

FREEWAY

Continued from Page 1A

Although the westbound lanes were never closed, traffic slowed because of the dense smoke that at times resulted in zero visibility, said Tom Strandberg, spokesman for the Oregon Department of Transportation in La Grande.

The triple-trailer load of straw and the truck were destroyed in the fire, he said.

Traffic began moving again about 7:30 p.m. Strandberg said those stranded between Baker City and the site of the fire began moving first. Exit ramps were next reopened at

Baker, La Grande and Pendleton. During the closure, local residents were allowed through to their homes east of Pendleton after showing identification to ODOT workers along the way.

"Since it wasn't weather-related, we opened it up for local folks to get through," Strandberg said.

"We understand how frustrating closures are," Strandberg said. "If people can get home, we try to get them through."

Strandberg himself was traveling to construction projects south of Baker City Tuesday and left his La Grande office before he heard

of the freeway closure. Unable to reach the construction site, he returned to his office, he said.

Firefighting response was delayed for some time Tuesday because of confusion over which agencies would respond under agreements with ODOT, Strandberg said. The fire started in an area unprotected by any fire protection district, Strandberg said.

Oregon State Police Lt. Sean Belding said firefighters from the Bureau of Land Management and the Burnt River Rangeland Fire Protection Association were the first to arrive at the scene.

The Baker City Fire Department also sent a crew.

Traffic was unable to move along the eastbound route because the truck was burning in the passing lane and firefighters worked from the slow lane, Strandberg said.

The cause of the fire has not been determined, Belding said. A passing traveler reported that the truck was on fire before the driver noticed it. He was able to stop the truck and safely escape.

The driver, whose name was not available in time for this story, first attempted to put the fire out with a fire extinguisher he carried in his truck, Belding said.



Oregon State Police photo

A truck hauling three trailers loaded with straw bales caught fire Tuesday afternoon, resulting in the closure of the eastbound lanes of Interstate 84 near Durkee for several hours. The closure was later extended to La Grande and to near Pendleton as truck parking spaces filled.

DEBATE

Continued from Page 1A

In a discussion about the county's budget process, Nichols said that he thinks there should be more discussion about certain county expenditures between the commissioners and the budget committee. He also said he thinks the budget committee should have more input in the county's budget.

Harvey said he thinks this would be difficult because the county is always pressed for time when working on the budget.

Both candidates said they believe they would receive a vote of confidence from county employees for the work they have done as a commissioner.

Harvey was elected in 2014 to a four-year term as chairman, the only full-time position among the three commissioners.

Nichols was elected in 2016 to a four-year term.

When answering question about transparency, Nichols cited the Lime plant demolition project and the Tri-County Weed agreement as examples when the county could have been more transparent.

He says he didn't have

information on the Lime project until the deal was almost done. The project was first reported to the public in February of this year at which point Harvey had been working on the project for about a year. Harvey said he didn't bring his proposal to the commissioners until then because he didn't have all the information.

"Do we disagree on principle, not really, but we disagree on the way that we do things," Harvey said.

The candidates were asked how they could manage the county better than their opponent.

Nichols said he would be more transparent and involve the public and committees more.

Harvey said he involves citizens at every opportunity.

While talking about public land management both candidates supported the strategy of coordination, a federal law that requires federal agencies to take into account county policies when making decisions about managing public land.

The coordination law does not require federal agencies to ensure their projects are consistent with county policies.

On Tuesday, both candi-

dates reflected on the previous night's debate.

Harvey said he liked the opportunity to involve the public and answer their questions.

"I'd love to have a meeting where there were 200 people or more so they could get more information and we could gain information from them," Harvey said.

Nichols said he didn't like the format, which had him answering each question first, followed by Harvey's response.

"When I go through a decision making process, I take my time to make sure I got all the bases covered," Nichols said.

Nichols answered first based on the result of a coin toss prior to the debate.

The format of the debate included questions submitted before the debate as well as a portion when audience members posed questions.

Harvey and Nichols were each given one minute to answer each question, as well as the option for a 30-second rebuttal.

Both candidates stated that the time limits were too short to answer some of the questions fully.

The candidates didn't have any information on what

the questions would be prior to the debate. At the end of the debate, candidates were given two minutes to explain why voters should elect them.

Both Nichols and Harvey are registered and self-proclaimed Republicans. This year's election is the first general election in which the commissioner chair position was nonpartisan.

In the May primary, Harvey received 94 more votes than Nichols.

About 40 percent of the county's registered voters participated in the primary election.

If Harvey wins the general election, Nichols would continue to serve in commissioner position 1 through 2020. If Nichols wins, he and the third commissioner, Mark Bennett, who is running unopposed, would appoint someone to fill Nichols' old position.

Harvey and Nichols are slated to debate a third time, on Oct. 18, hosted by the Baker County Cattleman's Association.

Prior to the debate Monday, Republican Party members discussed Measure 1-84, the Second Amendment Preservation Ordinance on the Nov. 6 ballot.

Baker woman charged with striking man in head with skateboard

By Chris Collins
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A Baker City woman accused of striking a man in the head with a skateboard remains in custody today on a charge of second-degree assault.

Baker City Police arrested Desiree Marie Barnett, 31, of Baker City, at 12:48 p.m. Saturday at the victim's Baker City home.

