workers will be replacing the eastbound slow lane with new concrete and the eastbound fast lane with new asphalt — the work is set to continue on from where construction took place last fall. Following phase one on the eastbound lanes, similar improvements will be conducted on the westbound lanes.

According to ODOT, the total project is expected to be completed by Nov. 1. The eastbound lane is estimated to be completed in July, with work on the westbound lane to follow.

During the work, eastbound traffic will traverse through the westbound side where both directions will be limited down to one lane — orange surface markers will indicate the new traffic pattern. Between mileposts 248 and 246, there will be two westbound lanes and one eastbound lane.

The work zones will include several emergency turnout areas, in the case of a disabled vehicle. Drivers will need to abide by the lowered speed limits of 50 miles per hour through the work zone — ODOT estimates that the reduction will begin on the week of April 4.

— EO Media Group

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