

LIGHTNING

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Al Crouch, a spokesman for the BLM's Vale District, had a similar reaction.

"It's a little strange — typically this is the time of year with these lightning storms where we get new fires," Crouch said. "But everything's quiet."

Both Crouch and Crippen attributed the absence of fires to the relatively low number of lightning bolts that hit the

ground.

Much of the lightning in the storm that moved through Baker City — a storm that delayed the East-West Shrine All-Star Football Game for about 30 minutes (see story on Page 6A) — was "cloud-to-cloud" lightning that generated thunder but didn't strike the ground and potentially ignite a fire, Crippen said.

He estimated that about 25 bolts hit the ground, mainly in the Phillips Reservoir and Hereford areas south

of Baker City, with another dozen or so in the Wallowa Mountains.

Crouch said there were fewer than a dozen strikes in the Vale District.

Crippen said heavy rain and scattered hail also accompanied the lightning.

An automated weather station near Blue Canyon, about 10 miles southwest of Baker City, recorded almost a third of an inch of rain Saturday evening.

With another heatwave

forecast this week, Crippen said it's possible that "hold-over" fires — ones started by lightning that are still smoldering — will flare up.

He took an airplane flight over the area Sunday and planned to do the same today, searching for smoke.

Crippen said fire crews found one holdover lightning fire earlier this summer 12 days after the storm that started it, and another blaze seven days after it was sparked.

FIRE BAN

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As it stands now, there is a small amount of land — about 20,000 acres scattered around the county — where open burning is not technically prohibited during fire season, even when open burning is banned elsewhere.

The ordinance would follow the same regulations as the Forestry Department.

Commissioners decided to deal with the situation by ordinance so that they would not have to approve a burning ban every year.

In the past, the county has issued temporary restrictions, which are harder to enforce.

People who violate the new ordinance could face a fine of up to \$500.

"The ultimate goal isn't to cite people, the ultimate goal is to raise people's awareness," Commissioner Mark Bennett said.

In other business at Wednesday's meeting, the commissioners accepted a bid from Palmer Roofing to replace the roof of the Baker County Jail. The accepted bid, for \$193,165, was the only one submitted that met all the criteria set by the county.

The commissioners also accepted a bid from High Desert Aggregate Paving of La Grande to supply the county with hot mix asphalt. The accepted bid of \$65 per ton was one of two bids considered by the board. The other was from Rogers Asphalt Paving, also of La Grande, for \$75 per ton.

At the meeting the commissioners also voted to approve changes to the Tri-County Weed Management Agency agreement and send the changes to commissioners from the other two participating counties, Union and Wallowa, for their consideration and potential approval.

REPORTER

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Crowley graduated from the University of Oregon Journalism School in June with a Bachelor of Science degree in journalism. In addition to editor Jayson Jacoby, a 1992 UO Journalism School graduate, Crowley is working this summer with Becca Robbins, who has passed the halfway mark of her 10-week stay at the Herald through the UO's Snowden Internship program for journalism students. Robbins will return to the Eugene campus at summer's end to complete her senior year at the University of Oregon.

Crowley and Robbins worked together at the Daily Emerald, the university's student-run newspaper.

Crowley, 22, grew up at Charbonneau, a private planned community that is part of Wilsonville. He is a Canby High School graduate and despite his U of O credentials, he started his college career in Southern California at San Diego State University.

He was attracted to the warmer climate of San Diego and had visited the city several times, he said. His father, Ken, a senior attorney general for the Oregon Department of Justice, had attended law school there.

Crowley says he enrolled in pre-computer science, but quickly found out his desire

to create video games was a long ways from the study required to reach that goal.

"It was not work that I'd like to be doing and I was not that good at it," he said.

His mother, Terri, who is retired after a career as a product manager for several companies, earned her degree in computer science.

But that wasn't for him, and after a year at San Diego State, Crowley said he decided to return to Oregon.

