

# Baker City Girl Scout hoping to make a splash

By SAMANTHA O'CONNOR  
Baker City Herald

**BAKER CITY** — Penelope Simmons is going for the gold as she raises money with a goal of helping bring a splash pad to Baker City's Central Park.

Penelope, 17, is working toward her Girl Scout Gold Award, the highest award a Girl Scout can earn.

"It's like the Eagle Scout for Boy Scouts and it has to be sustainable, it has to involve the community, and it has to cost nothing (for the community)," Penelope said.

She's been a Girl Scout for 10 years, but this is her last year to participate.

To use the splash pad project for her Gold Award, she has to finish it by September 2023, said her mom, Charline Simmons.

In deciding what type of project to raise money for, Penelope settled on a splash pad, an area with sprinklers and other water features that are popular attractions during the summer in many cities.

Baker City doesn't have a splash pad — the closest are in La Grande and Ontario.

"I just think Baker really needed one," Penelope said. "We go to other places to go use a splash pad. And why



Samantha O'Conner/Baker City Herald

**Penelope Simmons, 17, is raising money for a Girl Scout Gold Award project with a goal of helping to build a splash pad at Baker City's Central Park. To use the splash pad project to achieve the award, she has to finish it by September 2023.**

not have one here? I think Baker just really needs something besides the river to play in."

The Powder River, which runs just east of Central Park — between Washington and Valley avenues — is a favorite spot for kids to take a dip, but Penelope said a splash

pad, unlike the river, would be accessible to all kids, including those in wheelchairs.

Charline Simmons, said they are raffling off a shotgun donated by Trader Ray's, a rooster weather beam donated by Oregon Trail Landscapes and Nursery and

a full vehicle detail donated by RM Detail & Car Wash.

"We set up at the farmers market every Thursday, then we did Community Night Out on August 2, we did the parade for Shriners, and then we're doing the car show," Charline said. "We'll have a table set up there with raffle

items at the car show."

The latter reference was to the Baker City Memory Cruise, set for this Saturday, Aug. 20, at Geiser-Pollman Park.

They have also discussed having fundraisers at the Christmas bazaars.

So far, the duo have raised \$800 out of the approximately \$300,000 they need.

"We've got a ways to go," Charline said.

Joyce Bornstedt, the city's technical administration supervisor, said the city is not involved in the Simmons' fundraising project, but adding a splash pad to Central Park is a city goal.

"I think it's a good idea — there has been a lot of interest in having a splash pad for a long time," Bornstedt said. "I think it kind of fits well within the scope of the planning for that park."

The master conceptual plan for the park includes a water feature, she said.

Penelope said she had her Gold Award project approved by the Girl Scouts in late 2019, but then the pandemic hit, pausing the project.

She said a committee supporting the splash pad project started planning in October 2021.

The idea is to buy the

splash pad items from Northwest Playground Equipment of Washington. The water features will cost \$103,208, and Charline said they would need half that amount by Nov. 1 to place an order to allow installation in 2023.

"We didn't want to start raising money for it until we had a plan because then what are you going to do with the money if it never comes to anything?" Charline said.

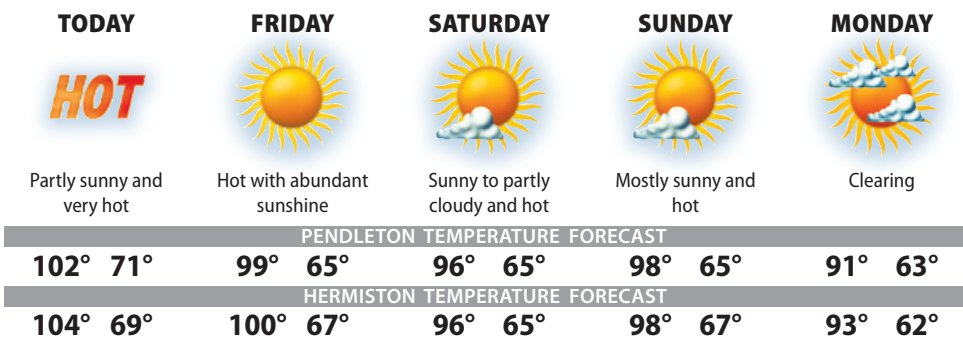
The daughter-mother duo are working with the Baker Lions Club which is helping them apply for grants, and holding the money they raise. The Lions Club is a tax-exempt nonprofit, so donations can be claimed on tax returns.

