

Local & State

Christmas homes tour Saturday

The public will have a chance to tour some of Baker City's homes — all decked out for Christmas, no less — on Saturday, Dec. 8. CASA of Eastern Oregon presents the Classic Christmas Tour of Homes from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Advance tickets are \$15 adults, \$12 for seniors and students. Tickets for groups of 10 or more are \$10 per

person. Tickets are on sale at the Baker Chamber of Commerce, Bella Main Street Market, Crossroads Carnegie Art Center, Compass Real Estate and on the CASA of Eastern Oregon Facebook page. On Saturday, ticket prices increase to \$20 for adults, \$15 for seniors and students, and \$15 for groups.

Tickets will be redeemed for a tour guide and map at the first stop, Compass Real Estate, 2419 Main St. Participants should plan on three hours to complete the tour, which is self-guided. All proceeds support CASA (Court-Appointed Special Advocates). For information, email caseasternoregon@gmail.com or call 541-403-0405.

FOREST PLAN REVISION OBJECTION MEETING IN LA GRANDE

Union County commissioner optimistic after forest plan meeting

By Dick Mason
(La Grande) Observer

LA GRANDE — Union County Commissioner Donna Beverage believes there may be light at the end of the tunnel.

Beverage emerged with a sense of hope from a public forum Saturday in La Grande put on by the Forest Service for those with objections to the Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision.

"I do feel optimistic. I feel like we are making progress," Beverage said.

The commissioner noted that there were a number of high-ranking Forest Service officials from Washington, D.C., on the forum's panel.

"This is the first time since the revision process began (15 years ago) that officials from there flew out here to find out how local people would be affected," Beverage said.

The forum was one of five conducted in the region by Forest Service Associate Deputy Chief Chris French. There was a meeting Friday

in Baker City.

Mark Owens, a member of the Harney County Board of Commissioners, attended all five sessions. Owens said he initially thought French was coming to Northeastern Oregon as a token gesture.

"I honestly thought he was coming here to check a box, but I was proven wrong," Owens said. "He was trying to learn and listen, (and) he did an exceptional job."

Beverage said French's sincerity was evident when he repeated questions from

those who spoke to make sure that he heard them correctly.

"I was impressed with that," she said.

Beverage and Owens participated in the La Grande forum as members of the Eastern Oregon Counties Association, which is made up of commissioners from Union, Wallowa, Baker, Deschutes, Grant, Harney, Malheur, Morrow and Sherman counties.

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SCHOOLS

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Baker, in switching from a five-day to a four-day week in 2012, complied with the minimum hour requirements by extending the length of the school day.

Witty said he has talked to state officials who understand the circumstances facing school districts that have four-day weeks, most of which are in rural areas east of the Cascades.

He doesn't believe Brown's proposal is intended to force districts such as Baker to add at least 33 days to its school year, which would essentially require reverting to a five-day week.

"I don't think it's going to be a mandate," Witty said. "I do not believe the Legislature would put something

through that does not allow flexibility at the local level.

"My view is the Legislature certainly realizes local control is absolutely a function of local school boards."

Witty said the Confederation of Oregon School Administrators, of which he is a member, has taken a position that the state should continue to allow local school boards to decide on such fundamental matters as class schedules.

At this point, with no specific proposal from the state regarding districts with four-day weeks, it's not clear what changes Baker and other districts would need to make, Witty said.

"We're just in the beginning phases," he said.

Witty said he supports the intent of Brown's proposal — to increase the

amount of time Oregon students spend in class — so long as the state gives districts money to pay for the additional instruction time.

Brown's budget plan proposes to do that, as well as to fully fund a program designed to reduce high school dropout rates by expanding technical education programs such as the Baker Technical Institute.

Oregon voters created the program when they approved Ballot Measure 98 in the 2016 general election.

Overall, Witty said Brown's education budget proposal is "positive" and "the most aligned that I've seen in my career" with the goals of the Oregon School Boards Association and the Confederation of Oregon School Administrators.

