



Baker City Herald, File

Search and rescue members practice near Phillips Reservoir in 2019. A 10-county training exercise is scheduled in the same area Friday through Saturday, April 29-May 1, 2022.

Training:

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There also is cell service in the area, he said, so participants can be reached if a work or family issue arises over the weekend.

Ash said officials at the Baker County Sheriff's Office have been designing the scenarios since January.

The focus, he said, will be on honing skills needed for a multi-day search involving two command teams.

On the evening of April 29, the first team was briefed about the situation, which involves a missing person or, potentially, more than one, Ash said.

The command team will then devise a strategy for a search that commenced Saturday morning.

The exercise is designed to keep searchers busy at least through the afternoon, Ash said.

If they happen to find the "victim" relatively soon, there are alternatives to extend the exercise, he said.

The command team will be given the sorts of information typically available at the outset of a search, such as the last point at which the person or people were seen.

The search area will be limited to about 3,000 acres, Ash said.

"We'll have some clues

throughout the scenario for them to find," he said — a piece of clothing, for instance.

"We're not setting them up for failure, but it is a real scenario where they will have to use their skills to find the person," Ash said.

He said the scenarios are intended to be challenging. Ash, who has participated in many searches during his law enforcement career, said almost every incident involves some unexpected twist.

Earlier this month, for instance, when volunteers from the Baker County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue team were summoned to look for a Pendleton couple overdue on a turkey hunting trip near Balm Creek Reservoir, northeast of Baker City, they were initially searching for a Dodge Dakota pickup truck.

But the couple, who spent the night in their vehicle and were found safe the next morning, were actually driving a Subaru.

Later on April 30, following the search, participants will gather near Union Creek for a technical rope rescue exercise at a cliff.

The "victim" in this case will be a mannequin, Ash said.

On Saturday evening, responsibility for the search will be transferred to the second command team — in effect a continuation of the exercise earlier in the day.

The new command team

will oversee another search on Sunday morning.

This task will have an additional challenge, Ash said.

The subject of the search is a person with a prosthetic leg, and the fictional scenario is that the person had the limb severed during an accident.

That will require searchers not only to find the person, but to "treat" the patient for severe injuries before loading the person on a litter for transport.

Other activities

In addition to the training exercises, Ash said a Life-Flight helicopter is scheduled to land Friday afternoon at Union Creek for a program about working safely around helicopters.

Also, FirstNet, an AT&T service designed to supply wireless communications to public safety agencies in the field, will have a mobile communications truck participating in this weekend's training, Ash said.

He said the Baker County Sheriff's Office is considering joining the First-Net network. The service supplies mobile trucks to provide wireless communications in places that lack reliable cell coverage — a frequent issue in search and rescue missions in remote Eastern Oregon. The service also allows command teams to track the movements of all searchers through their cellphones.

Charity:

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no longer provided us with onions and potatoes," he said. "One of our staffers got Riverpoint Farms to donate some onions for a while. The loss of Shearer's also hurt. Not only did we lose a source of donations, but then the employees who lost their jobs needed our help."

Shearer's Food lost its facility in Hermiston in an explosion and fire on Feb. 22, putting 231 people out of work.

Inflation and the influx of migrant workers from the easing of coronavirus restraints increased demand as well, Gomolski continued, and homelessness jumped up to about 200 per month from 30 to 40.

"In 2021, our average number of households served was 428, with 1,397 people," he said. Last month's (March 2022) stats were 850 households and 3,002 individuals.

The food bank also relies on 26 to 37 volunteers on average, he said, working about 160 hours per month.

Abercrombie with the Irrigon Emergency Assistance Center cited increased numbers of homeless people passing through her service area.

"They stay a few days or a week or two," she said. "We make sure that they have easily prepared food."

And there has been a "pretty big uptick" in emergency aid, she added.

"Rent has gone up. Donations from big corporations have fallen. We still get help from local businesses and the state," she said. "I also write grants."

But less federal aid has caused more families to return to the center.

"All the pantries have seen large increases in demand," Patton added.

"We have made up more food boxes than ever. Last month was a record 166



East Oregonian, File

Maj. DeWayne Halstad hands out a boxed lunch at the Pendleton Salvation Army in March 2020 at the start of the coronavirus pandemic. Now in April 2022 as the pandemic ebbs, local charities report several factors are pushing an increase for their services.

food boxes. Our boxes don't have random contents. They contain the ingredients for a meal."

The U. S. Department of Agriculture raising the amount of food aid for which people are eligible has helped, she said, and explained about 80% of the Neighborhood Center of South Morrow County's food comes from the Oregon Food Bank, via Community Action Program of East Central Oregon, and 20% from local donations and sources.

"We buy from local groceries, so that monetary donations stay local. We are a concierge of services," Patton said. "Besides our pantry and thrift store, we provide emergency aid and help people find the support they need."

Working with partners, outreach essential

Gomolski cited partnerships, such as with Jose Garcia's New Horizons for outreach to farm workers. County coronavirus relief funds also helped Agape House get an enclosed trailer to deliver food to migrant workers in the field on Fridays.

"The workers' hours and our open schedule mean that they can't come to Agape House, so we reach out,"

he said. "Now it's planting season, so the number of migrant workers' families has grown from 120 to 300."

Agape House also runs a 'backpack' program for youths, Gomolski said, that covers 270 students per week in Hermiston, Echo, Stanfield and Irrigon. The program's cost has ballooned from \$4,000 to \$9,000.

"Amazon donated to this program," he said. "We're grateful for every partner."

Gomolski said Agape House also has partnered with the American Legion in outreach programs for needy veterans. Seniors on fixed incomes now benefit as well.