Anyone who wants to volunteer is welcome to contact the Simmons through Facebook.com/bakercitysplashpad where Penelope's phone number is available. They can also email her at Bakercitysplashpad2023@gmail.com.

People can also go to Community Bank to put in a money donation by saying they want to donate for the Lions Splash Pad.

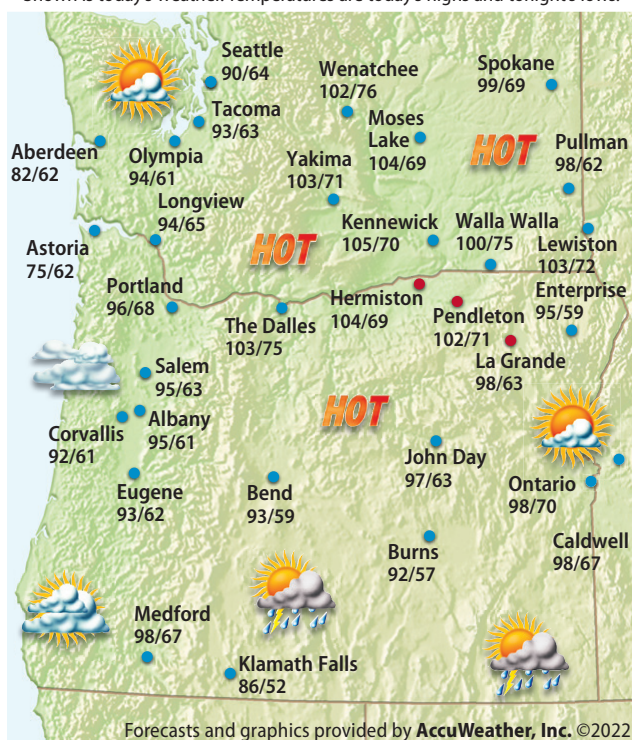
"We're just trying to get the community behind it," Charline said. "It'll be a nice thing for our community and everybody, we haven't had anything negative about it."

## Forecast for Pendleton Area



## OREGON FORECAST

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



## ALMANAC

**PENDLETON** through 3 p.m. Wed.

TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Wednesday	101°	62°
Normals	89°	58°
Records	108° (2008)	37° (1915)

**PRECIPITATION**

24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"
Month to date	0.04"
Normal month to date	0.17"
Year to date	11.17"
Last year to date	4.35"
Normal year to date	8.48"

**HERMISTON** through 3 p.m. Wed.

TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Wednesday	102°	56°
Normals	91°	57°
Records	107° (2008)	42° (1969)

**PRECIPITATION**

24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"
Month to date	0.02"
Normal month to date	0.09"
Year to date	7.50"
Last year to date	2.46"
Normal year to date	5.23"

**WINDS** (in mph)

Today	Fri.
Boardman NNE 4-8	SW 7-14
Pendleton NW 6-12	WSW 8-16

**SUN AND MOON**

Sunrise today	5:59 a.m.
Sunset tonight	7:58 p.m.
Moonrise today	11:14 p.m.
Moonset today	1:46 p.m.

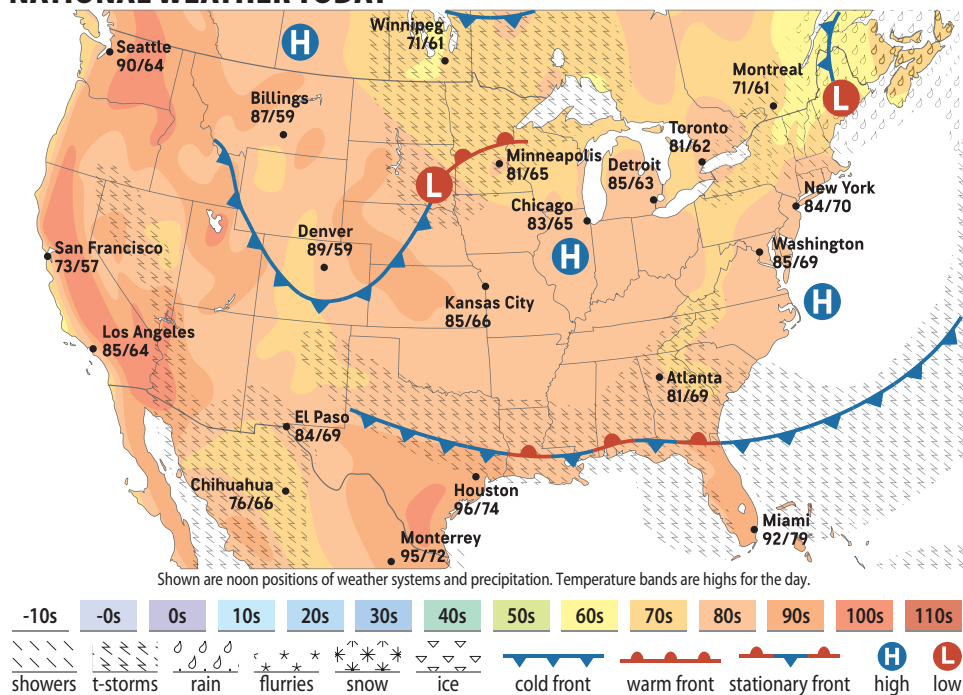
Last New First Full  
Aug 18 Aug 27 Sep 3 Sep 10

