

# OCTOBER

■ Highest Temperature: 75, on the 21st • Lowest Temperature: 19, on the 15th • Total Precipitation: .49 (avg.: .66)

## Grocery Outlet Opens Baker City Store

# Bagging Bargains



S. John Collins/Baker City Herald

Shoppers arrive early Thursday morning to be the first in line to enter the new store and be eligible for limited prizes. From right, Jaye Green, Jerry Herbes and Wynona Bacus lead a line that extends around and beyond the back of the building.

By Casey Crowley  
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OCTOBER — At 6:30 Thursday morning, with bright sunshine but temperatures in the upper 20s, shoppers eager to sample Baker City's newest grocery store were already lining up outside Grocery Outlet.

About two and a half hours later, when the store officially opened at 297 Campbell St., just east of Interstate 84, Jaye Green became the first customer to walk through the door.

Green, 62, said she had been planning to attend the opening for two

months and knew that she wanted to be first in line. She has lived in Baker for 12 years and would often drive to the La Grande Grocery Outlet for her groceries.

Green said the Baker store will now become her main place for grocery shopping.

Green was hardly alone in braving the chilly morning to have a look at the store that opened almost exactly one year after local officials announced that the California grocery chain had decided to build in Baker City.

When the doors opened around 9 a.m., the line of shoppers stretched to Windmill Road.

Karen Foglesong, 69, didn't get to the store until after it had opened but by the time she arrived she was one of the last people in line.

"I didn't think there would be this many, so it's kind of nice to see everybody turning out," Foglesong said.

Foglesong said she has shopped at the Grocery Outlet store in La Grande, and she believes it will be nice for local residents to have a new choice.

# Walden visits Baker City, discusses opioid abuse

By Chris Collins  
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OCTOBER 12 — U.S. Rep. Greg Walden stopped in Baker City Thursday on a tour of Eastern Oregon to discuss health care issues, including the country's ongoing opioid abuse crisis.

Walden met with health care professionals to discuss a bill he sponsored to address the issue.

Titled the SUPPORT (Substance Use-Disorder Prevention that Promotes Opioid Recovery and Treatment) for Patients and Communities Act it is headed to President Donald Trump's desk and is expected to be signed into law by the end of the month, Walden said.

The congressman, a Republican from Hood River, represents Oregon's 2nd Congressional District, which includes Baker County.

Administrators from St. Alphonsus Medical Center in Ontario and Baker City and New Directions Northwest staff shared their thoughts and concerns about how to improve services to their patients who are addicted to opioids and suffer physical illness and mental health disorders as well.

The group gathered in the hospital's physicians lounge for an informal meeting with Walden and his staff that lasted for about an hour and a half.

The health care providers told Walden about the need to offer behavioral health therapy, addiction counseling and medication-assisted treatment to help patients recover.

Complicating matters is the difficulty recruiting and retaining mental health clinicians in rural communities, they said.

# County late on audits

By Casey Crowley  
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OCTOBER 10 — Baker County is over nine months late in submitting its 2016-2017 fiscal year financial audit to the state, and the 2017-18 audit won't be finished by the Dec. 31, 2018, deadline either.

County officials say the delay has to do with the county contracting with a different accounting firm to do the audit.

The county's tardiness has triggered a three-year-old state law that allows the state to withhold 10 percent of some revenue, such as cigarette and liquor taxes, that is distributed to counties and cities.

The county receives about \$81,500 per year in liquor taxes and about \$15,000 in cigarette taxes.

Amy Dale, the municipal audit manager for the Oregon Secretary of State's audit division, said Baker County has been subject to the 10-percent revenue sharing withholding law since Sept. 1 of this year.

She did not know how much money, if any, has been withheld. Dale said some agencies distribute revenue sharing monthly, while others do so four times per year.

# Straw truck fire closes freeway

By Chris Collins  
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OCTOBER 3 — The eastbound lanes of Interstate 84 were closed for several hours Tuesday afternoon and evening after a truck hauling straw bales caught fire near Durkee.

The fire started about 1:30 p.m. near Milepost 325, about 21 miles southeast of Baker City. The freeway was initially closed at Baker City, and the closure was later extended to La Grande and to near Pendleton when truck parking spaces filled in Baker City and La Grande.

# City selects new fire chief

By Casey Crowley  
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OCTOBER 29 — Baker City Manager Fred Warner Jr. said a Michigan man has accepted the job as Baker City Fire Chief, contingent on a background check and drug test.

John Clark would take over for interim chief Cliff Hall, who has been in that role since Chief Tom Wills retired this summer.

Clark, 57, most recently served as chief of the Delta Township Fire Department in Lansing, Michigan. In July, he resigned from his position where he had served seven years as the chief. His stated reason for leaving was that he wanted to relocate to a new area, according to a story in the Lansing State Journal newspaper.

# Driver dies in cattle truck crash

OCTOBER 17 — The driver of a cattle truck traveling west on Interstate 84 near North Powder died Tuesday afternoon when for unknown reasons the 2012 Peterbilt semitruck he was driving left the roadway, hit the guardrail and flipped.

Shannon Dwinell, 46, of Great Bend, Kansas, died at the scene, about 2 miles north of North Powder, an Oregon State Police report stated.

The stock trailer was loaded with 28 cattle. Five died.

# Wyden hosts town hall

By Casey Crowley  
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OCTOBER 24 — Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Oregon, opened a town hall at Baker High School this morning by presenting BHS Principal Greg Mitchell with an American flag that had flown over the U.S. Capitol.

After talking about his efforts to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires, Wyden took questions.

Questions were

chosen by a raffle — attendees could take a ticket before the town hall started at 9 a.m. in the BHS auditorium.

Tickets were separated into two categories which were expressed by color, blue tickets for BHS students and yellow for community members.

Wyden was introduced by Emily Black, BHS student body president. No subjects

were off limits, Wyden said.

Questions in the early part of the town hall covered a variety of issues including senior citizen nutrition, youth poverty, the recent federal tax cuts, and violence in schools.

Wyden is not up for re-election in the Nov. 6 election. He was elected in 2016 to a six-year term that continues through 2022.

# Driver hit, killed while checking tires

OCTOBER 22 — A Washington man who pulled over to the shoulder of Highway 86 near Baker City Friday evening to check his tires was hit and killed by a vehicle that crossed the fog line.

Dennis Tim Cheney, 59, of Walla Walla, died at the scene just east of Interstate 84, according to Oregon State Police.

The driver of the vehicle that hit Cheney, Adrienne Marie Larsen,

32, of Boise, was charged with driving under the influence of intoxicants, first- and second-degree manslaughter, reckless endangerment and criminally negligent homicide.

# Baker City man shot during altercation

By Chris Collins  
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OCTOBER 3 — A Baker City man remained in critical condition in a Boise hospital Tuesday after being shot in the chest and neck area Monday

night during an altercation with another man outside a Main Street house.

Lucas McMillen, 36, of 3220 Campbell St., was flown by Life Flight from the Baker City hospital to St. Alphonsus Hospital in Boise.