Thomas Barger sustained a 2-inch cut to the back of his head in the alleged assault, said District Attorney Matt Shirtcliff. The assault took place after Barger had invited Barnett to his apartment.

Upon conviction, second-degree assault carries a mandatory minimum prison term of five years and 10 months. Barnett is accused of using the skateboard as a "dangerous weapon" to cause injury to Barger, Shirtcliff said.

Gubernatorial debate

PORTLAND (AP) — Young people questioned Oregon's main gubernatorial candidates on topics ranging from foster care to gun restrictions to bullying at the candidates' first debate in Portland Tuesday evening.

Democratic Gov. Kate Brown, Republican Knute Buehler and Patrick Starnes of the Independent Party met at the event dubbed the Debate for our Future.

The candidates sparred most intensely over the topic of education funding specifically related to underrepresented groups such as Native Americans.

Buehler said the single biggest failure of Brown's administration was that not enough money was getting into the classroom because too much of it goes to state and local government employees' pension plans.

Brown said she was proud of a measure that allowed tribal elders to teach native languages in public schools to all students and that by significantly investing in underserved communities, graduation rates have gone up.

The next two debates are scheduled for Oct. 4 in Medford and Oct. 9 in Portland.

NEWS OF RECORD

DEATHS

Russell "Bud" Beeson: 83, of Baker City, died Oct. 1, 2018, at St. Alphonsus Medical Center in Baker City. Coles Tribute Center is in charge of arrangements. A private family burial will take place at Mount Hope Cemetery in Baker City. The public will be invited to a celebration of his life at a later date. To light a candle in memory of Bud, go to www.colestributecenter.com

Ellen Rowley: 63, of Goldendale, Washington, died Sept. 26, 2018, near Baker City. Gray's West & Co. Pioneer Chapel is in charge of arrangements. To light a candle in memory of Ellen, go to www.grayswestco.com

Eugene Rowley: 65, of Goldendale, Washington, died Sept. 26, 2018, near Baker City. Gray's West & Co. Pioneer Chapel is in charge of arrangements. To light a candle in memory of Eugene, go to www.grayswestco.com

Katie Helman: 24, of Baker City, died Oct. 1, 2018, at St. Alphonsus Medical Center. Gray's West & Co. Pioneer Chapel is in charge of arrangements. To light a candle in memory of Katie, go to www.grayswestco.com

Jack A. Cupples: 83, of Irrigon, died Oct. 3, 2018, at an assisted living center in Hermiston. Gray's West & Co. Pioneer

Chapel is in charge of arrangements. To light a candle for Jack, go to www.grayswestco.com.

FUNERALS PENDING

Colleen Crow: There will be a celebration of Colleen's life and memorial service at 11 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 13 at the Pine Valley Presbyterian Church in Halfway. Tami's Pine Valley Funeral Home & Cremation Services is in charge of arrangements. On line condolences may be made at www.tamispinevalleyfuneralhome.com

Calvin 'Bud' Butts: Memorial service Saturday, Oct. 13, at 2 p.m. at Gray's West & Co. Pioneer Chapel, 1500 Dewey Ave. Pastor Lennie Spooner of the Baker First Church of the Nazarene will officiate. Memorial contributions may be made to the Trail Tenders at the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center through Grays West & Co., 1500 Dewey Ave., Baker City, OR 97814. To light a candle in memory of Bud, or to leave a condolence for his family, go to www.grayswestco.com

Glenna Lucile Smith: A Celebration of Life will take place at 1:30 p.m. Saturday, October 13, at the Halfway Lions Club Community Hall, 235 Lion St. in Halfway. After the service,

friends are invited to join the family for a reception at Wild Bill's. Memorial contributions may be made to the Pine Valley Fair Exhibit Hall through Coles Tribute Center, 1950 Place St., Baker City, OR 97814. To light a candle in memory of Glenna, or to leave a condolence for the family, go to www.colestributecenter.com

POLICE LOG

Baker City Police Arrests, citations
POST-PRISON VIOLATION (Clackamas County warrant): Daniel James Rothenberger, 36, of 1783 1/2 Valley Ave., 2:14 p.m. Tuesday at the sheriff's office; jailed.

ASSAULT IV, HARASSMENT and DISORDERLY CONDUCT: Sean Michael Dethloff, 19, of Baker City, 9:23 a.m. Tuesday, in the 2400 block of Resort Street; jailed.

ESCAPE III, DISORDERLY CONDUCT and CRIMINAL MISCHIEF II: Jonathon Dale Fields, 31, of 1783 1/2 Valley Ave., 4:11 a.m. Tuesday, at his home; jailed and later granted a conditional release.

Baker County Sheriff Arrests, citations
FAILURE TO APPEAR and THEFT I, two counts, (Baker County warrant): Virginia Joan Soderholm, 46, of 2641 Grace St., 4:52 p.m. Monday, at the Sheriff's Office; jailed and later released.

The Baker County Veterans office will be closed from Monday, October 1st through Friday, October 5th

We will be open for business on Monday, October 8th 2018.

Hosted By ALL AMERICAN METAL ART

November 10th, 2018 9:00 AM

For More Info Contact All American Metal Art
Owner: Tyler Gassin 541-519-4243

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Meet Our Local Veterans and Check Out What They Are Receiving For Their Service

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