## NATIONAL EXTREMES

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

High 109° in Palm Springs, Calif. Low 34° in Gould, Colo.

## NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



# Utah murder suspect found dead near Joseph

Wallowa County Chiefstain

**JOSEPH** — The body of a Utah fugitive who was wanted for murder is believed to have been found along Hurricane Creek Road west of Joseph, the Wallowa County Sheriff's Office reported in a press release Tuesday, Aug. 16.

Michael Grant Asman, 35, of Heber City, Utah, was wanted for the murder of Julie Ann Burns on July 14 in Wasatch County, Utah.



Asman

At about 1 p.m. Aug. 15, a sheriff's deputy and Oregon State Police responded to a report of an abandoned 2005 Chevrolet Silverado pickup parked on the shoulder of Hurricane Creek Road near the trailhead. The license plate on the vehicle was registered to Asman. A Wasatch County

warrant charged Asman with homicide, stating his whereabouts were unknown.

OSP Sgt. Grant Jackson and Wallowa County Deputy Sheriff Paul Pagano determined the vehicle had not been moved for some time. They searched through a wooded area to the creek

and found a decomposing corpse with a gunshot wound to the head and a Glock model 27, 40-caliber Smith and Wesson pistol by the left shoulder of the road.

Wallowa County medical examiner Gary Zeigler responded to the scene.

Law enforcement officers from Wasatch County flew into the Joseph Airport and joined the investigation. They believed the corpse to be that of Asman.

Wallowa County Sheriff Joel Fish said it was a

"domestic violence relationship." He said Asman and Burns had been married, even though they did not share a surname.

According to Law and Crime online, when officers responded to a domestic violence call, they found Burns in her home apparently dead of a gunshot wound to the head.

The couple's children were in the house at the time, Law and Crime said, and were sent upstairs while Asman and Burns argued. One child said Asman had a gun and they heard what they believed to be a gunshot. Asman led the children out and told them not to look at their dead mother.

A search warrant was issued by Circuit Court Judge Wes Williams on Asman's pickup, which was then searched and towed. Fish said nothing significant was found during the search.

## IN BRIEF

### La Grande police arrest suspect in deadly hit-and-run

**LA GRANDE** — Law enforcement arrested a La Grande man Tuesday, Aug. 16, in connection with the hit-and-run death of Maison Andrew, according to a press release from the La Grande Police Department.

Elijah Ward, 26, was arrested after officers located the car parked outside his residence at 609 Y Ave., according to Police Chief Gary Bell. During the course of the investigation, police connected the hit-and-run with a white 2009 Mitsubishi Galant.

The investigation began after La Grande police responded to a report at 5:30 a.m. Aug. 13, of a dead male on the side of 16th Street. La Grande police officers responded and immediately confirmed the individual had died.

The investigation revealed that a vehicle traveling south on 16th Street struck Andrew as he was walking on the street sometime during the night, according to La Grande police Lt. Jason Hays. The driver fled without contacting emergency services.

Ward was taken into custody without incident and booked in the Union County Jail, according to Bell. He has been charged with second-degree manslaughter and failure to perform the duties of a driver to an injured person. So far, Ward has cooperated with the investigation, Bell said.

The investigation is ongoing and additional charges may be filed. La Grande police also urged anyone with pertinent information to contact Sgt. Ryan Miller at 541-963-1017.

—EO Media Group

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**CORRECTIONS:** The *East Oregonian* works hard to be accurate and sincerely regrets any errors. If you notice a mistake in the paper, please call 541-966-0818.

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