Continuing his college degree was never a question. He says he knew when he graduated from high school, he would attend college, just like his parents, and grandparents (who also attended the U of O) and older brother, Nick, 24, a graduate of the University of Colorado at Boulder. Nick works as a brewer for Rogue Brewing in Newport.

Once enrolled at the U of O, Crowley said he still wasn't set on a journalism career. He was considering teaching or international communication as well.

But it was during his Communications 101 speech class that he began to realize how much he enjoyed the creativity required.

And it's the creativity that journalism allows that he most enjoys.

"It's interesting to go and talk to someone and tell their story," he said. "This felt like a more personal job. It feels creative."

And as he got further into his studies, he realized that he appreciated the work of journalists whose goals he believes are "to help make the world a better place and to help people be aware of the bad things that happen."

"I want people to be as informed as possible," Crowley said. "I like to be informed."

One story he is especially proud of while working for the Daily Emerald was based on a four-hour ride-along with a campus police officer the Friday before Halloween last year.

During the night, the officer responded to a scene where a student was in danger of alcohol poisoning, and arrested a man in possession of heroin, methamphetamine and drug paraphernalia.

"That was the first time I'd ever seen meth or heroin up close," Crowley said.

He watched the officer make the arrest, process the evidence and then complete the paperwork necessary to send the suspect to jail.

Shortly before his ride was scheduled to end, about 11 p.m., Crowley said the officer got a call reporting that a woman nearby was in cardiac arrest.

They found the woman, who had a stream of blood coming from her head, dead on the ground.

"I was pretty shocked at first," he said. "I didn't really know what to do about that."

The officer's response

impressed him, though.

"I don't have time to be in shock or to be emotional," the officer told him. "I just have to do my job and react."

The case was turned over to the Eugene Police Department and though Crowley's ride-along had ended, his work was just beginning.

He said he spent all day Saturday writing the story and then spent Sunday with his editors preparing the story for Monday's edition.

"I was very tired when it was done," he said. "But I was really proud of that story."

Crowley said he was eager to come to Baker City because of the encouragement he received from Jacoby.

"He seemed really cool and he cared about the town and the paper," Crowley said.

And he was excited to be able to go right to work on important stories, such as the community's first townhouse subdivision.

He learned of the sale of the city's grass tennis courts when his father signed up to play in a recent tournament and was able to get that story thanks to his inside source.

Crowley also is interested in meeting the cats that greet customers in area businesses. His own cat, Grayson, accompanied him to his new home in Baker City.

"I'm really excited to start my new job," he said. "I really like it so far. I really like the town and I'm excited to do some awesome journalism."

Fire destroys home

By Chris Collins

collins@bakercityherald.com

A home on Hughes Lane was destroyed by fire early this morning.

The fire was well on its way to consuming the house at 1330 Hughes Lane when the Baker City Fire Department was dispatched to the scene, at 1:09 a.m. today, said Cliff Hall, interim fire chief.

Casey Kump, deputy state fire marshal of La Grande, was headed to Baker City this morning to begin investigating the cause of the fire, Hall said.

The property is owned by Kipton and Shannon Farmer. The property was being rented, but the tenants were not at home and had not yet been notified about the fire this morning, Hall said. Oregon State Police were working to locate them, he said.

"The fire had a very large head start on us," Hall said.

When firefighters arrived, the roof of the house was caved in and the fire had spread to the attached garage and a nearby shop. A vehicle on the property also was burned.

Property loss was estimated at \$160,000. The loss of contents could not be determined because of the damage.

"Everything was so burned up it was hard to determine what was in there," Hall said.

Baker Rural Fire District volunteers, Baker City Police and Oregon State Police also responded.

Seventeen firefighters spent three hours and 13 minutes working at the scene. There were no injuries.

Truck fire closed freeway

A semitractor-trailer loaded with Gatorade sports drinks was destroyed by fire in the westbound freeway lanes near the south Baker City interchange Saturday afternoon.