BAKER CITY HISTORY

Memories of some of Baker's merchants during 1930s

By Phyllis Badgley
For the Baker City Herald

I recall merchants and establishments in Baker's business history of 1930s era. Among them, merchant Andy Melville operated a furniture store in the 2300 block of Broadway. Melville was a member of the local school board.

As a 10-year-old, I felt grown up when my Dad asked me to accompany him to Melville's store. Our mission was to purchase linoleum for the kitchen floor. Mother was home to answer incoming phone calls for Red's Delivery, which my Dad owned.

Melville's store displayed rolls of linoleum lined vertically against the east wall. The aroma of new linoleum permeated the store and

lingers yet, in my memory. I don't know the price of the linoleum but a loaf of sliced bread was 8 cents in those Great Depression days.

My parents acquired a kitchen table and chairs from Melville's. Finished in birch wood, it featured drop leaf style. Tablecloths were standard in that era, later replaced with plastic table mats. Mother served delicacies over that table for 25 years. Her cinnamon rolls and lemon meringue pie became legendary. These items were cooked on a Monarch woodstove that was attached to a galvanized water tank.

A formal walnut wood dining set graced a portion of the living room. Chairs had dark leather seats. Extra table leaves could be added to accommodate eight additional guests. During a 1931 remodeling of our house, the roof was partially disassembled and a rainstorm ensued. Dripping water caused a visible scar on the dining table.

I'm reminded of merchant Roy Melville, brother of Andy (above). Roy sold supplies of religious nature from a small shop on Broadway (current location of Greater Baker Food Co-op). Roy later moved to Second Street to continue

as an "in home" business.

After Andy Melville closed his furniture business, Elskamp leather goods occupied the premises. Their front window displayed a horse statue adorned with hand-tooled leather items.

West of Elskamps, the Palace Meat Market was operated by Bert Weeks and Bill Peterson. On one occasion, I recall an intense aroma engulfed the building. Apparently an ammonia pipe in the market had burst. My Dad delivered meat orders from the Palace shop. I accompanied him. As a child,

I soon learned the names of the proprietors when they offered me a fresh wiener — free of charge!

The 2300 block of Broadway also housed Rapp's Bakery, where I infrequently parted with a nickel to purchase a treat. Next door Percy Culbertson operated a barber shop. His children were my good friends. Immediately west, Bill Eaton operated a lunch counter where nickel and dime hamburgers were available.

Delameter's store of used articles abutted Gales Grocery. Henry and Mildred Gale

kept long hours to accommodate late customers.

O.D. Wilson established his hamburger stand at the Corner of Fifth Street (currently Dairy Queen). Odie's orange-colored facility was a popular lunch stop for students. Space was limited, no tables.

My next article will feature memories of more Baker business merchants of the 1930s.

The weather is changing...

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Saturday, December 8, 7:00P.M.
Sunday, December 9, 3:00P.M.

Temporary Farm Labor: Wonderful Bees, McKittrick, CA, has 18 positions with 3 mo. exp. required as beekeeper with references; raises bees to produce honey & maintain colony health through feed/supplements, find/cage queens, install queen cells, force bees from hives to extract honeycomb, assemble & transport bee boxes, load/unload hives from truck, select optimal hive placement, insert honeycomb of bees into hives, move boxes between field during flower bloom; maintain & repair vehicles, buildings & equip.; long periods of standing, bending & must be able to lift 75#; must obtain driver's license within 30 days of hire with clean MVR; no bee, pollen, or honey related allergies; once hired, workers may be required to take employer paid random drug test; testing positive/failure to comply may result in immediate termination; employer provides free tools, equipment, housing and daily trans; trans & subsistence expenses reimb.; \$13.18/hr, may increase based on exp. w/possible bonus; may work nights, weekends, holidays and asked but not required to work Sabbath; 75% work period guaranteed from 1/15/19 - 6/15/19. Apply and review ETA790 requirements at nearest OR Workforce Office with JO# 16301368 or call 503-947-1659.

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