"Inflation makes it harder to serve people, while increasing their needs," he concluded.

"Peanut butter costs \$3 per container. Even little boxes of raisins are hard to find. It might sound trivial, but it's a real problem."

Patton said some clients struggle with asking for help, so outreach is crucial to these efforts.

"Asking for help feels like begging to them," she said. "So we have to reach out, let them know what's available and that we understand that almost everyone needs help sometime, especially in tough economic times like these."

Dollars:

Continued from Page A1

to be a county commissioner because I possess a skill set that can help the county get where it needs to be."

Bower also has the most significant deficit from the campaign, having raised \$2,450, ranking her fourth in campaign contributions.

Barton ranks second in expenditures and contributions, having spent \$6,735 and raised \$7,400 following a \$3,000 donation from his own business, Barton Laser Leveling.

Local candidates funding their own raises is a common practice.

Shafer follows Barton for all nine candidates, ranking third in contributions and expenditure, spending \$4,900 and having raised \$4,800. Shafer has the support of several civic and community figures, including outgoing county Commissioner George Murdock, who donated \$1,000 to the reelection effort, and Echo farmer Robert Levy,

UMATILLA COUNTY COMMISSIONER CANDIDATES CAMPAIGN FINANCES

Cindy Timmons, Position 1 candidate

Total contributions: \$8,550
Total expenses: \$8,827.55

Susan Bower, Position 1 candidate

Total contributions: \$2,450
Total expenses: \$23,200

Bob Barton, Position 1 candidate

Total contributions: \$7,400
Total expenses: \$6,735

John Shafer, Position 2 incumbent

Total contributions: \$4,800
Total expenses: \$4,900

Rick Pullen, Position 2 candidate

Total contributions: \$2,250
Total expenses: \$2,000

Position 1 candidates

Jesse Bonifer, David Nelson and Alvin Young

and Position 2 candidate

HollyJo Beers have reported no campaign donations or expenditures.

Source: ORESTAR, the Oregon Secretary of State's website for campaign finance activity.

husband of State Rep. Bobby Levy, has donated \$500 to Shafer's campaign.

Pullen stands at fifth behind Timmons in campaign spending with \$2,000 and fifth behind Bower in contributions with \$2,250. His primary benefactor is Larry Givens, former Umatilla County commissioner who lost reelection in 2018 to Shafer, the man Pullen is looking to defeat this year. Givens has contributed \$2,000 in-kind for radio ads

to Pullen's campaign.

Bonifer, Young and Beers have not broken the threshold to report earnings or spending throughout the race.

And Nelson, a former state senator, has not broken the threshold to report expenses or contributions. He said he has run several radio ads and attended some candidate forums but has not attempted to campaign in any other way. He would be 85 years old at the end of his term if wins.



Your Voice & Your Vote Matter **VOTE** Return your ballot by May 17th
SUSAN BOWER
UMATILLA COUNTY COMMISSIONER

We Proudly Endorse Susan Bower

- | | | | | |
|-----------------|---------------------|------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Al Plute | Dennis Hunt | Joe Coehlo | Marilyn Brown | Ryan Lehnert |
| Alice Hepburn | DJ Johnson | Jo Jo Jeffers | Marilyn Smiley | Sam Palmer |
| Amber Henderson | Elizabeth Scheeler | Jose Garcia | Marc Gomoloski | Scott Bishop |
| Amy Johnson | Erik Davis | Julie Maher | Marv Anderson | Sharon Waldern |
| Andrew Bower | Fawn Sharlow | Julie Malcolm | Mary Koch | Shaw Jerome |
| Andy McAnally | Gail Plute | Justin Adams | Meghan DeBolt | Shawn Pierce |
| Angie Coehlo | Gordon Hepburn | Karen Malcom | Mike Thorne | Shawna Culvert |
| Ashley Hankins | Gwen Fjeld | Karen Primmer | Misty Fairbank | Shay Hoffman |
| Barbara Wright | Harley Jeffers | Karen Taylor | Molly Davis | Shayllynn Dickenson |
| Bill Elfering | Harriot Isom | Karen Wagner | Nick Bower | Stan Henderer |
| Bobby Levy | Heidi Bonbright | Kari Brooks | Nick Nash | Sue Quinn |
| Bodee Baney | Helen Case | Karl Farber | Pat Fjeld | Susan Talbot |
| Bonnie Douglas | Jack Shaw | Kathy Baney | Penny Gavette | Susie Barhyte |
| Brad Henderson | Jan Barhyte | Kathy Shaw | Randy Henderer | Tara Bishop |
| Buffy Farber | Jan Leonard | Kellye McAnally | Randy Jenness | Teresa Steele |
| Carla Harris | Janeen Reding | Kimberly Burt | Raylee Lehnert | Tim Hawkins |
| Cindy Wood | J.D. Kindle | Kimberly Goodhue | Rebecca Bower | Tim Johnson |
| Clyde Douglas | Jennifer Hawkins | Kristi Jenness | Richard Smiley | Tom Marks |
| Colleen Hunt | Jennifer Hungerford | Lauri Case | Rick Partlow | Tom Winn |
| Curt Thompson | Jeremy Hungerford | Linda Anderson | Rick Roach | Troy Jerome |
| Cyd Bothum | Jerry Hungerford | Lori Roach | Robert Pratt | Yvonne Carnes |
| Dale Primmer | Jill Thene | Mallory Erice | Rodney Burt | Yvonne Elfering |
| Dave Tovey | Jim Cheney | Marcie Jerome | Rosemary Garcia | |
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