Oregon State Police said the driver, Paulino Villagomez-Morales, 66, of Tacoma, Washington,

said the fire started after his front right driving tire blew out. By the time he got the truck stopped, the fire had spread to the rest of truck. Freeway traffic was stalled during the cleanup.

Police, fire and ambulance crews responded at 1:35 p.m. There were no injuries.

LOCAL BRIEFING

Assessor's office closed afternoon of Aug. 15

The Baker County Assessor's Office will be closed starting at 2 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 15, while employees attend events for the annual meeting of the Oregon State Assessors Association and Oregon Tax Collectors Association.

The office will re-open as usual at 8 a.m. on Thursday, Aug. 16.

Assessor Kerry Savage, who is president of the Oregon State Assessors Association, is the host for the annual conference, which will bring about 100 people to Baker City the week of Aug. 13-17.

Baker School District registration set

Registration for the Baker School District is scheduled during August.

Baker High School, South Baker, Baker Middle School and Brooklyn

- Monday, Aug. 13 — 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. at Baker High School, 2500 E St.
- Tuesday, Aug. 14 — 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Baker High School

Keating Elementary

- Monday, Aug. 13 — 8 a.m. to noon at the school
- Tuesday, Aug. 14 — 8 a.m. to noon at Baker High School

Haines Elementary

- Monday, Aug. 13 — 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. at Baker High School
- Tuesday, Aug. 14 — 8 a.m. to noon at Haines Elementary

Eagle Cap Innovative High School

- Monday, Aug. 13 — 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. and noon to 3 p.m. at Baker High School
- Tuesday, Aug. 14 — 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Baker High School

Immunizations

- Please bring your insurance card and immunization records
- Monday, Aug. 13 — 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. at Baker High School
- Tuesday, Aug. 14 — 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Baker High School

TELEGANI

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His next years of education included three years of minor seminary, two years of philosophy, one year in regency as personal secretary to the bishop, and four years of theology.

He was ordained at age 25.

After his ordination, Telagani was associate pastor of a parish for one year, then taught at seminary for four years.

He then served in another parish for five years, during which time he earned a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in education. Then he transferred to another parish where he served for four years.

The following year he preached on Divyavani TV, the first Telugu Catholic television channel.

"I was giving homily weekly," he said.

His sermons were also shared on his

"My intention is to go out in the world and share the word of God.

The faith experience I've had, I must share with others."

— **The Rev. Suresh Kumar Telagani**

YouTube channel.

The next step in his journey was one his mother never anticipated.

"I had a desire of coming to the United States," he said. "My intention is to go out in the world and share the word of God. The faith experience I've had, I must share with others."

His mother saw him off at the airport.

"My mother didn't expect me to leave my country," he said. "When she came to the airport, she cried. Then she blessed me."

He plans to return home to visit once a year, because it is difficult for his fam-

ily to make the trip overseas.

Although the United States differs greatly from his home country, Telagani is accustomed to experiencing different cultures. India is made up of 29 states, and each has its own local language, traditions, food and clothing style.

His desire to embrace local culture is influenced by a bishop who moved from another Indian state and immersed himself in the new language and culture.

"My intention, wherever I go, is to get into that tradition, that way of life," Telagani said.

As for his language, Telagani studied English in school.

"Mostly it is communicated with British English — for almost 200 years they ruled us," he said.

At airports in India, he said announcements are made in three languages: local, Hindi (the national language) and English.

Weekly Specials Aug 6 - 12

Monday	Mearloaf.....	\$8.95
Tuesday	Maple BBQ Smokehouse Chicken.....	\$8.95
Wednesday	Liver & Onions.....	\$8.95
Thursday	Chicken Fried Steak.....	\$9.95
Friday	All You Can Eat Mini Shrimp.....	\$9.95
	Steak & Shrimp.....	\$10.95
	Pan Fried Oysters	\$10.50
	Prime Rib	\$13.95
Saturday	NY Steak.....	\$13.95
	Prime Rib	\$13.95
Sunday	Old Fashioned Steak.....	\$9.50/8.95 sr

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